PREFACE

Thomas Hardy is a great novelist who attracted the versatile critical attractions of the great personality like David Cecil, H.C. Duffin, Norman Page and many other. But however, the critical attentions paid to him, do not show the height of importance that Hardy deserves as a creative artist. He has often been interpreted within the critical framework of the West. It is felt that his novels become more relevant for the modern life if they are interpreted in accordance with the Sanskrit aesthetic theories. Unfortunately in the ancient aesthetic theories, while the fundamentals are discussed thoroughly, the expiatory moods of modernist critical conventions are not there. But however the fundamentals as discussed by the Sanskrit aestheticians are highly applicable to any great creative artist. Hardy being a great novelist can well be interpreted within the scope of Sankrit aesthetics. It is proposed to make a modest attempt at explaining and critically evaluating the novels of Hardy in the light of the Sanskrit aesthetic theories. The whole thesis is divided into the following chapteral divisions:

Chapter I

This is purely introductory in nature with out claiming to be a piece of research, in brief of some of the land marks in Thomas Hardy's personal life and his career as a novelist. This also attempts to trace the progress of his art from the early steps to the final renunciation as his creative medium. Second part of this chapter will be an abstract of the major critical study of Thomas Hardy. Such study is essential because it enlighten us on the various Western perspectives from which Hardy is studied and evaluated. Let it be however said that only major critics are taken up for consideration because it is almost impossible to exhaust all the critical study of Hardy.

Chapter II

This chapter is a Summary of various Indian critical theories of ancient times. Major theorist like Bharata Muni, Anand Vardhana, Mummatta, Ruyyaka, Ksemendra, Mahimabhattacharya, Dandin and others are summarised here. Their theories provide us with the perspectives as backdrop against which the art of Hardy is to be assessed.

Chapter III to IX

Each of these seven chapters takes up each of the most prominent schools of Indian Aesthetics and each of them is applied to Hardy's novels for their evaluation. The major theories taken up for application of Hardy are Rasa Theory (Chap. III), Alamkara theory (chap. IV), Dhvani theory (chap. V); Aucitya theory (Chap. VI), Vakrokti theory (Chap. VII), Riti theory (Chap. VIII), Anumana Theory (Chap. IX). Each of this theory is explained in detail before it is applied to events or sequences in Hardy's novels.

Chapter-X

This is a Summing up of the findings in the earlier chapter. The achievement of Hardy is assessed not as Western critics would have us believe, but how Hardy
is viewed from the rigorous critical norms of the east.

For the purpose of notes & references and in the preparations of bibliography, the MLA stylesheet has been followed.

The Art of Thomas Hardy has been analysed and interpreted by scores of critics. But all of them have taken the western critical norms as point of reference for evaluating his work. The present attempt is designed to take a look at its novels from the norms laid down by the critical theorist in the east. The title therefore should mean the art of Thomas Hardy's novels judged from Indian Aesthetic Perspectives.

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THE ART OF THOMAS HARDY'S NOVELS - INDIAN AESTHETIC PERSPECTIVES