

1. Nyāya and the World – An Interdisciplinary, International Workshop

1.1.Synopsis

Nyāya Philosophy has deeply impacted India and the World. In India, Nyāya/Vaiśeṣika is considered to be a foundational discipline along with Pāṇinī, essential to comprehending everything from Mathematics, Aesthetics, Ayurveda, and Law, and as such, was part of the repertoire of every educated Indian. Nor was it confined to the Hindu tradition alone. Jains and Buddhists developed their versions of Nyāya so that it became all-pervading.

Further, as several scholars have recently shown, the Nyāya ways of reasoning directly migrated from India to Central Asia, and the Middle East to Europe. There they became known as the Scholastic Method, which became the foundation of the European University. The Scholastic Method, in turn, was the precursor of the Scientific Method.

Now, throughout the world, the Humanities are in decline. Enrollments are plummeting, and there is a crisis of confidence of sorts. One of the reasons for this state of affairs is the belief that Humanities are not thought to enable rigorous and structured thinking of the kind that the Social and Natural Sciences inculcate.

This is where Nyāya comes in. At its root, it is a sophisticated and structured analysis method for all types of evidence. It has stood the test of time throughout the World. Yet, today, it is rarely taught or discussed outside of narrow Philosophical circles. This state of affairs needs to change – a critical reexamination of Nyāya can aid critical thought across all domains of inquiry. As Kauṭilya was to write: *“pradīpaḥ sarvavidyānām upāyaḥ sarvakarmaṇām | āśrayaḥ sarvadharmānām śāśvad ānvīkṣikī matā”* || Artha. 1.2.11-12. That is, the study of Ānvīkṣikī (which is another name for Nyāya) is the illuminator of all knowledge, the means for all action, and the support of Dharma.

As a commentator was to write: *“dharmādharmau trayyām arthānarthau vārttāyām nayānayaḥ daṇḍanīyām balābale ca etāsām hetubhīranvīkṣamāṇā lokasya upakaroti vyaśane.abhyudaye ca buddhiṃ avasthāpayati prajñāvākyakriyāvaiśāradyaṃ ca karoti”*. Or: “Investigating by means of reasons, good and evil in the Vedic religion. profit and loss in the field of trade and agriculture, and prudent and imprudent policy in political administration, as well as their relative strengths and weaknesses, the study of critical inquiry (*ānvīkṣikī*) confers benefit on people, keeps their minds steady in adversity and in prosperity, and produces adeptness of understanding, speech, and action.”

By bringing an interdisciplinary and international group of scholars, this Workshop aims to bridge this gap between Nyāya and the World.

1.2.Dates and Venue

Workshop at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, from the 9th to the 13th of July 2023. (Some invitees may arrive a day earlier).

1.3.Confirmed Speakers

- Honorable Mr. Justice P.S. Narasimha – Judge of the Supreme Court of India, New Delhi, India (likely via Zoom on Sunday, the 9th of July). Will request him to inaugurate the Workshop.
- Prof. Arindam Chakrabarti – Professor of Philosophy, Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, NY, USA and Visiting Professor, Ashoka University, Sonapat, India. Will give Keynote Address on the 9th of July.
- Prof. Shrinivasa Varakhedi, Vice Chancellor, Central Sanskrit University, New Delhi, India
- Prof. Heeraman Tiwari, Professor, Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, JNU, New Delhi, India
- Prof. Martin Puchner, Byron and Anita Wien Professor of Drama and of English and Comparative Literature, Harvard University, Cambridge MA, USA

- Prof. Ram Nath Jha, Professor at the School of Sanskrit and Indic Studies, JNU, New Delhi, India
- Prof. Geshe Ngawang Samten, Vice Chancellor, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Varanasi, India.
- Prof. Om Nath Bimali, Head of the Department of Sanskrit, Delhi University, Delhi, India
- Prof. Veer Sagar Jain, Faculty of Darshan, Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya, New Delhi, India.
- Prof. Shyam Sunder, James L. Frank Professor Emeritus of Accounting, Economics, and Finance, Yale School of Management, New Haven, CT, USA
- Prof. Sanjay Sarma, Fred Fort Flowers (1941) and Daniel Fort Flowers (1941) Professor of Mechanical Engineering at MIT and the Vice President for Open Learning at MIT, Cambridge, MA, USA and also incoming Chief Executive Officer, President and Dean, at the MIT Sloan-Bank of Malaysia collaboration at Asia School of Business, Kuala Lumpur.
- Prof. Sacchidananda Mishra, Member Secretary, Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi, India.
- Prof. Shashiprabha Kumar, Dean, Sri Sankaracharya Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, New Delhi, India, and Chairperson, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, India
- Prof. Shailendra Raj Mehta, President and Director, MICA, Ahmedabad, and Vice-Chairperson, Governing Body, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, India.

2. Tentative Program

One major daily lecture by a Distinguished Visiting Scholar. Multiple presentations and discussions every day.

3. Institutional Support

- Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla
- JNU, New Delhi
- Central Sanskrit University, New Delhi
- MICA, Ahmedabad