

BOOK REVIEWS

Robert Magliola, *Derrida on the Mend*, Perdue University Press, West Lafayette, 1984, PP. 238.

Harold Coward, *Derrida and Indian Philosophy*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1990, PP. 200.

One of the objects of comparative literature is universalisation of knowledge and human experience. Therefore in any comparative study when one culture is juxtaposed with another, it is expected that the result must be an improvement upon the branch of knowledge concerned notwithstanding the finer nuances that may discriminate one culture from the other. When Derrida is juxtaposed with the Indian intellectual tradition, it should not be desired to discover only the analogical elements in both the contexts, historically demonstrating either Derrida's borrowings from or his being anticipated by the Indian tradition. What the reader expects is that he would be able to understand Derrida better—his power and limitations, his strength and weakness, the universal acceptability of his ideas in the light of similar ways of thinking in the Indian tradition.

Although Derrida himself charges the East with variations of logocentrism and claims the radical novelty of his own ideas, Magliola observes that Deconstructionism was anticipated by Nagarjuna a Buddhist philosopher of the 1st century A. D. and that too by reinstating logic while Derrida is a victim of the logical quandary which he is unable to resolve. Magliola elaborates his observation cogently and justifies the benefits of his comparative study by pointing out that each author is better understood by the writings of the other : Nagarjuna's abstruse system of the 'middle-path' can be understood by a 'modern' reader in the light of Derrida's critical concepts such as 'logocentrism', differance and representation; and Derrida's fallacy of logocentrism can be resolved by Nagarjuna's logical strategy of release from logocentrism by means of logocentrism : "... for Nagarjuna the 'beyond knowing' allows for logocentric (i.e. language-bound) knowing (in a way which frees him from Derrida's quandary concerning entrapment in language); and still Nagarjuna's 'beyond knowing' is not itself logocentric." (P. 88). But the fundamental question is : "is there any scope for this 'beyond knowing' or knowledge of any translinguistic reality

in Derrida ? The basic difference between the two thinkers is clear enough for discouraging any systematic comparison. For Derrida, experience of reality is essentially linguistic—"There is nothing outside of the text", whereas for Nagarjuna operation of language is valid relatively within only the phenomenal world. His controversial doctrines of two-truths and emptiness imply that the linguistic/conventional/phenomenal world/truth is devoid/empty of the translinguistic/ultimate world/reality and similarly the latter is devoid/empty of the former. Nagarjuna is not a logocentrist in the sense that firstly, he believes that the ultimate reality is translinguistic i. e. cannot be realized/understood by language and secondly, (unlike the orthodox philosophic systems) he rejects the idea that ultimate reality is a presence of which the phenomenal world is a Representation. The linguistic world is of course constituted by images only—but not the images of the translinguistic reality. This world is indeterminate only in the sense that no predicate can be applied and the type of negation involved here is not of choice type, but of exclusion type. Therefore Nagarjuna's attitude is completely non-committal. He is attached neither to any identity nor to any difference and in doing so he successfully claims to have forwarded no theory, nor is he prepared to believe the existence/non-existence of any theory. On the other hand, Derrida's negation is of choice type since he is committed to difference and as such he cannot claim that he has defied theories or that his own theory is always already deconstructed. Similarly, the Buddhist doctrine of eternal flux is only marginally applicable to Derrida's doctrine of dissemination.

Another fundamental question: can Derrida be mended in the light of Nagarjuna's thought ? The simple answer is : Derrida mended will cease to be Derrida. The fascination of Derrida's challenge of structuralism has already waned in the nineties and his writings will be read by the posterity more as forms of literature than as philosophical criticism deserving any comparison with any established philosophical tradition such as that of India. Of course Derrida may wish to reconstruct some of his ideas regarding the indeterminacy of the linguistic text following the lines of thinking of Nagarjuna and Bhartrhari notwithstanding the basic difference in the structures of their thoughts.

Harold Coward, who followed Magliola and David Loy in attempting a comparison between Derrida and Indian philosophy, extended his range

beyond Nagarjuna and studied Derrida with Bhartrhari, Sankara and Aurobindo as well. His introduction and the first two chapters on the basic features of the two philosophical traditions Oriental and Occidental and the origin of language are characteristically lucid and interesting for both specialists and beginners. But the comparison chapters, in spite of their most convincing juxtapositions of aspects of linguistic doctrines of Derrida, Bhartrhari, Sankara and Aurobindo (Coward draws much on Magliola and Loy for his chapter on Nagarjuna), the basic question is left unanswered : what for this comparison ? Magliola suggested a mend on the part of Derrida while Coward offers fragmentary juxtapositions to suggest perhaps that some of the Indian philosophers anticipated Derrida. Such an attempt certainly helps a reader understand Derrida in a broader perspective. But the major point is that Derrida's basic structure is simply a misfit in the intellectual ecology of India as developed in both the systems of thought—orthodox and heterodox. When all the orthodox systems including the grammarian Bhartrhari presuppose the Presence/Existence of the Absolute Reality and consider the phenomenal world as Its Representation, the interest in the fragments of similarities becomes only peripheral. Even when Bhartrhari's concept of Reality is linguistic, it is not the spoken or phenomenal language that constitutes this Reality. Bhartrhari's Sabdatattava and Sankara's Brahman are all transphenomenal/translinguistic concepts as is the Buddhist concept of Paramarthika in its own way. It is not understood why Coward has placed the chapter on Nagarjuna after the one on Aurobindo which should rather have been placed prior to Bhartrhari so that an attempt at constructing an integrated view of linguistic function in Nagarjuna, Bhartrhari and Sankara could have been formulated and such a view might have been focused on Derrida for better understanding and criticism of his ideas. In the philosophical tradition of India Aurobindo is certainly not immediately next to Sankara. There are many others who must have contributed a lot to the debate concerned. The chapterization is obviously anachronistic and leaves the long gap of twelve hundred years—from Sankara to Aurobindo—unbridged. Because of this structural weakness of the book, it fails to account for the debate in its appropriate form and turns out to be a collection of some essays published in fragments. Considered in this light Magliola's is rather an integrated and pioneering effort for putting Derrida to a rigorous test by an oriental system relevant in the context.

G. N. Devy, *After Amnesia : Tradition and Change in Indian Literary Criticism*, Orient Longman, Hyderabad, Bombay etc., 1992, PP. 147.

Despite its loose structure the book expresses a genuine anxiety and need of a literary criticism, both theory and practice, suitable for the study and evaluation of modern Indian literatures. The central argument of the author is that contemporary Indian literary history and criticism can be formulated by a comparative perspective on regional literary tradition such as Marathi, Gujrati, Oriya and Bengali. The author wishes to eliminate completely the impact of British colonialism and consider the regional literary traditions (which he calls *bhasa* tradition) of the pre-British period and also wants to avoid the classical and post-classical Sanskrit traditions that have ceased to be relevant in the contemporary social context. He understands that according to Panini an intellectual discourse must receive social legitimacy as a system of knowledge, and literary criticism as a sub-system of intellectual discourse stands "on the point of intersection of an existing body of literature, a logically formulated thing, and a society's acceptance of the correspondence between these two." (P. 90). He traces changes in the history of Sanskrit critical discourse from Bharata (4th c. B. C.) to Abhinavagupta (10th c.) and after that are due to changes in the socio-religious contexts, as evident, for example, in increasing the number of *Rasas* and considering the nature of *Rasa* itself. In Bharata *Rasa* is viewed as an experience of transcendental delight—*aesthetic* delight is similar to, though not identified with, *metaphysical* ecstasy. But in Visvanatha Kaviraja (14th c.) this discrimination is lost; and when Bharata numbers eight *Rasas*, later critics from Abhinavagupta to Rupa Goswami add one more—*Santa* or *Bhakti* and this addition was inevitable since the critics had to respond to the religious tension between the upper/elite class/caste and the lower class/caste and to the final victory of the latter over the former in making them realize that the highest spiritual experience was not confined to only the Vedic rituals or *metaphysical* knowledge monopolised by the higher classes: it was accessible even to the illiterate untouchable in terms of devotion or *bhakti*. The author observes that this *bhakti* tradition is the key sign of the *bhasa* tradition and it was expected that this tradition should have created its own critical discourse as distinguished from the earlier one, whereas it was unfortunately not the reality.

Then comes the principal target of the author's attack—the colonial period which caused such a forceful amnesia that even after half a century

of our political freedom, we have not recovered our cultural and intellectual health. Speaking of literary criticism, our scholars are still struggling with the defensive mechanism either by showing that our classical critics anticipated the British and European theorists, even sometimes with much greater strength or by simply juxtaposing them. Some of the Indian critics are interpreting and evaluating classical or modern Indian literature by the standards of European theories. So the colonialist complex rules everywhere and the only way of redemption is to go back to our *bhasa* tradition (pre-colonialist) and reconstruct a theory/theories and evolve the method (s) of their practice out of these *bhasa* traditions.

The book contains weaknesses galore. But I shall concentrate on a few points which are central to the crisis the author has himself envisaged and shall try to resolve his quandry which he himself has invited. It is true that we have not formulated any contemporary literary criticism. But how to evolve one? Obviously by drawing upon our tradition and applying the critic's individual talent. The same is also the process of creative literature. And what is our tradition, if not our entire history *including the colonial* one? It is again true that we still suffer from the colonial complex, but it is equally true that we are speedily recovering and the strong sign of such recovery being the very wing of the current critical movements entitled post-colonialism with which the author himself is obsessed. It is once more true that we suffered from political and cultural amnesia during the colonial period. But that was not the only or the first amnesia we suffered from. Amnesia has rather been an archetypal event in Indian cultural heritage. The very upanisadic slogan "arise, awake and approach the wise" and its echo in Swami Vivekananda reminds us that several times we have suffered from amnesia of all sorts from the spiritual one of the Upanisads to the politico-cultural one of the colonial period. Why so much anxiety for the recent one only? Besides, like the upanisadic *rishi* even during the colonial period there were some seers like Aurobindo, Coomaraswamy and S. N. Dasgupta who never suffered from amnesia and went on vindicating vigorously the values of Indian culture in its unified form. They are the path-finders—*mahajanas* who awakened us from colonialism. Instead of identifying them with the colonial victims, it will be wise to follow them. What have they done? They have imbibed the best from the ruler's culture and have assimilated it with our own. Invasion, Political and commercial domination are all unavoidable historical

phenomena in any culture. They form essential parts in the total growth of a culture. We may express our unhappiness about the pedagogic strategy of the British. But finally, that was all annulled and we learnt a great deal about many things other than what was confined to our pre-British Indo-Islamic world. How can we ignore the valuable impact of the European scientific methods through the British? We had certainly a lot, but not all and everything. The cross-cultural methodology in Jones' orientalism is certainly the path-finder for all our Indo-Western comparative intellectual activities. It is, therefore, a great futility on the part of the author to express so much venom in his monotonous rehash of the historical data—even going to the extent of condemning S. K. De for his observation that modern Bengali literature started in the mid-nineteenth century. It is an unpardonable audacity.

The author's paranthetic proposal for writing a social history of Sanskrit Poetics is most welcome, but his hypotheses based on the findings of the sociologists like Weber and Dumont is irrelevant for the purpose. Visvanatha has never *identified* aesthetic delight with metaphysical ecstasy. His metaphor of 'twins' clearly states the similarity between the two experiences—a similarity of kind and not of degree (P. 79). Similarly the tension between the transcendental and the mundane, as the author's sociologist mentors have pointed out, is neither a sign of the transition from the classical to the post-classical, nor the cause of various versions of 'salvation'. It was already there in the Upanisads. Bhakti has been highly spoken of in the *Gita*, it is certainly not a phenomenon, even in its cult form, due to the class-conflict of the medieval Islamic period. The sociological perspective of reading Sanskrit poetics misleads the author and leads him disastrously to observe that Indian culture is multiform: "It is certainly more meaningful to speak in terms of specific linguistic traditions and regions than to speak of an imaginary cultural unit and unity." (P. 3). We have different languages indeed; but not different cultures except only cultural nuances in manners and linguistic behaviour. In spite of linguistic variations we had one culture in the pre-British period and an integrated aesthetic sensibility which determined the common standard of literary criticism for all the bhasa traditions. There was no need for any other critical discourse distinguished from the earlier one. The author's expectation for such a distinguished one was therefore an undesirable utopia for the traditions themselves. Our contemporary literary tradition has also been

a common one during the colonial and post-independent period—dominance of a counter tradition of the European aesthetic movements Romanticism, Realism and Modernism. Therefore, we need a single critical method for our appreciation and evaluation of this literary culture as a whole and this method must necessarily be an evolute of the organic unification of the classical Sanskrit and the contemporary global traditions. I do not mean critical monism i. e. one method always, but that whatever the method (s), it should be equally applicable to the literatures of India—from Kashmir to Kerala and from Maharashtra to Bengal.

A. C. Sukla

Chari, V. K. : *Sanskrit Criticism* (Honolulu : University of Hawaii Press), 1990. pp. xiv + 306.

Among the Indian academics of English working in the West, Prof. V. K. Chari has earned the distinction of being a devoted scholar of Indian poetics. Through a number of his original and incisive articles he has drawn the attention of literary theorists to the peculiar relevance of Indian theories to current thinking on the subject in the West. *Sanskrit Criticism* is the culmination of his labours of a life-time and is a thorough and detailed reappraisal of Indian theories of literature. Apart from presenting critiques of the major Indian theories and setting them in comparison with Western counterparts, Chari proceeds to argue the thesis that the Indian theory of *Rasa* is singularly comprehensive and viable as a principle of definition of literature and a general theory of poetics, considerations of structure, style, generic mode, imagery and the like need to be guided by the principle of *Rasa* in the practical business of criticism. In criticising the other theories like figuration (*Alamkara*), style (*Riti*) and suggestion (*Dhvani*), he recognizes the functionality of these features in serving an evocative purpose in their context in poetry. Literature is, however, for Chari not a type of language use but a type of meaning —emotive meaning (*Rasa*), specifically.

Chari's general approach is refreshingly individual : he wants to show that the Indian theories need not be studied only in their religious and

transcendental setting as is generally supposed in the West. On the other hand, their insights and discussive tools concerning questions of language, meaning and truth in literature have an importance in any critical investigation, quite apart from their original metaphysical contexts. Chari can convincingly argue about the modernity and contemporary relevance of the Indian concepts of poetics and draws heavily on *Mimamsa* and Bhartrhari's doctrines of language and harmonizes them with the thought of Austin, Beardsley and Wittgenstein. In the presentation of his material, Chari, however, follows the traditional dialectical model of critical discussion in Sanskrit the statement of the opponent's view, its refutation, and establishment of one's own view. This gives a peculiarly argumentative flavour to the whole work.

The book is divided into ten chapters and after a brief introduction, in the following three chapters Chari gives a masterly exposition of the various aspects of the *Rasa* theory. Despite its preoccupation with emotions and affective experience, *Rasa* theory is shown to be essentially objective in its orientation. Emotion in poetry is presented as meaning inhering in an objective situation and not as private sensation. Poetic apprehension is a feeling response induced by a repeated contemplation of this emotive situation. *Rasa* experience is thus an emotional perception, not accounted for by any other modes of knowledge. The essential value of the experience is that it is pleasurable although its cognitive features are never denied. Chari argues that the *Rasa* theory holds expression of emotions to be the sole aim of literature. And from this standpoint, he provides critical reviews of all other theories—figuration, style and suggestion and asserts that formal features or figurative devices in poetry could be aesthetically significant only when there is a motive or a context for their use, the evocation of emotion or the emotive context presented in a literary work. Literature as a discourse type aims at evocation rather than expression or reporting of feelings and attitudes and in this respect it is different from utterances in ordinary situations of life. It is the presentational force of the literary discourse that is stressed by Bharata in his formula about the configuration of the conditions of an emotive situation. In these three chapters on *Rasa*, Chari not only argues for the essentiality of emotions in poetry but also makes a detailed discussion of Bharata's *Rasa-Sutra* and illustrates the various points involved in it through analysis of particular literary works

in English. In fact, chapter 4 : 'The Logic of the Emotions', is a model of practical criticism through an application of the *Rasa* poetics.

In chapters 5, 6 and 7—'Modes of Meaning : Metaphor': 'Suggestion', 'Style and meaning'—Chari addresses himself to one of the profound topics of Sanskrit criticism, the problem of literary semantics. In these chapters, the author presents detailed critiques of the concepts as discussed by the Sanskrit theorists of language and literature and often draws in sights from the Western aestheticians and philosophers to make his critiques comprehensive. The dominant influence on Chari's thought, as is admitted by him, is of the *Mimamsa* philosophy and naturally, the realist Chari fails to appreciate fully the transcendental roots of the *Dhvani* theory. Further, given his point of view of the essentiality of *Rasa* which is partially confirmed by the *Dhvani* theorists themselves, his critique draws attention to this ambivalence in the *Dhvani* theory. In terms of Chari's favoured doctrine of *Rasa*, emotions are said to be expressed in poetry by their objects and situations, not by virtue of any special arrangement or power of the words. The eighth chapter, the Logic of Interpretation, presents the *Mimamsa* view of interpretation that verbal meanings are explicable purely in terms of the linguistic system in which they operate and through the general principles of reasoning without any reference to the author or the interpreter of the text. The autonomy, impersonality and unity of meaning as well as the rules of interpretation elaborated in the hermeneutical philosophy of *Mimamsa* are set against the Western theories represented by Hirsh, Juhl and the reader-oriented critics.

The next chapter, 'Poetic Apprehension and Poetic Truth', deals with the nature and status of poetic knowledge and the related question of the referentiality of poetic statements as viewed by the Sanskrit critics. Here, too, Chari discusses the Indian ideas in the context of contemporary Western thought. There is a detailed discussion of the concepts of *Sadharani Karana* and poetic imitation and illusion as propounded by Abhinavagupta, Lallata and Sankuka. Poetic knowledge, according to the Indian view, has self-evident validity and is not contradicted by experience. Hence, the question of truth is, in a sense, irrelevant to poetic judgment. The final chapter, 'The validity of *Rasa* as a Theoretical concept', concludes that of all the rival doctrines advanced by the Sanskrit critics, *Rasa* alone promises to be the best definition of literature and accounts for

all its elements and values although Chari recognises certain limitations of the theory.

One marvels at Prof. Chari's scholarship and intimate knowledge of Sanskrit critical and philosophical texts as well as modern developments in Western literary theory and linguistic philosophy. His thesis is argued convincingly and with perceptiveness and the standard of scholarship set by Chari is difficult to surpass. *Sanskrit Criticism* will remain as the *magnum opus* of Prof. Chari and a challenging model for the serious students of Indian poetics.

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Kushwaha, M. S. (ed.) : *Indian Poetics and Western thought* (Lucknow : Argo Publishing House), 1988, PP. xii+266.

New Perspective on Indian Poetics (Lucknow · Argo Publishing House), 1990 viii+111.

One of the most interesting developments in the contemporary Indian critical scene has been the publication of several book-length studies and articles on Indian poetics/sanskrit criticism by the academics of University departments of English. This reflects a growing realization by the Indian scholars of English that imitative work on Western critical lines (the usual labours of the Indian academics) will not take them far enough in the highly competitive world of modern literary scholarship unless they develop an Indian critical scholarship in English that is truly Indian in perspective while benefitting from the Western thought and insights. The two volumes edited by Kushwaha are, as he observes in the "Preface" to the first one, "a modest step in this direction". (p. viii) While the first volume is mainly comparative, the second one offers some unorthodox and original essays on certain categories of Indian poetics. Of the nineteen authors of the two collections, four figure in both the volumes and the twenty three essays are mostly journal articles although some are excerpts from published books. The miscellaneous nature of the essays in the volumes precludes any firm and coherent organization of the material and pointed effect on the readers.

Indian Poetics and Western Thought is divided into three sections. The first one comprising five essays compares Indian poetics and Western criticism in broad and general terms. Prof. Srinivas Iyengar's opening essay is an overview of the two traditions with close-ups on Mimesis and *Rasa* theory and Katharsis and *Dhvani* theory attempting "an exercise in loud thinking...to forge a universal aesthetics" (p. 13). The categories under comparison in the next essay by Prof. Ayyappa Paniker are, however, numerically more : relation of aesthetics with metaphysics and ethics; distinction between poetics and rhetoric; the concepts of poet as seer and maker; the idea of aesthetic depersonalization; the principle of propriety; figurative language and poetic genres. Prof. Paniker does not rest contented after drawing up this inventory of similarities but goes further to show the differences as in the absence of the Western historical and sociological approaches in Indian poetics. Dhavle's essay on Indian poetics and Modern

Hermeneutics focusing on literary language, meaning and interpretation asserts the peculiar modernity of the Indian thought. The final two essays in this section : 'Indian Poetics and New Criticism' by Prof. P. S. Sastri and 'Bharat and the Western concept of *Dvava*' by V. Y. Kantak are more substantial and detailed studies than the others and so, more illuminating and satisfying to the critical reader. Although both the pieces had featured in earlier collections, they still retain the freshness of their appeal.

The second section consisting of nine essays institutes comparison between Indian concepts of *Rasa*, *Dhvani*, *Riti-Guna*, *Vakrokti*, *Alamkara*, *Sadharanikarana* and *Anchitya* and their analogues in Western criticism. Prof. Krishna Rayan argues for the relevance and applicability of *Rasa-Dhvani* poetics by updating the same with present-day literary theory and criticism. This has been a persistent concern of Rayan in all his publications and in the essay, 'The *Dhvani* theory : A Restatement' collected in the second volume under review, he also argues for a revised and modernized *Rasa-Dhvani* poetics accommodating the Western Romantic-symbolist poetics of suggestion. Rayan demonstrates the viability of his up dated theory of suggestion drawing on the old Indian and the modern Western ideas as a framework of criticism by application to four Oriya poems in English translation. While Rayan blueprints a model of formalist poetics as the basis for an Indian school of criticism, V. K. Chari provides the alternative of a contentual model in his essay, '*Rasa* as a General Theory of Poetry'. Like Rayan, Chari has been a life-long, devoted scholar of Indian poetics and has the additional advantage of being an avid student of both Indian and Western philosophies of language. With unusual perceptiveness and cogent arguments, he makes a plea for accepting the *rasa* concept as "a most convincing account of poetic semantics and a consistent general theory of poetry" (p. 121). A similar conclusion about the superiority of *Rasa* doctrine is reached by A. C. Sukla when he compares it with Eliot's theory of impersonality in "T. S. Eliot and the theory of *Rasa*" and points out confusions in the critic's theory of objective correlative and expression of emotion in art.

Gokak's essay elaborates a syncretic view of style "including constituents ranging from affixes and lexis to vision" (p. 140) and shows how the Indian concept of *guna* can better explain the transformation of language into style in literary art. Pathak makes a masterly survey of the statements of different theorists of *vakrokti* and their counterparts in the West

to highlight the common view that a certain obliquity or indirection characterizes the language of poetry. Venkata Subbaiah discovers no one-to-one correspondence between Kuntaka's six types of *Vakrakti* and the different types of linguistic deviations in poetry formulated by Geoffrey N. Leech. Kapil Kapoor studies the theories of *Alamkara* and *Laksana* and finds surprising parallels between the Indian thinking and the Western on the nature of metaphor and its interpretation. Mohan Thawpi finds similarity between the Indian doctrine of *Sadharanikarana* and some Western theories! Kant's 'Disinterested satisfaction', Bullough's 'Psychical Distance', Eliot's 'Impersonality,' Richards's 'Synaesthesia' and the concept of 'Empathy'. *Auchitya* and the Western ideas regarding decorum and propriety are discussed by the editor in the final essay of this section to show that the Indian treatment of the concept is illustrative rather than prescriptive and, therefore, better suited for employment in literary discourse.

The third section consists of only two essays dealing with the application of Indian poetics to interpretation and appreciation of Western literature. S. K. Ghose instances Sri Aurobindo's *Future poetry* as an original and provocative study of English poetry of different ages from a strictly Indian view point in criticism. Although Prof. Sen Gupta had expressed dissatisfaction about certain aspects of the theories of *Rasa* and *Dhvani* in an earlier publication (see the excerpt included in the second of the books reviewed here) in the later work, '*Hamlet* in the light of Indian Poetics', he ably demonstrates the efficacy of those theories in explaining satisfactorily the vexed problems of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. One wishes that the editor had collected more of such pieces highlighting the validity and relevance of Indian poetics in applied / practical criticism rather than amassing a rid catalogues of parallels between Indian poetics and Western critical theory.

The second volume contains seven essays of which the two by Rayan and Sen Gupta have been already referred to. The unconventionality and provocativeness claimed for some of the essays seem to be of dubious nature. Mukund Lath studies the making of *Natyasastra* through a structural approach usually employed in the social sciences and discovers that *Rasa*, far from being an aesthetic concept, is a principle of combining elements of discrete fields of aesthetic activity into a composite, unified whole. For

Prof. Barlingay, Bharata meant by *Rasa* an object in itself created by the dramatist's art and not an experience relished by *Sahrdaya* as Abhinavagupta and others interpreted it to be. While it is true that Abhinavagupta was responsible for psychologising *Rasa*, it is wrong to chastise him for misreading Bharata, for the cue for the later development of Bharata's *Rasa* theory is there in his *Natyasastra* in the use of the term in both the senses. Prof. Gokak's essay, '*Rasa. A psychological Interpretation*' argues for an extended theory of *Rasa* in the light of modern psychology and changing human experience through the ages. It is no longer possible to stick to the eight basic emotions recognized by Bharata in view of our knowledge of new and complex emotions and the factors deepening and intensifying there.

Chari's critique of the concept of *Rasa-Dhvani* points out infelicities in the doctrine by asserting that it is the *vibhavadi*, the causal factors, which bring forth the *Rasa* and, therefore, to posit a special emotive semantics of language is beside the point. *Rasa-Dhvani* is more a matter of the emotive context than of any special suggestive power inhering in the words. The question of *vibhavadi* signifying an *arthantara* which is central to *Dhvani*, is considered rather absurd. Chari's logic presupposes a particular philosophy of language—Mimamsa, Wittgenstein and speech-act theorists. The *Dhvani* theory has, however, a different foundation in the philosophies of Patanjali and Bhartrhari. In a paper, "Truth, consciousness and communication: Ontology, Epistemology and Linguistics in Sanskrit Literary Aesthetics", A. C. Sukla has clearly located the *Dhvani* doctrine in its proper philosophic context. It is natural that bereft of this context, *Dhvani* will appear distorted as it did so to the earlier critics of the theory. Despite the brilliance of its theoretical formulations, Indian poetics could not forster literary criticisms of the same order. In the final essay of the volume, Sivarudrappa speculates on this failure of the Sanskrit Critics and attributes the same to their peculiar preference for theory rather than practical application. The two volumes provide a diverse but sumptuous fare and they are essentially curtain-raisers rather than well-wrought treatises as is observed by the editor himself. Notwithstanding the difficulties involved in projects like this, one can not but commend Kushwaha's efforts and his success in the undertaking.

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V. S. Seturaman (ed.) : *Indian Aesthetics : An Introduction*. Macmillan India, 1992.

Bharat Gupta, *Dramatic Concepts : Greek and Indian*. New Delhi : D. K. Printworld (P) Ltd., 1994, P. P. 295.

These two works relating to Indian aesthetics, notwithstanding their differences, are linked together by a common factors; they all are penned by professors of English. This, indeed, is a healthy sign, for I strongly believe that the future of Indian aesthetics depends more on Sanskrit knowing English scholars than on only Sanskritists.

The first book, *Indian Aesthetics*, is a compilation, intended to serve as "an introduction to Indian poetics for Indian students studying literary theory at the postgraduate and research levels." ("Preface")

Obviously, the book is meant for English students who have no knowledge of Sanskrit but wish to acquaint themselves with Indian poetics. Perhaps it is also intended to be used as a text-book in English courses where Indian poetics has been introduced independently or made a component of literary criticism or theory. The inclusion of extracts from basic Sanskrit texts, with English translations, lends support to this view. But if these are the unstated objectives (there can't be any other), the book fails to achieve them. The primary task of the editor of such a work is to make it intelligible to the reader for whom it is meant. To give English translations of Sanskrit extracts is not enough, they should also be properly introduced and adequately annotated. Moreover, the editor has to ensure that the translations are accurate. For this he needs a sound knowledge of Sanskrit.

The extracts from Sanskrit texts constitute only one section. The remaining two sections contain essays by eminent scholars and thinkers. But for the essays by Mohan Thampi (which are portions of his book, *The Response to Poetry : A Study in Comparative Aesthetics*, published in 1968), they make a difficult reading for the beginner who is likely to be bewildered rather than enlightened by them. It would have been better if the editor himself had supplied a long general introduction.

Incidentally, the name 'Abhinavagupta' should be printed as a single word, not as two words ('Abhinava Gupta') as given in the text.

The second book, *Dramatic Concepts : Greek and Indian* is a comparative study of the dramatic concepts propounded by Aristotle and Bharata in the *Poetics* and the *Natyasastra* respectively. Unlike the other volumes, it is the product of his doctoral engagement. An earlier dissertation on the same subject by R. L. Singal titled *Aristotle and Bharata ; A Comparative Study of Their Theories of Drama* was published as early as 1977. Dr. Gupta's work is definitely more comprehensive as it includes also the theatrical and cultural aspects of the drama. As he himself makes it clear, his accent is comparing "the two works as two systems of performance rather than as two sets of dramatic theory meant for certain dramatic genre." (p. 12) Naturally, there is greater stress on praxis than theory.

Such an approach helps us in understanding not only the nature of the dramatic concepts but also their background and practical bearings. However, in his eagerness to be encyclopedic, the author tends to become a bit discursive in his treatment. The book, though useful and informative, fails to project an over-all comparative view of Greek and Indian systems of drama. Perhaps a separate concluding chapter is needed to highlight the result(s) of his study.

The indiscriminate use of Greek terms hardly serves any useful purpose; it is more irritating than illuminating.

KRISHNA RAYAN, *Text and Sub-Text : A Theory of Suggestion*, Arnold Heineman, 1987, 235 pp. and *Sahitya, A Theory*, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1991, 91 pp:

When read in succession, Krishna Rayan's *Text and Sub-Text* (1987) and *Sahitya, A Theory* (1991) reveal a trajectory of concepts and ideas towards a theory of "literariness" which consists in the dominance of suggestive meaning in the text.

Even though *Sahitya, A Theory* is apparently an improvement upon *Text and Sub-Text*, the danger of some kind of a formalist closure confronts Rayan's concept of literariness as much in this book as in the former. This is because in both books the theory of literariness is underpinned by the formalist notion that the text is a self-contained and autonomous verbal structure.

Text and Sub-Text on its own merits, however, offers a broad range of theoretical possibilities, both synchronic and diachronic, for genre studies and literary history. In this book Rayan presents a suggestion-statement dyad pointing to two fundamental modes of literary presentation. Rayan uses this dyad to account for a wide variety of genres and modes in terms of the binary opposites such as metaphoric vs. metonymic, "signification in code" vs. value in the context", connotative vs. denotative, and the like. He also argues that this dyad has been useful over a century and a half not only to mark poetry off for its non-discursive structure and function, but also to chart gradual predominance of the mode of suggestion over that of statement in all genres of British literature over a span of one hundred years through a series of discontinuities, contradictions and reversals of these modes.

With regard to suggestion in poetry Rayan rightly clarifies that there can be no monolithic definition of it. It may consist as much in metaphor, word play, pun, irony as in intended vagueness, sensuous and emotional evocations. Thus a comprehensive scheme of poetic suggestion is at work covering many poems of Keats, Yeats and the poets of Nineteen forties and fifties, which represent a wide range of experiences and feelings producing unspoken meaning through calculated concealment and withdrawal of obvious semanticity.

As for suggestion in drama, Rayan examines Tennyson's *Becket* alongside three plays of the twentieth century, namely Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*, Fry's *Curtmantle* and Anouilh's *Becket ou L' Honneur de Dieu* to show how these plays differ in the treatment of the martyrdom of the Canterbury saint and produce different effects. Unlike the nineteenth century Tennyson's play which relies on explicit dialogue form and elaborate dramatic construction, Eliot's play is characterised by intense subterranean level of action and interiority of experience through a muted but intensely suggestive idiom Frye, for his part, employs expressionist techniques and explores new areas of poetic ambiguity and new modes of oblique suggestiveness. Anouilh's *Becket* still makes an effective communication of subliminal meaning in its own way even though it makes use of prose idiom.

In the last part of the book four major novels of Hardy and three of Margarete Drabble, a contemporary writer, have been chosen for a

comparative study on the basis of their concern with a set of common themes. Rayan shows that in Hardy's novels the dominant mode is statement while in those of Margaret Drabble it is suggestion.

To a discerning reader, the last part is somewhat weak and vulnerable to the accusation that the study of two novelists and a few of their works is rather too inadequate to answer for the shift from statement to suggestion in this genre. The parts dealing with poetry and drama are, however, immune to this problem. Part II (poetry) is fairly comprehensive to cover all historical periods in question and Part III (drama) is justifiably compact to sample plays on the same story and themes, and in the same modes, as in case of Eliot and Frye.

In the second book (*Sahitya, A Theory*) Rayan argues, and rightly so, a case for the necessity of theory to support any kind of critical act, and ingeniously shows how in the absence of a theory and a methodology criticism may run the risk of reaching erroneous conclusions. Literariness in this book is defined as the way the text works towards arousing suggestive meaning through the reader's emotional experience of the verbal structure. One would see here that literariness is not so much implicit in the verbal structure as in its affective function. This book shifts the locus of meaning to reader-response from the text unlike the previous one.

But to the reader of contemporary post-structuralist persuasion, this book does not seem to offer much. For it deals neither with the psycho-analytic and phenomenological implications of reader-response, nor with the post-structuralist problematics of text and meaning. That Rayan does not go beyond the formalist bounds of text and meaning is evidenced by his theoretical propositions. Of them two are cited here :

The verbal structures in a literary work pertain to its nature as fiction and are intrinsic to it, whereas its reference to reality, whether outer (i. e., society) or inner (i. e., the self) is extrinsic. (P. 13)

and

The critic's chief project is to identify as far as possible the normal affective response to the work, examine each of the objective elements in it, analyse their effectiveness as suggestors of the reader's emotion which constitutes the meaning of the work. (P. 15).

