

**MOITREYEE**

**Assistant Professor**

**B.Ed. Department**

**Semester - 2**

**TOPIC - BIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH**

# History

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- Biographical Criticism was *excogitated* (invented) during the Renaissance Period.
- Founded by Samuel Johnson with one of his first thorough-going exercises in biographical criticism, the "*Lives of the Poets*" (1779–81)

## Biography

- A branch of history; provides a written account of a person's life.

## Biographical Criticism

*(is not concerned in recreating the record of an author's life)*

- It focuses on explicating the literary work by using the insight provided by knowledge of the author's life.

## *Definition* (1)

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- it is a form of a Literary criticism which analyzes a writer's *biography* to show the relationship between the author's life and their works of literature.

## *Definition (2)*

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- uses details about an author's personal life to analyze the author's works. It relies on autobiographies, correspondence, and other primary materials about the author and is a form of historical criticism.

This approach “begins with the simple but central insight that literature is written by actual people and that understanding an author’s life can help readers more thoroughly comprehend the work.” Hence, it often affords a practical method by which readers can better understand a text. The biographical critic “focuses on *explicating* the literary work by using the insight provided by knowledge of the author’s life.

- Anyone who reads the biography of a writer quickly sees how much an author's experience shapes - both directly and indirectly - what he or she creates.

- Reading and knowing about an author's tragic life or romantic love life will certainly make readers pay attention to certain aspects of the stories & poems that readers might have, most likely, missed or considered unimportant.

- And though many, if not most, literary theorists have assailed biographical criticism on philosophical grounds, the biographical approach to literature has **never** disappeared because of its obvious practical advantage in illuminating literary texts.

## ADVANTAGE

- Correlating the *book* to its writer would be helpful for a better understanding & interpretation by the reader.

## DISADVANTAGE

- The life story can overwhelm and eventually distort the work.