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FUNCTION OF LITERARY CRITICISM IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

It may be important to recall that other equally old classical critical traditions exist, especially at a time when we are questioning the capacity of such Western critical procedures to make sense of the many of literatures generated by the world's civilizations. There is an unbroken chain of literary theory and criticism in Indian culture that dates back at least as far as the Western canon. Since literature is given a higher status in the Indian tradition than in the Greek one, literary criticism in India is a rich and mostly unexplored resource for literary theorists. Critique, as defined by T.S. Eliot, is "the exposition of works of art and the corrective of taste," and this definition remains valid. At the time (the early 1920s), he said, it was more like a Sunday Park crowded with fighting and contentious orators than a well-organized arena of charitable action.

KEYWORDS criticism, Modern literary, Indian tradition, Indian Literature

INTRODUCTION

The term "literary criticism" refers to the discipline concerned with the analysis, interpretation, and defense of literary works. The philosophical debate of literature's aims and techniques, known as literary theory, has had a significant impact on modern literary criticism. While literary criticism and theoretical inquiry have many commonalities, critics of literature are not required to be, nor have they always been, theorists. Many works of literary criticism take the shape of essays or books. Popular literary critics publish reviews in widely read periodicals like The New York Times Book Review, The New York Review of Books, The London Review of Books, The Dublin Review of Books, The Nation, Book Forum, and The New Yorker, while academic literary critics teach in literature departments and publish in academic journals.

'Translation is the wandering life of a text in eternal exile,' argues J. Hillis Miller¹.

Christian themes of exile and travel are implicit in the sentence. Western philosophers see translation as a kind of exile, a fall from the source; and the legendary exile itself is a kind of metaphorical translation, a crisis in the wake of Babel. Literary translations are not given the same respect as original works because of this ontological foundation of Western aesthetics. For Western literary critics, the fact that translations were created in a different time period from the original served as evidence that the translation lacked the same level of literary authenticity as the original. For Westerners, who have developed a strong sense of self via systematic philosophy and the logic of social history, translation might seem like an invasion from "the other" (sometimes pleasurable). To the degree that it aids in the development of a sense of self, this interference is good; beyond that, however, it is undesirable. Of course, the

monolingual European civilizations would be hyperaware of the process of translation. However, due to individualism's philosophical underpinnings and the metaphysics of guilt's conceptual framework, European literary history has been rendered incapable of understanding the genesis of literary traditions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

SUCHISMITA RAY (2022) The notions of sub-wittedness and purposefulness in relation to poetic expression are also met with in Rasa -theory, which represents the pinnacle of Indian literary criticism. Rasa is the one idea that's intended to be present in every single one of poetry's constituent parts, from *gua* to *alakra* to *dhvani* to *vakrokti* to *anumiti* to even *kvyadota*, or poetic flaws. Consequently, Rasa is the most essential (*Svarpdhyaka*) part of the *Kvya*. It is only Rasa's omnipresence (*Sarvatattvavyapiti*) that is indicated by the many names for it, such as *Agin*, *Sajin*, *Jivita*, and *Atman*. Because of this expansion, the whole canon of poetry is now within Rasa's historical scope. Rasa is now recognized as its own school of poetics because to a long-standing custom of treating it as both an ingredient and a theoretical framework. Although many works have been written about Rasa, and gradual study of its various aspects has been underway by Indian and foreign scholars in a variety of languages, there are still some aspects to which proper justice has not yet been done, and there are some problems that need further elucidation. The goal of this study is to

investigate these facets and shed some much-needed light on them.

Arzoo (2020) Both Westerners and Easterners are familiar with the works of literature. The fact that a country's language, culture, and mythological interpretations differ from another's doesn't present much of a problem for readers throughout the globe. Literature's ability to appeal to a wide variety of audiences stems from its reliance on a universal element. According to the development of Indian art, "Rasas" are the aesthetics connected to any work of art—visual, aural, musical, or literary—that elicits heightened dramatic emotional aspects. This study's primary objective is to trace the development of Rasa theory and investigate the concept's applicability to works of Indian literature.

Shikha Sharma (2019) At the outset, a brief introduction to the history of criticism is to be provided. Then, we need to look at how the term "Literary Criticism" was first used and how it has developed through time. Arguments against something may be organized in a wide variety of ways. Some of the most important critical hypotheses are mimetic, pragmatic, expressive, and objective. One common dichotomy in critique is between Aristotelian and non-romantic perspectives. While Platonic criticism assumes a moralistic, utilitarian perspective on craftsmanship, where the worth of a work is to be found in the convenience of craftsmanship for other and nonartistic purposes, Aristotelian criticism assumes a legal, intelligent, formal criticism that will generally

discover the worth of a work within the work itself or indistinguishably connected to the work. Criticism is categorized further by the purposes for which it is intended, such as providing justification, depiction, translation, judgment, and the discovery of new and relevant perspectives on a work of literature.

Panduranga Charanbailu Bhatta (2017) Renowned Sanskrit literary critics have meticulously documented every stage of the creative process, from inspiration to publication. Literary production (poetry, prose, drama, etc.) is defined and categorized by these critics, as are figurative language (alamkaras), emotions (rasas), literary strengths and weaknesses (gunas and doshas), writing style (ritis), and authorial intent (dharma) (prayojana). The difficulty of coincidence (samvada), endless resources, etc. are all discussed as essential elements of literary composition alongside creative genius (pratibha), knowledge (vyutpatti), and practice (abhyasa). Imageries, natural descriptions, gorgeous miniatures, valuable maxims, insightful observations of men and things, and a profound comprehension of human nature are all hallmarks of excellent literature. It is marked by pinpoint language, appropriateness and moderation, sensitivity and delicacy, and above all, a deep suggestiveness. The desire to produce fresh literary invention, the ideas on what is vital for literary creation, the notion of poetry that includes spontaneous expression of a strongly felt emotion as its core, and so on are all extremely noteworthy contributions made by Sanskrit literary critics. This paper's overarching

goal is to provide fresh perspectives that will be useful to aspiring writers in any language and at any time.

Simhachalam Thamarana (2015) At the start, a quick overview of the critical history of the discipline is to be provided. The definition of the term "Literary Criticism" as well as its history and evolution must next be investigated. It's possible to group various types of criticism into distinct categories. Mimetic theory, pragmatism, expressivist, and objectivism are only a few of the most prominent critical perspectives. The Aristotelian and Platonic schools of thought are often contrasted when discussing critique. Platonic criticism implies a moralistic, utilitarian view of art, where the values of a work are to be found in the usefulness of art for other and nonartistic purposes, whereas Aristotelian criticism implies a judicial, logical, formal criticism that tends to find the values of a work either within the work itself or inseparably linked to the work. Criticism is further categorized according to the function it is meant to serve, e.g., to defend, describe, interpret, judge, or uncover different facets of literature. Aristotle's Poetics to Husserl's Phenomenological Criticism, and Everything in Between is Analyzed in this Paper. Last but not least, conclusions are reached based on the aforementioned literature study.

INDIAN LITERARY THEORY AND CRITICISM

The Western canon of literary theory and criticism may be traced back to the Greeks; figures like Plato, Aristotle, and Longinus set the stage for discussions that

continue to rage today. It may be helpful to remember that other equally old classical critical traditions exist at a time when we are doubting the capacity of such Western critical procedures to make sense of the many literatures created by the world's civilizations. Literary theory and criticism in Indian culture may be traced back at least as far as the Western tradition. In many ways, the Indian tradition gives literature a more fundamental role than the Greek tradition does, making Indian criticism a valuable and mostly unexplored resource for literary theorists.

There is extensive discussion of poetic and literary practice in the Vedas, which evolved between 1500 BCE and 500 BCE. Explicit literary theory in India may be dated as far back as the fourth century b.c.e., which places Indian critical thought at the same time as Aristotle and Plato. Hinduism, Buddhism, and other religions all had a significant impact on Indian culture, hence literary theory and criticism were never seen as a separate branch of philosophy. Ayurveda, the study of Indian medicine, held that a well-organized couplet by its rhythms could physically purify the air and cure the sick, despite the fact that Plato argued in *The Republic* that the social function of the poet was not useful. Mantra, which means "verse" in Sanskrit, is the name given to this flawless couplet. Poetry in Sanskrit must adhere to the strict meter of the sloka, which is similar to the heroic couplet, in order to convey its meaning to the reader or listener. Therefore, Vach, the goddess of speech or holy word, was worshiped by Vedic Aryans. There was a strong focus on

the content and spirit of words, but Indian critics, like their Greek counterparts, also established a formalistic system of rules of grammar and structure to mold literary works. This principle ultimately became a cornerstone of rasadhvani literary criticism. Unlike Plato, who wanted poets and poetry banished from his republic, Indian poetry served both religious and educational goals, resulting in a "purgation of emotions" and political freedom for the whole community rather than just for the individual. The elimination of "evil intent" and "feelings that cause negative karma" from society will lead to improved relationships between people. This article discusses the numerous frameworks that have attempted to establish and define this liberatory function in literature via style and subject matter.

Bharata's *Natyasastra* (second century C.E.), Anandavardhana's *Dhvanyaloka* (the basis for the dhvani school of criticism), and Bhartrhari's idea of *rasa* in the *Satakas* (about c.E. 800) are the three primary critical books that constitute the core of Sanskrit critical theory. Poetry, theatre, and literary criticism will be discussed in the sequence of their historical development. It's intriguing that these paintings posed questions.

They manage to seem very up-to-date at the same time. For instance, one major issue was determining whether "authority" lay in the poet, the text, or the critic's interpretation. "in the limitless realm of literature, the poet is the creator, and the world modifies itself to correspond to the standard of his pleasure," Anandavardhana wrote in *Dhvanyaloka*, his primary critical

treatise (Sarma). In Anandavardhana's view, Prajapati (Creator) is synonymous with the term kavirao (poet). The poet constructs the reality that the reader inhabits. For this reason, Anandavardhana also fought over whether or not social issues should be the focus of writing, the poet's place in society, and the poet's social obligation. Anandavardhana believed that "life copied art," and for this reason, the poet's duty is more than merely that of the "unacknowledged legislator of the universe," as P. B. Shelley put it (Shelley's Critical Prose, ed. Bruce R. McElderry, Jr., 1967, 36). Western critics from I. A. Richards to F. R. Leavis to Stanley Fish have battled with the notion of sahrdaya ("right critic"), "one who is in harmony with the poet's heart." A critic in Indian culture is someone who interprets the poet's work with empathy.

If so, then why interpret? If a culture regularly reads the works of its own authors, it shouldn't need translation. What is the reader's process like, and what is the function of criticism? Some Indian philosophers and priests sought to explain these phenomena by arguing for the liberatory potential of literature as an educational tool. We will discover that rasadhvani was quite similar to the Indian perspective on life, including distancing oneself from negative emotions that might lead to negative karma, purging oneself of such feelings, and then progressing down the path to moksha, or "freedom." In the twentieth century, the rasadhvani schools of criticism had a renaissance because to the work of critics like K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar and Kuppuswami Sastriar (both

South Indians; the latter being the prominent Tamil interpreter of Sanskrit literary criticism). Similarly, the rasadhvani critics' emphasis on literature's pedagogical function had a significant impact on the work of Bengali authors like Rabindranath Tagore.

Taking a quick glance back at Indian literature's history would help us comprehend the genesis of these critical perspectives. Somewhere between 2500 and 600 B.C.E., the Rig Veda was written. It is widely recognized as the first surviving poetry in the Indo-European language family. However, kavya, "stanzaic forms," or poetry, is mentioned, suggesting its existence even before the Rig Veda. The Rig Veda also has several occurrences of the term gatha, which refers to sung holy hymns in Zoroastrian religion. We will discover that Valmiki, the author of the Ramayana, is not only the first poet but also the first exponent of poetic form. Sarvepelli Radhakrishnan, the first president of the postcolonial Republic of India and the most prolific scholar of Indian philosophy and critical theory, dubbed the time period between 600–500 B.C.E. and c. E. 200 the epic period because it saw the development of the great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata (Radhakrishnan and Moore xviii). The Bhagavad Gita, which is included in the Mahabharata, is regarded as the most authoritative text in Indian philosophical literature by Radhakrishnan. This is because it is believed to have been divinely revealed and because it was apparently written down as it was revealed, rather than merely transmitted

orally. Krishna and Arjuna had deep discussions in the Gita on what it means to be a poet. The burden of keeping the world in order falls on the poet-sage like Janaka, since regular people take their cues from great figures like him. This means that poets are the ones whose work the rest of the world bases its values on.



The sutra period, or the time of treatises upon the religious and literary writings, encompasses more than a millennium of Indian philosophy, from the early Christian years to the sixteenth century C.E. This is the time when many different approaches to analyzing and understanding literature emerged. The importance of interpretation grew throughout what Radhakrishnan calls the scholastic age of Indian philosophy. All of India's religious, philosophical, literary, and critical literature was originally

composed in Sanskrit since the Vedas are written in that language and the Vedas form the cornerstone of the pan-Indian Hindu tradition. Sanskrit was used as a common language amongst people of all social levels and regions; nonetheless, it was used more often by the educated elite and the Brahmins, who were the religious leaders of the time. The Brahmins then used the local languages to translate the sacred, literary, and critical writings for the locals.

The Vedas, the holy writings of ancient India, were the subject of "ritual interpretation" in the early Indian critical tradition. Such ceremonial interpretation included the use of philosophical and grammatical concepts to a text, such as analyzing the simile as it is discussed in Yasaka's Nirutka or Panini's grammar. A sastra, or "science," was the term used to describe this analytical approach to poetry that focused on grammatical, stylistic, and stanzaic consistency. Various academics place Panini's Sabdanusasana (Science of sabda, or "words") and Astadhyayi (Eight Chapters of Grammatical Rules) (Winternitz 422) around the time of the birth of Christ as the first surviving grammars. Alankara sastra, or the "critical science," sprang out of Panini's grammar and was very dogmatic and rule-governed when it came to figurative language in poetry. As in Western rhetorical theory, this critical science, whose name translates to "ornament" (alankara), comprised of principles for figurative speech, such as rupaka ("simile"), utpreksa ("metaphor"), atisya ("hyperbole"), and kavya ("stanzaic forms"). Edwin Gerow points out in his

book *The Literature of India*, in the chapter titled "Poetics of Stanzaic Poetry," because Alankara criticism mostly ignores questions like the poetry's provenance, historical context, critical reception, and authorship. It is not an attempt to evaluate or explain the literary works that make up a body of work. [Citation needed] (Dimock 126)

India's long-held conviction that vyakarana, or "grammar," is the cornerstone of all learning and study provides the inspiration for the concept of criticism as a scientific discipline. Learning rules by heart, as well as declensions and conjugations, helped foster mental discipline.

According to Patanjali (c. 2nd century b.c.e.), a kid should spend the first twelve years of their lives learning grammar. In fact, according to Patanjali, one should spend the first twelve years of one's life learning grammar in order to prepare for the study of any science (see Winternitz 420). Since grammar was the cornerstone of education, other rule-governed fields sprung up, each with its own set of categorizations and lexicons that had to be memorized. This included arthasastra, a grammar of administration; rasa-sastra, the science of meaning or interpretation particularly for poetry; natyasastra, the science of theater or dramaturgy; and sangitasastra, the study of music or musicology. They were further subdivided into more specific categories; for example, musicology was split into jatilaksana (or "theory"), atodya (or "the study of musical

instruments"), susira (or "song"), tala (or "measure"), and dhruva (or "rhythm").

Since poetry before criticism, it was itself productive of that critique, yet it was still most regulated by the alankara, the standards of critical science. Kavya, according to critics from the previous few centuries BCE, is created whenever a word is linked to a memorable experience. Mnemonic rhymes were seen as fundamental to the art of poetry. Alankara, which may be translated as "formal attributes," and guna, which can be translated as "meaning" or "essence," were the two main characteristics attributed to poetry."

FUNCTIONS OF LITERARY CRITICISM

Understanding meaning – Literature scholar S.N. Radhika Lakshmi writes that Victorian poet Matthew Arnold was the first current critic. In his reviews, poetry was usually the target, and his enthusiasm for the art form helped spark a newfound respect for it in the literary community. Arnold takes a methodical, empirical approach to critique, which incorporates both isolated and comparative analyses. He delved into an author's motivations and provided insight into the writer's intended message.

Philosophy – Lakshmi claims that Arnold was a moral philosopher because of the conceptual groundwork he laid for his interpretation. He reasoned that one might establish a sense of morality and share optimistic viewpoints with an audience via poetry.

Discover History – In Arnold's view, poetry's creation as an emotional response

to events made it more credible than historical records because of its subjectivity. He claims that analyzing literary techniques, metaphors, and social standards from a certain time period may tell you a great deal about that time and its culture.

Develop writing skills – The Humanities Department at Georgia Perimeter College claims that students will benefit from and enjoy studying literary criticism since it will increase their knowledge of and enjoyment of the books they read and help them become better writers. It's a tool that may assist pupils provide a text's authorial intent and significance. As a means of bettering one's own direct and indirect communication skills, every writer should familiarize themselves with the principles of literary criticism. In addition, thinking critically about literature may lead to pupils' forming their own unique philosophical perspectives.

TYPES OF CRITICISM

Since the seventeenth century, the word "criticism" has been used to refer to the act of describing, justifying, analyzing, or judging a piece of art. It's possible to group various types of criticism into distinct categories. In addition to M. H. Abrams's differentiation between mimetic, pragmatic, expressive, and objective, some of the most prevalent categories are included below. The Aristotelian and Platonic schools of thought are often contrasted when discussing critique. Platonic implies a moralistic, utilitarian view of art, where the values of a work are to be found in the usefulness of art for other and no artistic purposes, while

Aristotelian implies a judicial, logical, formal criticism that tends to find the values of a work within the work itself or inseparably linked to the work. Those who embrace this perspective of platonic critique sometimes cite the poet's absence from Plato's Republic, despite the fact that this is a very restricted and erroneous interpretation of the philosopher's work. The Aristotelian-Platonic divide refers to an internal-external split, at its core. The absolute critic believes there is only one correct critical technique or set of principles, and that no others should be used to the critical endeavor, whereas the relativist critic uses any and all systems that will help in attaining and explaining the character of an artistic work.

Practical criticism, often known as "applied" criticism, applies these ideas or criteria to specific works of art, whereas theoretical criticism aims to arrive at the basic principles of art and establish all-encompassing and long-lasting aesthetic and critical precepts.

Many literary and critical histories classify criticism into the following categories:

- a) The critic's emotional response to an artwork is emphasized in impressionistic critique.
- b) The purpose of historical criticism is to evaluate a work in relation to its original historical context and the author's actual life and times.
- c) The goal of textual criticism is to restore the original manuscript or textual version of a work by whatever means necessary.

d) When analyzing a piece of work, formal critics look for telltale signs of the genre to which it belongs.

e) Judgmental critique evaluates the piece according to clear criteria.

f) Analytical criticism is a kind of literary criticism that dissects a work into its component pieces and examines its structure in order to determine what the work is like as an entity in and of itself.

g) Values-based critique considers how the work affects real people.

h) By analyzing the work through the lens of mythic critique, we may learn more about the role that archetypes and archetypal motifs had in creating the work and their relevance.

i) Literature is analyzed through the lens of structural criticism, which views texts as collections of language structures whose meanings are enabled by underlying conventions.

j) In phenomenological critique, the worlds imagined via art's language are scrutinized from an existential perspective. These many ways of organizing critique are not exclusive of one another; there are undoubtedly others. However, they will show the reader that the critic has used a wide range of methods to analyze the artwork and convey their findings. The function that criticism is meant to do is another criterion for categorizing it.

The main purposes that critics have had are:

a) To defend one's own work or attempt to explain it and its underlying ideas to an indifferent audience (Dryden, Wordsworth, Henry James).

b) To defend the worth of creative endeavors in a society that is often skeptical of their worth - Spenser, Shelley, and the Emergence of Modern Criticism.

c) Pope, Boileau, and the Marxists all wanted to regulate literary taste and impose norms for authors.

d) To provide meaning to works for readers who would not otherwise get them - Matthew Arnold, Edmund Wilson.

e) Suggested Reading: Samuel Johnson, T. S. Eliot, on the need of evaluating works according to well-defined criteria.

f) Finding and using the guiding principles that Coleridge, Addison, and I. A. Richards see as the basis of great art.

M. H. Abrams notes in *The Mirror and the Lamp* that all critical theories, regardless of language, distinguish between four elements in "the total situation of a work of art," and he differentiates between different types of criticism and the development of critical theory and practice based on the predominance of one of these elements. Indeed, they constitute:

- That which the creator has made, whether it is an object, a poem, or a piece of art.
- The artist, the maker, the poet, the artificer.
- If art is seen as imitation, then the universe provides the nature to be mimicked, the elements from the actual world or the world of ideal beings from which the work may be regarded to take its topic.
- Meaning: those to whom the work is directed (whether they are readers, viewers, or listeners).

The Poetics of Aristotle (4th century B.C.), the first major critical treatise, has had the greatest impact. He said that tragedy was a serious, dramatic portrayal or imitation of some significance, inciting pity and dread wherewith to effect a catharsis of such feelings, and that tragedies should have unity and fullness of story, with a beginning, middle, and finish. The character aspect of tragedy and the connection between tragedy and epic poetry are also discussed in The Poetics.

Unfortunately, Aristotle's analysis of the Homeric epic has not made it into the modern day. The ancient Greeks and Romans paid a lot of attention to oratory, which had a direct impact on the development of rhetoric. It was not until the Renaissance that the Poetics had its first significant impact. Longinus's essay On the Sublime is another classic Greek text. This book celebrates sublimity, height, and imagination in a manner that is inherently impassioned and expressive, which is quite different from Aristotle's Poetics in terms of both substance and attitude. Thus, for Longinus, the origins of the sublime are high ideas, high feelings, and high language.

Horace was the most influential critic writing in Latin. His influential poetry collection Art of Poetry was written in the manner of a casual letter. It urges the poet to compose for both amusement and teaching, covers many forms of poetry and character, highlights the significance of Greek models, and highlights the value of decorum. "Poetry is like painting," "the labor of the file," and "either to profit or pleasure" are only a few of Horace's

sayings that have entered the critical lexicon. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Horace's critique had a significant impact on English literature. After Horace's letter, Quintilian's Institutes of Oratory is the most influential Latin critical work. Plato, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Plutarch, and Lucian are some other ancient Greek critics; Cicero, the Senecas, Petronius, and Macrobius are some other old Latin critics. The craft of persuasion was central to this literary analysis.

INDIAN PARADIGM IN LITERARY CRITICISMS

Indian critical philosophy, which originated between 1500 and 500 BCE in the Vedas, was contemporaneous with that of Aristotle and Plato. The study and appreciation of literature in India have always been linked with spirituality and everyday living, rather than being treated as a separate philosophical discipline. In contrast to Plato's thesis in The Republic, which suggested that the poet's social function was damaging, the study of Ayurveda in India believed that the rhythms of a well-formed couplet could physically cleanse the air and cure the sick. The word "mantra," which means "verse" in Sanskrit, has come to be used as a synonym for this lovely couplet. If you want your Sanskrit poetry to have any influence on your audience, you need to write it in the exact meter of the sloka, which is the heroic couplet of the language. Therefore, Vach, the goddess of speech or holy word, became the patron deity of the Vedic Aryans. Literary works were subject to Indian critics, who, like

their Greek counterparts, constructed a formalistic system of language and construction principles. Still, like the Greeks, they gave much thought to the depth and significance of words. The literary critic Rasadhvani based his whole worldview on this central idea. Poems in India, in sharp contrast to Plato's desire to expel poets and poetry from his republic, were written to inspire people to live their lives in accordance with religious and didactic purposes, leading not only to an Aristotelian "purgation of emotions" and liberation for the individual but also to a broader, political liberation for the entire society. The absence of wicked *ama*, also known as "foul will" and "feelings that produce horrible karma," would lead to happier, more harmonious relationships among people in society. This article's goal is to outline the many different approaches used in literature, both formal and substantive, to accomplish and define this liberatory goal.

Bharata's *Natyasastra* (from the second century CE) is one of the three primary critical writings that constitute the basis of Sanskrit critical theory, together with Anandavardhana's *Dhvanyaloka* (from the seventh century CE) and Bhartrhari's *rasa* theory in the *Satakas* (written in the eighth century CE). Both of the earlier ones date back to the second century CE, while the latter one is from the eighth century CE. We'll go over the history of poetry, theatre, and literary criticism in chronological sequence. The themes raised in these works are surprisingly contemporary. Arguments raged, for example, about where "authority" really resided: in the

text itself or in the critic's interpretation. In his major analytical work, *Dhvanyaloka*, Anandavardhana concluded that "in the infinite realm of literature, the poet is the creator, and the world modifies itself so that everything corresponds to the standard of his delight" (Sarma 6). According to Anandavardhana, the name *kavirao* ("poet") is equivalent with the term *Prajapati* ("Creator"). The poet creates a world that the reader may imagine as real. It was for this reason that Anandavardhana pondered such concerns as the role of the poet, his responsibilities to society, and whether or not social topics should be explored in writing. According to Anandavardhana, the poet is not only the "unacknowledged legislator of the universe" but also someone who shapes societal standards and morals since, as P. B. Shelley put it, "reality copied art" (Shelley's *Critical Prose*, ed. Bruce R. McElderry, Jr., 1967, 36). Since the time of Isaac Asimov and continuing through F. R. Leavis and Stanley Fish, Western critics have argued over the definition of a "suitable critic" (*sahridaya*), which they have generally agreed upon as "one who is sympathetic to the poet's heart." According to Indian cultural norms, a critic is someone who interprets a poet's works while maintaining an open mind and respect for the poet's perspective. We need to look at the history of Indian literature for a moment to see how these critical viewpoints emerged. When it comes to the Indo-European language family, the *Rig Veda* is the oldest surviving collection of poetry. Authorship estimates place its composition anywhere from the year 2500

to the year 600 BCE. Nonetheless, it does reference kavya, or "stanzaic forms," or poetry that before the Rig Veda. The term gatha, meaning "sung" in Zoroastrian religion, appears several times in the Rig Veda. As we will see, Valmiki, the Ramayana's author, is usually considered as the world's earliest exponent of poetic form, which he employed to great success, which lends credence to the common belief that he was the first poet. The great Indian epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, were written down and transmitted orally between roughly 600–500 B.C.E. and the year 200, a time period that Sarvepelli Radhakrishnan (the first president of the postcolonial Republic of India and the most prolific scholar of Indian philosophy and critical theory) calls the "epic period" (Radhakrishnan and Moore xviii). According to Radhakrishnan, the Bhagavad Gita, which is considered to be a part of the Mahabharata, is the most authoritative text in Indian philosophical literature because it is thought to have been divinely revealed and because it appears to have been written down as it was revealed, rather than simply passed down orally. The Gita has a conversation between Krishna and Arjuna on the value of poetry and the poet's role in society. Because regular people seek to model themselves after the poet-sage, like Janaka, the responsibility for maintaining social order falls on his or her shoulders. This means that poets are the ones who set the bar that everyone else must meet. The sutra period, also known as the age of treatises on religion and literary literature, spans a thousand years of Indian

philosophy, from the early Christian centuries to the sixteenth century C.E. In this age, several different theoretical frameworks for analyzing and understanding literature emerged. Radhakrishnan brought interpretation to the forefront during the scholastic era of Indian philosophy. Sanskrit is the language of all religious, philosophical, literary, and critical writing in the Indian Hindu tradition, since the Vedas are the cornerstone of that culture. Only the Brahmins, members of the upper castes and the priestly elite, spoke Sanskrit. The Brahmins interpreted religious, literary, and critical texts written in other languages for the inhabitants. To meet the needs of the Tamil and Telugu speaking population, localized versions of religious literature emerged even as Sanskrit maintained its status as the holy language in the south. Following the dissolution of the Brahminical tradition in the seventh century, Tamil literature began to produce devotional hymns. Indian-born English writer R. K. Narayan adapted Kamban's Tamil version of the Ramayana from the eleventh century. Ancient Sanskrit critical belief systems, however, did not give way to the Dhvanyaloka criticism of Kuppu swami Sastri in Madras.

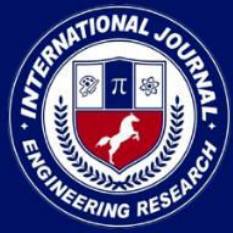
CONCLUSION

These patterns in Indian history have been reflected in literary and critical writing from the sixteenth century. Many of the positions and arguments put out by Plato, Aristotle, and Longinus are still in play today. It is important to keep in mind that there are other equally old classical critical traditions to turn to when we question the

adequacy of Western critical procedures to make sense of the broad diversity of foreign literatures. Literary theory and criticism in Indian culture go back far further than in the West. The book, poetry, short story, exposition, theater, etc. all have their place in the canon of Indian English literature, which lives thanks to the dedication and expressions of so many giants. However, there is another sub-genre of Indian English writing whose primary goal is to help readers weigh the pros and cons of a given option according to a predetermined set of criteria.

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