

CONCLUSION

The aim of my thesis has been to study Indian literary criticism as represented in some major trends in the twentieth century in terms of a continuous tradition. The critics discussed in each of the four chapters have been significant ones within their respective trends. My attempt has been to place them together in terms of the common critical concerns they shared rather than in terms of chronology. They are deemed to have been interested in some common theoretical issues, on account of which they represent dominant literary concerns. Though conceptually there is an unbroken tradition of literary criticism in India, it tends to pass through various distinct phases resulting from the impact of extra-literary aspects of Indian history. Beginning from Sri Aurobindo ^{and continuing through} to Homi Bhabha, the critics have been selected to highlight the general shifts and trends in the critical climate in India in this century, and to chart the field of literary criticism in terms of a tradition.

In the light of this ~~four~~ major trends in Indian criticism have been identified : (1) Romanticist criticism, (2) Reinterpretation of Sanskrit poetics, (3) Modernist criticism and (4) Nativistic and Post-colonial criticism. The critics representing each trend have been selected

from English, Gujarati and Marathi. The purpose in doing so was to form a comparative basis for the discussion and to have as broad a perspective of the Indian literary criticism scene as possible.

Chapter One, 'The Indian Romantics', discusses the work of Anandshankar Dhruv and B.K. Thakore representing Gujarati literary criticism and Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath Tagore representing Indian criticism written in English. They all share Romantic orientation. Anandshankar's writings seem to display a mature synthesis of both the English Romantic concerns and Sanskrit poetics. He assigns primacy to human emotions and to aesthetic delight. His casual discussions have been able to generate debates in Gujarati literary criticism on the function of art, art - artist relationship, the function of criticism etc. B.K. Thakore's focus is the literary culture of Gujarat. For developing proper literary criticism, Thakore advocates an extensive and thorough exposure to a variety of literary traditions. Without offering precise definitions, his criticism aims at sympathetic evaluation of literature. Sri Aurobindo aims at blending both Indian and Western critical traditions. Refraining from terse definitions, he aligns literary criticism with spiritual philosophy. In his opinion, poetry is divinity, and hence he discusses poetry rather from a metaphysical point of view than from a

literary one. For Tagore, literature is an expression of personality, hence his discussion of literature centers around the terms art - artist, emotions, expression, enjoyment etc. The chapter has thus indicated the dimension of Romantic criticism in India in the twentieth century.

Chapter Two, 'Revival and Reinterpretation of Sanskrit poetics' discusses the interest in Sanskrit poetics as a recurring phenomenon. Coomaraswamy discusses Sanskrit literary criticism within the broad expanse of Indian art. M. Hiriyanna on the other hand gives utmost attention to art experience, and rasa. The attempts of both reveal the interest of their generation in Sanskrit poetics. Krishna Rayan advocates active use of dhvani theory in evaluating contemporary literary works. B.K. Matilal invokes the remote Buddhist philosophical tenets, and discusses linguistic theories. But these and other such attempts remain what they are and where they are i.e., within the sphere of nationalistic assertions.

Chapter Three 'The Indian Modernists' discusses B.S. Mardhekar, R.B. Patankar and Suresh Joshi, as critics who have a Western orientation. Both Mardhekar and Patankar discuss only Western Aesthetics and the discussion of literary criticism is confined within the discourse of Aesthetics. Suresh Joshi views the other forms of knowledge

with a literary bias. The philosophical and theoretical concerns in each of them are different and yet significant.

Chapter Four 'Nativistic Criticism and Post-Colonial Criticism studies Sujit Mukherjee, Bhalchandra Nemade, Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha. Mukherjee envisages literary study in India on ^a'national' level, and advocates strategies for literary study based on the comparative method. Nemade believes that a meaningful critical discourse is possible if a critic restricts himself to just one language and its literature and its tradition. Gayatri Spivak speaks for 'the other' in terms of literature, gender, and nation. Her argument aims at consolidating the self and the original within the local traditions in India. Homi Bhabha isolates 'the nation' within nations i.e., Indian literature as the manifestation of the political idea of a nation, within existing nations or literature. In general all four of them call for nativisation of critical discourse.

This dissertation wishes to establish that there is a tradition of serious literary criticism in (the) twentieth century India. The tradition cannot be read as a unified text in terms of the consistency in critical problems. But the tradition does show a recurrence of certain critical problems. The major among these are related to the identity of the Indian critic today. The search for

identity expresses itself through the strategies of intellectual alignments that the critics have employed. Some critics align their concerns with Sanskrit Poetics, others align theirs with Western Aesthetics, and still others seek the refuge of the contemporary creative literature. These apparently diverse alignments underline the search for selfhood in modern Indian criticism. The recent upsurge of Nativism implies the rejection of Westernisation as well as revivalism in criticism. This rejection also suggests the sense of a tradition against which one can agitate. The other major concern is of phenomenological nature. Several critics have tried to problematise consciousness in the context of literary criticism. Similarly problematised is the aesthetic notion of rhythm and the sociological concept of realism. When one considers the map charted out in this dissertation, one feels that Indian criticism in this century is by no means a series of fragmentary works. It is a complex body of aesthetic and sociological issues which have so far remained unresolved. In any case Indian literary criticism in the twentieth century can be viewed as a 'field' for serious literary study. This dissertation hopefully establishes that it is so.