



# THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

(A Branch of Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, West Bengal)

GOL PARK, KOLKATA: 700 029, WEST BENGAL, INDIA

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CENTRE FOR INDOLOGICAL STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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## WORKSHOP

# The Relevance of Indian Philosophy to Contemporary Western Philosophy

## *A New Paradigm of Philosophy*

The workshop will provide a forum to discuss the relevance of Indian philosophy, including epistemology, philosophy of language, logic, and values, to Western philosophy so that Indian and Western philosophy can speak to each other and assist in solving shared problems.

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## TOPICS

- Causation, including the views of Sāṃkhya, Bauddha, and Nyāya philosophers
- Sources of knowledge, such as perception, inference, analogy, and testimony
- Gettier and post-Gettier problems (counter-examples to the JTB thesis)
- Analysis of belief-sentences, doubt, meanings of terms including proper names, definite descriptions
- Meanings of sentences as well as the understanding of their meanings, subject-predicate and related pairs, negation, number, self
- The nature of human beings-East and West, Freedom-East and West, Dharma and the law of karma in Indian culture, concepts of harmony in Indian philosophy, including the philosophy of Swami Vivekananda



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## INSTRUCTOR

**Dr. J. L. Shaw**

Victoria University of  
Wellington, New Zealand

**DATE:** 15 - 22 JAN 2024    **TIME:** 11AM - 5:00PM    **LUNCH:** 1:00 - 2:00PM

**Registration:** Rs. 800/-

## WORKSHOP: AIMS AND REACH

There are several ways of introducing Indian philosophy and all of them are required at some stage or the other, although some of them may not appear to be useful to Western philosophers.

- To translate the texts from the original sources into English, or to write commentaries with translation.
- To compare Indian philosophy with some trends of Western philosophy, ancient or modern, such as the comparison of Advaita Vedānta with Hegel or Bradley, or existentialist's conception of 'angst' (anxiety) with Buddhist conception of duḥkha (suffering).

Now the Western philosophers might ask, why should we study Indian philosophy if it is not useful for solving the problems of Western philosophy?

In order to answer this question, the workshop would focus on the following questions:

- How to reconcile some of the conflicting views in contemporary Western philosophy by using the techniques of the Nyāya tradition.
- How to suggest new or better solutions to some of the problems of contemporary philosophy.
- How to suggest solutions to some age old or unsolved problems of Western philosophy.
- How to add new dimensions to Western philosophy.

### Impact:

Participants, including teachers or scholars, will introduce the techniques of Indian philosophers in their discussion of Western philosophy for better solutions. Thus, the workshop will add a new dimension to Western philosophy.

### Recommended Texts:

- *The Collected Writings of Jaysankar Lal Shaw: Indian Analytic and Anglophone Philosophy*, Bloomsbury, London, 2016;
- *The Nyāya on Meaning: A Commentary on Pandit Visvabandhu*, Punthi Pustak, Kolkata, 2003;
- *Cognition of Cognition: A Commentary on Pandit Visvabandhu*, The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Kolkata, reprinted 2022;
- *The Relevance of Indian Philosophy to Contemporary Western Philosophy*, The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Kolkata, 2022



## Dr J.L. SHAW : A PROFILE

Dr Shaw's research in the field of Indian and Comparative Philosophy is considered to be pioneering. His aim is to suggest some new solutions which involve both scholarship and creativity. His papers have been the first of their kind in many Western journals of philosophy and logic. The seminars he organised were also the first of their kind. He has presented some 200 papers at conferences or seminars in several countries. He has also received around 130 funded invitations from institutions or universities around the world, directed orientation



courses on comparative philosophy, and received a grant from the National Endowment for Humanities (Washington, D.C.) to train American philosophers in Hawaii. In 1993, he represented New Zealand at the World Parliament of Religions in Calcutta.

He is also a founder of several Societies in different countries for the promotion of comparative philosophy, including the Society for Philosophy & Culture, a society dedicated to cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary debate and discussion. It has now been running for 19 years, with branches in 3 countries. Through the profits of his books, the Society offers scholarships to master's Students at Victoria University.

His unique contribution to the field of comparative philosophy has taken on the form of a global movement. His research in the field of comparative philosophy will promote better intercultural understanding among different communities and nations at large. As a teacher he has been described as second to none, receiving perfect evaluations from his students both in Hawaii and Wellington.

Over his career, he has organised several seminars, supported and worked with visiting scholars from across the world, reviewed articles for major international journals of philosophy, coordinated the World Peace summit in Wellington, in 2008, and organised fundraising dinners at his home to set up the New Zealand Asian Studies Society at Victoria University, and has actively run community focused seminars and talks on Vedānta philosophy for the past 27 years.

Dr Shaw is the recipient of two Festschrifts. He is the first New Zealand-based philosopher to be honoured with the Festschrift Contemporary Philosophy and J.L. Shaw (2006) - Dominion Post. He is also one of only two New Zealand-based scholars honoured with Festschrift, Comparative Philosophy and J.L. Shaw (2015), published by Springer.