CHAPTER ONE

((LITERARY CRITICISM))

Part 1 (Critical Approaches)

Literary Criticism is the overall term for studies concerned with defining, classifying, analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating works of literature. **Theoretical criticism** proposes an explicit **theory** of literature, in the se nse of general principles, together with a set of terms, distinctions, and categories, to be applied to identifying and analyzing works of literature, as well as the **criteria** (the standards, or norms) by which these works and their writers are to be evaluated. The earliest, and enduringly important, treatise of theoretical criticism was Aristotle's *Poetics* (fourth century B.C.).

Landmarks of theoretical criticism in the first half of the twentieth century are:
1. A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924)
2. Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form* (1941, rev. 1957)
3. Eric Auerbach, *Mimesis* (1946)
4. R. S. Crane, ed., *Critics and Criticism* (1952)
5. Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957).

1. **Practical criticism, or applied criticism** concerns itself with the discussion of particular works and writers. Among the more influential works of applied criticism are the literary essays of
   1. Dryden in the *Restoration*
   2. Dr. Johnson's *Lives of the English Poets* (1779-81)
   3. Coleridge's chapters on the poetry of Wordsworth in *Biographia Literaria* (1817) and his lectures on Shakespeare
   4. William Hazlitt's lectures on Shakespeare and the English poets
   5. Matthew Arnold's *Essays in Criticism* (1865 and following)
   6. Richards' *Practical Criticism* (1930)
   7. T. S. Eliot's *Selected Essays* (1932)
   8. Critical essays by Virginia Woolf
   9. F. R. Leavis, and Lionel Trilling.
   10. Cleanth Brooks' *The Well Wrought Urn* (1947)

✎ *Example* **1: The phrase 'text and text alone' is the familiar motto of ……… .**
   1) New Criticism   2) Postcolonialism   3) New-Historicism   4) Marxism
Answer: [1].

Practical criticism is sometimes distinguished into **impressionistic** and **judicial** criticism:

1.1. **Impressionistic criticism** attempts to represent in words the felt qualities of a particular passage or work, and to express the responses (the "impression") that the work directly evokes from the critic.

   Quotes:
   - William Hazlitt in "On Genius and Common Sense" (1824): "You decide from feeling, and not from reason; that is, from the impression of a number of things on the mind . . . though you may not be able to analyze or account for it in the several particulars."
   - Walter Pater in the preface to *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873): "the first step toward seeing one's object as it really is, is to know one's own impression as it really is, to discriminate it, to realise it distinctly".
   - For Anatole France's phrase, this mode of criticism is "the adventures of a sensitive soul among masterpieces."

✍ *Example* **2: The systematic study of literature in Europe begins with ……… .**
   1) Aristotle   2) Plato   3) Longinus   4) Horace
Answer: [2].

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1.2. **Judicial criticism,** on the other hand, attempts not merely to communicate, but to analyze and explain the effects of a work by reference to its subject, organization, techniques, and style, and to base the critic's individual judgments on specified criteria of literary excellence.

Types of traditional critical theories and of applied criticism can be usefully distinguished according to whether, in explaining and judging a work of literature, they refer the work primarily to
   - the outer world (**Mimetic criticism**)→ Plato, Aristotle→ Realism
   - the reader (**Pragmatic criticism**) → Roman Horace→ Rhetorical criticism, structuralism
   - to the author (**Expressive criticism**) → George Poulet→ Psychological and Psychoanalytic critics, Critics of consciousness, Geneva School
   - the work as an entity in itself (**Objective criticism**) → Kant→ New Critics, Chicago School, Formalism

1. **Mimetic criticism** views the literary work as an imitation, or reflection, or representation of the world and human life, and the primary criterion applied to a work is the "truth" of its representation to the subject matter that it represents, or should represent. This mode of criticism, which first appeared in Plato and in Aristotle, remains characteristic of modern theories of literary realism.

2. **Pragmatic criticism** views the work as something which is constructed in order to achieve certain effects on the audience (effects such as aesthetic pleasure, instruction, or kinds of emotion), and it tends to judge the value of the work according to its success in achieving that aim. This approach, which largely dominated literary discussion from the versified *Art of Poetry* by the Roman Horace (first century B.C.) through the eighteenth century, has been revived in recent *rhetorical criticism,* which emphasizes the artistic strategies by which an author engages and influences the responses of readers to the matters represented in a literary work. The pragmatic approach has also been adopted by some *structuralists* who analyze a literary text as a systematic play of codes which effect the interpretative responses of the reader.

3. **Expressive criticism** treats a literary work primarily in relation to its author. It defines poetry as an expression, or overflow, or utterance of feelings, or as the product of the poet's imagination operating on his or her perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. Such views were developed mainly by romantic critics in the early nineteenth century and remain current in our own time, especially in the writings of *psychological and psychoanalytic critics* and in *critics of consciousness* as George Poulet and the Geneva School.

4. **Objective criticism** deals with a work of literature as something which stands free from what is often called "extrinsic" relations to the poet, or to the audience, or to the environing world. Instead it describes the literary product as a self-sufficient and autonomous object, or else as a world-in-itself, which is to be contemplated as its own end, and to be analyzed and judged solely by "intrinsic" criteria such as its complexity, coherence, equilibrium, integrity, and the interrelations of its component elements. The general viewpoint of the self-sufficiency of an aesthetic object was proposed in Kant's *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (1790) was up by proponents of *art for art's sake* in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and has been elaborated in detailed modes of applied criticism by a number of important critics since the 1920s, including the *New Critics,* the *Chicago School,* and proponents of European *formalism.*

✎ *Example* 3: **Sidney wrote "The Defence of Poesy" in response to the Puritan-style attacks of ……… on poetry.**

　　1) Edmund Spenser　　　　2) Stephen Gosson　　　　3) William Webbe　　　　4) Roger Ascham

Answer: [2].

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Types of Criticism after World War I

Since World War I, and especially since the 1960s, there have appeared a large number of innovative literary theories and methods of critical analysis such as

Russian Formalism	1920s and 1930s
Archetypal criticism	1930s and 1940s
New Criticism; phenomenological criticism	1940s and 1950s
Structuralist criticism; modern forms of feminist criticism; stylistics	1960s
Theory of the anxiety of influence; deconstruction; discourse analysis; various forms of reader-response criticism; reception theory; semiotics; speech-act theory	1970s
Dialogic criticism; new historicism; cultural studies	1980s
Postcolonial studies; queer theory	1990s

✎ *Example* 4: **"The secret of all good writing is sound judgment." This is a quotation from ……… .**

　　1) Puttenham　　　　2) Longinus　　　　3) Aristotle　　　　4) Horace

Answer: [4].

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✎ *Example* 5: **The sugar-coated-pill theory of poetry was formulated by ……… .**

　　1) Longinus　　　　2) Aristotle　　　　3) Horace　　　　4) Plato

Answer: [3].

The Most Common Theories of Criticism in Detail

Archetypal Criticism In literary criticism the term archetype denotes recurrent narrative designs, patterns of action, character-types, themes, and images which are identifiable in a wide variety of works of literature, as well as in myths, dreams, and even social rituals. Such recurrent items are held to be the result of elemental and universal forms or patterns in the human psyche, whose effective embodiment in a literary work evokes a profound response from the attentive reader, because he or she shares the archetypes expressed by the author. An important antecedent of the literary theory of the archetype was the treatment of myth by a group of comparative anthropologists at Cambridge University, especially James G. Frazer, whose *The Golden Bough* (1890-1915) identified elemental patterns of myth and ritual that, he claimed, recur in the legends and ceremonials of diverse and far-flung cultures and religions. An even more important antecedent was the depth psychology of Carl G. Jung (1875-1961), who applied the term "archetype" to what he called "primordial images," the "psychic residue" of repeated patterns of common human experience in the lives of our very ancient ancestors which, he maintained, survive in the "collective unconscious" of the human race and are expressed in myths, religion, dreams, and private fantasies, as well as in works of literature.

Archetypal literary criticism was given impetus by Maud Bodkin's *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (1934) and flourished especially during the 1950s and 1960s. Some archetypal critics have dropped Jung's theory of the collective unconscious as the deep source of these patterns; in the words of Northrop Frye, this theory is "an unnecessary hypothesis," and the recurrent archetypes are simply there, "however they got there."

Among the prominent practitioners of various modes of archetypal criticism, in addition to Maud Bodkin, are G. Wilson Knight, Robert Graves, Philip Wheelwright, Richard Chase, Leslie Fiedler, and Joseph Campbell. These critics tend to emphasize the occurrence of mythical patterns in literature, on the assumption that myths are closer to the elemental archetype than the artful manipulations of sophisticated writers. The death-rebirth theme is often said to be the archetype of archetypes, and is held to be grounded in the cycle of the seasons and the organic cycle of human life; this archetype, it has been claimed, occurs in primitive rituals of the king who is annually sacrificed, widespread myths of gods who die to be reborn, and a multitude of diverse texts, including the Bible, Dante's *Divine Comedy* in the early fourteenth century, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" in 1798. Among the other archetypal themes, images, and characters that have been frequently traced in literature are the journey underground, the heavenly ascent, the search for the father, the Paradise-Hades image, the Promethean rebel-hero, the scapegoat, the earth goddess, and the fatal woman.

In his remarkable and influential book *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), Northrop Frye developed the archetypal approach—which he combined with the *typological interpretation* of the Bible and the conception of the imagination in the writings of the poet and painter William Blake (1757-1827)—into a radical and comprehensive revision of traditional grounds both of the theory of literature and the practice of literary criticism. Frye proposes that the totality of literary works constitute a "self-contained literary universe" which has been created over the ages by the human imagination so as to incorporate the alien and indifferent world of nature into archetypal forms that serve to satisfy enduring human desires and needs. In this literary universe, four radical mythoi (that is, plot forms, or organizing structural principles), correspondent to the four seasons in the cycle of the natural world, are incorporated in the four major *genres* of comedy (spring), romance (summer), tragedy (autumn), and satire (winter).

✎ *Example* 6: The most influential of critics throughout the Renaissance and Neoclassical period was ……… .

    1) Dante   2) Sidney   3) Horace   4) Milton

Answer: [3].

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Cultural Materialism is a term used by the British neo-Marxist critic Raymond Williams, which has been adopted by a number of other British scholars, especially those concerned with the literature of the Renaissance, to indicate the Marxist orientation of their mode of new historicism—Marxist in that they retain a version of Marx's view of cultural phenomena as a "superstructure" which in the last analysis is determined by the economic "base." They insist that, whatever the "textuality" of history, a culture and its literary products are always to an important degree conditioned by the real material forces and relations of production in their historical era. They are particularly interested in the political significance, and especially the subversive aspects and effects, of a literary text, not only in its own time, but also in later versions that have been revised for the theater and the cinema, and in the changing interpretations of the text by later literary critics. Cultural materialists stress that their criticism is itself oriented toward political "intervention" in their own era, in an express "commitment," as Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield have put it, "to the transformation of a social order which exploits people on grounds of race, gender, and class."

✍ *Example* 7: For ………, the highest truth is austere, mathematical, and intellectual.

    1) Longinus   2) Horace   3) Aristotle   4) Plato
Answer: [4].

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Cultural Studies designates a cross-disciplinary enterprise for analyzing the conditions that effect the production, reception, and cultural significance of all types of institutions, practices, and products; among these, literature is accounted as merely one of many forms of cultural "signifying practices." A chief concern is to specify the functioning of the social, economic, and political forces and power-structures that produce all forms of cultural phenomena and endow them with their social "meanings," their "truth," the modes of discourse in which they are discussed, and their relative value and status.

1. One precursor of modern cultural studies was Roland Barthes, who in *Mythologies* (1957) analyzed the social conventions and "codes" that confer meanings in such social practices as women's fashions and professional wrestling.

2. Another was the British school of neo-Marxist studies of literature and art—especially in their popular and working-class modes—as an integral part of the general culture. This movement was inaugurated by Raymond Williams' *Culture and Society* (1958) and by Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (1958), and it became institutionalized in the influential Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, founded by Hoggart in 1964.

3. In the United States, the vogue for cultural studies had its roots mainly in the mode of literary and cultural criticism known as "the new historicism," with its antecedents both in poststructural theorists such as Louis Althusser and Michel Foucault and in the treatment of culture as a set of signifying systems by Clifford Geertz and other cultural anthropologists.

A prominent endeavor in cultural studies is to subvert the distinctions in traditional criticism between "high literature" and "high art" and what were considered the lower forms that appeal to a much larger body of consumers. Typically, cultural studies pay less attention to works in the established literary *canon* than to popular fiction, best-selling romances (that is, love stories), journalism, and advertising, together with other arts that have mass appeal such as cartoon comics, film, television "soap operas," and rock and rap music.

As in new historicist criticism, politically radical exponents of cultural studies orient their writings and teaching toward the explicit end of reforming existing power-structures and relations, which they view as dominated by a privileged gender, race, or class.

A conspicuous activity in cultural studies is the analysis and interpretation of objects and social practices outside the realm of literature and the other arts. In theory, there is no limit to the kinds of things and patterns of behavior to which such an analysis of cultural "texts" may be applied; current studies deal with a spectrum ranging from the vogue of body-building through urban street fashions, and from cross-dressing to the social gesture of smoking a cigarette.

Cultural Materialism an approach to the analysis of literature, drama, and other cultural forms, adopted by some critics, mainly in Britain, since the early 1980s. Its principles, derived from western Marxist traditions, were outlined most influentially by Raymond Williams in his later writings, notably *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (1980) and *Culture* (1981). Here the orthodox Marxist model of an economic 'base' determining a cultural (and political, religious etc.) 'superstructure' is challenged and replaced by a more flexible model in which cultural activities themselves are regarded as 'material' and productive processes. Cultural materialist approaches to literature emphasize the social and economic contexts (publishing, theatre, education) in which it is produced and consumed. They are also interested in the ways in which the meanings of literary and dramatic works are remade in new social and institutional contexts, especially in re-stagings of Shakespeare. Critics who have identified their work as cultural materialist include Alan Sinfield, Catherine Belsey, and Jonathan Dollimore. Their approach has been distinguished from the somewhat similar school of new historicism in that they hold a less pessimistic view of the prospects of cultural dissidence and resistance to established powers.

✍ *Example* **8: For ………, a poet's greatest reward is the adulation of the public.**

    1) Horace   2) Aristotle   3) Longinus   4) None of them

Answer: [1].

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✍ *Example* **9: "Correctness escapes censure; greatness earns admiration as well." This is a quotation from ……… .**

    1) Longinus   2) Bacon   3) Dante   4) Horace

Answer: [1].

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Deconstruction designates a theory and practice of reading which questions and claims to "subvert" or "undermine" the assumption that the system of language provides grounds that are adequate to establish the boundaries, the coherence or unity, and the determinate meanings of a literary text. Typically, a deconstructive reading sets out to show that conflicting forces within the text itself serve to dissipate the seeming definiteness of its structure and meanings into an indefinite array of incompatible and undecidable possibilities.

The originator and namer of deconstruction is the French thinker Jacques Derrida, among whose precursors were Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) and Martin Heidegger (1889-1976)—German philosophers who put to radical question fundamental philosophical concepts such as "knowledge," "truth," and "identity"—as well as Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), whose *psychoanalysis* violated traditional concepts of a coherent individual consciousness and a unitary self.

Derrida's point of vantage is what, in *Of Grammatology,* he calls "the axial proposition that there is no outside-the text" ("il n'y a rien hors du texte," or alternatively "il n'y a pas de hors-texte"). Like all Derrida's key terms and statements, this has multiple significations, but a primary one is that a reader cannot get beyond verbal signs to any things-in-themselves which, because they are independent of the system of language, might serve to anchor a determinable meaning. Derrida's reiterated claim is that not only all Western philosophies and theories of language, but all Western uses of language, hence all Western culture, are **logocentric;** that is, they are centered or grounded on a "logos" (which in Greek signified both "word" and "rationality") or, as stated in a phrase he adopts from Heidegger, they rely on "the metaphysics of presence." They are logocentric, according to Derrida, in part because they are **phonocentric;** that is, they grant, implicitly or explicitly, logical "priority," or "privilege," to speech over writing as the model for analyzing all discourse. By logos, or **presence,** Derrida signifies what he also calls an "ultimate referent"—a self-certifying and self-sufficient ground, or foundation, available to us totally outside the play of language itself, that is directly present to our awareness and serves to "center" (that is, to anchor, organize, and guarantee) the structure of the linguistic system, and as a result suffices to fix the bounds, coherence, and determinate meanings of any spoken or written utterance within that system. Historical instances of claimed foundations for language are God as the guarantor of its validity, or a Platonic form of the true reference of a general term, or a Hegelian "telos" or goal toward which all process strives, or an intention to signify something determinate that is directly present to the awareness of the person who initiates an utterance. Derrida undertakes to show that these and all other attempts by Western philosophy to establish an absolute ground in presence, and all implicit reliance on such a ground in using language, are bound to fail. Especially, he directs his skeptical exposition against the phonocentric assumption—which he regards as central in Western theories of language—that at the instant of speaking, the "intention" of a speaker to mean something determinate by an utterance is immediately and fully present in the speaker's consciousness, and is also communicable to an auditor. In Derrida's view, we must always say more, and other, than we intend to say.

Derrida expresses his alternative conception that the play of linguistic meanings is "undecidable" in terms derived from Saussure's view that in a sign system, both the *signifiers* (the material elements of a language, whether

spoken or written) and the *signifieds* (their conceptual meanings) owe their seeming identities, not to their own "positive" or inherent features, but to their "differences" from other speech-sounds, written marks, or conceptual significations. From this view Derrida evolves his radical claim that the features that, in any particular utterance, would serve to establish the signified meaning of a word, are never "present" to us in their own positive identity, since both these features and their significations are nothing other than a network of differences. On the other hand, neither can these identifying features be said to be strictly "absent"; instead, in any spoken or written utterance, the seeming meaning is the result only of a "self-effacing" **trace**—self-effacing in that one is not aware of it— which consists of all the nonpresent differences from other elements in the language system that invest the utterance with its "effect" of having a meaning in its own right. The consequence, in Derrida's view, is that we can never, in any instance of speech or writing, have a demonstrably fixed and decidable present meaning. He says that the differential play *(jeu)* of language may produce the "effects" of decidable meanings in an utterance or text, but asserts that these are merely effects and lack a ground that would justify certainty in interpretation.

✎ *Example* 10: ……… demanded the poet to "inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and to allay the perturbations of the mind."

    1) Sidney   2) Jonson   3) Dryden   4) Milton

Answer: [4].

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In a characteristic move, Derrida coins the *portmanteau* term différance, in which, he says, he uses the spelling "-ance" instead of "-enee" to indicate a fusion of two senses of the French verb "différer": to be different, and to defer. This double sense points to the phenomenon that, on the one hand, a text proffers the "effect" of having a significance that is the product of its difference, but that on the other hand, since this proffered significance can never come to rest in an actual "presence"—or in a language-independent reality Derrida calls a **transcendental signified**—its determinate specification is deferred from one linguistic interpretation to another in a movement or "play," as Derrida puts it, *en abîme*—that is, in an endless regress. To Derrida's view, then, it is difference that makes possible the meaning whose possibility (as a decidable meaning) it necessarily baffles. As Derrida says in another of his coinages, the meaning of any spoken or written utterance, by the action of opposing internal linguistic forces, is ineluctably **disseminated**—a term which includes, among its deliberately contradictory significations, that of having an effect of meaning (a "semantic" effect), of dispersing meanings among innumerable alternatives, and of negating any specific meaning. There is thus no ground, in the incessant play of difference that constitutes any language, for attributing a decidable meaning, or even a finite set of determinately multiple meanings (which he calls "polysemism"), to any utterance that we speak or write. As Derrida puts it in *Writing and Difference:* "The absence of a transcendental signified extends the domain and the play of signification infinitely".

✎ *Example* 11: Mark Schorer believed that only when we speak of the achieved content or the ………, we speak as critics.

    1) Myth   2) Paradox   3) Form   4) None of them

Answer: [3].

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Several of Derrida's skeptical procedures have been especially influential in deconstructive literary criticism.

1. One is to subvert the innumerable binary oppositions—such as speech/writing, nature/culture, truth/error, male/female— which are essential structural elements in logocentric language. Derrida shows that such oppositions constitute a tacit hierarchy, in which the first term functions as privileged and superior and the second term as derivative and inferior. Derrida's procedure is to invert the hierarchy, by showing that the secondary term can be made out to be derivative from, or a special case of, the primary term; but instead of stopping at this reversal, he goes on to destabilize both hierarchies, leaving them in a condition of undecidability.

2. A second operation influential in literary criticism is Derrida's deconstruction of any attempt to establish a securely determinate bound, or limit, or margin, to a textual work so as to differentiate what is "inside" from what is "outside" the work.

3. A third operation is his analysis of the inherent nonlogicality, or "rhetoricity"—that is, the inescapable reliance on *rhetorical figures* and *figurative language*—in all uses of language, including in what philosophers have traditionally claimed to be the strictly literal and logical arguments of philosophy. Derrida, for example, emphasizes the indispensable reliance in all modes of discourse on metaphors that are assumed to be merely convenient substitutes for *literal,* or "proper" meanings; then he undertakes to show, on the one hand, that metaphors cannot be reduced to literal meanings but, on the other hand, that supposedly literal terms are themselves metaphors whose metaphoric nature has been forgotten.

Initially, that is, he interprets a text as, in the standard fashion, "lisible" (readable or intelligible), since it engenders "effects" of having determinate meanings. But this reading, Derrida says, is only "provisional," as a stage toward a second, or deconstructive "critical reading," which disseminates the provisional meaning into an indefinite range of significations that, he claims, always involve (in a term taken from logic) an **aporia**—an insuperable deadlock, or "double bind," of incompatible or contradictory meanings which are "undecidable," in that we lack any sufficient ground for choosing among them. The result, in Derrida's rendering, is that each text deconstructs itself, by undermining its own supposed grounds and dispersing itself into incoherent meanings in a way, he claims, that the deconstructive reader neither initiates nor produces; deconstruction is something that simply "happens" in a critical reading. Derrida asserts, furthermore, that he has no option except to attempt to communicate his deconstructive readings in the prevailing logocentric language, hence that his own interpretive texts deconstruct themselves in the very act of deconstructing the texts to which they are applied. He insists, however, that "deconstruction has nothing to do with destruction," and that all the standard uses of language will inevitably go on; what he undertakes, he says, is merely to "situate" or "reinscribe" any text in a system of difference which shows the instability of the effects to which the text owes its seeming intelligibility.

Paul de Man was the most innovative and influential of the critics who applied deconstruction to the reading of literary texts. In de Man's later writings, he represented the basic conflicting forces within a text under the headings of "grammar" (the code or rules of language) and "rhetoric" (the unruly play of figures and tropes), and aligned these with other opposed forces, such as the "constative" and "performative" linguistic functions that had been distinguished by John Austin. In its grammatical aspect, language persistently aspires to determinate, referential, and logically ordered assertions, which are persistently dispersed by its rhetorical aspect into an open set of non-referential and illogical possibilities. The inevitable result, for a critical reading, is an aporia of "vertiginous possibilities." Barbara Johnson, once a student of de Man's, has applied deconstructive readings not only to literary texts, but to the writings of other critics, including Derrida himself. Her succinct statement of the aim and methods of a deconstructive reading is often cited: *Deconstruction* is not synonymous with *destruction* The deconstruction of a text does not proceed by random doubt or arbitrary subversion, but by the careful teasing out of warring forces of signification within the text itself. If anything is destroyed in a deconstructive reading, it is not the text, but the claim to unequivocal domination of one mode of signifying over another.

J. Hillis Miller, once the leading American representative of the *Geneva School* of consciousness-criticism, is now one of the most prominent of deconstructors, known especially for his application of this type of critical reading to prose fiction. Miller's conclusion is that any literary text, as a ceaseless play of "irreconcilable" and "contradictory" meanings, is "indeterminable" and "undecidable"; hence, that "all reading is necessarily misreading."

✎ *Example* **12: T. S. Eliot asserted that ……… wrote "the first serious literary criticism in English by an English poet."**

   1) Johnson   2) Milton   3) Sidney   4) Dryden

Answer: [4].

Dialogic Criticism is modeled on the theory and critical procedures of the Soviet critic Mikhail Bakhtin. To Bakhtin a literary work is not a text whose meanings are produced by the play of impersonal linguistic or economic or cultural forces, but a site for the dialogic interaction of multiple voices, or modes of discourse, each of which is not merely a verbal but a social phenomenon, and as such is the product of manifold determinants that are specific to a class, social group, and speech community.

Bakhtin's prime interest was in the novel, and especially in the ways that the voices that constitute the text of any novel disrupt the authority of the author's single voice. In *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1929), he contrasts the **monologic** novels of writers such as Leo Tolstoy—which undertake to subordinate the voices of all the characters to the authoritative discourse and controlling purposes of the author—to the **dialogic form** ("polyphonic form") of Fyodor Dostoevsky's novels, in which the characters are liberated to speak "a plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices." In Bakhtin's view, however, a novel can never be totally monologic, since the narrator's reports of the utterances of another character are inescapably "double-voiced" (in that we can distinguish therein the author's own accent and inflection), and also dialogic (in that the author's discourse continually reinforces, alters, or contests with the types of speech that it reports).

In *Rabelais and His World* (1984), Bakhtin proposed his widely cited concept of the **carnivalesque** in certain literary works. This literary mode parallels the flouting of authority and inversion of social hierarchies that, in many cultures, are permitted in a season of carnival. It does so by introducing a mingling of voices from diverse social levels that are free to mock and subvert authority, to flout social norms by ribaldry, and to exhibit various ways of profaning what is ordinarily regarded as sacrosanct. Bakhtin traces the occurrence of the carnivalesque in ancient, medieval, and Renaissance writers (especially in Rabelais); he also asserts that the mode recurs later, especially in the play of irreverent, parodie, and subversive voices in the novels of Dostoevsky, which are both dialogic and carnivalesque.

In an essay on "Discourse in the Novel" (1934-35), Bakhtin develops his view that the novel is constituted by a multiplicity of divergent and contending social voices that achieve their full significance only in the process of their dialogic interaction both with each other and with the voice of the narrator. Bakhtin explicitly sets his theory against Aristotle's *Poetics,* which proposed that the primary component in narrative forms is a plot that evolves coherently from its beginning to an end in which all complications are resolved. Instead, Bakhtin elevates *discourse* (equivalent to Aristotle's subordinate element of *diction)* into the primary component of a narrative work; and he describes discourse as a medley of voices, social attitudes, and values that are not only opposed, but irreconcilable, with the result that the work remains unresolved and open-ended.

✒ *Example* **13: An overactive ……… creates an unconscious sense of guilt.**

    1) Ego   2) Superego   3) Libido   4) Thanatos
Answer: [2].

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✒ *Example* **14: A recurrent plot pattern, image, or motif that evokes from the reader strong but illogical responses is called ……… .**

    1) Mata-narrative   2) Allegory   3) Myth   4) Archetype
Answer: [4].

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Discourse Analysis traditional linguists and philosophers of language, as well as literary students of *style* and *stylistics,* have typically focused their analyses on isolated units of language—the sentence, or even single words, phrases, and figures—in abstraction from the specific circumstances of an utterance.

Discourse analysis, on the other hand, as inaugurated in the 1970s, concerns itself with the use of language in a running discourse, continued over a sequence of sentences, and involving the interaction of speaker (or writer) and auditor (or reader) in a specific situational context, and within a framework of social and cultural conventions.

Emphasis on discourse as occurring within specific cultural conditions and under particular circumstances derives from a number of investigators and areas of research, including the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer in hermeneutics, the concern of Michel Foucault with the institutional conditions and powerstructures that serve to make given statements accepted as authoritative or true, and the work of Clifford Geertz and other cultural anthropologists on the rootedness of linguistic and other meanings in the social forms and practices specific to a cultural community.

The current use of discourse analysis in literary studies was given special impetus by the speech-act philosopher H. P. Grice, who in 1975 coined the term **implicature** to account for indirection in discourse; for example, to explain how we are able to identify the illocutionary force of an utterance that lacks an explicit indicator of its illocutionary intention.

Thus, how can we account for the fact that the utterance, "Can you pass the salt?" although it is in the syntactical form of a question, can be used by the speaker, and correctly understood by the hearer, as a polite form of request? Grice proposed that users of a language share a set of implicit expectations which he calls the "communicative presumption"—for example, that an utterance is intended by a speaker to be true, clear, and above all relevant. If an utterance seems purposely to violate these expectations, we seek to make sense of it by transferring it to a context in which it is clearly appropriate. Other language theorists have continued Grice's analysis of the collective assumptions that help to make utterances meaningful and intelligible, and serve also to make a sustained discourse a coherent development of signification instead of a mere collocation of independent sentences. One such assumption is that the hearer shares with the speaker (or the reader shares with the writer) a large body of nonlinguistic knowledge and experience; another is that the speaker is using language in a way that is intentional, purposive, and in accordance with linguistic and cultural conventions; a third is that there is a shared knowledge of the complex ways in which the meaning of a locution varies with the particular situation, as well as with the type of discourse, in which it is uttered.

Some proponents of stylistics include discourse analysis within their area of investigation. And since the late 1970s, a number of critics have increasingly adapted discourse analysis to the examination of the *dialogue* in novels and dramas. A chief aim is to explain how the characters represented in a literary work, and also the readers of that work, are constantly able to infer meanings that are not asserted or specified in a conversational interchange. The claim is that such inferences are "rule-governed," in that they depend on sets of assumptions, shared by users and interpreters of discourse that come into play to establish meanings, and furthermore, that these meanings vary systematically, in accordance with whether the rule-guided expectations are fulfilled or intentionally violated. Such explorations of conversational discourse in literature often extend to the re-analysis of *point of view* and other traditional topics in the criticism of literary narratives.

Feminist Criticism was not inaugurated until late in the 1960s. Behind it, however, lie two centuries of struggle for the recognition of women's cultural roles and achievements, and for women's social and political rights, marked by such books as Mary Wollstonecraft's A *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869), and the American Margaret Fuller's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845). Much of feminist literary criticism continues in our time to be interrelated with the movement by political feminists for social, legal, and cultural freedom and equality.

1. An important precursor in feminist criticism was Virginia Woolf, who, in addition to her fiction, wrote *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and numerous other essays on women authors and on the cultural, economic, and educational disabilities within what she called a "patriarchal" society that have hindered or prevented women from realizing their productive and creative possibilities.

2. A much more radical critical mode was launched in France by Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949), a wide-ranging critique of the cultural identification of women as merely the negative object, or "Other," to man as the dominating "Subject" who is assumed to represent humanity in general; the book dealt also with "the great collective myths" of women in the works of many male writers.