



A Conceptual Paradigm Of Philosophical Understanding Of Culture And Cultural Values In Indian Society

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ABSTRACT

Culture is the soul of social life and it focuses the reality of social living and explores self identity. Philosophy of culture means the thought and spirit of man behind the total paradigm of culture of life and social order. It helps to realize the reality of the traditions and the ethical beliefs resulted in phenomena of the society. It gives and directs ways for new contracts of races. Cultures which are common from the broader perspectives help to perceive social order in insightful way. Indian society is consisting of divergent communities, races and religions and hence it has integrated cultural paradigm.

Key words: Culture, social, tradition, ethical, phenomena, order.

Introduction:

Philosophy, as a scholastic exercise of knowledge, arose in Greece in ancient time. The logic behind this perception is linked with the origin of the term philosophy. Etymologically philosophy means love of wisdom. The term is originated from two Greek words, i.e. Philos which means love and Sophia which means wisdom. Thus, philosophy means love of wisdom. The concern of humanity has been linked with some basic questions like - who needs philosophy and why? As philosophy is love of wisdom, it is for the love of life, living in society, for the love of nature and the universe. Philosophy exists for life and living. Respect and love for knowledge is unimaginable without the existence of man. Thus, philosophy is the love of wisdom for the existence of man as a being. It is the love of wisdom for the prosperity of life, society, culture and civilization.

The world is boundless. It is mysterious and covered by riddles. Men have been trying to overcome the mysteries and solve the riddles since the beginning of civilized life in the planet earth. This perseverance of man helps him to know the world partially but does not help him to cognize it in totality. For the philosophers philosophy embodies man's striving to engage in a constant search in order to cognize the infinite, the roots and causes of all existing.

Philosophy helps to realize man's place in the world. In all ages of man's history, he has been facing the question of his place in the world, the aim of living, purpose and value of life. With rapid societal progress and development in the arenas of science and technology, arts and religions, man has experienced the ease of living and the brutal acts of man against man and devastation of war. Humanity has faced two great wars, and has been witnessing destructions for disagreement. Man has been experiencing the horror of terrorist acts. The Covid situation, threatened the existence of life. In the climax point of scientific and technological advancement, the attack of the minuscule virus compelled the societies think about - what is in the store for man - destruction, the holocaust of war, or a peaceful life. What will the Earth be like, will nature survive or will it be annihilated by scientific temperament? Is there the possibility of mass devastation from technology? Will hunger, poverty and oppression disappear or persist forever? These questions are posed with great sharpness amidst the domination of technology. The future prospects of life, society, culture and civilization have philosophical connectivity with the answers. Some philosophers hold that philosophy is the study of reality. Some considers philosophy as a systemic study of human experience. Some regards philosophy as self knowledge. Thus different groups attempt to define philosophy from own point of view. In totality it is a rational and speculative study of life and the issues of concern for survival. Customs, convictions, traditions of living order have philosophical concern.

Culture - What & Why:

Culture is the ingredient of a society and social life. Culture focuses the self identity of man and society. By analyzing culture, the activities of people and their status in social order are measured. Culture helps in understanding the entire human efflorescence. For societies culture is the standard for measuring social progress. Cultural parameter of philosophy has been helping in knowing the realities behind social mores, customs and traditions. Culture focuses development, social status of communities, social progress and beliefs of people. Thereby it has become the integrated segment of philosophy. Malladi Subbamma states, "We determine a society's culture by the qualities of modesty, discretion, tradition, character and genius of the individual of that society."

The term culture has originated from the Latin word "Cultura" meaning practice of cultivating land. The word is related with the process of cultivation and fostering of all human qualities and potentialities. From broader perspectives, culture is the holistic way of life. Culture helps to explore the material, scientific and technological, intellectual and spiritual aspects of life and social order. For Taylor, "culture is the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral laws, customs and other capacities acquired by man as a member of society." It is a complex blend of issues because it covers the whole way of life. For Robert Redfield, "culture is an organized body of conventional understanding manifest in art and artifact, which is persisting through tradition, characterizes a human

group". By culture of a society, the philosophy of life order is measured. Culture is the soul of philosophy and philosophy is its body.

Philosophy of Culture:

Philosophy has link with world outlook. It investigates the mystery of the Universe in an insightful way. What does world outlook refers is a philosophical question. To answer the question we have to put another question relating to our day-to-day life. How do we spend a free evening? By going to a football match? Or watching television? Or reading an interesting novel? Or visiting friends and chatting with them? When one decides one of these, one is guided by the worry of the moment, habits and possibilities. Other problems of life relate to convictions, a broad view of the world and clear understanding of the goal for answering all philosophical queries. The totality of basic convictions or beliefs, views of the world, of its structure and origin, of the meaning and purpose of human life and of the place of human being in contemporary reality, is known as world outlook and it is the prime concern of all philosophical discussions.

Radhakrishnan (5th September, 1888 – 17th April, 1975) has rightly said "Today all the people of the world form a close neighborhood, thanks to the invention of science and the devices of technology. Transport and communication have resulted in the meeting of culture, races and religions." "The only attitude that we can adopt in the present context is an attitude not of exclusiveness but of comprehension, not of intolerance but of understanding, not of hatred and fanaticism but of appreciation and assimilation of what is valuable". He further stated "Mankind has stemmed from one root, though it is split up into different communities. It is striving for recovery of its basic unity and the reconciliation of different culture. The history of the new world, of one world promises to be rich in range and majestic in its scope."

Philosophy of culture thus means about the thought and spirit of man behind the total paradigm of culture. It helps man in realizing the reality of the social traditions and ethical beliefs raised from varied phenomena. It gives and directs ways for new contracts of races.

Cultural Values in Indian Society:

Indian society is value based. Values of life order helps in the development of self identity of social living. Indian society is consisting of divergent cultures, communities, races and religions and hence it is diverse but liberal. Liberalism is the basic ideology of Indian social life. Values in life spheres are absolutely evaluated liberally. Value refers need and necessity of living. Value is significant for the valuation of life. Values exist in usefulness of phenomena. All values have practical significance for measuring the philosophy of life and status of culture.

All over the world Mankind has been constantly striving for freedom to choose own destiny, considered as the value of life. In Indian traditional thought four Human Values called as Purusarthas, viz. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksa were considered as the ways of Moksa or Liberation. Dharma refers to righteousness as moral values, Artha refers to as property or economic values, Kama refers to the value of pleasure and love as psychological values and Moksha indicates liberation as spiritual values. As Indian society is based on multiculturalism, the values prevailing in India are cosmopolitan in nature. Among all these Human values spirituality is the highest destiny of human life, according to Indian traditional thought. Spiritualism is the heart of Indian culture. Spiritualism can be defined as the insightful perception about the existence of self or spirit.

Every cultured society of the world has a value oriented education system. Education is the process which facilitates not only the physical development but also the mental, social,

emotional, as well as the spiritual development of a learner. According to Tagore “To attain the full manhood is the ultimate end of education, everything is subordinate to it.” All great personalities of Indian thought have emphasized on the all round development of human being through education. Swami Vivekananda also stated “The ideal of all education, all training should be man making.”

In ancient time, i.e., in Vedic period Indian school system prevailed as Gurukul system. Guru or acharya was the trainer of character of the sishya. The practice of concentration for self control was an essential feature of education in ancient India. By that system students were taught various subjects and they were taught for living a cultured and disciplined life. In Indian society the culture of self respect as well as respect to elders have special significance. Family unity, Honesty, Love and Humanity and belief in Karma following the principles of Srimadbhagawad Gita are treated as cultural values in Indian thought. All over the world it is believed that Indian culture is that which can flourish a free society where the integrity of the individual is recognized and respected as a primary ethical value. The famous saying of Tattirio Upanishad like -

Sarve bhabantu sukhino

sarve santu niramaya

sarve bhadrani pachyantu

ma kachhit dukhabhag bhabet –indicates and aspires a peaceful, healthy and disciplined life for a vigorous as well as cultured society.

Conclusion:

The philosophical interpretation of culture helps to realize the depth and insightful analysis of beliefs and convictions, spirit and thought of a life and society. Thought as well as spirit of a society helps man to learn to live together and understand one another for a better and

balanced life. If culture is well analyzed, values would be properly evaluated and all the social maladies like distrust, forceful violation of human rights can be eradicated from society. Devaluation of value has been creating many problems in modern life. Most of the values of Indian origin have mostly been derecognized in all fronts which have threatened the bond of living. The basic perspectives where value crisis has been noticed in Indian life are epistemological and identity parameters. Crisis in epistemological parameter is the crisis or lack of adequate knowledge to lead life as per the call of time. It has created problems in social order. Crisis in identity parameter, in real sense, appears due to the epistemological crisis of value. As for example, we can talk about the problem of insurgency or the problem resulted from religious conflicts and controversies. Hence, it can be concluded that the problem of not realizing the philosophy of culture and the problem of crisis of values can be minimized if we are socially aware about the values inherent in our society. This awareness is possible only by flourishing our philosophical tenet. Such awareness can strengthen the spiritual force for the realization of culture. When culture is enriched inner beauty is expanded and philosophy of life takes a new shape. Philosophy coats culture and culture manifests the beauty of life and living.

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