

INDINIASING LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM

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Abstract

The Greeks are largely responsible for the development of Western literary theory and criticism, and there is a way in which Plato, Aristotle, and Longinus define stances and disputes that are still being played out today. Especially at a time when we are doubting the sufficiency of such Western critical methods to make sense of the multiplicity of literatures created by the world's cultures, it may be helpful to remember that other equally ancient classical critical traditions exist. In Indian culture, there is a continuous line of literary theory and criticism that extends back at least as far as the Western tradition in terms of time and place. India's literary criticism is a significant and mostly untapped resource for literary theorists, as the Indian tradition accords a more central position to literature than the Greek tradition does in a number of important ways. T.S. Eliot argued that criticism is "the explication of works of art and the correction of taste," which is still relevant today. He noted in the same piece that at the time (the early 1920s), it was more like a Sunday park filled with warring and acrimonious orators, rather than an orderly field of beneficent activity. By this article, the literature that founded in India has been criticised and theorised which is constituting the large untapped resources of literary theorists in India which is assigning central role in literature that that of other foreign traditions.

Introduction

While it is true that each Age must develop its own literary critical judgments, it is maybe even more accurate to state that each individual must help shape their criticism in accordance with their own genius. This Eliotian view is more true today than it was in the early twentieth century. In 1970s after the theoretical revolution, we have more contesting and argumentative orators. Surprisingly, the revolution fails to develop a systematic method for studying literature. This revolution has left literature and criticism in limbo. It has surpassed the literary text in importance, taking on the role of a segregationist rather than an interventionist. A perilous performance which presume supremacy of specific set of values is undermined by literary modernism, he claims. It debates power, gender, racism, responsibility, sexuality, mind, aporias, ironies, etc.

It must have been a time when theory devolved into a quick-fix framework that masked disparate disciplines. Its scope has widened to the point where what it discloses may be trivial. Thus, theories have gradually replaced literary criticism in the West. The theories has created web through which practitioners, readers will be entangled. They wriggle more as they strive to escape. Worst of all, these ideas only address one or two compartments, leaving others unaffected. A theory's conformity implies a theory's refutation. This bleak status of western criticism inspires me to construct and formulate Indian Literary Criticism. Now we need a comprehensive literary criticism paradigm. Discourses on a literary text's sociological, linguistic, semantic, general, and narrative components are insufficient. Literature is a product of human mind, a fact that cannot be overlooked. Numerous influencing variables shape and mould it. Language, meaning, and a cultural-socio-historical document are all components of literature, but so are other facets of human life. It is possible to analyse, assess, and explain Indian Literature's criticisms and theories in a step-by-step manner using the preceding literary criticism paradigm.

Criticism: Its Purpose and Use

Criticism of literature is an attempt to determine how accurately an object has been imitated, whereas writing is a form of mimicry that has chief goal is to generate an authentic depiction of its subject, and to provide feedback of literature is the kind of attempt for determining how faithfully the counterfeit has imitated the original. It is easy to see how literature and criticism are intertwined in this context. In literary criticism, literary criticism is examined. It is not the most important discipline of criticism because of this. Critique may be distinct from theory in that it does not exclude theories. Practice, as in the form of practical critique, is a form of criticism that appears to be more fundamental and true at first glance. When it comes to critics' work, theory is a kind of added metalanguage that takes critical practise into account; it's the way you talk about, organise, and reflect on it. The Indian manishis of yore placed a high value on the kavyashastra, which is Poetics' legislative and dogmatic component. Similar to western poetics, kavyashastra aims to define the nature and function of various literary approaches and resources. There have been many excursions taken by the kavya shastra over the years, which has made it far more expansive than Poetics. Scholars in India, ranging from Bharata to Panditraj Jagganath, have examined every facet of literary creation, no matter how little. Kavya shastra's scope of practise includes both the creation and interpretation of literary works. If you're looking for a reader or critic who asks insightful questions, Kavya shastra is the best option. As a sort of criticism, asking questions is itself a form of inquiry It's hard

to know what will happen to a writer's work or the writer themselves in the future. Questions that a critic asks revolve around a literary work's substance and dialogue as well as its characters, setting, style, and message, as well as the underlying ideas that the author is aiming to convey through his or her writing. When it comes to interpreting and evaluating the text, the intrinsic elements that Krishna Rayan emphasises are critical. For example, the philosophical, socio-political, and theological dimensions of the text may cause digressions in the emotional response of the reader, as in the case of To put it another way, in Indian kavya shastra, criticism is the process of scrutinising everything to the greatest extent possible. A piece of art is not simply good or bad; rather, criticism analyses the strengths and weaknesses of a text, pointing out its strengths and flaws, as well as its literariness/vyaguna and any flaws in the author's work. Lastly, Leavis argues that criticising is only one stage in the wider process of education, which is only one step in the evolution of human life and civilization.

Determining the Literature

The Aristotelian and Bharat's views of theatre, to be precise, were greatly impacted by one another in this way. Drama was the most prevalent and representative form of art in their time, so it was no surprise. Poems, epics, novels, and stories, to name just a few, were developed over time. In order to refer to literature as a collective term for all of its different structural and formal variations. Various oppositions, such as fiction versus truth, emotion versus referentialism, aesthetic versus utilitarian, deviation from the norm, and so on, have been used to identify the distinctions between literary speech and conventional or standard language. The Dominancloka, a 9th century Sanskrit classic of literary theory, provides the finest indication of what he means when he states "literaryness is the core of poetry or literature." Anglo-American Poststructuralism is being reinvigorated by Paul De Man's declaration: "I would not hesitate to connect the rhetorical, figurative possibilities of language with literature itself." This corresponds to the suggested or denotation/connotation in English. Literature is defined as a work of art when it instructs or demonstrates a way of life that adheres to some ideal of a civilised community. Even the tiniest deviation from this pattern can spark an author's creativity and inspire them to write. A person's journey through life is marked by the mingling of a wide range of emotions and rasas such as love, humour and mercy as well as anger and bravery, as well as terror and awe. He begins to identify with a fictitious character when he sees the same interplay of emotions in a fictional setting. To him, his actions bring him joy and satisfaction. Assisting the protagonist in his endeavours to restore order or punish those who have done wrong, he

gives his assistance Literature has a profound effect on its readers. In his writing, Bhattanayak refers to the dhrnikaran, or literary strength. To empathise and sympathise with a character on stage or in a book or magazine means to understand and feel what they are going through. A writer's most keen interest in the world around him or her dictates not only the aesthetics of literature, but also its content. When you have this much passion, you begin to see universal and timeless values in action. Literature is only important if everyone enjoys it, and it must be universally appealing. Great literature is not confined to a certain period or place, as is the case with many magazine articles. The primary goal of literature should be neither to glorify nor to completely criticise the time period in which it is set. It should provide the highest level of enjoyment or the best position in which a person can mould himself or herself for the common man or woman.

Indian Paradigm in literary criticisms

In the Vedas, which emerged between 1500 BCE and 500 BCE, there is significant discussion of poetic and literary practise, which may be dated back to the fourth century BCE, placing Indian critical philosophy at the same time as Aristotle and Plato. In India, literary theory and criticism were never considered to be a separate branch of philosophy; rather, the practise and love of literature were intertwined with religion and daily life. Ayurveda, the study of Indian medicine, thought that the rhythms of a well formed couplet could literally purify the air and heal the ill, contrary to Plato's argument in *The Republic* that the poet's social role was detrimental. Today, we refer to this beautiful couplet as the mantra, which literally translates as "verse." Sanskrit poetry must be written in the precise metre of the sloka, which is equivalent to the heroic couplet, in order to communicate effectively with the listener. As a result, the Vedic Aryans venerated Vach, the goddess of speech or holy word, as their patron deity. Indian critics, like their Greek counterparts, established a formalistic system of grammar and structure principles that were intended to mould literary works. However, they placed a strong focus on the meaning and essence of words, much as the Greeks did. This became the tenet of Rasadhvani's literary-critical philosophy. Poems in India, in stark contrast to Plato's desire to expel poets and poetry from his republic, were intended to inspire people to live their lives in accordance with religious and didactic purposes, resulting not only in an Aristotelian "purgation of emotions" and liberation for the individual, but also in a broader, political liberation for the entire society. Individuals would then be able to live in greater peace with one another because society would be free of evil ama, also known as "ill will," and "feelings that generate terrible karma." It is the intention of this article to describe the numerous systems

that have been developed to achieve and define this liberatory purpose in literature, whether through form or substance.

Three major critical texts that form the foundation of Sanskrit critical theory are Bharata's *Natyasastra* (written in the second century CE), Anandavardhana's *Dhvanyaloka* (written in the eighth century CE), and Bhartrhari's *rasa* theory in the *Satakas* (written in the eighth century CE). The first two are from the second century CE, and the third from the eighth century CE. Poetry, drama, and literary criticism are the three genres that we will be discussing in the order in which they developed: poetry, drama, and literary criticism. It's interesting to note that these pieces posed concerns that seem remarkably modern in nature. The question of whether "authority" lay with the poet or the critic, that is, whether it lay in the text or in the interpretation, was for example a hotly debated topic at the time. Anandavardhana came to the conclusion in his main critical treatise, *Dhvanyaloka*, that "in the boundless world of literature, the poet is the creator, and the world alters itself so that everything conforms to the standard of his enjoyment" (Sarma 6). The term *kavirao* ("poet"), according to Anandavardhana, is synonymous with the term *Prajapati* ("Creator." The poet conjures up the reality that the reader sees or experiences through his or her eyes. Consequently, Anandavardhana grappled with issues such as the poet's function, his societal obligation, and whether social problems are an appropriate subject for literature. As P. B. Shelley put it (Shelley's *Critical Prose*, ed. Bruce R. McElderry, Jr., 1967, 36), "life mimicked art"; as such, the poet's position is not only that of the "unacknowledged legislator of the world," but also that of someone who moulds social ideals and morality, according to Anandavardhana. It is the concept of *sahridaya* ("appropriate critic"), defined as "one who is sympathetic to the poet's heart," that Western critics have fought with for centuries, beginning with Isaac Asimov and continuing through F. R. Leavis and Stanley Fish and others. In the Indian tradition, a critic is a sympathetic interpreter of a poet's works who is sympathetic to the poet's point of view. We must first take a brief look at the development of Indian literature in order to understand how these critical perspectives came to be. Known as the *Rig Veda*, it is regarded the earliest extant poetry in the Indo-European language family. It is thought to have been written between 2500 and 600 BCE, depending on who you ask. It does, however, make mention of *kavya*, or "stanzaic forms," or poetry, that existed before to the *Rig Veda*'s creation. The *Rig Veda* contains numerous occurrences of the word *gatha*, which refers to Zoroastrian holy poems that are sung. Valmiki, the author of the *Ramayana*, is often regarded as the world's first poet, but as we shall see, Valmiki is also widely regarded as the world's first exponent of poetic form,

which he used to great effect. Sarvepelli Radhakrishnan (the first president of the postcolonial Republic of India and the most prolific scholar of Indian philosophy and critical theory) refers to the period between 600-500 B.C.E. and the year 200 as the epic period because it was during this time that the great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, were written down and transmitted orally (Radhakrishnan and Moore xviii). According to Radhakrishnan, the Bhagavad Gita, which is considered to be a part of the Mahabharata, is the most authoritative text in Indian philosophical literature because it is considered to have been divinely revealed and because it appears to have been written down as it was revealed, rather than simply being passed down orally. In the Gita, Krishna and Arjuna discuss the importance of poetry and the poet's function. For the poet-sage, such as Janaka, the duty of keeping order in the world rests on his or her shoulders because ordinary mortals tend to emulate the role model portrayed by Janaka. As a result, poets are the ones who establish the standards for the rest of the world to follow. The sutra period, or age of treatises on religious and literary literature, is a millennium-long period of Indian philosophy from the early Christian centuries to the seventeenth century C.E. During this time period, various schools of literary criticism and interpretation arose. In Radhakrishnan's scholastic period of Indian philosophy, interpretation became essential. Because the Vedas form the foundation of the entire Indian Hindu tradition, all religious, philosophical, literary, and critical literature was produced in Sanskrit. Sanskrit was the language of the erudite, higher castes and priestly class, the Brahmins. The Brahmins then used indigenous languages to interpret religious, literary, and critical literature for locals. While Sanskrit remained the sacred language in the south, local versions of religious literature began to emerge to fulfil the demands of the Tamil and Telugu speakers. Literary religious songs in Tamil arose after the Brahminical tradition broke apart during the 7th century (Embree 228-29). The Ramayana by Indian-English writer R. K. Narayan is based on the eleventh-century Tamil rendition by poet Kamban. However, Dhvanyaloka critique by Kuppaswami Sastri in Madras remained entrenched in ancient Sanskrit critical beliefs.

Early Indian critique was "ritual interpretation" of the Vedas. For example, the employment of similes in the Nirutka of Yasaka, or applying Panini's grammatical categories to a text. The investigation of grammar, style, and stanzaic regularity was called a sastra, or "science." A number of experts believe that Panini's Sabdanusasana [Science of words] and Astadhyayi [Eight chapters of grammatical rules] (Winternitz 422) are the oldest existing grammars. The Alankara sastra was dogmatic and rule-bound about poetic

figures of speech, derived from Panini's grammar. Like Western rhetorical theory, this critical science had standards for figurative speech, such as rupaka (“simile”) and utpreksa (“metaphor”), atisya (“hyperbole”) and kavya (“stanzaic forms”). In ancient India, vyakarana, or “grammar,” was believed to be the foundation of all education and knowledge. Rules, declensions, and conjugations were to be mastered by rote to promote mental discipline.

Patanjali, a second-century BCE author, thought that a youngster should study grammar for twelve years before studying any science (see Winternitz 420). A series of rule-governed disciplines evolved, each with its own categories and classifications to memorise. These were arthasastra, a grammar of government; rasa-sastra, a grammar of meaning or interpretation specifically for poetry; natyasastra, a grammar of theatre; and sangitasastra, a grammar of music. In musicology, there were five categories: theory, atodya (instrument study), susira (song), tala (measure), and dhruva (rhythm).

Poetry was most regulated by the alankara, the standards of critical science, but it was also generative of critique. Critics claimed that any specific property of word and memory association produced kavya. Poetry required the formation of mnemonic rhymes. Poetry had two qualities: alankara, or “formal qualities,” and guna, or “meaning” and “essence.” According to Aristotle, “tragedy” and “comedy” are meant to generate “homeostasis” or “balance” in an audience by having them identify with specific rasas

Indian criticism most closely approximates Aristotle's notion of tragedy in the idea that writing is supposed to purge emotions and restore audience balance. But this idea comes from Indian philosophy and religion, which emphasises emancipation from bad karma. The goal of all literature is moksha (freedom). To release the spirit from the body, literature, especially drama or tragedy, must purge the emotions of satva (“happiness”), rajas (“anger”), and tamas (“ignorance” or “laziness”)

Bharata split the Natyasastra into hasya- and karuna-rasa. Aristotle's dictum of identification with a person's fall and uddipana-vibhava, the circumstances for the emotion to be evoked, as in the role of fate, pride, ambition, and so on, can all be used to achieve the effect of drama. According to S. N. Dasgupta, is based on a certain theory of psychology that argues that our personality is made up of a few fundamental emotions hidden deep within our subconscious or unconscious stratum. Amorous, ludicrous, melancholy; heroic; passionate; terrifying; sickening; amazing. Poets and playwrights developed historical criticism in India. Anandavardhana created systematic literary critique in the Dhvanyaloka. This was the beginning of formal literary criticism, as opposed to the

critical standards developed by poets and dramatists. Anandavardhana, poet laureate of Avantivaranan (C.E. 855-85), the Kashmiri king, established for the first time that dhvani, “sense suggested by form,” is the soul of poetry (Banerji 13). He chose to challenge the rasa theorists by returning to the grammarians', or Alankarikas', emphasis on words.

Conclusion

Since the sixteenth century, these historical tendencies have been mirrored in Indian literature and criticism. Plato, Aristotle, and Longinus marked out stances and debates that are still being played out today. When we doubt the sufficiency of Western critical methods to make sense of the vast array of foreign literatures, it is essential to remember that other equally ancient classical critical traditions exist. Indian culture has a long legacy of literary theory and criticism that predates the Western tradition. This is because the Indian tradition places literature in a more central role than the Greek tradition. In India, literary theory and criticism were profoundly entwined into religion and daily life. By criticising the Indian literature and theories, the paradigm, of different criticism has been accomplished in a more pragmatic and ethical way.

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