Chapter: 1
Introduction to Critical Theory

A

Theory:

The word ‘theory’ is frequently used in every discipline of knowledge. It is always read with certain invisible assumptions like, theory as a set of rules, a set of principles or a philosophical foundation of any practical work. The English word theory is derived from the Greek word ‘theoria’ which means contemplation or speculation. (Joseph Chandra, 1) Etymologically, theory advocates the process of speculation according to particular assumptions.

In Oxford Dictionary, theory is defined as “a set of principles on which an activity is based”. The word theory appears in various forms as theoretical, theorize, theorizing, theorization, theorized. In Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary; the word theory is explained as “a formal statement of the rules on which a subject of study is based or ideas which are suggested to explain a fact or event or more generally an opinion or explanation”, for example economic theory, scientific theory, Darwin’s theory, literary theory etc.

In the Dictionary of English, the Language Haughton Mifflin Company has defined theory as “a set statements or principles deserve to explain a group of facts or phenomena, especially one that has been repeatedly tested or is widely accepted and can be used to make
predictions about natural phenomena, or a belief that guides actions or assists comprehension or judgment.” Theory is contemplative and rational type of abstract or the result of such thinking. Depending on the context, for ex. the result might include generalized explanation of how nature works. Theory has its roots in ancient Greek, but in modern use it has taken on several different related meanings. A theory is not the same as a hypothesis it provides as explanatory framework for some observations and; from the assumption of the explanation follows a number of possible hypothesis that can be tested in order to provide support for or challenge the theory. While explaining about the nature of theory, Jonathan Cullor says: A theory must be more than a hypothesis it cannot be obvious: it involves complex relations of a systematic kind among a number of factors, and it is easily confirmed or disproved. If we bear these factors in mind, it becomes easier to understand what goes by the name of theory. (Jonathan Cullor, 3) As a genre of study, it is a body of thinking and writing, whose limits are difficult to define. It is not set of methods for literary study only but, says Cullor: An unbound group of writing about everything under the sun from the most technical problems of academic philosophy to the changing ways in which people have talked about and thought about the body. The genre of theory includes works of anthropology, art history, film studies, genre studies, linguistic philosophy, political theory, psychoanalysis, science studies, intellectual history and sociology. (Jonathan Cullor, 3)

Theory can be defined by its practical effects on the people, on their minds and views. Theory enables people to think differently about their way of life, activities of studying particular object. Cullor gives an
account of theory and its effects in following way, according to him: The main effect of theory is the disputing of “common sense” common sense views about meaning, writing, literature, experience. For example theory questions The conception that the meaning, of an utterance or text is what the speaker ‘had in mind’ or the idea that writing is an experience whose truth lies elsewhere, in an experience or a state of affairs which it experiences or the notion that reality is what is present at a given moment. (Jonathan Cullor, 4-5)

So what is theory? Four main points emerge:

1. Theory is interdisciplinary discourse with effects outside an original discipline.
2. Theory is analytical and speculative an attempt to work out what is involved in what we call language or writing or meaning or the subject.
3. Theory is the critique of common sense, of concepts taken as natural.
4. Theory is reflexive thinking and enquiry into the categories we use in making sense of things in literature and in other discursive practice. (Jonathan Cullor, 14-15)

**Literary Theory:**

Manoharlal Shah has explained the nature of literary theory in more illustrative way in his *Fundamentals of Literary Theory and Criticism 2009*, he says: *Literary theory is the process of understanding what the nature of literature is, what the function it has, what is the relation of text is to author, to reader, to language, to society and to*
history. It is not judgment. Theory however, particularly as “a theory of tends to operate within a frame of values and expectations itself”. (Manoharlal Shah, 8) Literary theory has historical background; it has developed gradually with various scholarly approach of reading a work of art. Shah continues: Basically literary theory is a theory of an interpretation of literature and literary criticism. Its history begins with classical Greek poetics and rhetoric, includes since the 18th century aesthetic and hermeneutics. In the 20th century, theory has become as an umbrella term for a variety of scholarly approach to reading text, most of which are informed by various trends of continental philosophy. (Manoharlal Shah, 1) There are number of schools or types of literary theory, which take different approach to understanding a text. Major schools of literary theory that have historically been important include New Criticism, Formalism, Structuralism, Post structuralism, Marxism, Feminism, New Historicism, Deconstruction, Reader-Response Criticism, and Psychoanalytical Criticism.

As, it is stated earlier that there are different literary theories, and each have their own principles and methods which lead to judgment of particular work of art. Literary theory plays the role of bedrock for literary criticism and practices or it is a foundation of practical criticism. All literary theories are formulated by taking into consideration that literature is human activity which is more subjective and less objective. The form of a text, genre, historical background, contemporary context, biographical traces, psychological expression, colonial and postcolonial setup, and role of reader in the creation of the meaning are some basic issues on which all literary theories make their stand. Though different
approaches hold their own separate tradition and histories, there are several ideas or principles which are recurrent in all critical theories in practice at present time, they were a single entity with a set of understanding beliefs. Some of these recurrent ideas or principles are listed in Peter Barry’s book *Beginning Theory* are as following:

1. They are socially constructed that is, they are depended on social and political forces and on shifting ways of seeing and thinking.
2. Theorists generally believe the all thinking and investigation is necessarily affected and largely determined by prior ideological commitment.
3. Language itself conditions, limits and predetermines what we see. Thus all reality is constructed through language; so that nothing is simply, there is an unproblematic way of everything is linguistic textual construct.
4. The meanings within a literary work are never fixed and reliable, but always shifting, multi-faceted and ambiguous. In literature as in all writing there is no possibility of establishment of fixed and definite meanings.
5. Theorists distrust all ‘totalizing’ notions. For instance the notion of ‘great’ books as an absolute and self-sustaining category is to be distrusted, as books always arise out of a particular socio-political situation, and this situation should not be suppressed, as tends to happen when they are promoted to ‘great men.’ (Peter Barry, 33-34)
These are some basic and recurrent principles in all literary theories. These principles simply come to front as common in all theories, when one makes comparison among them.

**Literary Criticism:**

Literary criticism has its origin in the ancient cultures of Greece and India. It begins with literary creation and since it is a part of creative development of literature. The etymological meaning of the word ‘criticism’ is as following: *The word criticism is derived from the Greek verb ‘kritein’ which means to judge and the one who is skilled in judging is known as ‘kritikos’ in Greek and critic in English. Criticism by definition is the act or art of analyzing and judging the quality of a literary or artistic work.* (Joseph Chandra, 2) Criticism is a practice of judging a work of art, to interpret, analyze and evaluate it. The chief objective of criticism is to provide a particular judgment. The well-known definition given by Matthew Arnold is significant. It focuses on the role of critic in the practice of criticism, Arnold says: *Criticism is disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world.* (Matthew Arnold) S. T. Coleridge insist upon the critic more than criticism, he begins with reviewers who turns into critics. Coleridge argues that: Reviewers are usually people who would have been poets, historians, biographers, if they could: they have tried their talents at one or the other and have failed, therefore they turn critics. Dryden was first to use the word ‘criticism’ in print, in the accepted sense of any formal discussion of literature. Dr. Johnson say’s “a critic is a person skilled in the art of judging literature, a man able to
distinguish the faults and beauties of writing” and criticism as “the task of determining principles to evaluate the merits of a literary composition.” Thomas Carlyle considered literary criticism as interpretation and an assessment of merit of a work of art.

**Literary Theory and Literary Criticism:**

It is difficult to decide the relationship of literary theory and literary criticism because whether literary criticism is involved in the theory or separate from the theory is a matter of debate. As the object of criticism is to analyze, to interpret and to evaluate the work of art with best judgment, literary theory has a role of bedrock to analyze, to interpretation and to evaluation of work of art. Literary theory is a set directive principles of criticism which lead the practice of criticism to the final judgment about the text.

Joseph Chandra says: *Whether literary criticism is a separate field of inquired from literary theory is a debated matter. Literary critics have not been always theorist. Literary criticism which is the study, interpretation and evaluation of literature is considered as a practical application of literary theory. Criticism always deals directly with literary work from a theoretical framework. Contemporary literary criticism is often informed by literary theory which is the philosophical discussion of its methods and goals. The two activities are thus closely related to each other.* (Joseph Chandra, 1-2)

Thus it becomes clear that, the literary theory is a foundation of literary criticism. In other words, criticism has the objectives; to define,
classify, and interpret and evaluate a work of literature. It has an applied orientation when it becomes literary criticism. Therefore theory and practice interact with each other. Though the practice of literary theory became profession in the 20th century, literary theory has its historical roots in ancient Greek and ancient India. The historical roots of literary theory can be found in ancient Greek (Aristotle poetics is often cited early example) and ancient Rome (Longinus on the sublime and Horace’s ars poetica). The aesthetic theories of ancient period to 18th and 19th century have important influence on current literary study.

The modern schools of literary theory are emerged around 1950s, when Ferdinand de Saussure, the structural linguist and his language theory begins strongly to influence English language and literary criticism. In late 1960s and 80s literary theory reached at its peak in the academic campus of United Kingdom and United States of America. Literary theories, for example, New Criticism, Formalism, Structuralism, Marxism, Feminism, New Historicism, Deconstruction, Reader-Response Criticism and Psycho- Criticism gain much popularity in the latter half of the 20th century.

Relevance of Literary Theory:

The significance of a literary theory depends upon its relevance. The relevance of the literary theory is defined by some parameters as:

1. A literary theory should be valid and must cover up all the elements of the text which it is going to evaluate. It should not be limited to any period, particular moment, region, genre, society
culture etc. A literary theory must include all these categories of literature and must reach beyond all these categories.

2. A literary theory must be objective and impartial one. It should lead to the valid and objective judgment of the literary work. It must eradicate the subjectivity and partiality from the process of evaluation. A literary theory always has some methods and principles for valid, objective and impartial judgments.

3. It is clear that the literary theory is about literature. It has always practical applications unless it can be applied; it has very little relevance or it usually stagnates or dies.

4. In most of the causes a good literary theory has a double potential. It can lead further theories, to newer philosophical speculation. At the same time it can also applied to literary text. (Patnaik, 1)

5. A literary theory must have general applicability. A theory must cover a wide enough area and should also be made of something that is not matter of vogue.

6. A literary theory must be flexible enough to take the wear of time, to be flexible to interpretation and newer needs.

A good literary theory incorporates these parameters. The relevance of the judgment brought by any literary theory can be tested on these points and at the same time it determines the relevance of the literary theory.
Indian Literary Theory:

Introduction:

Unity in diversity is the main feature of Indian culture. Indian culture and society are also known for their multilingual nature. Literature is generally defined as a mirror of society and culture through the medium of language. There are many similar features being found in Indian literary tradition which have been there since thousands of years. Though Indian literature is written in the medium of various languages it is considered as one literature. The variety in culture, society and language which are contributing to the production Indian literature with its various aesthetic theories are not exception in this context. The history of Indian literary criticism goes back to the Vedic culture, Buddhist’s philosophy and Jainism.

Nagarjun is an ancient Indian philosopher who’s the theory of emptiness (sunyata) gives new way of interpretation to Indian literary criticism. His work Muiamadhyamakakarika (the basic verses on the middle) is divided into 27 chapters and 400 verses. A key concept to understanding the theory of emptiness is dependent origination. It is the insight that all existing entities have come into existence only through the process of mutual interaction and causation that provides the understanding of emptiness. If all were originated dependently then all lack an independent self. Therefore, all are empty. Emptiness means a lack of self because it is originated dependently, and the emptiness is
contingent existence. In short, the theory of emptiness transcends being and nonbeing and lacks self. (Tasty Aoki, 58) Nagarjun states two truths as the basis for teaching the doctrines by the Buddha, first- conventional truth (samvrtti-satya) and absolute truth (parmarth-satya). He also observed language as a medium of convincing the truth and clarifies that the function of language is only to inform, yet language and concepts must be utilized. Nagarjun’s theory of emptiness gives reader a new tool of interpretation and views about the language as medium of truth, and to inform the truth is a function of language.

Anekantvad is a major contribution by Jain philosophy to the field of Indian literary criticism. Though the concept Anekantvad and its principles have existence in religious philosophy, they have applicable relevance in literary field too. Jain Mahavir is usually accepted as the founder of the anekant doctrine. Literary, the word anekant means not one or more than one. Therefore the term Anekantvad means the theory of non-one-sidedness or to be more precise the theory of many sided nature of reality. The basic connotation is that reality is essentially anekantic (many sided) in character. Thus the doctrine of Anekantvad can be briefly described as acceptance of manifoldness of reality. (Alok Tandon, 105-106) The argument and counter argument made by the rival schools only leads to dogmatism in philosophy. But according to Anekantvad rivals proposition can be integrated together as they may all contains some element of truth. Thus, Anekantvad is a philosophy of synthesis as attempt to synthesize different ontological theories of ancient India. According to Tandon, there are two senses of Anekantvad; first, the term is used to denote Jain’s view of reality, the metaphysical
doctrine that reality is manifold and each reality consists of diverse forms and modes or innumerable aspects. Secondly, the term *Anekantvad* is also used to join philosophic method which allows for reconciliation, integration and synthesis of conflicting philosophic views. (Alok Tandon, 105-106)

As it has been stated earlier that the theory is a set of underling principles, or it is a bedrock or foundation of any practical criticism. Author/ Writer, Text/Form and Reader/Reception are some object on which literary theory contemplates for an evaluation, interpretation and value judgment of given work of literature. Indian literary criticism has a tradition of two thousand years. Earlier, it is called as ‘Sanskrit Tradition’ because many theoretical works of Indian literary criticism are written in Sanskrit, it has its roots in Vedas, and Upanishads to Dnyaneswar to 13\textsuperscript{th} century. In Sanskrit, the literary criticism is considered as *Kavya-Sastra* as Krishnaswami explains: *Sastra, a discipline that is well formulated and systematic, such a study include logic (nyaya), grammar (vyakran) the nature of meaning or semantics, in the modern sense (mimansa) and as a necessary prerequisite, an understanding of basic philosophical problems.* (Krishnaswami, 149)

The above description of *Sastra* indicates that Indian Poetics deals with language, meaning, form, logic that is justice and truth in a work of art. It has a base of aesthetic consideration as in any other system, there is a philosophical understanding regarding language, meaning and truth in any studies. Some of the following pages of the chapter deal with a brief survey of Indian literary theory.
Most of the philosophers of Indian literary criticism agree that Indian Literary Criticism begins at somewhere in 200 BC. Bharat is called as dominant theorist and rhetoricians in the period 200 BC to 200 AD. He is the first Indian personage who talks over drama and various aspects of the drama. His work *Natyashastra* has great importance in the Indian literary tradition. It is a kind of encyclopedia on dramaturgy, art of dance and music. *Natyashastra* is more concerned with poetry and non-performing arts.

*Natyashastra* is also known as a *Natyaaved* that is the fifth *Veda*; it is a classical manuscript on the theory and practice of Indian aesthetics. Bharat thinks on the theatre, music, dance, poetics and gesture which aim to give direction to performers, and enable them for the perfect performance. He gives a way to dramatist to write flawless dramas and to audience to enjoy the beautiful experiences of representation, which show the way to understand the ultimate truth and the main purpose of human life. *Natyashastra* deals with the four main topics, *acting, dance, music,* and *rasa.* Among these, *rasa* is at central position and the first three topics are medium of *rasa* and its creation. It expounds the principles of poetic forms and drama. Bharat gives extensive and progressive concepts about poetic art that his followers became confuse towards the formation of principles connected to dramaturgy. In the early part of the text Bharat gives the definition, causes and purpose of the drama, he also discusses on genre of literature that is *Kavyabhed* and the creation of poetry. In latter part of the text he expounded the rasa theory, plot, diction, merits and faults of the drama or poetry.
Bharata explained the *rasa theory* in chapter no. 6 and 7\textsuperscript{th} of the ‘*Natyashastra*’. While explaining the theory, he begins with the nature of human temperament, according to him “this is an innate or inborn desire of mankind to share pleasurable or painful experiences in literary works or any other works, of course a direct narration of such emotion does not become literature, *suggestivity* is the key of creative literature, when an experience is narrated, the person uses appropriate language and diction. It is imaginative and fanciful according to content. It may be in some form as poetry, prose, play etc. This expression in imaginative or fanciful manner is called literature.

When we read a good piece of literature we get pleasure as a reader or when we watch a play on the stage, we derive a certain kind of pleasure from the scenes enacted on the stage. Bharata defines the pleasure as ‘*Rasa*’. Prof. Ami Upadhay has explained the theory in his *The Indian Poetic*; he writes that ‘*rasa*’ develops from the blending of *vibhav, anubhav* and *vyabhichyari*. It manifests itself when *sthayibhav* of the reader is correlated with the following three aspects presented in a piece of creative literature.

1) *Vibhav* - Excitant
2) *Anubhav* - Ensuing response
3) *Vyabhichyari\textsuperscript{bhav}* - Transitory feeling

These three should be combined into one. When these three, transitory feeling, excitant and ensuing response are correlated with permanent emotions of spectator i.e. (*sahardya*) it is manifested, transformed, or say converted into poetic pleasure or ‘*rasa*’, the sentiment. Prof. Ami
Upadhay tries to explain the ‘rasa theory’ with an example as following; he takes an example of ‘Karuna Rasa’. The perceiver of a play, for example experiences the feeling of grief (Soka) as manifest in the performer. A number of vibhav are used in such cases such as death of some loved one, misfortunes, sufferings etc. They depend upon visaya, asraya and uddipanna. The ‘Sthayibhav’ of ‘Soka’ takes different visible forms depending on the nature of the experiencer. ‘Abhinaya’ indicates the sthayibhav. Bharata uses the word ‘nispatthi’ (rendering) of rasa through bhava in ‘Sahardya’. In the sentiment of ‘Soka’ (grief), there may be anubhav like mourning (vilap), weeping (rudana), shedding of tears etc. ‘Sattivikbhav’ would be indicated through tears, change of voice etc. In Abhinaya we find actions like weeping, paleness of face, change of voice, deep breathing, fainting, Immobility and loss of memory etc. Bharata’s rasa theory is considered as major contribution to Indian literary tradition.

Tholkappiyar is considered as the first author of Tamil grammar. His work Tholakappiyam is centering the descriptive linguistics of Tamil. Though the main bulk of tholakappiyam is the descriptive linguistic of Tamil, a small and significant part of it is devoted to the discussion of styles, meter, diction and poetic sentiments. Instead of this the most remarkable contribution of tholakappiyam is that it makes the distinction between the poetry dealing with the themes of the interiority of a poet and the poetry dealing with the themes of the external world. Tholkappiyar has used the two terms for this first, aham and second, puram. His views on diction and syntax are very vital for Tamil sentiment. According to him: “The words used in poetry are classified as
iyarcal, thiscol, thisaicccl and vadasol, of them, the iyarcol words are those which are used in conformity with the usage of Tamil and without change in their meanings. Thrisol words are of two kinds which are synonyms and homonyms. Thisaicccl or the dialectical words are those which are spoken with their meanings unchanged in the twelve division of Tamil land where correct Tamil is in use. The words of northern language i.e. Vadasol, became fit to be used in Tamil when they adopt the Tamil phonetics discarding their northern ones”. Tholkappiyar gives the four kinds of syntax in poetry as following: Niral nirai, sunnam, adimari and molimarru of them, niral nirai is the mode of which the words stand in group of verbs and nouns separately in such way as to join the predicates or governing words to the subject or the words governed in respective order. Sunnam is the mode in which two lines of eight sir (measured words) grammatically formed may split up and join in such a way as to express the proper meaning of poetry. Adimari is the mode in which the position of the lines may be altered without changing the place of the sirs and the lines may exchange places …….the meaning of ‘molimarru’ is changing the position of words to bring out the correct meaning of the stanza and placing them before and after as need be” (Devi, 16-17)

Tholkappiyar also focuses on the eight emotions which evolve out of play; he calls them ‘meyppadus’. These emotions are laughter, weeping, despised, and wonder, fear, fortitude, anger, and delight. In his rasa theory Bharata explained eight rasa which are very close to Tholkappiyar ‘meyppadus’.
Bhartrhari is one of the members of post-Panini tradition. The tradition is known for its contribution to Indian linguistic and its emergence of the modern Indian languages. Panini is already been universally recognized as a phenomenon in the history and development of linguistic and grammar. Bhartrhari’s vakyapdiya is the earliest scientific work on syntax. He expresses his views on the terms sphota and dhvani. The sphota is produced by union and discussion of speech organs like the vocal cards and others. Dhvani is a sound’ born of this sphota. The measure of the word does not change on whether the speech sound is short or long. He states that the subsequent sound, i.e. the modified speech sound, which arises out of the primary speech sounds, can be expanded or contracted in its form. (Devi. 24)

Bhartrhari develops Vakyapdiya on three fold doctrines of sphota which are related to alphabets, that is letters of phonemes, words and sentences. He describes sphota as a part less and indivisible and divides it into two types: pada-sphota which is identified as a word or a unit having particular meaning and vakya-sphota which is identified as a form of a sentences or an order of words having particular meaning. His further discussion on the sentence and its interpretation comes to conclusion that a sentence is sequence less, part less and not whole. It is an order of words conveying particular meaning without any former or following sentence or word, it is complete in itself.

Dandin is considered as one of the leading theorists of the 7th century. In his critique of Sanskrit poetics Edwin Gerow called Dandin as pioneer of Sanskrit literary theory. Dandin writes an excellent text
Kavyadarsha which brings very clearly the idea of alankara (figure of speech) and its various types. According to Dandin, alankara are those characteristics which render kavyas (poetry) attractive. These characteristics even today diversified as new, but the essentials of these divergent characteristics are indicated by the old masters. Dandin and his followers show number of alankara for ex. the realistic expression, smile, metaphor, light, reputation and hyperbole etc. Dandin defined the characteristic of epic poetry (sarg-bandh) i.e. maha-kavya. According to him the epic poetry should begin with blessing or a dedication or an indication of the content. It should have it source in the story told in itihas or other good (true) material. It has a great and generous person as the hero. (Devi. 26)

Udbhat and Waman are the followers of Dandin in 8th century, though they are less popular theorist, their contribution to alankarschool is very much important. Udbhat wrote popular book titled kavyalamkarshatra which is a source of many references to Anandvardhans dhavnyalankar. Udbhat also classifies the alankara into 41 types as the name suggests, it is a detail expression of various alankara by him. Waman is known as literary critic, he wrote kavyalankarsutra where he imposes his argument on the need of practice or manner or style for the true poetry. He designs his theory in a word: riti (manner, style, practice), according to him riti is a soul of poetry, and it needs proper order of special elevated words. His theory is also known as the riti-science. He describes all theories of alankara as the formula of composing true kavya.
In the 9th and 10th century, Anandvardhan, Kuntak, Dhananjay and Abhinavgupta attract more attention of the reader. In the tradition of Indian Poetics, the Dhvanyaloka of Anandvardhan (8th century) is as significant as Bharata’s Natyashastra. In Dhvanyaloka, he describes a concise and comprehensive account of the poetry and poetic style which refers to numerous views, scholars and poetic texts, mostly by the way of illustration. Anandvardhan purposes the Dhvani theory; according to him Dhvani means a suggestive quality of poetic language. His contemplates on the semantics of poetic language which turns the whole critical discussion to complex issues of linguistic structure in poetry. In his views, linguistic structure of poetry effects on the suggestive quality of language that distinguishes poetry from the ordinary use of language. The conventional word in that kind of poetry renders its secondary meaning and suggest the intended or implied meaning, that is designated by the learned as dhvani or suggestive poetry. (Devi, 31-40)

Kuntak is known as the originator of the Vakrokti School of Sanskrit literary theory. Historically he occupies a place between Anandvardhan and Abhinavgupta in 9th and 10th century. Kuntak belongs to the period when literary criticism in India was acquiring a great sophistication. The originality of Kuntak’s critical persuasion acquires a special place among his contemporaries. Kuntak elevates the concept Vakrokti (ability) to a full-fledged theory in his treatise Vakroktivism, which he writes for the purpose of making an assessment of kavya by him. Etymologically the word vakrokti consists of two parts vakra and ukti the first vakra which means crooked, indirect or unique and the second ukti means expression or speech. Thus the literary meaning of
vakrokti is crooked or indirect speech. He defines vakrokti as “vakrokti-raiva-vaidagdhybhngibhnti-uccayate.” (Devi, 46-55) That means, an utterance, characterized by the wit or ingenuity is vakrokti. In other words, vakrokti is a theory of poetry which perceives poetry essentially in terms of the language and its expression. It sees the poetic language as language of metaphor and suggestive communication.

Dhananjay is the first philosopher after Bharata who talks over the drama and dramaturgy. Dhananjay writes the Dasarupaka, since it discusses the ten types of drama during the period. Bharata, some seven century before him intended to discuss the ten types as stated in the Natyashastra (chapter 20, verses 1&2). Dhananjay accomplishes that plan by presenting an exhaustive catalogue of the drama, though he is more partial towards the natak-drama and prakaran-drama. He classifies drama according to subject-matter, hero and sentiment. He also declares the five elements of the plot as – bija (germ), bindu (expansion), pataka (episode), prakari (episodic incident) and kavya (the denouncement). He mentions that there are five stages of the action which is set on foot by those that strive after a result: arambha (beginning), ytna-pryatna (effort), praptsya (prospect of success), niyatapti (certainty of success) and phalagam-phalyoga (attainment of result). Dhananjay mentions the characteristic of a true hero, according to him; the hero should possess some qualities to prove him as a demandable figure. The hero should have the qualities such as liberal, clever, popular, intelligence, energy and full of wisdom. Dhananjay has discussed four types of hero as the light hearted (lalita), calm (shanta), exalted (udatta), or vehement (udhatta). (Devi, 41-45)
**Abhinavgupta** is regarded as a chief commentator on Bharata’s *Natyashastra*. Abhinavgupta makes two commentaries on Bharata’s *Natyashastra* entitled *Abhinavabharati* and *Natyvedavivrti*. In these work Abhinavgupta gives an extensive treatment to various theories of *rasa* including his own *theory of revelation* (*abhivyakti*). He also comments on the Bhatta Lollata’s *theory of enjoyment* and *rasa* (*rasa-bhuktivad*). He posits the concept of *shantrasa* and defends with logical rigor, which reflects his visionary poetics. He argues that, the eight *rasa* are like eight Gods, and the *shantrasa* is like their highest center, *Siva*. This determination on transcendence as the highest value in literary aesthetics also reflects his realization of the need to modify Bharata’s formulation to suit the changing cultural ethos. Abhinavgupta calls *shantrasa* as an equipoise and to understand its real nature we must follow the reading of *navarasā* (*nine rasa*) instead of *astau rasa* (*eight rasa*). He tries to make clear the misconception of *shantrasa* in connection with *Sama*, *vibhav* and *anubhav*. He also states that *shantrasa* is to be known as the center of all *rasa* which reflects in the form of supreme God with other eight Gods. *Shantrasa* is to be known as that which arises from a desire to secure the liberation of the self, which leads to knowledge of the truth, which is connected with the property of highest happiness. So Abhinavgupta declares that, *shantrasa* is the source of all *rasa*. (Devi, 61-73)

The *Bhaktirasamrtasindhu* of **Rupa Goswami** is a critical document on *bhakti-poetry*. It is composed during the first quarter of the sixteenth century; in this philosophical work He tries to explain the *rasa theory* in terms of *bhakti-poetry*. According to Goswami *bhakti* is the
highest rasa because it brings an aesthetic experience to the rasika (reader/audience) which is superior to bramhananda (the ultimate happiness). Goswami is interested in describing bhaktirasa in real life. Keshavadas is a major poet in the tradition of Hindi poetry. The various works ascribed to him; Kavypriya, Rasikpriya and Ramchandrica are considered as his pure works. He writes Rasikpriya significantly for the benefit of poetic conventions and aesthetic assumption. This book follows a certain methodology and discipline which has its roots in the bhakti tradition of poetry and philosophy. According to him all nayakas (Hero) are the forms of Krishna and all nayikas (Heroine) are the forms of radha. He also treats Sringara as an expression of love between Krishna and radha, a kind of cosmic affairs. In medieval Indian aesthetic the bhakti rasa is believed to be a new theatrical category of rasa theory. But Keshavadas explains that, it is not an additional rasa. According to him, bhakti-rasa is a category of literary convention, loaded with the metaphysics and folklore which overlaps with all other aesthetic sentiments. (Devi, 101-107)

Mirza Ghalib belongs to 19th century and he is recognized as Persian and Urdu poet of India. He comments on poets and their poetry through his letters to various personage of his contemporary period. Through his commentary he reveals the social establishment of literature and likely the qualities of poet to creativity and literature. The anguish of social life leads him to believe on the faith in poetry as a way of life, and poetry as an independent medium of manifestation on the stage of social anguish. (Devi, 134-136)
Rabindranath Tagore is the later 19th and early 20th century Indian poet and critic. He is the only Indian who receives the Noble Prize for literature (*Gitanjali*, 1913). He belongs to Indian literature in general and Bengali literature in particular. His educational philosophy had an integral link, with his *theory of personality*. He believes that, an art is created out of *surplus of emotions*. According to him, literature is a reflection of a poet or writer because it is created out of excessive emotions of the poet to which he called the *surplus of emotions*. Tagore comes close to contact with the villagers and expresses sympathy for their poverty and backwardness that becomes the key note of his later writing. Tagore introduces new prose and verse forms and the use of colloquial language into Bengali literature, thereby freeing it from the traditional models based on classical Sanskrit, his philosophy of creative writing regarded him as the outstanding creative artist of modern India. Tagore’s advocate’s the romanticism in use of poetic language and simplicity in subject of poetry; he places common human being as the center of his poetic philosophy. While accepting *Sanskrit Poetics*, he says that, in poetry poet should use words which have got their proper taste, which do not merely talk, but rise up pictures and sing.

Sri Aurobindo gives significant contribution to Indian literary tradition. His critical masterpiece, *Future Poetry* is resulted from his good literary background and his visionary mysticism. He does not derive the ideas either from the west or from the ancient India but are of his own creation. The ideas in his criticism represent the romantic mood in Indian literature of the early 20th century. His definition of poetry is pathway for new poet; according to him all poetry is an inspiration. The
prophetic or reveling power sees the substance, the inspiration perceives the right expression neither is manufactured nor is poetry really poesies or composition, nor even a creation, but rather a revelation of something that externally exist. He continues, that poetry written from the reasoning intellect is apt to be full of ingenious conceits, logic, argumentation, rhetorical terms, ornamental fancies, echoes learned and imitative rather that uplifted and transformed. This is what something called classical poetry. Sri Aurobindo also defines the assets of a good poet. He says that, the good poet must achieve four major faculties that are prophecy, inspiration, intuitive judgment and spontaneous reason. He also expresses his thought on the essence of poetry; a good poem is pleasant and melodies with a beautiful ideas which serves the aim of an aesthetic wish of imagination. A good poem tries to strive after a more accurate, flexible and satisfying expression that the rough method of ordinary speech care to compass. (Devi, 153-163).

**B. S. Mardhekar** is accredited as the most significant Marathi poet of the 20th century, and as one of the pioneer of Indian modernism. He states that, poetry deals in words of an emotional meaning. Intimate apprehension of the emotional meaning is a biological necessity. Without the prompt apprehension of such meanings and the quick and proper reaction to them, the sentient being will not able to maintain itself in the constant struggle for existence, nor succeed in perpetuating its species. He further examines the medium of poetry that is the words which has primarily two aspects: 1) sensational and 2) intentional. The sensational aspect is made possible by the phenomenon of sound a group of vowels and consonants. The intentional aspect is the soul justification
of the existence of that particular combination of vowels and consonants. The sensation or sound aspect of a word is symbolical of the intentional meaning have two aspects 1) cognitive and 2) affective or in other words: intellectual and emotional. Further he subdivides affective aspects into two categories of emotions: 1) pure emotion and 2) contingent emotion that is poetic. He believes that, there is no inherent necessity that a particular combination of sounds must to express the particular meaning. According to him the readers of poetry only hunt after emotional meaning and neglect towards musical side of it. (Devi, 164-176)

Gayatri Chakravarti Spivak is a significant contributor of Indian literary tradition. Though Gayatri Chakravarti Spivak is one of the most influential theorists in US, she is deeply engaged in concerns related to her third world identity. Her subaltern studies provide a new historiographical perspective. Antonio Gramsci has used the term Subaltern in his writing and the term underlies a subordinate position in terms of class, gender, cast, race and culture. But, it is Spivak who popularizes the term subaltern in her essay titled Can Subaltern Speak (1985). Subaltern means the colonized / oppressed subject whose voice is silenced or not listened. The term has a relevance to the study of third world countries especially to India and other south Asian Nations. Spivak studies are centered on the women as subaltern in modern society. According to Spivak, the subaltern (women) cannot speak. She further explains that it is impossible for us to recover the voice of subaltern and to establish her view point; she speaks of widow immolation in India on the plea of performing sati at the funeral fire of
the husband. Further Spivak insists on gendered subaltern that the women, who are doubly, oppressed both by *colonialism* and *patriarchy*. Today, literatures in English by the third world writers have gained acceptance among the Anglo-American intellectuals. It is in this sense; subaltern studies have acquired a new dimension. (Das, 145-152)

**Homi K. Bhabha** is an Indian immigrant postcolonial critic; he makes significant contribution to postcolonial studies. He is influenced by French thinkers and critic of 20th century named Foucault, Derrida and Lacan like his contemporaries. Bhabha expounds his theory in the book *Nation and Narration* (1991) and the *Location of Culture* (1994) in light of terms like *other, mimicry, hybridity* and *otherness*. In general postcolonial theory hinges upon the relationship between *colonizer* and *colonized* equally, but Bhabha talks more about *colonized* to whom he defines as other not as *colonizer*. The term *other* is highly ambiguous, but for Bhabha, it means the colonized subject, it is not about the *colonizer* (self) but about *colonized* (other). It has its roots in the western (colonizers) way of thinking, the tendency of considering themselves as *self* (*center*) and those which are not European (*eastern colonized*) as *other* (*not center*). His term *mimicry* underlines the gap between the codes of civility that presented by European and its imitation by the colonial and postcolonial period. *Hybridization* is continuing fusion of cultures; it is a kind of negotiation both political and cultural- between *colonizer* and the *colonized*. Homi K. Bhabha suggests that colonial authority is rendered *hybridity* and *ambivalent* in post-colonial period and his significance lies there, because the face opened for the colonized to subvert the colonizer discourse. Now the colonial text is being read in
the context of post-coloniality, and it is the contribution of Postcolonial Criticism. (Das, 369-374)

**Aijaz Ahmad** is a major critic in the area of Post-Colonial Theory. In his book *In Theory: Class, Nations, and Literatures* he speaks on the current streams of colonial literature in a post-colonial India in Marxists perspective. He makes an attempt to define *Indian literature* in the *glocal* (global+local) context. Ahmad, in his argument finds it difficult to define Third World Literature and still more difficult to define *Indian Literature* since India is a multilingual country and literature can’t be limited to the boundaries of the states created by the linguistic consideration. In other words he says, *Indian (national) Literature* has to be more than the sum of its regional constituent parts, if we are to speak of its unity, theoretically. (Aijaz Ahmad, 244) Though it is difficult to define *Indian Literature*, it is fundamental characteristic of Indian civilization that it has multiplicity of languages. Further, Ahmad talks on the existence of *Indian Literature*; according to him, it exists in its comment civilization, ethos of Indian people. There is another view that, what ultimately gives unity to a literature is not the language in which it is written but the entire cultured context in which it grows and develops. (Gupta, 21) He also goes on to emphasis an interdisciplinary approach to literature helps to understand *Indian Literature*. According to Ahmad, knowledge of different subjects and disciplines can be used utilized for the understanding and interpretation of literary text. He also laments for more and more translations of literary text from one regional literature into another or into English. That will give us a scope for reading *Indian Literature* as a whole and single unity. After all, which
gives identity to literature is not the language alone but *nationality* and *culture*. (Das, 390-391)

The above brief survey of Indian literary theories shows that Indians have produced a rich and significant literary criticism. Our critics in Sanskrit tradition have played very important role in formulating and development of some recognized literary theories. The theoretical work of Bharata, Abhinavgupta, Bhama, Panini, Bharatrhari, Dandin, Udbhat, Waman, Anandvardhan, Kuntak, Dhananjay, and Dnyaneswar are noteworthy for their theories and principles regarding the literature and criticism. *Kavyalankar*, *kavyalakshan*, *kriyakalp* and *kriyavidhi* are some important terms which proved to be the great contribution by Indian theorists. Indian scholars have studied minutely the theory of literature (*sahityavidya*) and the science of beauty (*alankarshastra*) which, in present, became the core literary criticism.

At present Indian literary criticism is facing profound crises of identity. Our colonial expression and look at self-way of thinking awarded about our literary criticism and tradition. Today Indian literary critics and philosophers are divided into groups. They have different disposition regarding insistence upon the purification on and review of (Sanskrit) native tradition of criticism. These various and conflicting tendencies have failed to play important role to upkeep the creative literature in Indian languages. There are number of other traditions in Indian literary studies but they are yet to find proper expression in a systematic manner.
Today the common charge being made against Indian literary studies is that it has not practical application. There are two reasons, probably lack of written record of practical application and oral commentary of Indian literary criticism. N. Krishnaswami answered the question as, “explication or criticism of literary text was done orally by great scholar as part of the oral tradition and such elucidation never got recorded”, this is one of the main reasons for not findings any practical or textual readings of the literary works in the Indian subcontinent. Secondly “the commentaries, like Abhinavgupta on Anandvardhans works. This is to be considered practical criticism in the Indian context”. (N Krishnaswami, 150)

Modern India has lost touch with the Sanskrit language and so with Sanskrit literature and criticism. There is a problem availability of good translation of the critical material, Krishnaswami says, unfortunately not much has been written or translated into English because those who know English have not shown much interest in the Indian critical traditions and others are not in a position to express their scholarship in English. (N Krishnaswami, 150-151) Indian must come over this tendency in order to make the world aware of the great Indian character in literary theory. Indians should not fall as victim to any foreign theories, but they can show their supreme ability with own trends, critical concepts and theories.
Western Critical Theory:

Introduction:

Plato is known as a famous disciple of Socrates. It is said that Plato began his life as a poet but very soon he distorted his literature and begins to take interest in philosophy and politics. He is the first philosopher to attract the attention as a literary critic and as a defender of truth in poetry at the cost of aesthetic beauty. His views about poetry are characterized as unfriendly to poets because of his bitter analysis of poetry and idealistic aesthetic theories. Plato states his views on literature in the works like Republic, Ion, and Phaedrus. In his views literature is twice removed from the true reality and therefore it is based on falsehood and illusion. His theory of ideas is related to his metaphysics and an idealistic philosophy. He considers poetry for life sake, he believes that only the ideas are true and real and all the things (objects) on the earth are merely imitation of them. Art is an earthly object or human creation and that is why art cannot deal with the truth. Art is a distorted image of reality and it is twice removed from reality. Further Plato makes objection on poetry that poetry is a misrepresentation of God and thus poet as revengeful, lustful, cruel; evil who makes a reader weak and emotional. In his ideal state Plato gives a place only to hymn of God, and denies other forms of arts. He believes in the doctrine of art for life’s sake and according to him poetry should have utility and practicability in real life.
Aristotle is a disciple of Plato. He writes the first major critical treatise in the fourth century BC named as Poetics. It is a landmark in the world literary criticism. Aristotle coins some new concept regarding the art and its interpretation as; Theory of imitation, Definition of tragedy, Plot and character, Historic truth and poetic truth, Concept of catharsis, Concept of tragic hero and Difference between epic and tragedy

At the very outset of the Poetics Aristotle explains the theory of mimesis. He thinks that an art is a mimesis or an imitation of real world. Mimesis is an imitative representation of real world in the art and literature. There are more meaning of mimesis as Copying, mimicry, expression are some other meaning. (Joseph Chandra, 5) It hints that art is a representation or imitation of human life which has proper medium, object and manner or mode of imitation or expression.

Aristotle discussed the nature of tragedy in detail. His definition of tragedy covers almost all the element of tragedy. He insists that tragedy is about character that revealed in action. He defines tragedy as a conflict between good and evil. Tragedy has cosmic implication and asks fundamentals and unanswerable question about the universe and the fate of human beings. (Joseph Chandra, 5) Aristotle defines the character as ethos in his poetics’. He renders that moral value should lies in the inner self and personality of character. There is another similar important aspect of the character – dianoia, the thought or intellectual element which contains in the coherent conduct etc. through which the ethos finds noticeable manifestation. Aristotle observes some qualities of the
character of a tragedy. He thinks that the character must be good, appropriate, consistently inspiring, and must be appropriate for representation of the action and class to which it belongs.

Aristotle concept of tragic hero has a significant place in his discourse of tragedy. Aristotle prescribes some criteria and qualities of a tragic hero that, a hero of tragedy should have the qualities like, good and faultless, appropriateness in judgment, he must represent the class which he belongs and real life like as a human being, his behavior, action, speech and emotion must be consistent with one another, the hero should be in possession of hamartia that is a tragic flaw or error in judgment, he must be subjected to reversal of fortune and he should travel from ignorance to the recognition and suffer/pain. Aristotle finds that the three unites are significant for the successful representation and arousing of catharsis effect of a tragedy. His emphasis is on the observation of the unities in the representations of a tragedy that is unity of actions, unity of time and unity of the place.

In his theory of imitation, Aristotle states that, all forms of art are imitation of reality or truth in the world. Further he explains that an art is not mere representation or imitation of reality but it has a function that to represent universal aspect or truth of human life. The poet not only depicts the reality but also depicts what should be there, means he can judge the situation and put it in front of the audience or reader. Aristotle gives a clear difference between truth in history and truth in poetry. Since history deals with particular occurrences the truth in history is particular truth and it cannot be universalized or made applicable for all
times, it is bound within period of time, the event and the historical personage. While the poetry expresses universal and permanent possibility of human nature. The truth in poetry is universal and it is timeless, it is for all and for all time, the poet has a *poetic license* to write poetry as per his best judgment of reality, he has right to use language as per his requirements and he can deal with the reality with his best ability of expression so that the poetry and the truth in that poetry becomes more sublime and universal.

Aristotle *Poetics* is considered as a fundamental contribution to history of literary criticism. It is a treasury of ideas of lasting value about poetry and its form. Some modern philosophers consider Aristotle is the first among systematic theorists and is an early exponent of the psychological criticism of drama.

**Longinus**, the classical critic writes a critical treatise on the great writing entitled as; *on the sublime* during the third century AC. Longinus introduces a very significant next step to his masters that is the concept of *sublimity* as the primary characteristic of great writings. He defines *sublimity as the echo of great soul.* He believes that, the aim of greatest poet and prose writers is to instruct and to delight but their greatness lies in something else that is sublimity in their writing. For Longinus, the sublime in literature is essentially the echo of a great soul, echo of a lofty mind and a product of great and noble mind. *Sublimity* is always a distinction and excellence in language. *Sublimity* is the note that rings from a great mind. *Sublimity* lies in intensity. *Sublimity* consists in a certain distinction and complete excellence in an expression, and it is
from this faculty, that, the greatest poets and prose writers gain their eminence and important fame. The effect of a lofty passage is not to convince the reason of a reader but to transport him out of himself. An admirable speech casts a spell overs us and eclipse that which merely aims at persuasion and pleasure. (S.C. Mundra, 105) Longinus *theory of sublime* (transport) states the taste of great literature is not instruction, delight or persuasion but to transport the reader to ecstasy caused by the irresistible power of sublime language. (Joseph Chandra, 8) Longinus moves further and adds one more function of great literature that is to move the reader to an ecstasy with Plato’s instruction and Aristotle delight.

**Horace** also belongs to the ancient classical tradition, and he is nearly two centuries after Aristotle and represents Roman Classical Criticism. His *Ars Poetica* or the *Art of Poetry* gives him recognition as a Roman critic. He insists on the types, form and qualities of an excellent poetry. According to him, an excellent poetry should have the following qualities like unity in thought, brevity, word order and it should avoid the *purple patches*. He suggests that, the new poets must keep the Greek models in their mind while writing poetry. The objective behind writing poetry must be to gain pleasure, sublimation and delight. They should keep learning for new inspirations.

**Literary Theories of Renaissance to the Victorian Era:**

In the history of literature and literary criticism, the renaissance period is also known as the period of Queen Elizabeth in England. It is known for its characteristic like the revival of learning in Europe, a
torrent of new ideas and an active interest in literature and literary criticism. They found the principal of reason and its supremacy as a tool of investigation in all fields and interpretation. At the end of 15th century Italian humanist rediscovered Aristotle’s *Poetics* which laid the foundation of English criticism of the time.

**Thomas More** writes a book called *Utopia* in 1516. In that he objects *tragicomedy* as form of literature, he thinks that, mingling of comic and tragic elements in a play would be in congruity (Joseph Chandra, 10) and a mere force and violation of the basic principle of modesty. He also distinguishes the drama as separate literary form of art as poetry. His contribution to dramatic theory is regarded as valuable in the renaissance literary school.

**Ascham** is a Cambridge scholar; he develops the dramatic theory on the foundation of classical dramatic principles of Aristotle and Horace. He makes comparison between comedy and tragedy and finds that comedy is inferior for its theme selection from ordinary life and tragedy is superior for its universal nature. In his view, the comedy not deals with the serious issues of life. The Tragedy, for him is superior to comedy, the supreme value of tragedy as compared with comedy lies in the fundamental questions that it raises about the universe and fate of human kind. Comedy restricts itself to travel issue in social interactions. (Joseph Chandra, 10) Further Ascham suggests some standards of tragedy; they are similar to Greek models like Sophocles and Euripides. Due to the influence of Aristotle and Horace his views about tragedy are more moralistic rather than aesthetic.
**Philip Sidney:** In 1579, Stephen Gosson a dramatist, friend of Sidney writes a book entitled as *School of Abuse* and dedicates it to Philip Sidney. In his discourse of poetry, he objects that, the poetry is school of abuse and considers Plato’s views on poetry as foundation for literary interpretation. On this juncture Sidney writes *an Apology for Poetry* where he defends the poetry from Gosson’s complaints. He traces the origin of poetry to argue that, it is a medium through which all knowledge springs. He defines poetry as *an art of imitation, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring fourth ……..speaking picture, with this end to teach and delight.* The function of poetry is not to give an insight into reality being every way superior. Sidney considers three kinds of poetry; they are sacred poetry, philosophical poetry and right poetry. (Ashok Thorat, 97) Sidney writes that, the poetry should not be ignored, because it is valuable source of instruction with moral purpose, further he claims that the aim of poetry is delightful teaching and called poetry as a heart ravishing knowledge. (Joseph Chandra, 10)

Sidney also ranges the poetry with philosophy, theology and history and puts poetry as superior to rest all as it combines the merits of all others. He finds that poetry teaches universal truth of philosophy, facts of history through particular examples. Poetry reveals perfect world because poet transmutes reality by exercising his creative faculty to make things better than nature (reality) has.

In conclusion, Sidney points out that the ultimate goal of all learning is to produce good human being and poetry has the ability and power to produce the good life through its delightful teaching.
Ben Jonson’s views on poetry can be found in his *Timber or Discoveries* which is published four years after his death. He appreciates poetry and painting for having the function of pleasure and instruction. He considers the painter and poet as the artists of natural gift. According to Jonson; poem composition is an art which involves three things that is *the thing done, the doing and the doer* (poem, poetry and poet). He says; poetry is a center of all arts; poetry has its origin in heaven, born first in the Greek world from there transmitted to other countries. A good poetry offers rules and guidance for living well and happily. (Ashok Thorat, 105) Further, Jonson suggests some qualities of good poet that, a good poet must possess the goodness of natural wit, s/he should develop consistently their natural power, they must know the skill of imitation, and must be a good reader, a good artist so that they would bring perfection in their writing.

Ben Jonson views on drama are equally important, though he follows the classical tradition as a critic; he finds it difficult to observe the unity of time and the role of chorus on his contemporary stage. He insists that the time has changed and it is difficult to playwright to observe the three unities in the play, he says; a tragedy or a play should have some essential qualifications or qualities like truth in argument, dignity of person, fullness of dialogue and tragedy should be teaching moral value. In his *theory of comedy* he insists on the need of greater realism in comedy to bring it in closer to truth with life. The value of comedy is measured by the depth of its roots in social reality. Jonson demands that action and language in comedy should such as men do use as for more realistic characters. The business of comedy is to portray
human follies not crimes. The four cardinal humors are cholera, melancholy, phlegm and blood that correspond to the four primeval elements. A normal personality has a natural balance of humors which determines the temperament of an individual. An abnormal mixture of these humors disturb the balance and led to excess of one quality or other which results in these follies or foibles with which a comedy should deal.

Dryden is a classist and recognized as a father of the English criticism. But he gains an identity as a critic and literary scholar only after the publication of his famous treatise on criticism: an Essay on Dramatic Poesy. Dryden talks mostly on the nature of poetry and drama. He is influenced by Aristotle’s views, significantly the theory of imitation of facts. He writes; that imitation pleases us because they present us the image more perfect than the life of any individual, and we get pleased to see all the scattered beauties of nature united by a happy chemistry without its deformities or faults. (Joseph Chandra, 13) While talking on the purpose of poetry he insists that poetry should delight and transport the reader and his states of mind. He considers poet as a creator who uses his creative ability to produce something new that is poetry.

Further he expresses his views on English drama; in his opinion Aristotle never asked for unity of place and classical dramatist have violated the unity of time, and also explains that sub plot should be woven in main plot because it can disturb the main thrust of the story, so unity of action may be excluded. He talks on comedy same as Aristotle, he defines the comedy as a representation of human life especially of an
inferior persons and low subject. Its purpose is to teach people through laughter. (Joseph Chandra, 14) To conclude, according Dryden, poetry is as a torch which enlightens our way of life; he suggests the study of classical literature and Shakespeare’s writing. Dryden is the first scholar who makes descriptive criticism with literary theory and point out the importance of literature in general.

**Alexander Pope** is not major scholar in the field of literary theory and criticism but his focus on art of criticism, its methodology, standards of criticism and function of criticism gives him recognition as a literary scholar. His *Essay on Criticism* is a comprehensive treatise on criticism as an art.

**Dr. Johnson** is considered as more active in literary criticism than literary theory. He is known as literary critics more as literary theorist, his critical work includes *Preface to Shakespeare, Lives of Poets, Rambler and Rassels*. Though he is more active in literary criticism, his *theory of literary Excellency* is a valuably contributes to literary theory. His theory of literary *Excellency* is similar to Longinus’s theory of sublime and beautiful. He considers that an excellent literary work is not for a particular age, it is timeless, and it is general and continued attribution of mankind. Dr. Johnson tries to fix the standards of good and timeless literature through the theory of *Excellency*. He considers poetry as an art of gathering pleasure with truth and imagination. In short Dr. Johnson views on poetry and criticism credit him a place in the line of literary critics and theorist; however his contribution rests on the proper insights he provides for the true judgment of literature.
Literary Theories of Romantic Period:

In the history of English literature and literary criticism, the romantic period is known as the most fruitful period of literary creation. During this period the principle *art for art’s sake* become a center of every walk of life, literature and criticism. The philosophy of romantics takes poetry to the nature and holds common humans life as a center.

**William Wordsworth** is known as greatest English romantic poet than as a critic. In 1798 he published an anthology in collaboration with ST Coleridge entitled as *Lyrical Ballade* which found a bitter criticism by neo-classical critic. In the preface Wordsworth formulates the aesthetic theory of poetry and explains the definition of poetry, characteristic of a good poetry, subject of poetry, language of poetry, function of poetry, qualification of a the romantic poet. William Wordsworth defines poetry as the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings. It takes its origin from the emotion recollected in tranquility. He suggests some steps of poetry composition like, observation, recollection, excitation of imagination and creation. A good poetry is a truthful representation of nature, which imagines common people’s life in simplest way. There is close connection between subject and emotion in poetry. Wordsworth insists on the life of rustic and common people as most suitable subject for the best poetry. Wordsworth also talks on the qualities of a good poet, a good poet should be gifted with sensibility, enthusiasm, and tenderness and he must be sincere to his ideas and thoughtful at deeper level of the emotion. The function of poetry is to yield the pleasure and convey a general and universal truth to the reader.
in a simple way. Poetry also educates the reader and world around their. As poetry is sensible it sensitise the reader, his or her emotion, sadness, joy and helps to discover the invisible truth of human life.

**S T Coleridge** is regarded as best poet in literature in English. He also acclaimed as a philosopher and critic. He works in collaboration with Wordsworth. In his philosophical and critical work *Biographia Literaria*, he puts views on the *creative process of poetry, the theory of imagination and fancy* and the *theory of aesthetic*. He writes with the primary aim that to establish the norms of writing instead of rules and standers of evaluation, interpretation and proper judgment that to pass on poetry.

His views on *fancy and imagination* are truly fundamental, which is a break to the traditional way of interpretation of these terms. Coleridge coins the basic difference between the *fancy and imagination* and places *imagination* as superior to the *fancy*.

Coleridge is influenced by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, especially, the influence is found on his (Coleridge) *theory of art*. Coleridge thinks that poetry is a more product of imagination which is a reflection of poet’s perception. He calls poetry as a process of counteraction between the poet’s mind and the object he observes. The creation of poetry is guided by the force of imagination which provides a space to the poet to diffuse, dissolve or dissipates the world, nature of object. Coleridge takes more interest in the creative process of poetry than the analysis or criticizing a poem. He calls poetry as the self-
revelation and an interactive process between mind and nature, which leads his views to metaphysical nature.

The **Victorian Criticism** is known for the battle between romantic school of criticism and neo-classical school of criticism of 18\textsuperscript{th} century. Victorian English literature is considered as a representation of Victorian life, society and culture. The historical and political events like, the rise of democracy, development of science, reform bill of 1832, free education to all, industrialization, entry of middle class society in power and the colonial expansion of the period creates its impression in every walk of human life. The period is of many more social and political contradiction. The literary production and philosophy of the period reflect these contradictions with different objectives. The function of criticism and nature of great poetry are the issues of debate in Victorian literary circles.

**Matthew Arnold** is a major English critic of 19\textsuperscript{th} century and a professor of poetry in Oxford University. Most of his writing is concerned with the writing of poetry and problems of criticism during his contemporary period. Carlyle and Ruskin as moralists in philosophy believe that the poetry is for life’s sake and poetry should teach moral value to human being. On other side Walter Peter and Oskar Wild believe in the Romantic philosophy that the poetry or art for art’s sake and it should teach to express oneself instead of moral value of life. Arnold stands between the two these discourses and states that poetry (art) is a powerful and happy application of ideas to life and to the question: how to live? He writes, without poetry, our science will appear
incomplete, and most of what now passes with us for religion and philosophy will be replaced by poetry. (Joseph Chandra, 20) Arnold insists on some theoretical predeterminations, according to him true subject of great poetry is an excellent action which appeals the human being. He defines great poetry as following; the grand style arises in poetry when a noble nature, poetically gifted treats with simplicity or with severity a serious subject. (Joseph Chandra, 21) Arnold’s famous critical work *Essay on Criticism* deals with the function of criticism and his famous *Touchstone method*. He argues that the critical faculty is secondary as compare to creative faculty because it is highest state of poets mind. Further he explains some qualities of a critic for the disinterested criticism, in his opinion a critic must be competent, having a true and fresh knowledge of Greek, Roman, Present and Comparative literature as well. Arnold suggests the *touchstone method* for a true and promoting judgment of literature. Arnold finds the work of great masters of literature as standards to apply them as criteria of great literature.

The next Victorian critic Walter Peter advocates the romantic principle that *art for art’s sake* and considers that the purpose of art is to give delight to the reader. He writes an important critical work in 1873 entitled as *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, where he discusses the *Aestheticism* in 19th century. He insists on the form of art because he thinks that, it is central and significant element in the process of yielding poetic delight. His next work deals with the theory, style, composition and prose writing. According to him, writing good prose is a fine art, the writer has to possess three elements to develop a grand style of writing: diction, design and personality. (Joseph Chandra, 24)
**Russian Formalism** emerged as a movement of literary theory and criticism in former Soviet Union during 1920s. The movement is also called as the Prague Linguistic Circle. Roman Jacobson’s and Viktor Shklovsky are leading founder philosopher of the movement. Jacobson’s contribution to formalism is more like a linguistic philosopher while Viktor shklovsky is interested in literary interpretation.

The main thrust of formalist theory is to investigate that a language plays the role in literature and how a literary text is a part of a literary tradition. The language is focused for the first time in the history of literary criticism by the formalists. They think that, language is a center of all kinds of literature and literature is specialized mode of a language. Formalists insist on literariness in the text instead of text as literature. According to them literature keeps certain elements or linguistic principles that gives literature specificity. The Russian formalists try to investigate the elements under the name of literariness. **Viktor Shklovsky**’s views are more literary than Jacobson, he points out the difference between *poetical language* and *practical language*. He argues that, the poetical language is more powerful on the other hand practical language is not to make extrinsic references but to draw attention to its own formal features especially to the interrelationship between linguistic signs themselves. He believes that a new form produces a new content and the content is conditioned by form. Different forms have different meanings. (Joseph Chandra, 27) **Mukorvsky** views the literature as a system of signs, depends upon the contrast or other sign. He says poetic language is self-directed and self-referential which
calls the attention of reader to itself, so the poetic language is autonomous. Formalists deny that, the literature is a reflection of author’s life, or a representation of history or culture. They believe that, the literature is purely linguistic phenomenon. Formalists apply the term defamiliarisation and argue that practical language is automatic and familiar while the language of poetry is an artistic and unfamiliar. Literariness in literature is defamiliarisation of language in all genres of literature. Further, Shklovsky states that, the purpose of art is to unfamiliar the object and to make it strange to perception. Art removes object from automatism of perception. It is to make us see the strange aspects in the familiar and the unusual in the ordinary things of life through the technique of defamiliarisation. (Joseph Chandra, 29) The contribution of the formalist lies in its emphasis on literariness in literature. They give a surface to deconstruction and reader response critics who developed their argument and language of work of art. They also bring out traditional literary studies from the traditional boundaries of images and ideas and explain that literature is different from science because literature deals with universal and science with particulars.

**New Criticism** developed in America during 1920s as a literary movement. New Criticism is a reaction to the traditional, humanist, moralist and biographical criticism. Traditional critics talk more about the author and new critics insist more on a text as a form of art. The new critics advocates close reading for detailed analysis of poetry and show little interest in the mind and personality of the poet, sources, and history of ideas, political and social implication. (Cuddon, 544) The new critics oppose the established historical context of literature and role of history
in interpretation of a work of art. A criticism should focus on the poem itself not on the author or reader of the poem. The role of critic is to assist the reader for better comprehension. New critics suggest the method of *close reading* of a text for better comprehension and experience. They deny any reference of author’s life, his time and intention while evaluating a text. The complete rejection of any relation to other facts of a text and a complete isolation of literature by new critics cause too many objection in further time. In his essay entitled *Tradition and Individual Talent* T S Eliot redefines the term *tradition* and explains that traditions are important because they possesses historical sense and involve a perception of past and present. Tradition compiles a poet to write not only about his generation but from past to future also. In his *theory of impersonality* he attacks the old opinions that poetry is reflection of personality and recollection of personal emotions. Further he explains the terms like *objective correlation* and *dissociation of sensibility* which is considered as his significant contribution. In *objective correlative* he insists on a relation of the concrete object for the effective expression of emotion and evokes the same emotion in the reader. While studying Victorian poetry he finds that, there is no association between thought and feelings of Victorian poet. According to him poem is a recreation of the thought through feelings and therefore a poet should create a unification of sensibility. In his another essay *Function of Criticism* he defines criticism as a scientific enquiry of a literary text to understand it in true nature. Criticism is impersonal and disinterested practice of a critic through which he evaluates and
interprets a work of art. A critic should establish the standards of true
taste and excellence.

I A Richards is very well-known critic in the field of practical
criticism, he is also known as one of the new critics. He writes
*Principles of Criticism* (1924) and *Practical Criticism* (1929), the most
influential critical books on criticism in the early 20th century. He
explains the nature of literature in a psychological perspective and says,
human mind is a system of impulses and an impulse is a response of
human mind to the stimulus. Therefore the poetry which organizes the
impulses of mind and creates a state of poetry in the mind of the reader
is a greater poetry. He makes distinctions between the modes of
language use, which is always referential and emotive language as a best
medium for poetry. In his practical criticism he considers the criticism
as a science and scientific activity. He says an art must be analyzed by
the process that has gone into its making.

F R Leavis is an important critic of 20th century. His quarterly
review *Scrutiny* (1932-53) contains some close reading of his time. In
his view, literary criticism is an intellectual and educative process
through which human being and culture get inspired. He argues that the
literary critic should be authentic to his profession and he should
interpret the best representatives of his time for the advantage of the
reader. According to Leavis the foundation of criticism is a moral
approach and not a mere entertainment only………it has some moral,
social, and cultural expectation from the artist and critic for the good of
readers. (Joseph Chandra, 37) Literary criticism for Leavis focuses on
the human consciousness, so, it must discuss the artist moral value and sensibility of artist’s age. To conclude, FR Leavis establishes the important connection between art and human consciousness and similarly criticism and human culture on the moral and sensible background.

American New Criticism becomes famous in the decade of 1940s in America under the leadership of John Crowe Ransom and other. They give new anti-historical approach of criticism and bitterly attack on the traditional historical criticism. They argue that study of literature does not mean to study history, biography or social background of an author or the text, which is almost anything not the literary work itself. They consider poem as a sublime composition of meaning and it is timeless and so that one should see it as a separate part not with any relation or authors intentions. In the opinion of Wimsatt, relating the meaning of poem to poet’s intention is an intentional fallacy, on the other hand reader’s emotional response to the poem is an affective fallacy. Further he says that criticism of a poem should be free from these kinds of boundaries because it is an artistic object possessing value in itself. Ransom insists that the criticism of a poem must be precise and systematic and not as historical criticism. Poetry consist structure and texture in a beautiful manner and a critic should interpret the poem through the complexities and particularities of the local texture as it proceeds that the structure is made true meaningful and true poetic. (Joseph Chandra, 39) Robert Penn Warren’s views about poetry and criticism are notable; he denies the historical or traditional way of writing and interpretation of poetry. He emphasizes on the importance
Irony in poetry and argues that a great poetry must deal with the wit and irony, because it modify and comment on the surface meaning. Allen Tate a leading advocate of the school, he coins the term tension which designates the totality of meaning in the poem. He derives it from the logical concepts like extension and intention by removing the prefix. Extension means the literal meaning and intention means the metaphorical meaning. The simultaneous co-existence of these sets of meaning constitutes tension. It may also refer to conflict structure. For ex. the counterpoint between rhythms, meter of a poem and speech rhythms; or between the concrete and abstract. (Cudmon, 904) Cleanth Brooks is a key figure in the tradition of American new criticism. His critical contribution the Well-Wrought Urn (1947) and Modern Poetry and the Tradition focus on the paradox and ambiguity. The term paradox is to identification of special character of the literary language. He argues for the centrality of ambiguity and paradox as a way of understanding poetry, metaphor is the essence of poetry as it links the concrete with the abstract and universal elements in it. It differentiates poetry from the language of science. (Joseph Chandra, 42) In his next essay the Language of Paradox he discusses an appropriate and inevitable language for poetry by using paradox and irony. According to him irony also plays similar role in poetry as paradox.

Structuralism is an interdisciplinary school of criticism and it origins from the theory of language structure of Ferdinand de Saussure. The advocates of structuralism use linguistic principles as the tool of interpretation of a textbook and its underlying system. David lodge defines structuralism as, a movement in what continental
Europeans call the human sciences which sought to explain and understand cultural phenomena as manifestations of underlying system of signification, of which the exemplary model is verbal language itself, especially as elucidated by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. (Joseph Chandra, 46) Structuralism is concerned with language not only speech and writing but also sign and signification. They consider all cultural, social conventions and codes of interactions (signals, clothes, body language) as the means of transmission of information to each other among human being. In the theory of structuralism everything is the product of a system of signification or code. The relationship between the elements of code gives it signification. Codes are arbitrary and without them we cannot apprehend the reality. As far as literature and criticism are concerned, structuralism challenges the long standing belief that a work of literature reflects a given reality; a literary text is rather constituted at other conventions and texts. (Cuddon, 869)

In 1905 Saussure writes *Course In General Linguistic* in which he makes important contribution to the structural theory. He defines language is a system of sign and the component of the sign system can understand only in relation to each other. The sign is divided into two parts the *signifier* and *signified*. Further he differentiates between *langue* as representing language as a whole and *parole* refers to our individual utterances or speech acts. Saussure studies language in other dimensions like the *synchronic dimension* which denotes the study of language as a system at a given time and *diachronic dimension* which is a study of language change, growth and development throughout the history. Saussure also makes the distinction between *signifier* which means a
sound pattern of the word and *signified* that is concept of meaning of the word used as a signifier by user.

**Claude-Levi-Strauss** finds the linguistic model very useful for inspecting the different systems of habits, customs and rituals essential in different cultures. According him cultural system works like language system. Further he analyzes the cultural phenomena including mythology, kinship, religious rites, games, food habits and argues that these structures in the phenomena from the *deep grammar* of society which makes in the minds and activates in us reflexively.

Structuralism as an approach in literary theory tries to investigate the narrative by examining the underlying permanent structure. Structuralists suppose that language and literature are structures. They state that novelty value of a literary text can lie only in new structures rather than in specifics of character development and voice in which that structure is expressed. (Joseph Chandra, 49) In structuralist ideology, a text cannot be understood in isolation, because it has meanings only in relationship to other text. They are interested into find out the common – fundamental factors of a text with other text rather than text as unique self. The structuralist critics deny the relation of a literary text with socio-cultural factors and literary history. Structuralism faces many reactions like, it rejects the concept of human freedom and choice, and it is highly analytical and not evaluative in practice. It is also criticized for its anti-humanist and anti-realist way of interpretation.

**Post-Structuralism: Jacques Derrida**, the French philosopher delivered lecture in the conference at John Hopkins University in 1966,
which is considered as a manifesto against the Structuralism. Poststructuralists criticize the structuralism and challenges, interrogates, and undermines its principles, views and method of evaluation of art. Post-Structuralism is an umbrella term that contains several approaches to literary criticism. It highlights some major type with a unique focus as different areas of investigation. Derrida, the Yale School, Harold Bloom, Hillis Miller, Paul de Man and Geoffrey Hartman focus on the text and textuality. Foucault and Bakhtin focus on society where Jacques Lacan and Kristeva focus on the mind. (Joseph Chandra, 56) Deconstruction cannot be defined in any comprehensive definition. It is a critical faculty of method of reading and interpretation that is applied to literature philosophy, law etc.

It is a theory of language and method of reading that seeks to dismantle, destroy and subvert any notion that a text or signifying system has any boundaries, margins, coherence, unity, determinate meaning, truth or identity. Deconstructing is to questioning of all kinds text and sowing that they are based on methods and systems which officially constructed and have no absolute truth. Deconstruction seeks to expose and then subvert various binary appositions that undergird our dominant way of thinking. Deconstructing is to undo something, not destroy but destabilize constantly. It is an attempt to open any text to a range of meanings and interpretations. Its method is usually to take binary opposition within a text, the rigidity defined pairs of oppositions like good/evil or male/female and show that they are not as clear cut or as stable as it first seems, that the two opposed concepts are in fact fluid, and to use this new found ambiguity to show that the text meaning is
also unstable and these violent hierarchies of binary oppositions that dominate the philosophical tradition and all our thinking are eventually challenged. The meaning of a text depends on this contradiction. The deconstructionist occurs during such a reading is difference. The word is derived from the French verb deferrer, which means both to differ and to defer. There is only movement and delay from one signifier to another signifier. As sign differ from other sign and thing is defined in relation to what it is not for, e.g. west is defined by its difference from east and civilized is contrasted terms of savage, etc. therefore meaning is always perpetually deferred so that the final point of stable meaning and ultimate knowledge is never reached in any signifying system. A movement of unstably or Aporia springs from the inherent contradiction and tensions found in any text.

Some critics charge deconstruction as a form of nihilism, non-philosophical, pseudo-philosophy and dismiss it as charlatanism. Noam Chomsky accuses Derrida, for acting as “an elite power structure for the well-educated through difficult writhing”. And according to Jeffery Nelson, it is dead in literature today.

**New-Historicism** emerged in the 1980s as one of the major literary theories. It is also referred as cultural poetics. New Historicism is an ideology which looks at literary form by new perspective. It is better to understand New Historicism as opposite to Old Historicism which considers history as a record of impersonal events and incidents. The Old Historicism views history as a stable, linear and recoverable narrative of fact. They also consider literature as a reflection or a product
of the particular historical world, a literary text has its roots in its past. In short Old Historicism tries to know about certain historical aspect of a text, its date of publication, its author and the background on which the text is produced, it also tries to seek the history of the author and to understand how a historical situation produced a particular literary text. New-Historicism looks at a literary text from the new perspective; the word new in New-Historicism suggests its opposition to Old Historicism. In fact New Historicism is influenced by French philosophical historian Michel Foucault. He considers history in terms of power as complex of forces that produce what happens and not simply as a tool of repression. He coins a new term, discourse which means as language practice, language employed in social context and language used by various segments of society for the purpose of power relationship between people. In New-Historicism, history is considered as co-text and historical document of the same period in which the literary text were produced. New-Historicist focus on the state power, patriarchal structures and colonization for interpretation a particular narrative. In short, it is a method of critical interpretation and sees power relation as important context for all kinds of text. They consider text as a space where power relations are made visible.

**Cultural Materialism** became popular in 1985, under the philosophical endeavor of Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield as a British form of contemporary Historical Theory. Cultural materialism suggests that there should not be historical or sociological blindness in the interpretation of a literary text. They insist that the de-historicized study of literatures ignores the recovery of history that relates the play to
such phenomena as enclosures and the oppression of the rural poor, state power and resistance to it. Cultural Materialist makes no distinction between high culture of the elite groups and the low or popular culture of the masses. It is heavily influenced by the ideas of the British Marxist critic Raymond Williams. His term *structures of feelings* is equivalent to Foucault’s discourse and is defined as meanings and values as they are lived and felt. Cultural Materialism is an optimistic for resistance and considers literature as a source of oppositional values with a potential for social change, it uses the past to read the present and thus throws more light on the politics of our own society in terms of what we focus on or suppress of the past. (Joseph Chandra, 76-77) Cultural Materialism has very little to do with criticism except using it in political battles on the current teaching of literature. For cultural materialist literature is either emancipated from social oppression or is collusion with power.

**Hermeneutics** origins in the Greek word *hermeneuin* (verb), which means to interpret. Friedrich Schleiermacher, Martin Heidegger, Hans George Gadmer and Paul Ricoeur are some of the major philosophers of hermeneutics.

**Schleiermacher** is considered as the father of the modern hermeneutics. He influences variety of hermeneutics branches like biblical, literary, philosophical and juridical hermeneutic by establishing a general hermeneutic methodology. According Schleiermacher hermeneutics is a study of understanding of understanding itself. It is not limited only to the interpretation of a text but it can be applied to ways of life. The function of hermeneutics is to discover the meaning and it aims
to understanding. In literary hermeneutic Schleiermacher’s *theory of understanding* is important it focuses on the reconstruction or recreation of the authors intended meanings. He says that, the reproduction or reconstruction of meaning is basic of *hermeneutic circle* which he divides into two basic elements, the *grammatical* and *psychological*.

The German philosopher **Wilhelm Dithery** imports the term *hermeneutic* from theological studies to the realm of philosophy in order to define more methods of *geisteswissenschaften* or *science of human spirit* as opposed to the scientific method of the natural sciences. He reviews the term *geistesgeschichte* and concerns with essential meaning and essence, and thus with understanding. His method has profound and lasting influence on scholarly interpretation; it is partly through his thinking that hermeneutic interpretation is developed in literary and critical theory. In this field it relates to a general theory of interpretation to methods, procedures and principals involved in extracting meaning from the text. It has particular relevance to a reader’s involvement in the creation of meaning. A text may have totally different meanings for different readers at different times. This is what readers bring to a text (knowledge, assumption, cultural background, experience and insight) affects their interpretations. A reader is in a position to create the meaning of a text. (Cuddon, 376)

**Werner J Jeanrond** classifies *hermeneutics* into two types: *Philosophical* hermeneutics (Macro) and *literal, theological hermeneutic* (micro). Philosophical hermeneutics is interested in the study of principles and methods of hermeneutics, on the other hand literary or
theological hermeneutic is interested in the interpretation of actual literary work, in that way it has practical orientation, because it deals with an actual human activity.

In his argument Gadmer writes that, hermeneutics deals with the understanding of the fundamental fact of our existence in the world. He considers art as revelations of life or the unveiling of truth in the other. He claims that art is mode of experiencing reality. We cannot avoid an engagement with literature as it is a legitimate source of knowledge, for Gadmer, understanding the world as well as a literary text is always from a given Horizon. It means a particular perspective person to person. Understanding is always horizontal and this horizon even in a particular person may change over the years. Therefore horizon is not fixed and static, it is fluid and dynamic. Gadmer concept of historical consciousness and the fusion of horizons become the slandered vocabulary of modern hermeneutics. Meaning and consciousness are affected by history........ We belong to history and its effects before we even begin to analyze them. Further he considers a language as a basic mode of operation of our being in the world. He uses the term presupposition or prejudice to refer to this pre-understanding that all of us have when we use encounter reality or a work of art. It is impossible for a reader to approach a literary text with an empty mind or as a clean slate. Another unique contribution of Gadmer is fusion of horizons and Distancation. The fusion of horizons makes reader possible a revision of what is analyzed or encountered. Distancation is the effect of being made distant from the producer of a text and the cultural conditions under which he or she writes. In literary hermeneutic, existential
appropriation of a text is important. Reading a literary text is not merely an intellectual activity as what is important is how much of the given text is personalized and assimilated by the reader. Paul Ricoeur defines *hermeneutics* as the *theory of the operation of understanding the texts.* (Joseph Chandra, 85-87)

For to understand a text is to understand oneself before understanding the text. The process of understanding does not happen in a vacuum, absence of social, historical, political and cultural context. To understand oneself and existence of oneself in the world is chief aim of *hermeneutics.* To conclude, *hermeneutics* brings the process of understanding at center of literary interpretation. They also call the importance of culture, history, political context in the determination of the *horizons* of a reader. They insist that, meaning is the aim of literary interpretation and understanding of the meaning is a way of truth (self-understanding).

**Reader Response Criticism** is a group of critics and philosopher in modern literary criticism who insists to know and understand the literature. It insists the role of reader in understanding, creating the meaning and experience of a text, their focus is on the reader as an individual and a reader belongs to particular categories, such as gender, nationality, ethnicity, religion, class, age etc. and their response to the literary work. Reader response criticism aims to explain the diversity and divergence of readers and their response to literary work. It also aims to study how the audiences or readers response to literary work. The theorist of Reader Response Criticism considers reader as an active
agent in the meaning creation of a text; readers complete the text and bring it to the real existence. They view literature as performing art, where every reader performs a text-related performance. Stanley Fish’s critical work Surprised by Sin (1967) is considered as true beginning of contemporary reader response criticism. In his work he tries to answer some questions to reader oriented theories, who is the reader, types of reader, the standards of response of reader to the literary work and the standards of true judgment? He coins the term interpretative community and puts multiple opinions in the direction. The notion of interpretative community institutionalizes the reader in the form of a group. Wolfgang Iser is German scholar who contributes the school importantly. He coins the term like implied reader and actual reader and makes distinction between them. Iser tries to show how texts set up certain requirement for the reader. According to him, the words on the pages (the text) are but one half of the perpetual dynamic; the text is an object without perceiving subject and the reader is guided to fill in the gaps. Iser’s notion of reading is gap filling and gap filling is affected by the reader’s movement through the text. In Iser’s view, reading is a dynamic tension between the readers’ expectations and the schematic instruction of the text for meaning production. (N. Krishnaswami, 68) Iser’s actual reader do not participates in the process of gap filling but implied reader is an active reader who is also invited by the author to fill the gap and create the meaning of the text. Literary competency is a notion that reader response theorist use. It dents that a reader should deal with certain / different ungrammaticalities to understand and disclose the higher level meaning of a text. Hans Robert Jauss, an eminent theorist of 20th
century has given new direction to the Reader Response Criticism through his Reception aesthetic. His “Towards an Aesthetic of Reception” (1982) is a compromise between Formalism which neglected History and Socialism which marginalized the text. In his text Hans Robert Jauss holds the place of compromiser; he does not admire the Socialism and not take the side of Formalist view. He explains on ‘an act of reading’ instead of ‘individual reception’, according to him; reading happens in particular situation, the reader does not percept the meaning of the text as same when text was published. Jauss argues that a reader uses different criteria at different periods, which he calls ‘Horizon and Expectation’, to judge the nature of literariness in a text or genre to which it belongs. What appeals to our generation at given period may not interest reader at some other periods; according to him ‘no work is universal’. A literary work is not an object which stands by itself and which offers a same face to each reader in each period or its timeless essence. This suggests that Reception Theory defines literature as the process of how the reader and the text interact with each other, and it was a revolutionary way of looking at the history of literature and literary criticism. Jauss approaches the notions of hermeneutics with great emphasis on the importance of history and incorporates the philosophical hermeneutics of Hans-Gadmer. Jauss argues that “literary hermeneutics plays the role in the concretization of the meaning of literary works, which develops historically within a framework of a certain ‘logic’ creating and transforming ‘the aesthetic cannon’”. (Jauss, 147) The criteria help to constitute reader’s judgments of, say, a poem in a trans-subjective way, Horizons of expectation change. The poetry of
one age is judged, valued and interpreted by its contemporaries, but the views of the age do not necessarily establish the meaning and value of the poetry definitively. Neither meaning nor value is permanently fixed, because the Horizon of Expectation of each generation will change. Here Jauss makes a connection between literary and general history; this considered to be an important contribution to literary theory. Jauss argues that the task of literary history is “completed when literary production is not only represented synchronically and diachronically in the succession of its systems, but also seen as ‘special history’ in its own unique relationship to ‘general history.’” (Jauss, 39) Jauss explains that the horizon of expectations is formed through the reader’s life experience, customs and understanding of the world, which have an effect on the reader’s social behavior. In this sense, the notion of history becomes fundamental to the horizon of expectations, and this is what differentiates Jauss’ approach to Reception Theory from one of Iser. Jauss also points out that the horizon of expectations is a crucial element in connecting literature and society. Jauss argues, “The social function of literature manifests itself in its genuine possibility only where the literary experience of the reader enters into the horizon of expectation.” (Jauss, 39)

To conclude, reader response critics bring major part of creation and interpretation of literary work in light. They also try to reveal some aspect of meaning creation, role of reader, types of reader, reading strategies and author-text-reader relationship. For the first time in the field of literary history and theory, this school of criticism holds the reader at center of meaning process.
Archetypal Critical Theory (criticism) focuses on recurring myths and archetypes in literary work, for ex. symbols, images and character types. It also focuses on some (fundamental) patterns which are practiced in all kinds of writing. Archetypal criticism is referred first when Maud Bodkin published Archetypal Patterns in Poetry. During the 1950s the school raises to popular form of critical theory, especially in the work of Northrop Frye, the Canadian literary critic. He tries to formulate the theory of myth based on the works of James Frazer and C G Jung. Myth represents the belief of a specific cultural group, and they are narrative about the supernatural elements.

Myth criticism and archetypal criticism are closely related to each other, but they are not totally similar. The myth critics seek to uncover the mythic structures and themes of a text and archetypal critics aim to identify cross-cultural images, story patterns, images archetypes in a given text. C G Jung is an important contributor of the school, in his perspectives, myths represent of deepest recess of the human psyche: the world of the archetypes. Jung coins the new terms such as personal and collective unconsciousness and distinguishes them. Collective unconsciousness is the unconsciousness of people which includes common thought, feelings and instincts and memories, he also defines it as a shared part of the unconsciousness. Further he tries to explain, primordial images as it originates from the initial stage of humanity and have been part of the collective unconscious ever since. It is through primordial images that the universal archetypes are experienced, and more importantly, that the unconsciousness is revealed. As for Jung, Frye is uninterested about the collective unconscious on the ground of
feeling it is unnecessary. Since the *unconsciousness* is unknowable it cannot be studied. The origin of archetype is also of no concerns to Frye, instead the function and effect of archetypes is his interest.

**Psychoanalytic Literary Theory** is type of literary criticism is based on psychological principles of human being and their employment in the interpretation of literary work. The psychoanalytic theorists believe that a literary text is a representation of secret unconscious desires and anxieties that a literary work is a manifestation of the author’s self-neuroses. Psychoanalytic criticism is originated in the studies of **Sigmund Freud**, an Austrian psychoanalyst. He established the method and techniques for psychoanalysis of an object or subject. The language and theory he develops as a model of psychoanalytic criticism are directly or indirectly are contacted to the nature of human mind, those conscious and unconscious states of human mind. Further he suggests the three part model of the human psyche:

The *ego*, which is rational logical mostly conscious part of mind, regulates *id* and comes to standings with *super ego* and is driven by reality principles. The *super ego* which is an internal censor but is derived from collective control and drives to fulfill demands of morality principle and the *id* which is irrational, instinctual, vital unconscious contains our secrets desires, darkest wishes, intense fears and drives to fulfill wishes of pleasure principle.

The *ego* is said to be the battleground for forces of the *superego* and the *id*. He also coins some terms related to psychic process as *Oedipus complex* (affection of parent of the opposite sex), *repression*
(forgetting or ignoring of unresolved conflicts), *dream work* (the process by which real events or desires are transformed into dream images), *displacement* (the transfer of an emotion from the object to another object), *condensation* refers to the representation of two or more ideas, memories, feelings by one word or image.

**Jacques Lacan** is a major contributor to the theory, his meditations on language and language related disputes, he indulgences *language* as the unconscious, and it conditions our conscious and unconscious mind, it also constructs our sense of self. He opinions dreams as a form of discourse and suggests that the semiotic concept of *metaphor* and *metonym* are useful for understanding dreams.

Psychoanalytic critics see the text as an expression of the secret, repressed emotions and inner self of its author, explaining the textual features as symbolic of psychological struggles in the write. They treat the text like a dream, looking carefully at images to uncover latent content, expression of repressed fears or desires either on the part of author or characters. The Lacanian critics pay attention to unconscious motives and feelings, but they do not look for those of the author or character, instead they search out those of the text itself. The undercurrents of meaning that lie beneath the *‘conscious’* of the text are important for them. The psychoanalytical criticism should not be confused a psycho-therapy. This type of criticism is one of many different forms of study that use psychoanalytic concepts to understand a particular subject matter.
Feminist Literary School is an important school of literary criticism that begins to resist the tradition of patriarchy, the ideology or belief system that sees the dominance and superiority of men over women in both private and public context. Simon de Beauvoir’s text *The Second Sex* lays theoretical foundation of this school of criticism. (B K Das, 92) At the beginning, there is the *female* who is the biological product of nature or being, the term does not imply a political or feminist position; it implies a gender difference. Next appears the *feminine* which is a combination of culturally and socially mediated person. And lastly, there is *feminist*, who heavily grounded in ideology, determined at understanding male supremacy. Based on the various discussions, one can approximately place the feminist movement in four basic categories. First, the *Bourgeois feminism* of Virginia Woolf, she asserts that the constructed social condition and financial dependence of women is responsible for their plight. She believes that if the women are given the financial sources and freedom that available to the men, they will be as productive. Second, *Social Feminism* of Simon de Beauvoir calls for the social equality between the sexes for empowering women. They attack the traditional stereotype representation of women in male narratives. Third *French Feminism* includes a group of feminist who believe that women’s writing should be radical in its nature. They should reinvent language and writing so that they depart drastically, from the present masculine mode of expression. Fourth, *American Feminism* includes another group of mainly women intellectuals who suspect the French feminist movement, and they instead of reinventing the language,
advocate a literary reading of text against the grain of traditional male narratives, against the canon and the high culture.

Feminist literary criticism is a direct product of the women’s movement of 1960s. It realizes the significance of the images of women propagated by literature and saw it as vital to combat them and question their authority and their coherence. The major critical studies of women writers from the viewpoint of the female tradition constitute the first serious feminist criticism. Virginia Woolf’s *a Rooms of One’s Own* (1929) become an important pioneer of feminist literary criticism. She argues that the male dominated ideas of the patriarchal society prevented women from realizing their true potential and creativity. **Elaine Showalter’s** *a Literature of Their Own* (1977) is another typical example. In her analysis of the historical development, Showalter presents three important stages of women’s writing: First, the imitation of the mainstream literary tradition second, the protest against the standards of the dominant tradition concerning social values and rights and third, self-discovery which aims at a search for identify. **Sandra Gilbert and Sussan Gubar’s** *the Mad Women in the Attic* is another critical book on the major female writers of nineteenth century. Their main argument is that, artistic creativity which is perceived within the dominant 19th century tradition basically quality, is in fact a particular superimposition upon the women writers who are imprisoned within it.

Feminist critics rethink representation of women in literature by men and women. They scan the text for traditional female stereotype, general accusations about women abuse and disparagement and
deliberate omission of women altogether from a narrative. They examine the portrayal of a woman as ‘other’ and lack. Feminist critic read the text against the grain of a masculine dominated culture that determines both reading and writing. They look for the language used in the text and observe whether the text uses traditional and conventional language patterns associated with the male order, or whether language is used unconventionally and thus associated with the female order. Feminist critics also read the text applying the two Lacanian orders: the symbolic that implies the detachment of the narrative and the narrator from the mother’s body under the fear of symbolic castration by the patriarch and the imaginary that suggests a narrative or narrator completely fused with the body of the mother, with no exposition of any signs of the fear from the patriarch. (Joseph Chandra, 107-109) Feminist literary theory is only theory which gives reader a platform to understand a literary work from feminist or women’s point of view. To conclude, it may say that feminist literary theory is concerned with women as another of text, meaning with history, genres and structure of literature by female.

**Marxist Literary Theory** is depended upon the basic philosophical assumption that, life is not controlled by consciousness. Marxist philosopher coins a model of history, in which they assets that the economic and political condition determine social conditions. Marxism highlights the representation of class-conflict and reinforcement of classification through the way of literature. They analyze literature through the traditional method but subordinate the aesthetic sense to the final political, economic and social meanings of literature. These theorist show sympathy to the author of working class
and whose work challenges economic equalities found in the capitalist social system. They believe that the social and economic conditions are important because they determine the religious beliefs, legal system and cultural framework of human being. These critics insist on the role of literature, that it should represent such condition fruitfully and should improve them.

The well-known philosopher Carl Marx and his friend Frederick Engels formulate the theory to analyze that how society functions in a state of confusion and constant change.

Following Hegel’s theory of dialectic, Marx and Engels conceive a materialist account of history that focuses upon the struggles tension within the society. Marx thinks that dialectical account of history is the idea that an individual’s social being is determined by larger economic and political forces. He coins the term like basestructure i.e. the basic economic system of the society and super structure which means cultural activities such as philosophy and literature. He argues that superstructure is based on the basestructure; the economic base of society determines the interest and style of that society. This is the main argument which Marx makes. Further he defines the ideology as the changing values, ideas and feelings through which individuals experience their societies. Marx believes that the superstructure is determined by the base, so superstructure naturally supports the ideology of basestructure. The group of people who enjoy the fruit of belonging to a dominant group of society, says Marx, generally filled with ‘false consciousness.’ For Marx, literature is a cultural product
(superstructure), which is a form of ideology and legitimizes the power of ruling class.

Georg Lukas (1885-1971) a leading Marxist theorist tailored Marx’s original concepts. In his opinion, the literature basically reflects an economic base, and it cannot functions outside the strict base/superstructure model, he also states that only realistic forms of fiction are artistically and politically. According to Terry Eagleton, the another Marxist critic, literature is merely adaptation of ideology by which Eagleton means a reworking of all those representation, aesthetic, religious, judicial which shape an individual’s mental picture of lived experience. An American Marxist critic Fredric Jameson believes that, the ideology as strategies of containment, which allows societies to explain themselves as formal patterns. Some are inescapable. Marxist literary theory is based on the principle that, the base of work art is the social realities. They consider the relationship between socio-historical context and literary production. This theory also incorporates the theories of its own time, and gained much popularity within short time.

Post-Colonial Literary Theory is influenced by the Marxist ideology, Michel Foucault’s theory about the power and deconstruction. Post-colonial refers to the method, theories and strategies of evaluation of the culture, literature, history, polity of former colonies of the European empires, and their relation to the rest of the world. Edward Said is considered as the pioneer of the theory, he focuses the way in which colonizer has coined false images and myths about the third world and stereotypical images and myths that have conveniently justified
western exploitation and suppression of eastern and middle eastern cultures and peoples. Homi K Bhabha in his essay “Post-Colonial Criticism” (1992) shows how certain cultures falsify (misrepresent) other culture, thereby extending their political and social domination in the modern world order.

Post-colonial literary theory can be divided into five main principles as: national/regional principles which, emphasis on the distinctive feature of national or regional cultures and history. Racial/ethical principles are not necessary tied to an essentialist view of race but rather to the notion that “the idea of race” has been major part of colonizers economic, political and cultural practices. The comparative principle usually stresses stylistic and thematic concern of language and literature. The colonizer and colonized principle insist on the imperial colonial tension, the problem is whether de-colonization is ever possible. The principle of hybridity and syncretistic is influenced by the deconstructive theories where the notion of binary opposition is important. The term ‘other’ has crucial important in postcolonial literary theory. In general way the ‘other’ is anyone who is separate from oneself. The colonized subject is characterized as ‘other’ through discourses such as primitivism and cannibalism.

Post-Colonial critics inspect the claims made on behalf of euro-centralism and show its limitations of outlook and its inability to understand the importance of cultures across the borders. They view the projection of other culture in literature as an alternative method and give importance to the question of cultural differences, diversity and examine
their treatment in relation to literary work. (Joseph Chandra, 128-135) Post-colonial critics describe the role of literature in various way, they defend and challenge to literature by many interlocutors. These critics examine literature for the illumination of fact that not discussed before by other literary theories. They assign a proper role to colonizer’s literature which enables lost-colonial studies to place itself as a literary theory and literary criticism.

**Modernism and Post-Modernism** are literary movements which includes many of the literary theories after 18th century. In fact modernism and post-modernism as the theoretical movements do not mean a particular ideology but a way of looking toward life, history, culture and literature as form of culture. JA Cuddon defines Modernism as: the creative arts, especially poetry, fiction, drama, painting, music and architecture. There have been various theories as to when the movement was at its height and as to whether the modernist movement is actually over. Some suggest that modernism, as an innovative and refreshing movement, is played out by the late 1940s and that it is then that post-modernism began…………..as far as literature is concern modernism reveals a braking away from established rules, traditions and conventions, fresh ways of looking at human’s position and function in the universe and many experiments in form and style. It is particularly concerned with language and how to use it and with writing itself. (Cuddon, 515-516) A German theorist **Jorgen Habermas** considers that the modernism started in west almost from the middle of seventeenth century. The growth of industrialization, science and technology, urbanization in the century give birth to the faith in power of reason,
scientific spirit and logical interpretation which became the basic tenets of modernism in following period.

**Post-Modernism** as a literary movement begins in third quarter of 19\textsuperscript{th} century, the prefix ‘post’ suggests that the end of modernism and beginning of post-modernism. It is also considered as a reaction to modernism. It is general term used to refer to changes, developments and tendencies which have taken place in literature, art music, architecture, philosophy etc. since 1940s and 50s. Post-modernism is different from modernism, even a reaction against it. It is not easier to define than many other-isms, like them, it is amorphous by nature. (Cuddon, 689-690) As far as literature is concerned, Post-Modernist poetry or literature look like non-traditional and against established rules and signification. It is an experiment with the traditional poetry or concrete poetry. An eclectic approach, pastiche and parody are some other features of Post-modern literature.

**Eco Criticism:** the prefix ‘eco’ in Eco Criticism suggests its relation to the nature and ecology. Eco criticism analyzes literature from the natural/ ecological or environmental perspective. William Ruccekert is the first person who uses the term *eco criticism*. In 1978 he writes an essay “*Literature and Ecology: an Experiment in Eco-Criticism*” in which he focuses on the study of literature in the light of ecological concept. In his “*the Eco Criticism Reader*” Cheryll Glotfelty defines the Eco Criticism as the *study of the relationship between literature and physical environment*. Another eco-critic Lawrence Buell defines it as a study the relationship between literature and the
environment conducted in a spirit of commitment to environmentalist praxis. As far as literature is concerned eco critics attempt to characterize the relationship between nature and human life. They support the concept like interconnectedness and interrelationship. Eco critic advocates the rootedness and affection for a particular place; these critics portray the literature to represent these values, giving it their eco critical stamp of approval. (Joseph Chandra, 136-141) Eco Feminism is one of new theories of 21st century which insists not only on the freedom of women from subjugation, oppressive patriarchal system but freedom for all, liberation from all kinds of subjugations, oppression and discrimination (Universal freedom). It is also considered as universal feminism. A growing interest in autobiographies in last few decades lays foundation for Autobiographical Studies. The Travel Theory also emerged as a new method of judging the travel writing. The contemporary period is recognized for the development of science and technology, computer and information technology. These development have their implications in every walk of human life, literature is not exception for the fact. Literature has assumed new forms like digital text, e-text which has changed the whole notion of reading and understanding habit of a reader. Techno-Criticism takes into account all these facts. In Queer Theory, one can examine the role of gender identity and sexuality in literature. The critics of the theory try to show how the gender can define the meaning of a text or literary work.
Conclusion:

It is a brief introduction of western literary theories with the explanation of various literary terms and concepts. Western literary theory has rich and long tradition in the history. One can divide the tradition of western literary theory in four major parts according to period following:

1. **Classical literary criticism**
2. **Criticism of early centuries**
3. **Criticism of middle centuries**
4. **Criticism of modern and postmodern period**

The western literary criticism and literary theory has various dimension as there is a changing shift of center of discussion in its tradition. Early classical criticism has discussed about the *author, poet* and their qualities. They also determine the principles and merits of good poetry. The criticism of middle century hold the content, biography of author as center of literary discussion, while some modern and postmodern theories found the *role of reader* as crucial part in interpretation of a literary text. 20th century literary theories have specific ideology and methods of evaluation of literary work, for ex. Marxist critic evaluate literary text on the basis of *basestructure* of the society in which it is produced and feminist critic makes judgment from the feminist point of view. It is rightly said that, to decide the standard literary theory for the perfect judgment of literature is difficult but we also don’t have the definition of perfect judgment. All these western
literary theories try to reach at perfection to the logical judgment literature and their significance lies there.
References:


