

DINABANDHU MAHAVIDYALAYA



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Bongaon, North 24 Parganas

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NAAC ACCREDITED-2016(2nd cycle)

Affiliated to West Bengal State University & Formerly under University of Calcutta

Registered under 2(f) & 12(B) of U.G.C. Act 1956

ESTD: 1947

Add-on-Course

Department of Philosophy

Dinabandhu Mahavidyalaya, Bongaon

TITLE: CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY AND ITS DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES 2021-22

OBJECTIVE:

1. To give an account of contemporary Indian philosophy and the great contemporary Indian thinkers.
2. To introduce contemporary Indian philosophy.
3. To present the teachings of Swami Vivekananda, Sri. Aurobindo, Mahathma Gandhi Rabindranath Tagore and S.Radhakrishnan

The contemporary Indian philosophy

A detailed breakdown of its objectives:

Biswajit Ghosh
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1. **Exploration of Modern Philosophical Trends:**

The course aims to introduce students to the key philosophical movements, thinkers, and trends that have emerged in India since the colonial period. This includes engaging with the works of prominent modern Indian philosophers such as Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, and Mahatma Gandhi, among others.

2. **Understanding Cultural and Intellectual Contexts:**

By delving into contemporary Indian philosophy, students gain insight into the socio-cultural and intellectual contexts that have shaped philosophical discourse in India. This involves examining the impact of colonialism, modernization, globalization, and socio-political movements on the development of Indian philosophical thought.

3. **Exploration of Themes and Issues:**

The course explores a wide range of philosophical themes and issues that are relevant to contemporary Indian society, including identity, freedom, justice, ethics, spirituality, and the role of tradition in the modern world. Students critically engage with these themes, analyzing different philosophical perspectives and approaches.

4. **Integration of Traditional and Modern Insights:**


Contemporary Indian philosophy often involves a dynamic interplay between traditional philosophical systems (such as Vedanta, Nyaya, and Buddhism) and modern philosophical discourses (including existentialism, phenomenology, and postcolonial theory). The course facilitates the integration of traditional and modern insights, encouraging students to explore the continuity and innovation within Indian philosophical thought.

5. **Application to Contemporary Issues:**

Contemporary Indian philosophy offers valuable insights into pressing social, political, environmental, and ethical issues facing India and the world today. The course encourages students to apply philosophical concepts and methods to analyze and address these contemporary challenges, fostering critical thinking and ethical reasoning skills.

6. **Promotion of Critical Thinking and Intellectual Inquiry:**

Through the study of contemporary Indian philosophy, students develop critical thinking skills, intellectual independence, and a deeper appreciation for philosophical inquiry. They learn to critically evaluate arguments, question assumptions, and engage in rigorous intellectual dialogue, thereby enhancing their capacity for reflective and informed citizenship.


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7. Cultivation of Cultural Literacy and Global Awareness:

By studying contemporary Indian philosophy, students not only gain insights into Indian culture and thought but also develop a broader awareness of global philosophical diversity. This fosters cultural literacy, intercultural understanding, and a more inclusive worldview.

In summary, an add-on course on contemporary Indian philosophy aims to provide students with a deep understanding of the rich philosophical traditions and debates through this course curriculum. This course will help students to know overall understanding of the nature and characteristics of contemporary Indian philosophy and the prominent figures in the context of Indian Renaissance.

Teachers: Faculty of the Department of Philosophy, Dinabandhu Mahavidyalaya, Bongaon

Introduction:

All systems of Indian philosophy contain a practical aspect called Sadhana. Thus the theoretical aspects of philosophy can be applied to everyday life. Self-realization, the Contemporary Indian Philosophy School of Distance Education direct experience of ones inner nature is the goal of all systems of Indian philosophy. Every system prescribed its own way of overcoming pain to achieve the goal of life. Thus every human being has to look within, understand his own nature and figure out his way to self-realization. Modern philosophical thought ,ranging from the metaphysical and mystical philosophy of Sri Aurobindo to the social and political philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. All of these people were born when India was still under British colonial rule. Consequently, some of their writings are tinged with nationalism or nationalistic fervor. Still, we can extract from their writings, a universal philosophy that applies to all people in all times. In our list of six, three personalities can be described as coming from the scholastic tradition and with the express goal of interpreting and re-interpreting the ancient philosophies of India in the modern context. These three are Vivekananda, Aurobindo and Radhakrishnan. By explaining the Sanskrit texts in the English language, they fulfilled the academic role and enabled these ideas to have a wider circulation. At the same time, they re-interpreted them in the modern context. With Gandhi, we see the development of a political philosophy based on the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita. In Rabindranath Tagore and Sri Aurobindo, we find the same philosophy find new expressions in art, poetry, literature and even music. In Krishnamurti, we find a total break from the past and an exhortation to think for oneself, relying only on oneself for the great journey. With Vivekananda and Radhakrishnan, we


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find a combination of all these viewpoints. We will examine each of these personalities and their contributions to contemporary Indian philosophy.

Unit-1


Swami Vivekananda: Man, Universal Religion and Practical Vedanta.

The Philosophy of Vivekananda owes its origin from the thoughts of Advaita, being inspired by Sri Rama Krishna, in such a way he accepts the theory, "Brahman alone is real, true all else is false. I am Brahman." Vivekananda says that reality is one absolute Brahman. He gives emphasis on monistic character of reality. Being a Neo-Vedantist, Vivekananda accepts Brahman as beyond space, time and causation. He recognized the energy of individual human as a form of divinity and built a tremendous positive psychology of human kind. His success lies in drawing social philosophy from the thoughts of Advaita Vedanta which paved the way for the social reforms in India. He encouraged the practice of Advaita Vedanta in people's daily life linked with society. He applied philosophy of Advaita Vedanta to build humanity and spirituality. It all reflected his practical Vedanta idealism.

Unit-2

Sri. Aurobindo: Reality as "Sat-Cit-Ananda", Three Phases of Reality-evolution, Mind and Supermind, Integral Yoga.

At the heart of Aurobindo's philosophy is the idea that the human being is still in a process of evolution. The human race must rise from its present level of consciousness to a higher level if it is to survive, and hence the need of philosophy and religion. "The Synthesis of Yoga" and formulated the basic principles of an integral yoga. In essence, this is the four-fold yoga expanded and amplified. At the same time, the new yoga found a place for artistic creativity as a means for sadhana and self-knowledge. He learned Sanskrit and tried to fathom the mystery of the Veda and dived deep into the system of yoga. Sri Aurobindo was a yogi of the highest order and since he stands prominently in the recent past, we can gain much from the nature of his sadhana. At the heart of Aurobindo's philosophy is that the human race is still in evolution. In this sense, it is an evolutionary philosophy. The sequence of matter, life forms, and mind is something familiar in the study of evolutionary biology. But beyond this, Aurobindo envisions a further development of mind, first into reason and intellectual development, but later into intuitive and supra-mental levels of development. In the philosophy of Aurobindo, there are several gradations of mind. First is the ordinary mind, then there is the higher mind, followed by the illumined mind, and then the intuitive mind and finally the over mind. All of these represent increasing levels of awareness and understanding. The ordinary mind is the common experience of all humanity. Though we chose Sri Aurobindo as an example of a mystic philosopher of modern India, we find that there is much that is practical in his integral yoga. Especially in


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connection with mental vagaries and laziness, the sadhana of artistic expression in the form of creative writing will help much in confronting our defects and raising us into the higher levels of the mind. In this sense, the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo is part of the "Neo-Vedanta" of the 20th century.

Unit-3


M. K. Gandhi: Truth, Non-Violence, Critique of Modern Civilisation, Concept of Swaraj.

Mahatma Gandhi, who denied that materialism and spirituality could be brought together in a harmonious way. Gandhi argued that what characterized modern civilization is its replacement of God with materialism. Thus modern civilization is not merely incompatible with spirituality, but, in truth, 'Satanic'. Materialism, for Gandhi, did not merely oppress non-Western societies, but it also oppressed Western societies. Thus, like Vivekananda, Gandhi associates materialism with the West and spirituality with the East, but where they part is Gandhi's rejection of materialism. Gandhi asserted that violent nationalism, otherwise known as imperialism, was a curse; non-violent nationalism was a necessary condition for civilised life. Against the aggressive concept of nationalism in the west, Gandhi proposed a concept of people's swaraj or self-rule based on truth and non-violence.

Unit-4

Rabindranath Tagore: Man and God, Religion of Man.

Rabindranath Tagore was born in Calcutta, in 1861 into a wealthy, artistic family. He started to write poetry at the age of eight. His early education was through private tutors at home, but later, he went to England to study law. He returned to India within one year without earning a degree. Though his early writings were in Bengali, he also wrote in English and translated some of his Bengali poems into English. Most of his work is imbued with a mystical quality and often borders on the devotional. Multi-talented great personality Rabindranath Tagore was a great thinker, amazing poet, dramatist, best instructor, sharp essayist and unbelievable artist of excellent reputation. His viewpoint of lifestyle was depending on the values of commitment, patriotism and naturalism. Although he was a perfect thinker, but the ideas of naturalism, pragmatism and personal image are also shown in his viewpoint. The great principles, which provided a lot towards enrichment of his lifestyle, are stated below. Great poet Tagore considers that man should recognize the "ultimate truth" which will free him from the life nipple play. Encounter according to him is within the planet of impression. He ideas the planet is the position of both fact and impression (illusion or Maya). In Tagore's perspective, man is designed with tremendous unwanted power, which is unwanted of his substantial necessitate. This superfluous is the unlimited potentiality of human character and creativeness. It can be found the unrestricted forthcoming of man. The unwanted potentiality exhibits itself in person's spiritual religious and ethical actions. As an idealist, he was an enthusiastic promoter of fact, benefits and principles.


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According to great Gurudev, by using art, man can undergo the completeness of standard of living. The excellent artistry was nothing but perceptive and spiritual self-discipline. He said some Bhakti could spiritualize people's Kama. To Rabindrabath Tagore characteristics and man are designed by superior power. There is a powerful link between man and characteristics. Therefore, man should act normally to feel the use of superpower within him.

Great Tagore's internationalist thought and attempt for making the country of United States world is valued all over the planet. His viewpoint shows that he was a Vedantist in real a sense of conditions. He had trust in one Supreme Being that is the holy Brahma. He discovers oneness in diversities on the planet and a spiritual oneness between man and man, man and characteristics. The connection between god and man must be like the connection between love and joy. He considers both the use of God in all symptoms of matter and soul.


Unit-5

Philosophy of S.Radhakrishnan:

S.Radhakrishnan may be considered as one of the great philosophers of the world who tried to formulate a genuine synthesis of Eastern and Western thought, especially philosophical and religious, and arrive at a world-view; incorporating elements from the thought of both the worlds. Succeeding generations will be highly indebted to him for his pioneering work in this field. He is superbly equipped for this task as he is thoroughly conversant with the traditions of both the East and the West and so could interpret the thought of the East to the West in a Western idiom, and the thought of the West to the East in an Eastern idiom.. Philosophy must be systematic exposition of the content and implications of religious experience. There is such an overwhelming evidence for genuineness of mystic experience that it cannot be ignored or set aside easily. The experience is accompanied in the individual by a sense of certainty.

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Evaluation Method: MCQ/Paper Presentation (making a group)

Sample Questions:

1. Which of these adjectives has been most widely used to describe Swami Vivekananda?

- a) Punditji
- b) Vedantic Scientist
- c) Mahatma of the masses
- d) Shaheed Bhagat

2. Vivekananda “is the maker of modern India”. Who said this?

- a) Rabindranath Tagore
- b) Jawaharlal Nehru
- c) C Rajagoplachari
- d) Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose

Certificate: After successful completion of the course every candidate will receive a Certificate from the concern authority.



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