

Writing Indian Philosophy in Modern Perspective

(Concept Note)

From the ancient times Indian Philosophical tradition has been active and alive through the argumentative system of education that facilitates our understanding of immensely critical complex structures and notions of the different school of thoughts. It is a significant fact that the new researches in the different fields such as Archaeology, History etc. have opened newer dimensions of viewing Indian Philosophy. These should be kept in mind while discussing relevant issues. It is necessary to re-examine and revise the contents of the current books. It is also noteworthy that prevalent books were written in accord to the Western parameters. These were more or less a natural outcome of western accusations. So, while writing in a free atmosphere as it is now, one may be expected to be truly original and creative yet thoroughly in accordance with the tradition of Indian Philosophy. It can be done categorically in the tradition of substantial Indian Philosophy as summarized in “*Samagra Darshana*” (Integral Philosophy) that has been attributed to *Shad Darshana Samuchchaya*, *Sarva Darshana Samgraha* and *Sarva Siddhanta Samgraha*. In Kautilya’s *Arthashastra*, four sciences had been mentioned. Four sciences included *Vedas Trayi* and the fourth was *Anvishiki* (Metaphysics), the later was broadly Philosophy and we found no distinction or *Astika-Nastika* bheda in it. The prevailing way of categorizing is basically oriental dates back to Max Muller, and further it is like seeing things of our intellectual tradition through the eyes, who was biologically a European and an authority on Oriental Philosophical context. There is a need to form an unanimity on *Astika-Nastika Darshanas*. There is an urgent need to explore new grounds, seek new insights for alternative approaches as it is a time defied continuous process.

It is noteworthy especially in modern context the popularity of science and management has unfolded viable necessities to change the syllabi of Philosophy to directly benefit to the scholars in their practical vision of life as a whole. Observing the changes in teaching-learning pedagogical concepts and methodologies in different universities and colleges, it can be proposed to incorporate perceptions and suggestions of the academic community involved in teaching-learning process while designing the anticipated curriculum.

It is a well known fact that Indian Philosophy had been portrayed in terms of spiritual mystical, pessimistic, highly intuitive, non progressive etc. The configuration of Modern Indian Philosophy had been created by the dissent presented in the system, identical to the Indian Philosophical characteristics, prescribed and written by Indian Philosophers, i.e Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. It is resulted in engaging focus of Indian philosophers to resolve issues brought into surface by the Western philosophers and contrarily, at another point refutations that Indians presented their categorical approach rigidly. It acted as hindrance for creative thought process. Many books were written getting inspiration from these works but they have their limitations. These limitations are nothing else but the product of the circumstances of that particular historical period in which the cause-effect theory got materialized as limitation. It is the historical context of that time which is known as limitation. There were dissensus in the books *Shad Darshana Samuchhaya*, *Sarva Darshana Samgraha*, answering the questions, “Which should be the *Shad Darshana*”, “Which are the *Astika Darshana*”, Max Muller had fixed them. Structuring the Philosophy Max Muller mentioned the lack of chronological framework and he eventually fixed it to the whole tradition of Indian Philosophy. That developed the wrong notion regarding antiquity of Indian tradition. He referred Shankara’s *Advaita Vedanta* as a pinnacle that later became a general mindset.

Dr. Radha Krishanan presented his refutation but could not remain unaffected to the visionary philosopher. Contrary to the Indian tradition he accepted the linear concept of historical chronology of Europeans, indispensable for dating the history. Moreover he tried to sub-ordinate Indian Philosophical tradition under the tradition of Western Philosophy. That was the main reason he supported some of the Western Philosopher's notion on "Spirituality"; an imperative characteristic of Indian Philosophy and culmination of *Advaita Vedanta* of Shankara. Deviprasad Chattopadhyaya, Daya Krishna and some later writers tried to refute the current illusionistic concept, as Indian Philosophy is only spirituality, that it lack the reasoning and only centred towards "*Moksha*". Immense endeavour is needed in this domain to write in the tradition of indigenous or original Indian Philosophy. Likewise inclusion of Science, Education, Management in Indian Philosophy is elemental in modern context.

Actualizing the recent past, we in fact appropriate the perception of seeing the ancient. The way of looking into the vast heritage of Indian Philosophy whether by Orientals, Liberals, or spearheading National school of philosophers from the recent past, had some where ambiguity of comprehension that led to biased interpretations and this inadequacy to portray the true characteristic of Indian Philosophy led to ideological misconception. Multiplicity of notions already established in the system, be it empirical, metaphysical, religious, ritualistic or spiritual, are there to explore all the phenomenon of Philosophical creativity and they uphold the concept of Ultimate Reality. The system of cultural tradition especially in philosophical context, have always been there to postulate, revive and compare epistemologically to find alternative ways of perceiving as well as to keep the tradition alive and thriving.

Incorporating all the points mentioned, Sanchi University of Buddhist-Indic Studies has an aim to cater the need on utility of

modern perspective and new applications on the basis of Indian Philosophy creating new Teaching-Learning Material. 91st IPC organized in the campus had a symposia on this very topic and the discourse had generated many in-depth perception and different scholars had contributed and enriched with their valuable suggestions that is a significant development. Discussing on this matter, Prof. Dr. Siddheshwar R. Bhatt, Prof. Dr. Yajneshwar S. Shastri, Prof. D.N. Dwivedi, Prof. Ambika Datt Sharma, Prof. R.C. Sinha, Prof. Basavaraj P. Siddhasharma, and Prof. Ashok Akluzkar stressed on the idea of rewriting History of Indian Philosophy in Modern time. It is concluded that rewriting should be problem based and it should also based on original texts. Unity in diversify is the main characteristic of Indian Culture. The core of this unity lies on Integrated Philosophy. This Integrated Philosophy is sum of all the philosophical thoughts in orderly manner. Hence, it is expected that Indian text books should be modeled and drafted in the glorious tradition of *Madhavacharya's Sarvadarshahnsangraha*. It is also suggested the idea of rewriting should be based on Indian point of view. While describing the subject matter Prof. Yajneshwar Shastri has emphasized upon the utilization of newer research for writing the history of Indian philosophy. He has also mentioned the efforts of Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi and other organizations in this direction. We should recollect their views in this regard.

Prof. S. R. Bhatt has elaborated the need to work on this subject. While mentioning the works of Dr. Radhakrishnan, Dr. S.N. Dasgupta and M. Hiriyanna on 'The History of Indian Philosophy', he has proposed to write a new book in the modern context. According to him these History books have not been able to accommodate all the important aspects of Indian Philosophy. Dr. Radhakrishnan's book does not include *Arthashastra* and *Charak samhita*. Secondly, these books have more of '*Tattvamimamsa*'. It included '*Jnanamimamsa*'

but does not emphasize on it. Books on Buddhist logic contain formal logic which is absent in these books. The *'Mulyamimansa'* of these books is also incomplete. They lack the elaborate discussion on *'Purusharthas'*. Although M. Hiriyanna has written a book on this subject but it is not sufficient. The content of Vedas is just limited to the *'Nasdiya'* and *'Purushsukta'* in these books. Vedic mantras like *'Sam gachchhadhvam sam vadadhvam sam vo manasi janatam'* which shows a glimpse of Vedic society, have not been able to make their place in these books. *Charak-Samhita* can be used as a source book for research in the study of *Samkhya* Philosophy. Dr. Radhakrishnan's work does not cover it. Hence, it should be supplemented. Both *Mahabharata* and Kautilya's *Arthashastra* contain important sutras on polity, which are not included in these books. The theory of rasa propounded by Bharat Muni in his *'Natyashastra'* may also be included. In spite of original texts, the translations of the original source have been the basis of these popular works, which should be changed now.

Prof. D. N. Dwivedi has emphasized on the need for explanation of philosophical problems as per the times. Applied philosophy like applied ethics may be useful. The proponents of philosophies should also be alert about the researches by the world of science.

Prof. Shrikala has emphasized on presenting the subject from the source texts. Like matters related to *Nyaya* Philosophy can be understood by starting from *Gautama* till *Udayana* and then various explanations may come later on. This work is not possible without the knowledge of Sanskrit. Hence the familiarity with Sanskrit is necessary. She has expressed his disagreement with division of Indian philosophy into *'Astika* and *Nastika'*. According to her Dr. Radhakrishnan's work was just a reply to the western accusations. While expressing his views on the division of Indian philosophy into *'Astika* and *Nastika'*, Prof. S.R. Bhatt mentions the collection of

ancient Indian texts where such division is not present. He has also presented a modern example of Ganganath Jha on *Purvmimansa* Philosophy where such division is not found. In 14th century Madhvacharya used the term *nastika* in relation of Charvaka's Philosophy. In modern times Max Muller in his book 'Six Systems of Philosophy' has presented such division. After that, Radhakrishnan and Dasgupta have adopted such classifications. P.T. Raju, a disciple of Radhakrishnan has criticized his master on this matter. Changes are required in the text books on these matters.

Prof. V.P. Siddh Sharma has presented his thoughts of seeing the Philosophy in the light of scientific research. While mentioning Dr. Amit Goswami, he has said that Dr. Goswami is working on the synthesis of science and spirituality. Creative writing is necessary in the modern context. Prof. A.D. Sharma considers the tendency of comparing western philosopher with Indian philosophy as unfair. Prof. Ashok Aklujkar has emphasized to be free from the colonial impact and stressed on inventing newer terminology. Prof. Avinash Singh has focused his thoughts on the problem solving ability of philosophical wisdom. Prof. Bhatt summarized that both philosophical history and problem solving philosophical history have their place in a true philosophical enquiry. For the example, he cited two books by Bertrand Russell. In Indian context, he mentioned Prof. Dasgupta's and Prof. Brajendranath Sheel's works on philosophy & Science. Prof Adityanath Sharma, in order to popularize philosophy emphasized that philosophy should be introduced in story form on school level. Prof. Jatashankar Tiwari stressed on the need of practical and applied dimensions of Philosophy. In conclusion, we may say that there is an urgent need to express Indian philosophy in a modern form.

Therefore, the aim of the Workshop is to revive the implicit conceptual writings in the Indian tradition be brought to the surface and reinstated in the modern terms.

This workshop will cover following topics/subjects.

1. Vedas
2. Upanishads
3. Vedangas
4. Smritis
5. Epics (Ramanaya & Mahabharata)
6. Prasthan Tryi- Upanishads, Gita, Brahmasutra
7. Shaddarshanas
8. Different Vedantic Schools
9. Philsophy of Tantra Shastras
10. Charvakas
11. Jainism
12. Buddhism
13. Aesthetics
14. Social Philosophy
15. Political Philosophy
16. Environmental Philosophy
17. Philosophy behind Music, Architecture, Temple Arts and Architecture
18. Philosophy behind idol worship

19. Modern Indian Thought
20. Philosophy of Religion
21. Philosophy of language
22. Philosophy of Education

It will be also discussed that can we find answers to modern days challenges such as environmental crisis, social conflicts, gender problem, terrorism, civil wars and world wars etc. in Indian Philosophy ?