

ROLE OF A PHILOSOPHER IN THE MODERN WORLD

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Abstract:

Philosophy is love for wisdom & a philosopher is one who is wise, one who has a perspective that can influence human emotions & mind positively. In a modern sense, a philosopher is a person who contributes to one or more branches of philosophy. The history of philosophy has various dimensions, but in this paper, I have focused on how philosophers can bring change in the thought process of the human mind & thereby help with modern world problems.

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Introduction:

There are similarities & differences between Eastern & Western philosophical thought. Science is universal, we do not discriminate between eastern scientists & western scientists but when it comes to philosophy eastern philosophers bother more about the other world, life after death, karma, etc. They go beyond the reach of the five senses while western philosophers' thought is more about this very world, the world which we experience. The western philosopher is more analytical, intellectual & scientific in their theories. They believed that through intellect they can reach the Truth. Thales, Pythagoras, Socrates, Aristotle, Spinoza, etc, and a few of them were mathematicians & scientists. They had a scientific bend of mind.

Eastern Philosophy is more religious in nature and it does have intellectual reasoning, but they try to go beyond the intellect and have some supernatural experience. Indian philosopher is more spiritual than logical. It doesn't mean that western philosopher is not curious about the world, soul, or Supreme. They did discuss the soul, Being, Absolute, and God out of curiosity. Almost all Indian philosophers dealt with misery & suggested means to overcome suffering, while western thought emphasized problems of the current world.

Who can be called a philosopher? Dictionary meaning of the word philosopher is a person engaged or learned in philosophy, especially as an academic discipline. To me, a philosopher is a person not necessarily holding a doctorate degree or not necessarily emerging out of philosophy class, but a person who is wise has a balanced state of mind, have a Vivek of what is right & what is wrong. A person who has a very clear perceptive, who has applied philosophy to his own life, and who can set an example for others. Listening to such a person can bring a great change in one's life.

The way Swami Vivekanand said every soul is potentially divine, we can say each soul has the potential to be a philosopher. Can we call a housewife, CEO of a multinational company, a labor, a leader a Philosopher? Yes a housewife who has "Samatva" a balanced state of mind, managing the tantrums of family members peacefully, catering to their needs selflessly, and guiding them through their problems, is a philosopher. CEO of a company who is always balanced, not adopting corrupt methods, looking after the well-being of the company, employees & consumers at the same time is a philosopher, and a great example is Mr. Ratan Tata. A labor working on a construction site eating dry chapati, onion & chili for lunch but immersed in the bhakti of Bhajans at night is a philosopher. A non-corruptive leader who rules

the nation selflessly is a philosopher.

Modern-day problems & Role of a Philosopher: The modern world has many issues corruption, competition, vices, degradation of moral values, unemployment, women's problems, pollution, religious conflicts, political issues, jealousy, hatred, greed, loneliness, grief, anger, anxiety, depression & many more. Does philosophy matter to real life and society? Or it is just about abstract ideas? When we look at the list of problems, we understand the role of the mind and thought processes that affect human behaviour as major culprits in many cases. Control over emotions and thought processes & mind can be the guiding light & here the role of the Philosopher is. With critical and systematic thinking, philosophers and their writings can help with many modern-day problems. A philosopher can be a reason for development of virtuous society. The world today is very complex and this wisdom guides one to make right choices. Such a rational thinking enhances one's personality and character. Not just Indian but also Greek philosophy is based on virtues. Be it a modern philosopher Swami Vivekananda or Lord Krishna, karma theory explained by both is relevant today too. Even great Greek philosophers discussed about virtues. Plato's, Aristotle's depiction of virtues has applicability to transform many lives.

For example, when we read, understand & relate to the theory of karma of Bhagwat Geeta, we get positively influenced by the guidelines given by Lord Krishna. We accept the present suffering as a result of past actions & we have become objective about happiness & suffering both. Aristotle's 'Practical wisdom' can help us to make the right choices. These are just few examples, looking at the life of saints & mystics of Maharashtra and other parts of the country, their hardships & their service to humanity and their writings we certainly get influenced. Our minds & thought process is purified. The role of a philosopher is to draw attention to our shortcomings & improve them. Philosopher guides us to find the meaning & purpose of our life. Philosopher helps us to develop a Vivek. We learn to discriminate between right and wrong. The influence of the philosopher helps us to choose the correct path and make the right decisions. Thus, philosophers make a great contribution to the upliftment of society through critical thinking and can help solve many global problems.

Conclusion: Philosophers bring in this integrated approach to all modern-day problems. The great wisdom of philosophers is much needed in today's modern time where the materialistic approach is at its peak. The young generation that is running after their desires have lost the essence of life. They must be exposed to this treasure of life management skills given in our scriptures at an early age. A Philosopher who is not just reading or writing philosophy but applying it in his own life can set a great example for others.

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