

Contemporary Relevance of Indian Classical Literature

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Abstract:

UNESCO once carried out research and noted that out of forty-six civilisations in the world forty-five have perished with the onslaught of time. Indian Civilisation is not only the oldest, but also the only living and alive civilisation in the world. Quite naturally, it has a rich tradition and heritage. It has not grown out of the void. Ever since the pristine times the rich tributaries of diverse regional literatures have thriftlessly conjoined to the making of a vast bulk of literary body called the Indian Classical Literature. It has ever remained vibrant in imparting the laws of life, the manual to follow as does a piece of writing within its ambit of aestheticism. It has its continuity and an unbroken stream of life. But in the Middle Ages and afterwards owing to the hegemony of Eurocentric culture and the English Education Act in 1835, the normal rhythm of Indian Classical Tradition snapped off, of course, it never quite ceased to exist. As good things never pass out but remain suppressed for the time being, likewise, ICL is alive but lacks proper care. On considering the rich potency and tradition of Indian Classical Literature, UGC has laid special care on the revival of Indian Classical Literature as one of the parameters of Indian Knowledge Systems and sought to introduce it in the New Education Policy, 2020, across the Indian institutions. In this paper, I have tried to say that our classical texts are rich in philosophical thoughts, knowledge and wisdom. They are all intellectual texts attaching a great value to the tradition of knowledge that can help build up a knowledge –based sustainable civilisation which is the demand of our times. I have also discussed some of the great values mirrored in those classical texts and their relevance in our contemporary times.

Key Words: Indian Classical Literature, Value Structure, Sustainability, NEP, Contemporary Relevance.

Every civilization has its own complex mazes of troubles and the means of overcoming those complexities. The civilizations which have most tolerantly and painstakingly solved their problems and earned peace and sustainability are exemplars to others; worthy to be followed as they might be addressed as what we may say role models. Ours is a time of instability and anxiety in some major parts of the globe. Cataclysmic events are countless, running rampant in different corners of the globe; historical and political conflicts are there; economic and

ecological disparities, socio-cultural disturbances are escalating diverse archives of traumatic experiences. Mankind is hemmed in a web of hostile circumstances, perpetual flux and the different patterns of unthinkable. India as a civilization in the present times has been much more complex than it was in the past and such complexities must be addressed adroitly and carefully, otherwise the equilibrium of society would be lost and humanity would be in the blind lane. A person who is alive to those complexities of society is a social scientist, or one may say in the words of Matthew Arnold, an intellectual deliverer. He understands his age and the complexities involved in his civilisation. He understands the complex past and the complex present and finds solutions of such social problems. In case of Indian sub-continent, we had to bear the brunt of foreign influences in the Middle Ages, and later when we set ourselves free from the imperial hegemony of the European colonies, it has moved afar from what it was in ancient times. We still find ourselves in the garb of foreign influences which are like the used garments hanging loose and unfit upon our bodies. With a body foreign and a soul Indian, we are quite a misfit. Centuries of foreign invasions and afterwards the Eurocentric forms of knowledge have unsettled the very tradition of knowledge and culture that had a continuum over 3000 years spanning from 1500BCE- 1200 CE. We are culturally dislocated, almost like Caliban in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, who cannot articulate his own language nor of the outsiders. We are strangers in our own land. We are uprooted from our own cultural roots and at the same time we have developed an antipathy to our own structure of thought, knowledge and wisdom. We are bottling up the foreign cultures and presuming to be our own. We are also aping the proverbial cunning fox that takes its dip into the pot of blue. We are, in fact, not purely Bhartiya, not purely outsiders. The insiders are forced to assume themselves as outsiders. Very pertinently, in this context, we align with Padma Bhusan Dr. Kapil Kapoor when he says,

We are not in Bharat, we are in India and we are disaffiliated, cut off from our roots and generally in every way, in food and dress, in oblique behavior, in the language we use in the public. We are no longer what we should be that we learn from our shastras and our texts. (Sangam Talk)

Our education is not vernacular, Indian, democratic and federal. The sole motif of our education has been three 'E's'- English Education Employment. Indians are divided broadly into two-the English educated and the persons who could avoid it. English as a language for communication is anticipatory but the cultural registers it bears with it may not always be wholesome for a nation like ours. The culture and the climate are quite different here. So we can no longer dress ourselves with foreign thoughts and cultures. Everything has its own individuality, own identity and existence and the mode of living. We are, in the words of Arnold, "soaking passively in the tepid bath of nonsense." A nation which has lost its own language and culture has literally lost its integrity and voice.

But we cannot buoy up in the turmoil of such mismatches. We cannot remain idle in seeking our roots, nor can we cherish such a cultural amnesia for long. We must look back and seek our roots. But some questions crowd pell-mell into our minds. What should we look for and why? Is such a looking back wholesome in a time that has walked too much with the hegemony of other cultures? Is it really possible to accept our past cultures in a context of globalization? The answer could be definitely given in the affirmative. We must cast a revivalist interest in our Classical texts which are rich in philosophical thoughts, knowledge and wisdom. We must bear in mind that India has always attached a great value to the tradition of knowledge. Ours is a knowledge-based civilisation. In simple terms we can affirm that our civilisation is value loaded. Despite several distractions and burning of books by foreign invaders, as many as ten million of books are there written in ancient India, all intellectual texts and mainly in four different languages: Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit and others. It is also an attested truism that contemporary European civilisation has philosophical roots in Indian civilisation. So to cope up with the complexities of life and to address the problems with solutions and to know the laws of life our ancient knowledge books and texts are in fact treasure troves. So, casting a fresh look at our own ancient body of knowledge is the demand of our contemporary times. Not that we would be quite oblivious of our present development and the other conducive and salubrious exotic influences but we are to anticipate with legitimate rationalization and we are to keep our feet steady so that we might not be blown away with them. Whatever may be foreign influences, Bhartiya way is sustainable and hence to decolonize our minds is the urge of present times. The Eurocentric assumptions in the context of Indian subcontinent have miserably failed to stabilize the way of life and its complexities.

Out of forty-six civilizations in the world, UNESCO once carried out research, forty-five have perished with the onslaught of time. Indian civilisation is not only the oldest but also the only living and alive civilisation in the world. Quite naturally, it has not grown out of the void. It has a rich legacy. Ever since the pristine times the rich tributaries of diverse regional literatures have thriftlessly conjoined to the making of a vast bulk of treasure trove called the Indian Classical Literature. If the chief purpose of life is to garner happiness, then the Manas Gangotri, the vast flow of life in the form of Indian Classical Literature, down the ages, has ever remained vibrant in imparting the laws of life, the manual to follow as does a piece of writing within its ambit of aestheticism. It keeps its tenor along the process of civilisation. It has its unbroken stream of life. Though in the Middle Ages and afterwards owing to the European colonial hegemony and the English Education Act in 1835, the Indian Classical influence snapped off, yet it never quite ceased to exist. As things of good value never pass out but remain suppressed for the time being, likewise, Indian Classical Literature is alive and only lacks proper care. H.L.V. Derozio's words are worth quoting in this context. In his sonnet, *The Harp of India* he yearns for being the lyre that would sing the glory of India's rich heritage of culture and art:

Why hang'st thou lonely on yon withered bough
 Unstrung forever, must thou there remain;
 Thy music was once sweet—who hears it now?
 Why doth the breeze sigh over thee in vain?
 Silence hath bound thee with her fatal chain;
 Neglected, mute, and desolate art thou,
 Like ruined monument on desert plain:

 May be by mortal wakened once again,
 Harp of my country, let me strike the strain! (L.1-14)

Since after independence and even after seven decades of autonomy we have not done a good justice with our own rich legacy and blindly pursuing what is not ours. Ours is a condition much like that of the prisoner in the fort of Castile at the time of French Revolution. When Louis xvi fell and Castile was blown down, the prisoner after a confinement of nearly forty years came out but could not adjust himself when he was freed from chains. He formed the habit of walking with the chains.

The vibrant enthusiasm for the revival of Indian Classical literature across Indian Institutions is partly due to the introduction of Indian Knowledge Systems in the New Educational Policy, 2020 by the University Grants Commission. As one of the branches of knowledge, Indian Classical Literature has been promoted with a special impetus. The motto of IKS is to impart Gnan (Knowledge), Vigyan (Science) and Jivan Darshan (Philosophy of Life). Indian Classical Literature can afford to cherish those ideals which are the demand of the time. In this context, it must be mentioned that ICL has its continuity since the pristine times. The vast stream of ICL is there always felt in the collective consciousness of Indians. It is nurtured with interest. Not that, it was not pursued until the introduction of IKS or NEP. Some of the classical texts are unknowingly embedded into our consciousness because of the oral tradition. We know a lot what is ancient and classical. The vast majority of Indians have hardly read the two great ancient epics, *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata*, yet because of the oral tradition, we know something about the great epics and other sacred scriptures. There is a misconception that Indian Classical Literatures are religious texts, but it is misconception only. They are in fact knowledge texts from the beginning, records of history and ethical values in scriptural garb.

Let us exemplify some of the values which are registered into our classical texts. Our classical texts bear witness to the fact that our civilisation is duty oriented, not right oriented. Sense of duty brings harmony in the family and in greater perspective, in the society. But the sense of rights lead but to the conflicts may be, in domestic spheres or in the vast arena of society and even in the domains beyond borders. In Chapter sixteen, the first seven verses of the *Bhagavata Gita*, Lord Krishna speaks of the different virtues of Kshama (Forgiveness), Daya

(Kindness/ Charity), and Seva (the sense of care). In Indian society the duty of an individual may be described as Arpan, Samarpan and Tarpan. The goal of life is that we all want to be happy and the chief means of happiness is to find happiness for others. Fortunately enough, there is a road in Delhi named Kartavyapath. Valmiki's composition *The Ramayana*, one of the two great Indian epics, comprising 24000 verses and divided into seven books, codifies as an edict the importance of duty, honour, devotion and sacrifice. Rama, the prince of Ayodhya, is the embodiment of virtue and duty, and Sita represents a devoted wife with loyalty and purity. Hanuman, the monkey worshipper, embodies strength and devotion. The epic of Valmiki is not just a mythic story in grand scale but also a manual of life of virtue and honour. All along the epic there are examples of incidents which inscribe the messages of dharma or the righteous duty, devotion to the families, friend and the society as well. The struggle between the summum bonum (supreme good) and the infimum malum (evil) is always there. Moreover, the *Ramayana* leaves an indelible impact on the stream of culture that flows down from ancient times. It has cast a sound impact upon the arts and practices like dance dramas, theatrical performances and the television series in our times. In fact, the classical epic remains an immortal beacon untiringly emanating the aura of moral lessons and mirroring the cultural legacy of India. Vyasa's grand epic, *The Mahabharata*, comprising over one million lines is a mythical history combining historical events and moral lessons. It codifies the virtues of duty, destiny and righteousness. The most important section of the *Mahabharata*, *The Bhagavad Gita* propounds the timeless philosophical concepts of Dharma(Duty), the importance of motiveless/self-less action (Nishkarma Karma), and the relation between self (Atman) and the universe (Brahma). In this dialogic section one can come across the solutions of all problems of life. The practical need of establishment of dharma is the main motive of the *Mahabharata*. It also serves as a great political treaty for great politicians for ages- "paritranaya sadhuna vinasayacha duscritam"- Uphold honesty and destroy the evil. It also shows the concept of time and its relation to eternity. The epic includes a plethora of characters each embodying a virtue. Yudhistira is the dharmaraja, the symbol of judgement and honour. Karna stands for courage and loyalty and promise. Draupadi is the symbol of tolerance and the confluence of all the major virtues which help in establishing the rule of dharma (righteous duty). The epic, in fact, reflects upon the duties and responsibilities in the complex mosaic of life and in its journey along the complex tapestry of life. The *Puranas*, the major ones and the minor ones are priceless chronicles of ancient Indian wisdom including various subjects like mythology, history and theology. They help in educating the mass as to their religious belief and practices. They connect the ancient wisdom with contemporary practices. They preserve cultural narratives through story-telling.

The *Vedas*, consisting of four main texts, are the oldest sacred texts of Hinduism and they form the foundation of ancient classical literature. Those texts written in Sanskrit delve us deep into the ancient Indian society and its spirituality. Search for one's own spirit, awakening the spiritual dimension, one's own inner consciousness, and a harmonious bondage with nature are

central to the fundamentals of the *Vedas*. The oldest of the four Vedas, *Rigveda*, is about the hymns consecrated to different deities. It focuses on the importance of knowledge, and the main source of early Indian philosophy. *Samaveda*, fabulous for musical hymns, is considered to be fountain of Indian Classical music, and it sheds light on the nexus between sound and spirituality. *Yajurveda* codifies different rites and ceremonies. It records the instructions for performances of sacrificial rituals in Indian religious practices. *Atharvaveda* is a blend of hymns, incantations and spells. It addresses the chores of everyday life and the pragmatic knowledge, including the skills in health and wellness. In *De Musica*, Aristotle also spoke of the healing therapy by music. In fact, the Vedas are a comprehensive guide to the social, cultural and spiritual life of ancient India. These texts are potent enough to impact the modern Hindu life and thought. The *Upanishads* are ancient texts which fore-grounded Hindu philosophy. They are the explorations of life, existence and the cosmos. The texts highlight the interconnectedness between the individual soul with the ultimate reality or cosmic spirit. The concepts of Brahman, the cosmic spirit and the Atman or individual self, have been explored in the Upanishads. For instance, *Chandyoga Upanishad* brings to the fore the nature of reality and the individual self; *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* explains the concept of Brahmana and the nature of existence; and *Taittiriya Upanishad* explores the layers of human experience and the ultimate reality. The Upanishads have significantly left impact on the later philosophical thoughts and traditions like Buddhism, Vedanta and modern philosophy. The literature of the *Puranas* addresses a variety of subjects like astronomy, genealogy, medicine, cosmology, deities, demigodds, grammar etc.

Flourishing between 3rd century B.C. and 3rd century A.D., the Tamil writings in ancient times, in South India, called the Sangam literature comprise three literary academies in Madurai. Sangam literature comprises the earliest literature in Tamil language. Themes like love, politics and war are common themes here. The literature often explores the complex human emotions and social norms. *Ettutogai* is a collection of eight anthologies. *Tolkappiyam* is an ancient grammar text in Tamil, *Pattupattu* is a collection of ten long poems. *Silappathikaram* by ElangoAdigal is an important writing. *Thiruvalluvar* is written by Kural. Sangam literature acts as a significant bridge to grasp an idea of the politics and society of ancient Tamilnadu.

Buddhist literature, the rich and multifaceted teachings of Buddha, illustrates the philosophy and ethics of Buddha. *Tripitaka* written in Pali language, and divided in three parts- *VinayaPitaka*, *SuttaPitaka* and *AbhidhammaPitaka*. Buddha's *Jataka Tales* are a collection of stories that speak of the previous lives of Buddha. The *Jataka* tales are cast in the model of parables featuring moral lessons like compassion and wisdom, kindness and generosity. Buddhist literature, its themes of morality, compassion, and the quest for enlightenment recur in various cultural contexts, and it has influenced philosophical works of later writers.

Sanskrit drama in classical period reflects the society, morality and philosophy of the times. *Malavikagnimitram* is a romantic story about the love between King Agnimitra and a beautiful handmaiden. *Vikramorvasiyam* is a story of a king's fascination for a celestial nymph and *Raghuvamsa* is a chronicle of the lineage of Lord Rama. It focuses on heroism and virtue. Other playwrights are Bharavi and Magha. All these dramas explored various themes like love and romance, duty and morality, and myths and legends. In fact, the Sanskrit dramatic literature is an assimilation of entertainment, philosophy and art, and such a blending makes them live long down timeline.

Indian Classical Literature is audio-visual, *sarvapreksha*; it has the quality of speaking and seeing both and that is why the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* and other classical texts are easily rendered into performances. They are performative in nature.

The chief purpose of literature is to produce Rasa or pleasure. Quite interestingly, in Indian Literary theory we have as many as eight theories of Rasas expounded by Bharat Muni in *Natyashastra*-The *Natyashastra* originally describes eight fundamental rasas (aesthetic tastes or emotions). However, later, Abhinavagupta added a ninth, Shanta Rasa, leading to the popular concept of the "Navarasas" (nine emotions).-Original Eight Rasas are: Shringara (erotic or love): Love, romance ;Hasya (comic or laughter): Humor, mirth ; Karuna (pathetic or sorrow): Compassion, sadness ; Raudra (furious or anger): Anger, wrath ; Veera (heroic or valor): Heroism, bravery; Bhayanaka (terrible or fear): Fear, horror; Bhibhatsa (disgust or repulsion): Disgust, repulsion; Adbhuta (marvel or wonder): Wonder, astonishment ;Ninth Rasa (added later):Shanta (peace or tranquility): Peace, calmness. The Rasa theory has deeply left influence the Indian classical music, dance, and theatre, shaping the development of various art forms over centuries. But in European literature or in literary theory no structured format is there. In European theory there is no sound explanation of tragic pleasure, how tragedy pleases us. Tragedy evokes two emotions like pity and fear. But in Sanskrit, the emotion of tragic pleasure could be properly explained. The staple of tragedy is to create a *shokabhava* and *shokabhava* ultimately transforms into *karun rasa* and it is tragic pleasure. European literary aesthetic only explores the tragic, the comic, the sublime and the grotesque.

In contemporary times two pressing subjects claiming a stable solution are nature and women. The entire globe is under a serious threat of climate crisis and environmental hazards. The ancient way of living as inscribed into classical texts is more sustainable. In Kalidasa's *Abhignana Shakuntalam* we have inkling into the life of the ashramites, the life in the hermitage of sage Kanva where Dushyanta was sincerely requested not to kill the deer in the forest. The bond between nature and man is very poignantly expressed when Shakuntala leaves for the palace of Dushanta.

We generally make a great hullabaloo regarding our social structure. It is very often iterated like a cliché that Indian society is patriarchal and the women beings are always subjected, marginalized, oppressed and what not. But it is a proven fact that Indian civilization is basically matrilineal. Our greatest worshippers were goddesses. A mother is the key to a family. The legal institution is divested upon the eldest living lady in the family. The wives and the old mothers are the deciding bodies in the families. Most importantly, it is worth noticing that our family economy is in the hands of women. 34% of gold in the form of ornaments are there in the possession of women, an economic structure that is matrilineal and can save the society from economic depression. In the North-East India the properties as a social rule naturally gets handed down to the younger daughter.

Our culture is celebratory, ‘utsav’ culture. We perform Utsav (festival) and Upasana(worship). We do not cook only for ourselves, but for all in the family. Even in birth and death the ceremony is concluded with the celebratory activities.

The secular literature in ancient India has a considerable impact on Indian civilisation. Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* has been a glorious work on various aspects of governance, economics, and military stratagems. It shows a model of ideal statecraft, diplomacy and economics. Vatsayana’s *Kamsutra* is not merely a manual on love but also a guiding principle of living a life of fulfillment. It focuses on the importance of love, relationship and social behaviour. *Panchatantra* is a collection of animal fables that teach moral lessons. The stories are replete with wisdom, friendship, and cunning. The work also conveys deep truth about human nature and society. Secular literature in ancient India contributes to the rich tapestry of knowledge and wisdom. It offers a deep insight into politics, love and morality, making it essential for understanding the cultural and intellectual heritage of India.

In the Vedic age a number of scientific practices developed in the fields of astronomy, astrology, and mathematics and they may be credited to the intellectuals of the Vedic period. The practice of Ayurveda in Vedic period has made a significant impression in medical science. The Ayurvedic doctors performed the first surgeries. It has become an alternative medical system today and reinforces much on preventive healthcare. Yoga, which developed from *Rig Veda*, is a significant contribution to health and wellness. Vedic knowledge also focuses on psychological growth through spiritual practices and excellent ethics. They built up mental health, motivation and concentration. In the domain of astronomy, our classical texts had a significant contribution. *Hanuman Chalisa* (16thc.) by Tulsidasa provides us almost an accurate measurement of the distance between the Sun and the Earth in the 16th century. As goes the narrative, Hanuman takes the Sun to be a ripe mango and jumps to swallow it (*Yuga-sahasra-jojanaparabhanu; leelyotahimadhuraphalajanu*). The distance traversed by Hanuman is *yugasahasra-yojana* i.e.

12000x1000 yojanas ,i.e. 96 million miles, i.e. 153.6 million kms , an estimation which the Western astronomers tried to calculate much later with the aid of telescope.

Modern day weaponry owes much to the ancient texts. The idea of Astra (Missile) and Dhanush(Launchers) came from there. The Astras like Brahmastra ,Brahmashira, Pasupatasthra, Vaishnavasthra, Agneyasthra, Narayana Astra, Vayavasthra, Nagasthra, Vajrashra, and Varunasthra were used in Mahabharata which altogether took a huge toll of lives within the time span of 18days. All those weapons clearly anticipate the use of nuclear weapons of our times. The modern Tesla shield that discharges electrical energy has its root in the disc used by Lord Krishna. *The Ramayana* exemplifies the aircraft technology much before the Europeans invented aircrafts. The great epic mentions various types of airplanes and aircrafts which were popular in legendary times. The marvelous aircraft called the Pushpak is reminiscent of the time of *The Rmayana*. Valmiki says, the PushpakViman was created by the divine architect Vishwakarma for Brahma. Kuber the god of wealth earns it from Brahma after propitiating him with penance and austerities. Later Ravan snatched the Viman from Kuber and moved across three worlds. *Vaimanika Shastra*, a book on aeronautical engineering was supposed to have been written by the sage Bharatdwaja about six thousand years ago. It details the various avian machines, special mechanism that can cope with the adverse weather, different kinds of weapons carried on fighters, dress and food for the pilots. A special device known as gyroscope and the system of flying with the help of mercury have been elaborated. NASA has examined and confirmed the process. NASA is said to have thousands of palm-leaf literature on this subject. They also have some scientists knowing Sanskrit.

However, things of these kinds would be exhaustive. We may add several others. The *Rigveda* is the world's first book; first poetry and prose were composed in India. The first book on phonetics, etymology, arithmetic, sociology, book on dharmashastra (law books) and niti (polity) were composed in India. Considering and analyzing the vast expanse of Indian Literature UGC has introduced it as part of Indian Knowledge System and as a separate body of knowledge it has included samples of literature across the country. It has included the folk literature, the writings of Veda Vyasa, Bishnusharma (*Hritopadesh* and *Panchatantra*), Hala, Kalidasa, IlangoAdigal (*Cilapatikaram*), Kabir, Guru Nanak, Shah Hossein (*Saloo*), Guru Govind Singh, Mirza Ghalib, Joydeb (*Gita Govinda*), AdiShakara, Andal, Bhakti Movement poets like Mirabai etc. They all contribute to the making of literature of the country. There is Indianess in all. Stories written by Jain women in the 1st century have also been considered belonging to the ICL. There is also Ramanujacharya, who lived in Mandya, between Mysore and Bangalore, and wrote vasyas on Badarayana (*Bramha Sutra*) in folk language in Tamil. In Maharastra we have Jnaneswari, in Karnataka Vasavanna, in Gujarat HemchandraAchrya, in BenarasRamanand, in Punjab Shah Hussein and Guru Nanak Dev, in Assam Shankar Devji and Madhava Kandali. They have enlivened the slokabhasa to lokabhasa that came down to people as folk literature.

So the values, the treasure trove of culture and knowledge which have stood the test of time and shaped what is called Indian culture are memorable and sustainable. They were practiced in a civilisation dating back thousands of years. Needless to say, foreign influences apart, Indians still bear the ancient values but the segregating attitude of the Brahmins, their alienating impulse, vindictive superiority complex born of caste, the highest in the layered caste system has functioned as a major handicap in popularizing it within and without the borders. All such prejudices apart, it has been the need of the hour to look back into the vast reservoir of traditional values which may bear fruit in our society facing erosion in value structure in every way. In this connection it is convenient to mention the fact that the entire globe is under a serious threat of climate crisis and environment hazard. In our sub-continent, our indigenous culture believed in the protection of nature whereas the Europeans believe in the preservation of nature. Our literature shows that human beings are lulled under the soothing influences of nature whereas the Western concept takes nature to be adversary. In the West, things are wronged first then the new departments are opened to right them. There the rivers move along the hills and they are enchantingly beautiful, but they have made them dirty, full of chemicals. Not only nature but God was also dead in the Renaissance. Descartes in *On Method* said, bend the nature and exploit it. The Europeans destroy nature first. Then they open the departments for water conservation and ecology. Their Green Revolution has ultimately turned into Greed Revolution. The same influence in recent times can be visible in some of our states. Chemicals are excessively used in growing crops. Ninety percent energy comes from the Sun and water, only for three percent energy, we are using chemicals with boundless greed and poisoning our food and drinks. Such a misuse has mounted so high that quite ironically there is Cancer Express in Punjab!

What is needed in our times, in the 21st century, is a well-founded economy to cater to the demands for food, clothing and shelter; secondly, what Arnold calls 'peace' in the common sphere of life and a Yogic life; and the rule of justice, i.e. dharma. With the co-presence of all of the above our society might be in a harmony to carry out the culture of knowledge. In this regards, needless to say, Indian classical literature has imparted a significant influence on the multiple facets of life. The ways of life, shown there are more sustainable. The vast bulk of modern literature across the globe is concerned with the leitmotif of identity crisis and existential problems, and psychological crux. So the revivalist yearning for the Indian Classical Literature is the need of the hour. In the words of Arnold, we may say,

What we seek, therefore, what will most enlighten us, most contribute to our intellectual deliverance, is the union of two things; it is the co-existence, the simultaneous appearance, of a great epoch and a great literature. (Arnold, 26).

The Classical texts are written in diversified languages like Sanskrit, Pali and Tamil and some other languages. To facilitate reading those texts need to be translated into other regional languages or into English for wider readership. One may be wondering whether Indian Classical Literature could be revived in the present times and whether such literatures could be assimilated in the 21st century. In this connection, we may assert that ICL has a vast continuum and it is almost a flowing river ever untiring in its journey ahead, only seeming sick and slim sometimes in the medieval and in the colonial times. It can definitely appear meaningful in the context of globalization. Again, in the context of globalization, ICL is relevant for its sustainable aspects. Not that everything projected there is the ideal, but the aspects which may hold good for the progress of mankind might be brought back without any reservation and prejudice. I may conclude with the words of, Kanav Gupta and NehaPande who in the *Preface to the Mahabharata* very pertinently opine,

However, the ways of the world are mysterious, and sometimes, classical knowledge is far more palatable, because it is useful to a society than is its modern counterpart. After all, societies derive their identity as 'great' in their sense of oldness, even, a primeval oldness. Classical knowledge comes in handy in serving this far more esoteric utility, than any market could fulfill.(Buitenen, xi)

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