

SHODH SAMAGAM

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Indian Ancient Literature Relevance and the Study of Value Crisis of Indian Culture in the Age

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As we all know we are living in a global world. The impact of Globalization is being felt on all aspects of human life. It has affected every society, tradition and every culture very deeply around the world. It has changed man's perceptions, attitudes, habits, priorities and goals. Actually the entire world is in continual flux and change. The rapid progress of scientific knowledge and thought has resulted in worldwide development. But together with this we are also faced with a competitive world where people have started treating life as a race thus losing sensitivity towards their fellow competitors/human beings. Often the Modern Age is characterized as the Age of 'Anxiety', Age of 'Information and Consumerism' and the Age of 'Value Crisis' which leading to dehumanizing and materialistic value of human life.

It is high time now for us to acknowledge the fact that the Indian society is passing through a very crucial phase of the history where India has to rethink about its goals for the 'Nation Development'. We need to think about a crucial question- In what, direction India is going on? On one hand we talk about our dream to become superpower in the world and on the other hand our news papers are full of the news of corruption, rapes and lots of crimes. We need to think - Is India moving in a right direction? Whether our country demands a new nationalism? What are the reasons for the Value Crisis in our country and what can rejuvenate India ?

In this contemporary global scenario of our nation where the nation is facing various challenges, it is necessary to redefine our role as the citizen of India. The onus does not lie only with the religious sects, philosophers or with the social organizations. We can't just go on talking and discussing things here and there and let go it as it is. Especially the teachers, the writers, the media people and the people having similar responsible positions in the society have to realize the fact that they are among the most equipped in the society to deal with the

issue of degradation of values in our society. The new era demands us to take the responsibility in order to be an effective catalyst for social change. We should come into action and make a decision regarding what is important for our nation now at this most significant and perilous point of time where India stands at the threshold of a great destiny.

In the age of 'Cybernetic Revolution' anything to everything is just a click away. But the true knowledge - that is 'vidhya' has gone away is realized that the institutions of knowledge and education have become fields of business today. They are just tools to fight in the race of the modern world. They are the trainers of skills for the person's own benefit. They don't offer the true Vidhya to bring peace for the self and for the society. The right kind of knowledge brings peace and the highest freedom "SaVidhyaYaVimukataye". *But* it seems that in the so called modern age education becomes a bondage/prison and the institutes have become battle fields. We need to rethink what is wrong in our education system?

How come that the modern man with this great progress L"1

21st century has not been able to do justice with his fellow human beings? How come that in this so called modern age our society is plagued with increasing levels of crimes, rape, violence, corruption, divorce, suicide and so on? So the question is what has gone wrong with our culture? Do we have answers in our age old traditions? Can we find solutions in our ancient literature and culture ?

It would therefore be interesting to look back in retrospection and move along with time to understand' whether our ancient literature, our scriptures, our notions of 'Dharma' has something that can help us to overcome the problems of the modern age? Our Indian wisdom Tradition c- the Gita Upanishad, Stories of Panch-tantra are 'out things' now? Do they have any relevance now? If we can talk about Shakespeare, Milton and Wordsworth today than why can't we think about the relevance of our ancient literature - The Gita, Mahabharat, Upanishdaand Ramayana ?

Years ago Swami Vivekananda has said, **"Science and technology should be coupled with Vedanta.It's only then the world can be a better place to live on."** He firmly believed that the chaos of the modern world can be removed only by combining science with spirituality.

If we observe Indian progress in this new era, we find that the time has gone when people believed that science and technology are privileged to the western

countries. India has achieved a remarkable success in the field of science and technology. Indians are moving ahead in many fields like IT and Management. At the same time we also possess our ancient treasure of spiritual knowledge. India now possesses both science and Vedanta.

Thus, the question is what has gone wrong with our nation? How come that India with such a wonderful culture and a colorful history and rich thriving civilization is facing Value Crisis? We have made a great progress in science and technology. But what humans have gained in material! terms; have lost on moral and spiritual grounds. We have done wonders in the field of material comfort but forgotten the supreme source of happiness and bliss. It sharpened our intellect and physical needs but hardened our heart and soul, which ultimately brought social disorder, persecution, terrorism, atomic horror and ecological crisis. There is a constant increasing urge for money, power, politics, sex and decline of virtue and goodness.

In the world of computers and multimedia we find parents in a very miserable condition. They don't know what to do with their children and how to save them from the kind of exposure that may ruin their lives. They are in a world where even teachers and saints are not trustworthy. Our teenagers are on to the vulgar porn sites, developing a strange kind of behaviour. How to protect a teenager from misleading media attack? If we observe our society now a day we can see that the bhajans like "Vaisnavjan To TenereKahiye" has been replaced with «Item songs" and the reading of religious books like Rarnayana, Gita and Kuran has been replaced with TV serials. Recently in an interview on a famous TV channel a famous Indian actress said, "I feel proud to be known as a sex) girl. I have got a beautiful body and I like to show it. We are not in the 21st century we need to open our thinking."

Are we really moving ahead? We need to rethink what can prevent our child from lust, depression, and suicide tendency? How to cultivate values in new generation? How to culture them? What kind of literature should we teach them? What kind of exposure should they get? Can **family prayers**, reading of religious books literature help us ?

The society is more and more exposed to the values in this modern time and it seems we are ignoring the 'RAJASIK' and 'SATVIK' values. In fact we should not feed the animality in man. Swami Vivekananda says, 'Man is a combination of animality, humanity and divinity'. We need to bring out divinity out of animality to make this world a worth living place.

The time has changed. The western world is gradually creeping towards the Indian point of view. We can already see how the traditional Indian disciplines like 'Yoga', 'Pranayama' and 'Meditation' are gaining respect worldwide. For Indian philosophy is not in conflict with science but it combines science with spirituality, reason with faith, knowledge with intuition and progress with peace. It provides true knowledge of self and the society. Of late the world has realized that the real spirit and power are not in machine and science but they are within the human. The world has started courses like Human Resource Development. If you refer to the Gita we have better theories to uplift an individual towards divinity. There are notions of 'A bhayam, 'Aham Brahma Asmi', 'Tat Tvam/Isi', you are the infinite potential, you are the part of almighty. So if we refer, to the Gita then we find the theories like 'Auto Suggestion' very ridiculous. In fact the Gita, and panchtantra can teach Psychology and Management in a better way. The Gita can offer a clearer insight for leadership and management. It can teach administration through Ethical values. We have the best principles like 'Yogah Karma Su kausalam'

The American philosopher Henry David Thoreau says, "In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the Bhagavad-Gita, in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seems puny and trivial." The Gita can serve as torch-bearer for human kind. Our Yoga can bring peace of mind. The concept of 'Manovijaya', 'Somata', 'Paraspar Devo Bhava', and 'Sthitprajna' can moderate the ways of life. We have concepts of four human goals 'Dharma', 'Arth', 'Kama', 'Moksha'. We have concepts like 'Atmashraddha', 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', 'Yajna Karma', 'Niyam' and a like for human uplifting. Human uplifting is possible by profound discovery of the glorious divine self that is 'Alma' the spiritual reality within all beings - 'Sat- chit - ananda', Any society can rise to a higher level not only through mechanical or technological efficiency but by combining them to sound moral and ethical values. That's how our 'Vedanta' Explains "Yajna Karma"- "Consciousness rooted in Divinity".

ShriAurobindo remarked that India's real role was to be the guru among nations of the world. Above all it requires a new generation of thinkers who are global in perspective but grounded in the practical spirituality of 'Yoga' and 'Vedanta'. Indian literature and thinkers must return to the cultural well springs, not to stop there or glorify but create a new vision for humanity. New generation of writers, New Rishis, New Yogis must arise to complement the old. India has to discover its lost soul and get ready not only to recapture its past glories but also to save the world.

There are enough indications that our culture would awaken once again to those eternal values for which this land has stood for many centuries. The new generation of writers of India should take up this task of world making as their goal with the help of Indian wisdom tradition. It is rightly said by a British Historian Dr. Arnold Joseph Toynbee (1889-197), **‘India alone with her integral broad and tolerant spiritual culture can save ?**

He also said, “It is clear that a chapter which had a Western Beginning will have an Indian Ending, if it is not to end in the self destruction of human race At this supremely dangerous moment in human history, the only way of salvation for mankind is the Indian way.”

Swami Vivekananda says, **“If there is any land on this earth that can Jay claim to be the blessed Punya Bhumi .**

. . . . the land where humanity has attained its highest

the land of introspection and of spirituality - it is India”. An American Historian, William Durant says, **“India is the motherland of human race, the mother of the world philosophy”.**

India holds ‘the Shakti’, spiritual potential and evolutionary force of humanity. Ours is the culture that has values to lead the world. Let its Yogic force come forth once again for the benefit of the global society. **Indian literature has to work to bring out the latent potential of Indian wisdom tradition.** The time has come that Indian philosophy and literature have to play a vital role for the emergence of India as world leader.

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