

## Chapter Four

### NATIVISTIC CRITICISM AND POST-COLONIAL CRITICISM

#### I

The scene in literary criticism in India, during the last two decades is marked by variety and heterodoxy, the main reasons for these are : (I) institutionalisation of literary study in a multi-lingual nation allows scope for co-existence of a variety of critical trends. In every university, there are departments of international languages, such as French, Russian, German and English, departments of national languages, Sanskrit, English and Hindi, and departments of regional languages. Therefore a variety of critical traditions is employed for academic purposes giving rise to scholarly publications. (II) In the post-colonial period the hold of Anglo-American criticism over the Indian critical sensibilities, has inevitably weakened, and hence critical theories and practices from all corners of the Western world are being appropriated by Indian critics. (III) The sociology of literary study has undergone rapid and substantial changes as a result of intensive literacy programmes. Due to this many layers of the Indian society have found a place in the field of creative literature creating the need for

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critical heterodoxy.

The variety of critical practices can be broadly classified into; (i) criticism engaged in<sup>1</sup>formulating ideas with reference to the living literary practice in regional languages, (ii) criticism interested in conceptualising literary and theoretical issues from a national perspective, (iii) criticism primarily interested in theoretical formulations mainly of [the] Western origin. In this chapter, I intend to discuss the contemporary literary criticism in India, with particular reference to the works of Sujit Mukherjee, Bhalchandra Nemade, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and Homi Bhabha, with a view to illustrating the tendencies mentioned.

The fact that such a variety of tendencies has emerged in India in recent years, has to be explained with reference to language politics, rather than with the political ideologies of the critics. In fact in the four critics selected for study, there is a vibrant awareness of being Indian, and being different from the Western critics. Where they do not belong together is in their perception of the relationship between language and culture. Gayatri Spivak and Bhabha operate within the sphere of English as an international language of criticism. Sujit Mukherjee operates within the sphere of English as a national language. He disavows the possibility of using

Western theories of literary criticism even if they are available through the medium of English. On the other hand, he insists on the use of English for theorising in the interest of creating a national awareness of Indian literature. Bhalchandra Nemade's basic premise is that literature is a sub-system of language, and criticism is a sub-system of language-culture. Therefore, he argues, criticism has the obvious limitation of belonging to the language, the literature of which it examines. In the recent years, regional languages have begun to perceive English as an increasing threat to their existence. This perception breeds radical varieties of nativism. On the other hand, English is seen as an ennobling language in the academic circles, and hence the critics like Gayatri Spivak, and Homi Bhabha sail across the international field of criticism with great élan.

Given the rapid development in the methods of communication, it is no longer possible to visualise the purity of any national culture. Particularly in the field of literary criticism, new theories initiated by the developments in Anthropology, (linguistics, Psycho-analysis, Analytical philosophy, and Semiology, after originating in France, Germany, and Czechoslovakia, have spread all over the world in the form of Structuralism, Deconstruction, Stylistics, Feminism, and Hermeneutics etc. India is no exception to this. In recent years, one notices a multitude

of books and essays on Feminism, Marxism, Post-structuralism and Post-modernism, published in India. The intensity of interaction between Indian critics and the Western critical theories has increased. One, therefore, cannot fail to notice the strategies of complicity as well as confrontation with these theories in the agenda of contemporary Indian criticism.

The complicity with the Western ideas cannot be read as a complete structure of inter-textuality. Within it there seems to be an attempt to appropriate those theories with a greater sense of urgency. Thus the works dealing with colonialism<sup>1</sup> as a literary and social phenomenon are in wider circulation in India than the works by Derrida, Lyotard, Lacan and others. In this chapter, it is not intended to analyse the reception of Western theories. The scope of the thesis does not provide space for such a complicated programme. The aim here is to comment on two varieties of nativism i.e., one based on language as a unit of culture, and the other based on the nation as a unit of culture, and on two varieties of post-colonial literary theory, one adhering to Marxist-feminist model and the other adhering to Foucault's model. In the process, the central ideas of the four critics selected will be introduced and commented upon.

## II

Sujit Mukherjee taught English literature before getting into publishing. His contribution may be considered esoteric by the English studies community in India, but by the students of translation studies and literary history it is regarded as pioneering work. He has published several critical essays and books in these areas. He has translated copiously from Bengali. In whatever he has written, there appear two of his following convictions : (i) literatures in various Indian languages past and present can be perceived essentially as one body of 'Indian' literature, and (ii) the theoretical framework of Indian criticism or Indian literature has to be evolved with reference to Indian literary traditions. Thus Mukherjee's stand is nativistic, whereas the cultural unit with reference to which he presents his ideas, is conceptualised in nationalistic terms. His critical concerns originate in his practice as a literary translator and as an Indian teacher of English; his critical perspective originates from the nationalistic discourse in the Post-Independence India. What he offers in his criticism is not so much a theory of literature, it is a perspective on theorising. It is this perspective which gives his criticism a nativistic character.

Towards a Literary History of India, (1975), and Some Positions on a Literary History of India, (1981),<sup>2</sup> are

significant works dealing with literary historiography as their central concerns. Literary history is dependent for its growth on several allied fields (like) literary pedagogy, literary criticism, the general developments in the humanities, and the consciousness about the past. In independent India, after the departments of regional languages were set up in the universities, there has been a steady growth in the histories of regional literatures.

However, historiography of literature has remained a poorly *cultivated* attended branch of literary study. Mukherjee's contribution in this field is not so much in presenting novel and radical ideas, as in mapping out the field and stating with clarity its central issues and problems.

In Mukherjee's opinion, the most central issue in the field of literary historiography in India relates to the national identity. The national identity may not be a greatly debatable concept in terms of Indian polity. In the field of literature the problems are innumerable, and apparently insurmountable. First, there is the division in terms of regional languages, next, there is a clear division in terms of language families, the Indo-Aryan and Dravidian, and finally there is the cultural distinction in terms of the mainstream (marg; such as Sanskrit, Persian and English), and the marginal, (desi; such as oral and regional). A historian of literature in India, has to make strategic choices before planning and writing a

history. In the process one may write a history just of marg or desi literature, Dravidian or Indo-Aryan literature, and so on. Mukherjee conceptualises the literary identity of India in terms of a unit. His attempt may bring to one's mind the works by the Indologists like A.K. Warder, Maurice Winternitz and Albrecht Weber etc.<sup>3</sup> Though a nativist, he does not run down these attempts but appreciates the work of his predecessors :

e The Western historian of Indian literature offers us at least three advantages which his Indian counterpart has not always been able to match: (1) that he writes in the foreground of a continuous and well developed critical tradition; (2) that what he writes becomes available (if it is not already in English, then through translation into English) to a relatively large circle of Indian literary scholars; and (3) that as an outsider seeking entry he is compelled to consider the wholeness of Indian Literature before he considers the parts.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time he is able to see the drawbacks in the purely Indological methods, the most dispensable among which is the insensitivity to literatures in Indian languages. He is able to see the merits of some earlier Indian attempts to formulate the 'history of Indian literature'; but he cautions against a simple compendium of all literatures as a substitute for a single history of literature :

The customary Indian view of the history of Indian literature is that it is the sum-total of the histories of the literature in the various languages of the country, composed separately by scholars drawn

from each region and language. Nearly all our modern languages (the New Indo-Aryan language) have searched for and found evidence of literary composition dating back to at least A.D. 1000. Among the Dravidian languages, works in Tamil are of even older vintage. From about A.D. 1800 onward in all Indian languages, the trail is distinct and unmistakable. These nine centuries, when attached to compositions in parent languages sorted out by philologists, provide an ample body of works in every language around which to build a history of literature of that language. To the undemanding view, the history of Indian literature is a confederation of literary histories - a view that would be as valid as, say, that of the history of African Literature or South American literature.<sup>5</sup>

Mukherjee, obviously, does not reject all traditions indiscriminately. He maintains that in a multi-lingual country like India, literary history cannot just be a story of temporal progression of literature. It also has to be an account of the synchronic, cross-lingual entanglements of the literature in one language with the literatures in other Indian languages :

Given the linguistic environment wherein so many regional languages and their literary cultures act and react upon the literature of every language, we obviously need a much wider context of consideration. What is generally offered in available histories of literature in our languages are really histories of those languages, clothed in a chronological arrangement of works and authors down the years, presented with descriptive rather than analytic intention. The globe of Indian literature has been circumscribed by parallels of longitude in the form of these separate histories of literature of Asamiya, Bangla, Gujarati, and so on. But these are parallel lines which resist meeting except at infinity.<sup>6</sup>



The task thus proposed by Mukherjee regarding the field of literary historiography is a daunting one, and hence he proposes the method of comparative literary study as the way out.

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Literary history is treated as a branch of study associated with comparative literature by Western scholars. One of the major aims of comparative literature is to compare literary movements, trends, genre, etc., across languages, so as to enrich the history of the languages involved in the comparison. Through comparison of different literatures, historians of literature can determine the exact source of literary movements, and their chronology. Mukherjee considers the possibility of working towards a history of Indian literature by using the comparative method, and he supports it by quoting the following theses :

- (i) Literature relates to the expression of the real world, and criticism to the dialectical and historical testing of this realism.
- (ii) Literary study should ideally be
  - (a) comparative, confronting ... each ... literature with other literatures, and
  - (b) complex, confronting literary with other cultural phenomena.
- (iii) Influences have to be studied in the light of a literary works' relation to its society and epoch; .....<sup>7</sup>

His preference for the comparative method is supported by a meticulous account of the developments in comparative

literature in the West. He is aware of the necessity to Indianise comparative studies. The implication in the method is that any history of literature in India cannot be complete, unless it accounts for the multi-lingual nature of Indian tradition and culture. Implicit in the argument is a radical censure of the current practice of writing histories of Indian literatures in isolation from one other. That is to say, a history of Gujarati literature will have to establish the cross-connections between Gujarati on the one hand, and Sanskrit, Prakrit, Persian, Hindi, Marathi, and English on the other hand, in order to be a meaningful history. In speaking of 'Indian Literature', Mukherjee does not intend to impose a hegemonic structure on literatures in various Indian languages. What he proposes is the need to be sensitive to the cultural history of Indian languages, particularly the history of their inter-dependance.

If one is lead to believe that Mukherjee proposes a single, and unified history of Indian literature, it may be pointed out that his awareness of the complexities of regional cultures, prevent him from proposing such an essentialist concept. He carefully specifies the existing historiographical trends in India, namely, Sanskritic, Hindustani, and Bharatiya.<sup>8</sup> The Sanskritic model, as he describes it, was created by the Indologists like Albrecht Weber, A.K. Warder and Maurice Winternitz. It is not

sufficiently alive either to the sociological context or to the literary Aesthetics. It seems to include all kinds of antiquarian works in the category of literature. Naturally, it is unacceptable to emulate :

[which] The fixity of the so-called 'classical' literature leads itself to each work being recorded as in a catalogue of antique objects. The antiquity itself invites deference rather than evaluation ..... Useful as the method has been in recording the existence of Sanskrit literature, the Sanskritic model cannot serve the purpose of literary history.<sup>9</sup>

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The Hindustani model is designed partly after the Sanskritic model, and partly after the Western model, which emphasises the presence of major literary figures in the history of a given literature. But there may exist literatures without 'major' figures. Though this model does consider the sociological context of literature, it is found inadequate. The Bharatiya model emerges out of the compendia of literary history, such as the one produced by Jan Gonda.<sup>10</sup> In relative terms, this model has a greater sociological awareness, as well as the sense of critical discrimination. It is on the basis of the Bharatiya model that Mukherjee wishes the new Indian literary historiography to be built :

What we need therefore is a broad spectrum view of our past as the basis of an alternative mode of literary history. Literary history is the youngest of our historical disciplines but, as applied to the literatures of individual languages, enough work has been done on each literature to feed multi-volume histories of literature of each language (and, of course, written in these languages)

..... The time seems ripe now to consider the necessity of reviewing our literary past in different terms, if only to assure ourselves that the evaluation made until now and the explanations offered are just and valid, that the literary culture we have described to ourselves, each for his own language, is indeed the correct description.<sup>11</sup>

Mukherjee suggests the formation of a new field of study in India which can be devoted solely to 'Indian Literature'.

how? The concept thus envisaged is debatable from the perspectives of both Nationalism and linguistics. The form of Mukherjee's ideas is significant in comparison with their content. The ideas in the field of literary historiography cannot and should not be tested in terms of their validity or logical inevitability. Historiography is like narratology. Its concerns are representations of historical truth as much as the effectiveness of the representation itself. A historiographer therefore has the freedom to propose and advocate new methods of historical representation. No such methods are absolutely wrong or right. They can be acceptable or otherwise depending upon their relation to the established intellectual discourse in a given culture. In that sense all historiography is programmatic. Mukherjee's programme for literary historiography in India stems from his nativism, and is guided by his passionate cultural nationalism.

Another area in which he has made a significant

contribution is translation study. His book Translation as Discovery<sup>12</sup> is one of the earliest Indian books on translation. Sri Aurobindo, and Tagore, Mukherjee's predecessors in the field, have discussed linguistic and cultural problems involved in literary translations. Sri Aurobindo advocates the diachronic translation, while Tagore advocates the synchronic one, with reference to translation from Indian languages into English. Mukherjee deals with issues related to literary translation such as synchronic and diachronic translation, translation from Indian languages into English and vice-versa, cultural and linguistic problems involved, and the functions of translation. The titles of some of the chapters, 'Translation As New Writing', 'Translation As Testimony', 'Translation As Prejudice', 'Translation As Patriotism', and 'Translation As Discovery',<sup>13</sup> reflect his concerns. He obviously does not have a monolithic view of translation.

[For him translation is more a cultural practice than a translation.] For him translation is more a cultural practice than a translingual activity. Translations are closely linked with cultures which produce them. [One is able to locate nativism in these assumptions.] Generally, the writings on translation in India tend to think of the problems in translation in universal terms. As in his historiography, in his translation 'theory', Mukherjee thinks in terms of the Pan-Indian context. His apparent

reluctance to theorise about translation, and his choice of discussing the practical aspects of it, imply an unstated theoretical position regarding translation. The position is that a translation theory, valid in the context of Indian literature, can be formulated only after actual translation practice is described with historical accuracy. This position is concentral to Nativism in literary criticism. The apparently non-theoretical book on translation by Mukherjee subtly implies his historiography in its theoretical structure. [Mukherjee's criticism, is an example of profound scholarship combined with a lively awareness of the native literary culture.]

### III

Like his predecessors Sri Aurobindo, Tagore, Mardhekar, and Suresh Joshi, Bhalchandra Nemade is a writer-critic. [Nemade's criticism issues from his concerns as a creative writer.] Nemade's work is particularly similar to that of Suresh Joshi, like whom he discusses the literary culture of Marathi. Like Joshi, Nemade has been a literary crusader, an editor of little magazines devoted to the avant gard in literature, and a versatile writer. His first novel Kosala (1963)<sup>14</sup> changed the idiom of Marathi fiction in the early sixties. He has published three more novels and a collection of poems. Among his critical works,

Sahityachi Bhasha (language of literature) (1987), and Tikasvayamvara (1990)<sup>15</sup>, are in Marathi and Tukaram, The Influence of English on Marathi : A Sociolinguistic and Stylistic Study (1990)<sup>16</sup> are in English. Sahityachi Bhasha and Tikasvayamvara are collections of critical essays written by Nemade over the last three decades. These two works offer a good historical perspective of Nemade as a critic. Nemade is considered a leading figure in the Nativistic movement in Marathi literature. His essays in these two volumes reveal the basic tenets of Nativism as well as the central critical concerns and values in his critical writings.

*Evidence?* →

Though Nemade is acclaimed as a leading Marathi critic today, it is difficult to evaluate him in the tradition of Mardhekar and Patankar. Unlike them, he has no penchant for theories and Aesthetics. Mardhekar has seen was interested in describing all art in terms of a single philosophic hypothesis. Patankar's work has been to establish that such a generalisation will not hold. Nemade does not show much interest in the philosophical side of Aesthetics. He is more interested in the practical aspects of criticism. He perceives Marathi criticism as a living practice performed within the context of Marathi literary culture. In the entire range of the critics studied in this dissertation, Nemade is singular in his belief that criticism is a language-specific activity and

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that criticism has no validity beyond the language of its origin. Naturally therefore, he has very little patience with the contemporary practice of borrowing the Western theories of literature or reviving Sanskrit poetics.

Nemade started his literary career in the 1960s. At that time literary criticism in Marathi showed two influences, that of Mardhekar's Aesthetics, and of a Formalist Existentialist - New critical school. These trends tended to focus attention on the formal aspects of literature without any interest in its social contents. Besides, the language used in Marathi literature had an apparent avant-gard character and it had become predictable. Kosala employed {the} conversational Marathi, the impact of which made it necessary to review the received notions of literary language and beauty. It was in the context of this transition that Nemade as the leader of a new school of criticism started propagating Nativism.

'Nativism' as a term is employed to explain the complexities of the colonial encounter. Ralph Linton uses the term to specify the feeling of cultural suffocation experienced by the colonised cultures. The victor-victim relationship involved in a colonial encounter causes such a feeling which finds expression in two distinct modes. The first mode is irrational and is evident in inadequately organised political uprisings. The second is

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irrational.



the rational mode which takes the form of ideological or linguistic action. In Nemade's opinion the rise of prose fiction in India during the nineteenth century was a rational form of Nativism.

(as defined by Sk. Madhavan) > Prose literature is one of the important cultural activities emerging from an inter-action between the restless, active British culture and the contemplative, passive Hindu culture during the nineteenth century. The Hindu writers who had inherited a long tradition of poetry found in the novel a new vehicle of expression which offered scope for social characters - themes - incidents. Prose is more open to social life and to reason than poetry, and it is more active a medium. The nineteenth century gave rise to the feeling that the native culture was being smothered by the cultural encounter of a victor-victim character. Anthropologists call this phenomenon Nativism. Nativism articulates itself either through a sudden irrational explosion or else gradually through reason. The mutiny of 1857 was a former type of expression. When the Marathas realised the foolishness of trying in that direction, they adopted the latter path and organised various movements and activities based on reason. It could be said that the most effective of these was the creation of prose literature.<sup>17</sup>

t In Nemade's view, prose and prose fiction are dynamic social institutions. He asserts that "the novel has proved all the world over to be an important vehicle of social though and dynamic expression".<sup>18</sup> The nature of this dynamism, however is determined by the history of a given culture. Thus literature is a social product guided by the currents of history; and yet it is not a passive vehicle of history. Nemade believes that literature is an active instrument which shapes history. Since literary transaction

involves the dialectic between a dynamic history and dynamic linguistic conventions, the critical tools for the analysis of literature have to be evolved in the context of this dialectic. As such, every literary tradition must evolve its own tools of criticism.

Nemade's Nativism should not be understood as an attempt at reviving Sanskrit poetics. On the contrary, he tends to consider such a revival as an impossibility as well as an impropriety. Just as he is critical of the exclusively aesthetic schools of Western criticism, he is also critical of the exclusively conventional Sanskrit poetics. He advocates the use of Native and living trends of creative literature in formulating critical concepts and theories. In a sharp reaction to the Aesthetics of Mardhekar and Patankar, Nemade maintains that criticism is necessarily secondary to literature. It is not a self-sufficient discipline. It is just a cultural practice and can never attain the status of theory. Moreover, no criticism will be a meaningful cultural practice unless it is bound to its native soil.

The present generation must have an unfailing nativistic awareness that the novel in Marathi is a creation of Marathi writers, who in turn, are products of the Marathi society. Further, the formalist unintelligent practice of picking up all the sundry works of art from languages all over the world for a comparative assessment

of artifacts in Marathi - a tendency rife in our criticism - has to be avoided. It is dangerous for criticism to enter the comparative field without making an in-depth study of both the cultures compared. Culture is not a hot-house but a social-bound process; literature is not a theoretical construct but a living phenomenon.<sup>19</sup>

Nativism in Nemade's version means a vibrant awareness of one's own tradition of language and literature. This view implicitly advocates realism. Since criticism is a *social* soil-bound cultural practice, critical values ought to be consistent with the social reality. Such criticism values literature which reflects social reality more than literature which claims formal perfection. Nemade's understanding of the term 'Realism' is not influenced by European schools of Realism. He proposes :

Realism means acceptance of the objective existence of the universe independent of the individual's existence; and the primary condition of realism in literature is the acceptance of the individual - society relationship from this perspective. The details that a novelist selects while structuring his meaning percolate to him from the various aspects of the individual - society relationship. Since the medium of expression for literature, which is language, belongs to a specific place and a specific time, and since it is available to an individual only as a social system, it controls the individual's cognition. The writer, therefore, has to abide by the sign-structure of meanings that society has determined. It will not be possible to depict reality in an uncontrolled way and keeping only the individual in focus.<sup>20</sup>

Realism is thus an awareness of the individual's place in the society, which is essentially a continuous

historical institution. Realism in literature, requires of a writer a spatial relation with his contemporary society as well as a temporal relation with his tradition. Within the framework of these relationships, the writer must shape his material from a morally responsible position. Nemade appreciates those works which show the nativistic awareness of the social morality and the social reality. By 'morality' he does not mean ethics. The concept of morality as used by him is related to the concept of medium. He considers, as stated earlier, language to be a dynamic cultural force. To use the dynamic medium with an awareness of social reality and tradition is to be 'moral' on the part of the writer in Nemade's opinion. An example from his critical writings may illustrate this concept of morality.

In evaluating the success of Swami (1962)<sup>21</sup> by Ranajit Desai, Nemade argues that the novel fails to perform a ) linguistic action by ignoring the various social reform movements which took place in Maharashtra during the historical period in which the novel is set. In other words the novel lacks social morality.<sup>22</sup>

The question one may raise here is 'should history not be reported as it was, in a historical novel'? Nemade's answer is that even in a so-called historical novel, a writer cannot abandon his morality. Every literary work reflects the society which produces it; and a writer has

to take a moral position in relation to the nature of social reality to be represented in his work. The failure to do so is termed Pratikriti by Nemade (Prati in the sense of anti). Nemade uses three terms Kriti, Pratikriti, and riti,<sup>23</sup> to describe the degree of the moral commitment of the writer.

The term riti is used to denote design-consciousness, and a formalistic, entertaining, affected and non-realistic aestheticism. 'Style' is used to mean the techniques employed creatively to shape the substance into a form through the medium (= language). Style is neither language, nor merely the treatment given to language. The term 'morality' is used in the sense of a personal value-scale. It does not have implications of a social, unvarying, impersonal morality. The term 'Kriti' is employed to indicate action, and 'pratikriti' to indicate illusion or image.<sup>24</sup>

According to Nemade, the novel tradition in Marathi can be described in terms of a tripartite relationship between the riti-oriented fiction, Pratikriti-oriented fiction, and Kriti-oriented fiction. The Pratikriti-oriented fiction shows greater deviation from realism than the riti-oriented fiction does; on the other hand the kriti-oriented fiction is closer to realism. He conceptualises the history of the novel in Marathi in terms of a wide spectrum accommodating the three tendencies.

Nativism is thus a style of thinking about literary history in terms of the native traditions as seen engaged

in a dialectic with the social morality of the writers and the social reality in what they write. In other words, Nativism is a native style of literary historiography. It is in this sense that Nemade belongs together with Sujit Mukherjee as a critic.

The three terms riti, kriti and pratikriti, used by Nemade to describe the nature of the writer's morality, have serious stylistic implications. The three terms are not just modes of perceiving the universe, but also the modes of representing it. Nativism with its well-articulated historical perspective has a philosophy of stylistics implicit in it. The implication is that the language of literature has the context of the culture that produces it. Literature should reflect the living concerns of the society at all its levels. Further, literature must draw upon the usages and idioms from the language as used by the society. When such a description of the literary language is accepted, it follows that the works which draw upon the living language are aesthetically superior to those that draw upon the language of literary conventions. This perspective of style values the synchronic linguistic transactions between literature and the society more than the diachronic ones between literature and the prior literary conventions. The nativistic stylistics distinguishes nativism from revivalism. Nemade's book Sahityachi Bhasha

discusses the perspective of style in Nativism.

In the two essays 'Shaily' (Style) and 'Shailyche Gundharma' (Properties of Style )<sup>25</sup> in Sahityachi Bhasha, Nemade discusses his concept of style. He maintains that 'style' in literary criticism is erroneously understood in the context of language alone. It is thought of only as the linguistic style. Because of this narrow perspective, the alamkara theory gained legitimacy and the style began to be classified in terms of a qualitative hierarchy. Nemade argues that no given set of linguistic techniques can be desirable in all given aesthetic structures. The style ~~thus~~ is not made up of exclusively linguistic features. Nemade ascribes the rise of this view to the Formalist criticism propounded by Western critics from Coleridge to I.A. Richards. He disagrees with their claim that literature is autonomous, and refutes the stylistics of the alamkara school and the Formalist school. He asserts that "rarely has a Western critic presented a comprehensive theory of style".<sup>26</sup> A comprehensive theory would require the style to be considered from the perspectives of literary criticism, Aesthetics, and linguistics. It would also have to view style as a dynamic concept. Further, it would have to take the impersonal and objective frame of references of the act of creation into account. The stylistics focusing on only one of the three; literary

criticism, Aesthetics, and linguistics - would be lop-sided.

Nemade proceeds in his analysis of the concept of style with the axiomatic assumption that all readers (rasika) are members of the social institution called language, and that the sensibilities of different individuals are more or less the same kind. Inscribed within this assumption is a total rejection of the notions of 'genius' and the uniqueness of artistic creation. If language is a social institution, and so is style. When the society does not respond to a variety of styles, literary style in that society does not develop. The shifts in style originate in the corresponding shifts in the response of the society to literature. Style therefore can be defined as "the composite function of techniques used to articulate the artistic material within a given form through a given medium".<sup>27</sup> The study of style would include parameters of literature ranging from its semantic substance, the medium, the form and the techniques used, to the sociology of literature, and the history of language. These aspects of style are mutually inclusive as well as <sup>e/</sup>complimentary. The study of style therefore is very central to literary study. In Nemade's opinion, all problems of literary criticism originate in [the] shifts in style. Whenever style in literature is revolutionised, a corresponding revolution in literary theory becomes necessary.



Nemade lists the functions of style thus :

1. Selection is an important function of style where there is no selection, there is no style.
2. The second function of style is to use language which is neither conventional nor ideal, and deliberately mould language to bring it closer to the language of communication.
3. The third function is to let literariness rather than ordinariness dominate and support the formal structure with it.
4. The fourth function is to contextualise the special language.
5. The fifth function is to reformulate the formal canons.<sup>28</sup>

*Contradiction*

Similarly he lists the functions of stylistics as *analysis of*

(1) style of a literary work; (2) style of a writer; (3) style of a period; and (4) style of a form.<sup>28A</sup> While proposing this typology, he does not fail to remind his readers that stylistics does not begin its work unless the critic has a total understanding of the literary texts to be analysed, and literary texts cannot be understood unless one is aware of the entire tradition of one's language. In other words the stylistics in Marathi should begin not with French Structuralism or Russian Formalism, but with the study of Marathi language, its tradition, and its social moorings.

Since Nativism does not accept literature as autonomous, it does not think of literature as an entirely aesthetic construct. Literature is a cultural process and derives values from its involvement in the society. If literary style and form are social products, it follows

that translation of literature needs to be viewed differently. The Western theories of translation consider that poetry is untranslatable, which is not acceptable to Nemade. In the essay 'Bhashanktar Mimanseche Swarupa' (Translation study : Its Nature)<sup>29</sup> he presents translation as a field within comparative literature. This interest in translation and comparative literature is a convergence of Nativistic criticism as evinced in both Sujit Mukherjee and Nemade. He discusses the cultural, semantic, and linguistic problems of translation in this essay, and argues that they are not insurmountable. He looks at translation as a necessity for inter/cultural transmission of languages. He reminds the readers that it was through translations that the Panchatantra stories migrated from India through Baghdad and Constantinople to Europe.<sup>30</sup> In his opinion, translation study is essentially an interdisciplinary one, and can develop properly through a systematic inter-disciplinary effort.

Nemade's interest in comparative literature extends beyond translation study. He has proposed an important theory for studying literary influences. According to him the study of influences could be meaningful if it considers the context of cultural encounters involved in the process of the influences. He states :

Sujit Mukherjee

The process of combinations of languages is a part of cultural combinations, and it is therefore linked with the psychological and sociological process of language. In this process two cultures confront each other. A casual consideration of the nature of language influence reveals that the developments within the sub-system of language after such an encounter between cultures, indicate how a society comes to terms with a new situation.<sup>31</sup>

In other words, literary influence is a sub-system of cultural confrontation causing such an influence. The study of literary influence therefore does not warrant a theory with claims of universal validity. Literary influence needs to be studied as one important aspect of linguistic influence for which historical and social linguistics form important tools. In Nemade's view literary influence is of two types : (There is the influence reflected in linguistic changes caused by borrowings, and then there is the influence reflected in the changes caused by the internal developments of a language. The Eurocentric method of the study of influences unduly highlights the borrowings in Indian languages. Nemade's proposed model, on the other hand, stresses the dynamics of cultural confrontation as the main sources of literary influence. Nemade's significant work in English The Influence of English on Marathi: A Sociolinguistic and Stylistic Study, is a study of Marathi prose style from this perspective. He takes up in this work the shifts in the style of Marathi prose during the nineteenth century to show the precise nature of the impact

of English prose on it. In this work Nemade compares the samples of Marathi prose produced in the centuries before Marathi - English encounter, with those produced during the nineteenth century. This comparison helps him to establish how the influence of English has caused an alination between the style of literary prose and the spoken language. The study is carried out in the manner of a scientific, linguistic study based on abundant available data. In the light of this study one can say that Nemade's Nativism is rooted in a scholarly awareness of the history of Marathi language and literature.

Nemade's literary criticism has two important facets. It is iconoclastic and provocative and, therefore, trend-setting. On the other hand, it is scholarly and has a wide historical perspective and, therefore, it is an important contribution to serious criticism in Marathi. Within the tradition of Marathi criticism Nemade shifts the focus from Aesthetics to cultural practices. In that sense he belongs to the tradition founded by Mardhekar and further developed by Patankar, through a relationship of dissent. Besides, Nemade's criticism reflects the dominant mood in post-independence India, which requires nativisation of critical tools and concepts.

## IV

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak represents the growing community of Indian critics who feel involved in theoretical discussions without any sense of inferiority about being post-colonial subjects. She also represents the swift and radical transitions in the theoretical positions that have marked the critical scene in India in the last three decades. Her writings reflect the post-Naxalite Bengali Marxist attitude of the early seventies, the Post-structuralism and Deconstruction in their Franco-American expressions during the 'eighties, and Marxist-Feminist Post-colonialism in recent years. Spivak belongs to the community of [the] Indian critics writing in English and to that of international critics writing in the context of post-structuralist theory of literature. She has been a spokeswoman for the 'other' literature in the West, and has also been an interlocutor. She interprets the Western Theories for the Indian readers, and she interprets India for the Western ones. Spivak is thus a successor to Coomaraswamy. The major difference between them however is that Coomaraswamy interpreted Indian poetics through the Western frame of references, whereas Spivak interprets the Western theories in the Indian frame. The ideological orientation of the two projects differs in that Coomaraswamy's ideology issues from nationalism, Spivak's from Post-colonialism.

In terms of the historiography of Indian literature therefore, post-colonialism replaces nationalism. The historical continuity, though not so obvious between Coomaraswamy and Spivak inheres identical limitations. The chosen role of the interpreter suspended between the West and the East does not allow either of them a firm foothold in any Indian literature. Besides the danger of essentialising India thwarts every intellectual project they undertake.

Spivak acquired fame through her involvement in French criticism. It was her marvellous translation of Grammatology<sup>32</sup> by Jacques Derrida and her scholarly introduction to it, which made both her and Derrida famous. Subsequently Spivak's critical writings have appeared in the columns of leading critical journals in the West. In India her contribution to the Subaltern Study Collective has been widely noticed. Her interviews have adorned the pages of many periodicals and like Roland Barthes she has disseminated her ideas through seminars. Her essays have been compiled in In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural politics and her interviews in The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues.<sup>33</sup>

Throughout this century Indian literary criticism is distinguished by the tendency to employ cross-culturalism and multi-lingualism as the contexts of criticism. Spivak's work reasserts this tendency. She has translated Mahasweta

Devi's 'Draupadi' from Bengali to English. Thus her critical consciousness operates in three different languages and cultures, Bengali, English, and French.

R Her translation of Derrida is an impressive achievement. The English version by Spivak reflects the word-play, the philosophic adroitness, and the iconoclastic sense of humour of the original French text. But more than its textual virtuosity as a translation its historicity is significant. Spivak's translation stands as the first important milestone in the history of the Yale school of critics, which institutionalised Deconstruction in America. > It was in the late 1970s that Geoffrey Hartman, Paul De Man and J. Hillis-Miller made Deconstruction fashionable in Anglo-American criticism. Thus Spivak has a role to play in bringing the era of American New Criticism to an end.

The purpose of Spivak's preface to Of Grammatology is to introduce the stylistic peculiarities and the philosophic turn of Derrida's prose to the English readers. It also provides a historical perspective on Deconstruction. Spivak takes great pains to establish the philosophic @ genealogy of Deconstructive criticism. She never tires of reminding her readers that Derrida leans <sup>more</sup> heavily on Heidegger than on Nietzsche :

Heidegger stands between Derrida and Nietzsche. Almost on every occasion that Derrida writes of Nietzsche, Heidegger's reading is invoked. It is

as if Derrida discovers his Nietzsche through and against Heidegger. In the Grammatology he writes : "..... rather than protect Nietzsche from the Heideggerian reading, we should perhaps offer him up to it completely.<sup>34</sup>

She also points out the differences between Heidegger and Nietzsche, particularly the ones which are pertinent in the context of Derrida's grammatology. In explicating the non-logocentric thrust of Derrida's grammatology, linguistics anthropology and philosophy, Spivak does not fail to point out the metaphysics inherent in Derrida's writings.

Her preface to Derrida is a classic exposition of the tension between Derrida's self-referrant writing (that is, writing about writing) and the philosophy of perpetually receding meaning. Thus her preface probes the Derridean rhetoric to its utmost limits ;

Something that carries within itself the trace of a perennial alterity: the structure of the psyche, the structure of the sign. To this structure Derrida gives the name "writing". The sign cannot be taken as a homogeneous unit bridging an origin (referent) and an end (meaning), as "semiology" the study of signs would have it. The sign must be studied "under erasure", always already inhabited by the trace of another sign which never appears as such "semiology" must give place to "grammatology".<sup>35</sup>

And again;

..... if we respect Derrida's discourse, we cannot catch him out so easily. What does it show but that he is after all caught and held by the metaphysical enclosure even as he questions it, that



his text, as all others is open to an interpretation that he has done a great deal to describe? He does not succeed in applying his own theory perfectly, for the successful application is forever deferred. Difference/writing/trace as a structure is no less than a prudent articulation of the Nietzschean play of knowledge and forgetfulness.<sup>36</sup>

Spivak views ~~Derrida~~<sup>e</sup>'s contribution from the perspective of a contemporary theorist herself. She points out the difference between Derrida and the other contemporary thinkers like Lacan, Foucault, Freud, Heidegger, etc. However, she does not identify herself totally with Derrida's point of view. There is an unfailing awareness in Spivak's critique of Derrida about her own femininity and otherness. In a provocative interpretation of Derrida's concept of writing, offered in the frame of Lacanian psychology. She writes :

Within this sexual fable of meaning, Derrida's term is dissemination. Exploiting a false etymological kinship between semantics and semen, Derrida offers this version of textuality: A sowing that does not produce plants, but is simply infinitely repeated. A semination that is not insemination but dissemination, seed spilled in vain, an emission that cannot return to its origin in the father. Not an exact and controlled polysemy, but a proliferation of always different, always postponed meanings. Speaking of the purloined letter as signifier, Lacan writes "..... a letter always arrives at its destination"..... It "always might not" ..... is the mode of Derrida's answer.<sup>37</sup>

The most original part in Spivak's preface to Of

Grammatology is her comment on the problem of translation. Translation as a literary problem is seen to have engaged the attention of most Indian critics in this century. In this dissertation, I have already referred to the views on translation held by Sri Aurobindo, Coomaraswamy, B.K. Matilal, Sujit Mukherjee, and Bhalchandra Nemade. In her concern for translation Spivak belongs with these critics. She points out, first the great difficulties in capturing Derrida's French entamer<sup>38</sup> in English, in reproducing the paradoxical and the playful style of Derrida, and in reproducing the polysemies of French into English. However she uses the very Derridian logic to justify her act of translation. Derrida has questioned the absolute privilege of the original. Spivak uses this questioning as a defense for her translation :

Within the limits of its possibility, or its apparent possibility, translation practices the difference between signified and signifier. But, if this difference is never pure, translation is even less so, and a notion of transformation must be substituted for the notion of translation : a regulated transformation of one language by another, of one text by another. We shall not have and never have had to deal with some "transfer" of pure signifieds that the signifying instrument or "vehicule" - would leave virgin and intact, from one language to another, or within one and the same language.<sup>39</sup>

Translation in this sense is a deconstructive strategy. Spivak's achievement in translating Of Grammatology and in commenting upon it has received [the] deserved acclaim.

It is remarkable that in spite of her impressive scholarship on Deconstruction Spivak does not proclaim to be a deconstructionist. Perhaps a more appropriate description of her critical position would call for the terms 'Marxist' and 'Feminist', but even within these positions she has avoided <sup>a</sup>/doctrinaire approach and philosophic essentialism. In his Forward to In Other Worlds, Colin MacCabe comments :

Spivak's feminism may well seem as initially unreadable as her deconstruction. This stems from her conjunction of a reflection of any essentialism with an emphasis on the crucial importance of examining and reappropriating the experience of the female body. While Spivak avoids the sterile debates of deconstruction, or comments on them only obliquely, she is a willing participant in feminist debates, but a participant who problematically combines positions which are often held to be antithetical.<sup>40</sup>

{ The denial of the hegemony of the female body in the feminine experience of the world is implicit in Spivak's treatment of the feminine being (dasein in the Heideggerean sense). This is where Marxism takes precedence over Psycho-analysis in Spivak's Feminism. In correspondence with her Marxist - Feminism she feels attracted to the Marxist interpretation of value as an essential economic commodity.

One way of moving into Marx is in terms of use-value, exchange-value, and surplus-value. Marx's notion of use-value is that which pertains to a thing as it is directly consumed by an agent. Its exchange-value (after the emergence of the money form) does not relate to its direct fulfillment

of a specific need, but is rather assessed in terms of what it can be exchanged for in either labour-power or money. In this process of abstracting through exchange, by making the worker work longer than necessary for subsistence wages or by means of labor-saving machinery, the buyer of the laborer's work gets more (in exchange) than the worker needs for his subsistence while he makes the thing. This "more-worth" ..... is surplus-value.<sup>41</sup>

*direction* → It may be interesting to recall Tagore's theory of Surplus emotion as the basis of creativity, to illustrate which he gives the example of a woman's expression of her personality.<sup>42</sup> If one poses these two views together one can see the ideological progression among Bengali intellectuals of this century. What Tagore considered to be a privileged aspect of personality is considered by Spivak as the socially disabling aspect of womanhood. Her theoretical writing shares the quest for discovering and regaining selfhood, which in her case is Feminine and post-colonial selfhood. It is from this quest that she generates her gender criticism. Analysing the ideas of Marx and Freud on the question of gender, she concludes :

*val?* These are some questions that may be asked of the Freudian and Marxist "grounds" of theoretical "bases" that operate our ideas of world and self and say that the business of literary criticism is neither your gender ..... nor the theories of revolution or psychoanalysis. Criticism must remain resolutely neuter and practical. One should not mistake the grounds out of which the ideas of world and self are produced with the business of the appreciation of the literary text ..... Part of the feminist enterprise might well be to provide "evidence" so that these great male

texts do not become great adversaries, or models from whom we take our ideas and then revise or reassess them. These texts must be rewritten so that there is new material for the grasping of the production and determination of literature within the general production and determination of consciousness and society.<sup>43</sup>

However Spivak's use of the terms 'literature', 'criticism' and 'gender' carries with it a caution coming from her race sensitivity. She argues that history is the most important element in the analysis of ideas and texts. She puts both Freud and Marx to a close historical scrutiny so as to expose their Eurocentrism. Thus logocentrism, Phallogentrism, and Eurocentrism come under attack in Spivak's critical writings.

In the matter of race-sensitive analysis, the chief problem of American feminist criticism is its identification of racism as such with the constitution of racism in America. Thus, today I see the object of investigation to be not only the history of "Third World Women" or their testimony but also the production, through the great European theories, often by way of literature, of the colonial object. As long as American feminists understand "history" as a positivistic empiricism that scorns "theory" and therefore remains ignorant of its own, the "Third World" as its object of study will remain constituted by those hegemonic First World intellectual practices.<sup>44</sup>

? It is in her critique of centers and origins that Spivak displays her Nativism. Her extensive work on Western philosophers and theories does not ever overlook the fact that knowledge is generated within specific cultural conditions, and that dissociated from these

conditions it loses its value as knowledge. In her interpretation the Western forms of knowledge imposed on the third world, are a kind of surplus employed for political exploitation. Implicit in this position is the plea for nativising knowledge. It is important to note here that though Spivak deals with the Western theories, her orientation differs from the critical orientation of Mardhekar's generation, as Spivak constantly brings her Nativism to bear upon the Western theories.

Spivak shares her interest in translation and literary history with Mukherjee and Nemade. Her historiography is consistent with her Marxism-Feminism. It is a historiography which agitates against the hegemony of centers and origins. Spivak advocates writing of history from the perspective of the rebellious; and it is for this reason that she collaborates in the subaltern studies project.<sup>45</sup> These volumes sought to challenge the established historiography by bringing to the fore the neglected part played by the apparently non-significant events in history. The subaltern historiography is more interested in the signs of history rather than the system of history, it is interested in the micro-study more than in macro-study. Spivak comments :

A functional change in a sign-system is a violent event. Even when it is perceived as "gradual" or "failed" or yet "reversing itself" the change

itself can only be operated by the force of a crisis. What Paul de Man writes of criticism can here be extended to a subalternity that is turning things "upside down" : "In periods that are not periods of crisis, or in individuals bent upon avoiding crisis at all cost, there can be all kinds of approaches to (the social) ..... but there can be no (insurgency)". Yet, if the space for a change ..... had not been there in the prior function of the sign-system, the crisis could not have made the change happen. The change in signification - function supplements the previous function.<sup>46</sup>

*Contradiction* →

In these comments Spivak tries to combine Derrida's grammatology with the Marxist vision of history, and she reads history as a text of highly sensitive signs. In this vision, the margins became more meaningful than the centers. In her comments on Of Grammatology she brought a historical perspective to bear upon Derrida's grammatology. In [the] subaltern studies, Spivak brings Derridean linguistics to bear upon social history. Thus her role is that of a mediator between the forms of knowledge.

In her mediations, Feminism merges with Marxism, Marxism with Deconstruction and Deconstruction with anti-colonialism. Philosophically speaking, Spivak's work is a continuous and vigorous mediation between herself as the subject and forms of knowledge as the object. In conclusion to her review of The Subaltern Studies, she writes :

..... I have repeatedly emphasized the complicity between subject and object of investigation. My role in this essay, as subject of investigation,

has been entirely parasitical, since my object has been the subaltern studies themselves. Yet I am part of their object as well. Situated within the current academic theatre of cultural imperialism, ..... I bring news of power-lines within the palace. Nothing can function without us, yet the part is at least historically ironic. What of the post-structuralist suggestion that all work is parasitical, ..... that critic (historian) and text (subaltern) are always "beside themselves"? The chain of complicity does not halt .....47

The paralogy of which Spivak speaks is the only possibility left open for a critic who is at once subjected to the pressures of logocentrism, Eurocentrism, and Phallogentrism. In opening up the possibility of writing [the] Feminist-Marxist and Post-colonial criticism, Spivak is also extending the potential of Nativism beyond the political. In Mukherjee, Nativism has nationalistic fervour. In Nemade it <sup>is</sup> <sup>ed</sup> concerns with the language of a culture and the culture of a language. In Spivak it takes on other forms, forms related to the otherness of the subject which include the dasein of femininity, the marginal of Post-coloniality, and the subaltern of [the] historicity. Spivak's contribution to Nativism is an ennobling and a liberating trend in criticism. However her status of an expatriate Indian writing about literary issues, which transcend national borders, involves the need for redefining the relationship between nationalism and nativism. Spivak's criticism has no nationalistic bias and yet it gels with nativism because of its ideological stand. It raises



interesting questions related to the identity of a modern critic. She has said that "Indianness is not a thing that exists".<sup>48</sup> For her, her identity is a more philosophical

issue made complex by her personal history of multiple migrations. One can conclude that Spivak's nativism is more rooted in the notion of selfhood than in the notion of nationhood.

# V

Homi K. Bhabha, an expatriate Indian, has come into prominence as a critic during the last decade. His contribution has appeared in literary and theoretical journals of international repute. Many of them have been noticed as being critical statements of importance. The anthology of essays, Nation and Narration<sup>49</sup> edited by him includes essays by many contemporary critics, which speaks for Bhabha's standing in the field of literary criticism today. Next to Spivak, he ranks the foremost among the Indian critics who have acquired a major reputation. It must at once be added that Bhabha has not set any critical trend affecting the production or reception of literature in India. It must also be added that he does not write about any specific Indian language or literature. The sphere of his activity is 'India' as a political and cultural notion operative in the Western literature and

thought. He is an 'Indian' critic precisely in the way that Edward Said is an orientalist. Said does not write about the literatures in Persian, Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Sanskrit. He writes about the writings about these. Similarly Bhabha does not write about Indian languages and literature. He writes about the Western writings about them. Within his chosen area of interest he shows an obsessive concern for the colonial period. Thus he performs through his criticism the function of disabusing the Western critique of India from the perspective of an expatriate intellectual trying to seek the dual citizenship of the two vastly different intellectual worlds. In terms of the historical and the sociological contexts, Bhabha represents the new ideological trend which encourages increasing interaction between the West and India. His concerns are like those of the creative writers who have moved from the colonial margin to the center, who possess the ambivalent wish of belonging to both, and who try to engage in an incessant deconstruction of the center. Bhabha's criticism does not have any direct relevance to British literature. Nor does it have any direct relevance to Indian literature. He belongs to the area of the middle passage, fashionably described as the 'Post-Colonial discourse'. This discourse, made (so) by Said, has one foot in the political history of domination and the other foot in the post-structuralist theory. However one would have ignored Bhabha

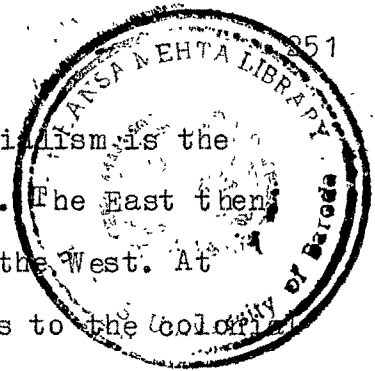
as a critic had he been the only Indian engaged in this dual enterprise. With the tremendous growth in English-language education in India, and the consequent cultural ambivalence involved in the sociology of multi-linguality, the number of Indians operating in the post-colonial discourse is rapidly increasing. Bhabha is the most obvious example of this tendency. I wish to discuss briefly two of his major essays in the following paragraphs so as to indicate the place of this new trend in the discourse of Nativism in Indian criticism.

Perhaps the <sup>best</sup> [most well]-known essay by Bhabha is 'Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree Outside Delhi, May 1817', first published in 'Critical Inquiry' and subsequently reprinted in Race, Writing and Difference.<sup>50</sup> This title misleadingly suggests that Bhabha is engaged in deconstruction of history in the manner of Foucault and Derrida. But when one learns that the title of Bhabha's essay is borrowed from a book on literary history with the same title by Franco Moretti<sup>51</sup>, the exact nature of Bhabha's enterprise becomes clear. Moretti's historiography tries to combine the analysis of the variables with the constants in history. Moretti sees an eternal recurrence of events in the course of a given history. Bhabha reads the history of the colonial encounter in terms of a recurrence of inter-textuality.

In his interpretation the history of colonialism is the history of the Western writing of the East. The East then becomes a text produced and reproduced by the West. At another level the West offers written texts to the colonial world as a means of emancipation. When these two tendencies combine, the means of emancipation becomes the Western fantasy of the non-West. Bhabha is interested in pointing out the role played by the Western text in the history of the colonial domination :

There is a scene in the cultural writings of English colonialism which repeats so insistently after the early nineteenth century - and, through that repetition, so triumphantly inaugurates a literature of empire that I am bound to repeat it once more. It is the scenario, played out in the wild and worthless wastes of colonial India, Africa, the Caribbean, of the sudden, fortuitous discovery of the English book. It is, like all myths of origin, memorable for its balance between epiphany and enunciation. The discovery of the book is, at once, a moment of originality and authority, as well as a process of displacement that, paradoxically, makes the presence of the book wondrous to the extent to which it is repeated, translated, misread, displaced. It is ..... an insignia of colonial authority and a signifier of colonial desire.....52

> The colonial domination is thus a play of signs. In this play the colonial subject is the sign taken for wonder by the coloniser. This sign is invested with meaning by the coloniser himself. Thus colonisation is read by Bhabha as a semiological relationship in which the colonised function as empty signs to be used by the colonising 'author'. Colonialism produces a vast and repetitive texts of such



writing based on the relationship of domination. Discussing Conrad's portrayal of Africa Bhabha says :

Written as they are in the name of the father and the author, these texts of the civilizing mission immediately suggest the triumph of the colonialist moment in early English Evangelism and modern English literature. The discovery of book installs the sign of appropriate representation : the word of God, truth, art creates the conditions for a beginning, a practice of history and narrative. But the institution of the Word in the wilds is also an *Entstellung*, a process of displacement, distortion, dislocation, repetition - the dazzling light of literature sheds only areas of darkness. Still the idea of the English book is presented as universally adequate : like the "metaphoric writing of the West", it communicates "the immediate vision of the thing freed from the discourse that accompanied it, or even encumbered it".<sup>53</sup>

Bhabha's analysis of Conrad is novel; but the implication of his analysis is still more valuable. The implication is that literature, art, and other forms of knowledge are necessarily conditioned by power relations.

The West looked at itself as the origin, as the source of authority and order. It then tried to impose the same order on the empty signs that the dominated world in its view was. The process of domination through textual politics involved the sharp distinction between the self and the other. Due to this distinction the Western self gets formed by the non-Western other, as much as the non-Western other gets deformed by the Western self. Since such an influence is inevitable, the Western perception of itself as the origin becomes questionable. Every

Conrad's new  
writing

✓

colonial western text tries to invoke the authority of the origin by referring to textual precedents, which in turn defer the origin. The authority of the West, and its authorship in relation to the East, <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ therefore deeply embedded in ambivalence :

C It is this ambivalence that makes the boundaries of colonial "positionality" - the division of self/other - and the question of colonial power - the differentiation of coloniser/colonized - different from both the Hegelian Master/slave dialectic or the phenomenological projection of Otherness. It is a difference produced within the act of enunciation as a specifically colonial articulation of those two disproportionate sites of colonial discourse and power : the colonial scene as the invention of historicity, mastery, mimesis or as the "other scene" of Entstellung, displacement, fantasy, psychic defence, and an open textuality. Such a display of difference produces a mode of authority that is agonistic (rather than antagonistic). Its discriminatory effects are visible in those split subjects of the racist stereotype - the simian Negro, the effeminate Asiatic male - which ambivalently fix identity as the fantasy of difference. To recognise the difference of the colonial presence is to realize that the colonial text occupies that space of double inscription, hallowed - no, hollowed.....54

In Bhabha's rendering the colonial experience creates <sup>a</sup> hybridity of forms of knowledge. The colonial forms of knowledge cease referring to the objective world directly and start referring to it through metaphors. However the displacement is not just a problem in the history of colonialism, it is the very essence of it. He argues ;

..... colonial hybridity is not a problem of geneology or identity between two different cultures which can then be resolved as an issue of cultural relativism. Hybridity is problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonialist disavowal, so that other "denied" knowledge enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority - its rule of recognition ..... what is irremediably estranging in the presence of the hybrid - in the revaluation of the symbol of national authority as the sign of colonial difference - is that the difference of cultures can no longer be identified or evaluated as objects of epistemological or moral contemplation : they are not simply there to be seen or appropriated.<sup>55</sup>

The displacement and the hybridity that Bhabha mentions are also to be seen in the history of nationalism. Both nationalism and colonialism have been seen to evolve simultaneously, and both involve the relationship of political domination. Nations are the structures which invest the signs i.e., the people they formalise, with meanings which work through metaphors. The process involves radical displacement of identities of the marginal communities. Thus Nations are narratives that lend metaphoric status to the signs they create. Again Nations perceive themselves in terms of their relations with other Nations. The self - other dialectic generates an ontological hybridity. In his essay 'Dissemination' Bhabha states that nationalism creates structures of "undecidability at the frontiers of cultural hybridity."<sup>56</sup>

hybridity Nations dehistoricise the cultural narratives. At the same time they interrupt the social space. The hybridity involved, therefore pervades the temporal as well as the spatial. Drawing upon Benedict Anderson's concept of imagined communities, Bhabha suggests that Nationalism/like colonialism/calls for a distortion in the racial memory. It creates people as free floating signs trying to tell a non-existent story. He says :

It is from this incommensurability in the midst of the everyday that the nation speaks its disjunctive narrative. It begins, if that's the word, from that anterior space within the arbitrary sign which disturbs the homogenising myth of cultural anonymity. From the margins of modernity, at the insurmountable extremes of storytelling, we encounter the question of cultural difference as the perplexity of living, and writing, the nation.<sup>57</sup>

The narrative that a nation is, causes a scattering of the signs it uses towards the construction of the structures of political narratives. In his editorial introduction to Nation and Narration, Bhabha writes :

Nations, like narratives, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind's eye. Such an image of the nation - or narration - might seem impossibly romantic and excessively metaphorical, but it is from those traditions of political thought and literary language that the nation emerges as a powerful historical idea in the West. An idea whose cultural compulsion lies in the impossible unity of the nation as a symbolic force ..... large and liminal image of the nation ..... is a particular ambivalence that haunts the idea of the nation, the language of those who write of it and the lives of those who live it.<sup>58</sup>



Bhabha's criticism undertakes the task of deconstruct-<sup>ct-</sup>  
 \cting history with a view to exposing the relations of  
 political domination which construct the forms of knowledge.

His stance is explicitly non-national. It is then meant  
 that knowledge is generated within the context of specific  
 power structures. Bhabha argues that historicising is the  
 only way to problematise the given forms of knowledge. In  
 this sense he can be termed a nativistic critic. His  
 Nativism is evident in his emphasis on anti-colonialism  
 and historicism. If Bhabha's argument is nativistic in  
 essence, his method and the frame of references do not  
 qualify for that term. One sees a certain ambivalence  
 of attitude in Bhabha's own cultural hybridity which is  
 perhaps inevitable in the post-colonial discourse. His  
 writing shows that Nativism which does not refer to the  
 actual literary practices and which carries the onus of  
 excessive theorising, develops attitudes not congenial  
 with the spirit of Nativism.

Four nativistic and post-colonial critics are studied  
 in this chapter. Nemade uses nativistic strategies to  
 define axiomatic concepts such as literature, form, and  
 style. For him Nativism is inextricably linked with a  
 specific language - culture. Mukherjee employs Nativism  
 to read literary history within the framework of nationalism.  
 He argues in favour of the comparative method of literary

study. His approach is, thus pragmatic. Gayatri Spivak brings in the gender question in her version of Nativism. She also brings in the colonial issues, and so does Homi Bhabha. However Bhabha rejects the framework of nationalism which Mukherjee finds useful. Bhabha's perspective is historical as is Nemade's. But Bhabha tends to be theoretical while Nemade's interest is in practical criticism. Nativism is a multi-faceted critical trend in Post-colonial India; and it has its distinctive theoretical assumptions which make it different from the three trends discussed in the earlier chapters.

## Notes and References

1. The works like Octave Mannoni's Prospero and Caliban : The Psychology of Colonisation, trans. by P. Powesland (Prager, New York, 1964), Frantz Fanon's, The Wretched of the Earth, trans. by Constance Farrington, (Mentor Books, New York, 1969), and Albert Memmi's The Coloniser and the Colonised, (Orion Press, New York 1985), still remain central to the colonial debate in literature.
2. Sujit Mukherjee, Towards a Literary History of India, (Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, 1975), Some Positions on a Literary History of India, (Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore, 1981).
3. A.K. Warder, Albrecht Weber, and Maurice Winternitz each wrote on the history of Indian literature. But their focus was on the Sanskrit literature, and they too failed in creating a viable historiography for the later day literatures in India to follow.
4. Mukherjee, Towards a Literary History of India, 8-9.
5. Ibid., 17.
6. Ibid., 24.
7. Ibid., 35.
8. Mukherjee, Some Positions on a Literary History of India, 6.
9. Ibid., 6.
10. Majority of Jan Gonda's works deal with vedic Sanskrit literature. Though his approach in general, is 'historical' he does not seem to offer any precise method for evolving a history of Indian Literature.
11. Mukherjee, Some Positions on a Literary History of India, 44.
12. Sujit Mukherjee, Translation as Discovery: And Other Essays on Indian Literature in English Translation, (Allied Publishers Pvt.Ltd., New Delhi, 1981).

13. The titles of the chapters are listed from the 'contents' of Translation as Discovery.
14. Bhalchandra Nemade's Kosla (1963) has been generally acclaimed as a revolutionary novel which brought about the change in the form and the idiom of Marathi novel.
15. Bhalchandra Nemade, Sahityachi Bhasha, (Saket Prakashan, Aurangabad, 1987), Tikasvayamvara, (Saket Prakashan, Aurangabad, 1990).
16. Bhalchandra Nemade, Tukaram, (Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1980), The Influence of English on Marathi : A Sociolinguistic and Stylistic Study, Rajahansa, Panaji, Goa, 1990).
- > 17. Bhalchandra Nemade, 'Marathi Novel 1950-75', Setu, Vol.II, No.1 (1986), 30-31.
19. Ibid., 31.
19. Ibid., 29.
20. Ibid., 40.
21. Ranajit Desai's Swami, is though a historical novel Nemade is very critical of it. In his opinion, the novel is hindered by its fusion of family structure and cultural lore specific to Marathi. It thus fails to have the required historical morality, which Nemade considers obligatory for it.
22. Nemade, 'Marathi Novel (1950-75)', 45-47.
23. Ibid., 29-30.
24. Ibid., 29-30.
25. Nemade, Sahityachi Bhasha, 35-43, 44-54.
26. Ibid., 38.
27. Ibid., 40.
28. Ibid., 44.

29. Ibid., 78-85.
30. Ibid., 84.
31. Nemade, Tikasvayamvara, 243.
32. Jacques Derrida, Of Grammatology, tr. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, (The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1976).
33. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, In Other Worlds : Essays in Cultural Politics, (Methuen and Co. Ltd., New York and London, 1987), The Post-Colonial Critic : Interviews Strategies Dialogues, ed. Sarah Harasym, (Routledge, New York and London, 1990).
- 33A. Spivak, In other Worlds, 179-196.
34. Derrida, Of Grammatology, XXXIII.
35. Ibid., XXXIX.
36. Ibid., XLV
37. Ibid., LXV
38. Ibid., LXXXV-LXXXVI
39. Ibid., LXXXVII.
40. Spivak, In Other Worlds, XIII.
41. Ibid., 78-79.
42. Rabindranath Tagore, Personality: Lectures Delivered in America, (Macmillan and Co. Ltd., Bombay, 1917/70).
43. Spivak, In Other Worlds, 81.
44. Ibid., 81-82.
45. Ranajit Guha, ed., Subaltern Studies : Writings on South Asian History and Society, Vol.V (Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1987).

46. Spivak, In Other Worlds, 197-198.
47. Ibid., 221.
48. Spivak, Post-Colonial Critic, 39.
49. Homi Bhabha, ed., Nation and Narration, (Routledge, London and New York, 1990).
50. Henry Louis Gates Jr., ed., Race, Writing and Difference, (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1986).
51. Franco Moretti, Signs Taken for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Forms, tr. Susan Fischer and others, (Verso, London, 1983).
52. Gates, Race, Writing and Difference, 163.
53. Ibid., 166.
54. Ibid., 169.
55. Ibid., 175.
56. Bhabha, Nation and Narration, 312.
57. Ibid., 311.
58. Ibid., 1.