

Towards Interdisciplinary Studies and New Humanities in University in India*

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Ekam Shastram adhiyano na vidhya shatra nischayam!
Tasmat bahushrutah shastram bijaniyach chikitsaha!!

-Sushruta

Every science is a system in its right; ... we must ... set to work architectonically with it as a separate and independent building. We must treat it as a self-subsisting whole and not as a wing or section of another building – although we may subsequently make a passage to and fro from one part to another.

-Immanuel Kant

Everyday life, in a sense residual, defined by 'what is left over' after all distinct, superior, specialized, structured activities have been signaled out by analysis, must be defined as a totality. Considered in their specialization and technicality, superior activities leave a 'technical vacuum' between one another which is filled by everyday life. Everyday life is profoundly related to all activities, and encompasses them with all their difference and their conflicts; it is their meeting place, their bond, their common ground.

-Henri Lefebvre

Lead in

Before discussing the issue of interdisciplinary studies in the existing humanities and social sciences and their relevance in 21st century, it must be borne in mind that the relevance is a consequence of applicability, relatedness and rootedness of the discipline concerned. Its rootedness is to be seen in terms of its concerns for human condition, experience and its

dimension, relevance in local (regional, national and international) and global terms, and applicability in terms of the use of acquired knowledge in making the learners reasonably good human beings individually and collectively and their employability in terms of acquisition of skills and their use in earning livelihood and financial sustenance. Moreover, it would be congruous to see the whole issue in the perspective of evolution of the institutions of university, and disciplines of knowledge like humanities, social sciences and interdisciplinary studies in them.

The Journey of the university from 'corporation' to 'corporate house' which has led to the commodification of education in the present century makes an interesting reading particularly in the Indian context. It has brought about change in the character of university education. In its traditional concept, it was supposed to be dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge for the sake of it. In the course of time universities had to give up their elitist character based on values, and the focus shifted to utilitarian aspect, and service to society became central in this phase. Now, university is a producer, wholesaler and retailer of knowledge; education is a knowledge industry. Moreover, there is change in character of communities of teachers and students. Students do not come to the university for becoming 'gentle (wo)men' but for making their careers, and teachers join teaching not for service subscribing to the ideals of voluntary poverty but as a profession and career.

In the Indian intellectual tradition, knowledge was always considered in integrated or interdisciplinary manner. The typology of knowledge systems or domains was prepared without privileging any school or tradition of articulation. The provisionality of truth was stated in the fact "*Ek sad viprah vahudha vadanti.*" ("The truth is one, though articulated in different ways by wise people"). Secondly, the Indian knowledge culture sounded caveat against jumping to conclusion on the basis of study of just one domain of knowledge. (The words of Sushruta cited and explained later in the next part of the book support the view.) And all disciplines of knowledge aim at study in specialization, but qualified by the concept of *patrata* (competence) or *adhikar* (worthiness) that are pre-requisites for study before entering the subject and knowledge of other related domains or disciplines. Equally

important is Bhartrihari's caveat against insularity in *Vakyapadiya*, as he underscored the importance of knowing other traditions-other than one's own:

The intellect acquires critical acumen by familiarity
with different traditions. How much does one really
understand by merely following one's own reasoning
only? (*Vakyapadiya* 2.484)

Different traditions here include knowledge systems and disciplines from different lands. However, Bhartrahari's words of wisdom do not seem to be reflected in Indian higher education in which, leave aside the question dialogic interaction among different Indian and traditions, -- Indian knowledge systems/traditions do not find respectful space for them.

Indian university system that has expanded multifold in the last two decades of the preceding century titled in favour of science and technology. The national Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at present is said to be around 12 percent (Akshaya Mukul, India's Vision 2010' in Sen 9) which means 88 percent of the total youth in the age group of 18 to 23 is outside the system. It further means that the youth from the tribal and rural areas are the most deprived lot. The GER in the four tribal districts of South Gujarat is as about 4 %, according to an estimate. If this chasm gets further aggravated, it would create imbalance in terms of social opportunities and development that would be limited to the few against whom many would react, leading to social disorder. Moreover, a large number of students are in arts and commerce faculties. This imbalance was further augmented in the last decade, as hordes of students followed courses in engineering, medicine, and management like the pied pipers to such an extent that the departments of pure sciences like mathematics, physics, statistics are fighting for their survival in terms of quality and number of students, as the so called meritorious ones, given a choice, go for professional and vocational courses.

In an age of ICT revolution, science and its tangible accomplishments have privileged scientific method to such an extent that there is an increasing insistence on employing the scientific method in other spheres of life. Against the dominance of scientific method and truth, other truths—poetic/literary, and philosophic, have been marginalized in the academic spheres. The votaries of science and technology do not consider studying and teaching of humanities and fine arts as the integral aspects of teaching and learning, and they do not receive even step-brotherly/sisterly treatment which is reserved for social sciences; consequently, the funding for them has dwindled considerably. The present education system in India is so science and technology intoxicated that the planners and their subscribers obviate the limitations inherent in the system and method, and ugly consequences that it might lead us to. Interdisciplinary studies can help in balancing the imbalance, but accepting IITs and IIMs and institutions they are not pursued methodically in conventional universities.

In conventional universities in India we are not doing even humanities, social sciences or natural sciences in their true sense, leave aside the question of doing New Humanities, inter or multi-disciplinary studies. The problem is further aggravated by lake of motivated students who come to Arts Faculty which includes Departments of languages like Assamese, Bangla, Hindi, Gujarati, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Tamil and Telugu and departments of social sciences like Economics, Sociology, History, Political Science, are necessarily not those who are there by choice, but out of choicelessness and compulsion, as most of them have no place to go. Departments or Schools of Liberal Arts (human sciences) are relatively new and a few, and have come in existence as a copy of the American model, and not in response to new challenges and in view of Indian realities. The servile subscription to the American model would amount to becoming the intellectual weathercocks.

Languages/Literatures in Indian University System

Human beings move towards certain sort of absolution (*purnata*) in terms of organic composition of physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual selves. Science caters largely to intellectual aspect; humanities (literature), social sciences and value-oriented education (liberal arts) to others as well. The nurturing and maturity of emotions is as essential as development of intellect. Indifference towards emotional aspect would make machines out of wo/men, and cause anarchy in society. Another casualty of this imbalance is concern for cultivating and nurturing values in higher education. Fortunately, value-oriented education that was considered a waste of time and intellectual luxury is at least being discussed, if not fully implemented, in Indian academic circles. Value-oriented education hinges on human beings, human values and values of life in living, and even non-living objects. That is what spiritual [adhyatmik (in one sense *adhi*=transcend or beyond, *atmik*=self)] educational aspect of value-oriented education informs us. Human beings become inhuman when they cease to think beyond themselves.

Multiplicity and pluralism along with thinking beyond self come naturally to India. It has lived for so long in various fields here that singular number exists only in grammar. In Indian culture, there is no singular number. Singular is plural in Indian cultural practice. Be it the concept of time or system of belief or modes of worship, plurality has become an integral part of collective Indian consciousness. As a result, in its long, attested, continuous and cumulative tradition of knowledge, it constructed *shastra-s* on almost every conceivable human activity but did not ignore its holistic integrated consideration and its relationship with other disciplines of knowledge.¹ So the holistic integrated consideration based on interrelatedness of various manifestations of life and its activities involved some sort of inter-disciplinary studies, without conspicuous evidence of its methodology, that flourished its diverse linguistic, literary, social, cultural realities co-habiting the same space or Indian intellectual traditions that speak of embracing best thoughts from the world all over.² It informs us about limitations of knowledge of just one discipline coming to conclusion or taking decisions, as stated by Sushruta:

*Ekam Shaastram adhiyano na vidhya shastra
nischayam!
Tasmat bahushrutah shastram bijaniyach chikitsaha!!*

*(Sushruta Samhita, Sutra Sthan, Chapter IV,
Shloka 7, 'Prabhashniya Adhyaya')*

Sushruta asks us not to come to conclusion or decision by studying just one discipline. In fact, all major Indian knowledge texts scandalize the prevailing classification of knowledge systems, based on the Western taxonomy. The text like the *Ramanyana, Mahabharata, Gita, Natyashastra, Arthashastra, Tolkappiyam, Thirrukul*, and *Saundrayalahiri* exist at multiple levels and defy being categorised in one discipline or system.

Of all countries, India is the most suitable site for interdisciplinary studies. It has a long tradition of not only constructing *shastra* and but also of studying different *shastras* before coming to a conclusion and pronouncing judgement. The tradition of inter-relational integrated study from various perspectives in India provides suitable scaffolding for comparative/interdisciplinary studies which was ironically not used in the present education system.

Therefore, India needs to re-look at its existing language/literature study and teaching in its university system. Single language departments were established during colonial period, as the colonizers could not understand the fact that India did not have lingua franca, for the language of the region used to be the language of the people residing in the area in which more than one language easily. The single language departments continued to flourish in India even after its independence against linguistic and literary realities of the country in which citizen, apart from his/her language, know and can operate in more than two languages. In view of this fact, the single language departments are a cultural crime in the country. Comparative study of literatures of Indian languages would have lessened the

gravity of the insulation, caused by single language departments. But baseless apprehensions and interests of faculties employed in departments did not allow comparative study of literatures to prosper or alternative system of multi-literaturality to succeed. For instance, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad (Gujarat) introduced the concept of School of Languages with Departments of Sanskrit, Gujarati, Hindi, English, and Linguistics as the parts of it. The students could join one department of literature/language of their choice, and had the option of choosing subsidiary papers from other departments/literatures, and thereby could compare and be free from the insularity of one literatures. A distinguished writer and scholar like Umashankar Joshi envisioned and practiced comparative study of literature in this manner. However, this model collapsed not because of the burden of its ideals but because teachers could not arrive at commonly acceptable time-table.³

On the other hand, in the last two decades, departments or schools of comparative literature have into existence at least in some new universities. Hence, the destination called CL was reached, albeit belatedly, not out of conviction but out of compulsion, as the governments/universities cannot afford many single language departments with five or six faculties in each. So having one department or school with one faculty each for a language/literature is a cost-effective proposition. The model was destined to fail like many cases of academic miscarriage in the country, mainly because faculties, recruited in departments of comparative literature, were from single language departments without any training in the methodology of CL or commitment to CL. As a case for study, a new university like North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon started Department of Comparative Literature in it. All good intentions failed at the level of implementations, as within a few years all departments moved in the direction of single language/literature department, for the faculty come from single language department from affiliated colleges and other university departments. Lack of feasibility and employment opportunities for students are mere excuses forwarded by teachers who are neither exposed nor trained to practice comparative study of literature. The absence of conviction and commitment in faculty

members does not allow multi-literary sensibility of the students to prosper in the country.⁴ Consequently, the teachers and students trained in such departments/schools at best do acquire knowledge or some competence for social transactions, and at worst develop perceptions by which they would perpetuate linguistics or literary difference. The issue is: if we cannot practice intra or inter-literary studies, can we the teachers of literature or humanities practice intra/interdisciplinarity? Before I conclude this section I must hurriedly add it here that in these failures, it is the teachers who have failed, not the methodology or relevance of comparative study of literature or interdisciplinarity.

Humanities, Social Sciences and the National Knowledge Commission Recommendations (2008 & 2009)

Against the background of interdisciplinarity, it would be congruous for us to examine the status of Humanities and Social Sciences in wake of the recommendations of the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) constituted by the Government of India, as it unconsciously rearranged the hierarchy of disciplines by foregrounding science and technology. As expected in the age of information and communication technology and explosion of knowledge, humanities and social sciences were marginalized in the Recommendations, The NKC in its report was almost silent about humanities, and social sciences were merged with sciences.

The NKC brought sciences and technology in the centre of its core concerns for its knowledge projects in the age of interdisciplinarity. The NKC took note of 'knowledge as one seamless entity', for which it subscribed to interdisciplinary studies and proposed to set up a National Science and Social Science Foundation (NSSSF) to suggest policy initiatives to make India a leader in the creation and application of knowledge, to ensure that sciences and technology are maximally used for the betterment of the lives of people, and to develop the scientific temper in the country. It meant well and sounded good, for surfeit of specialization leads to lopsidedness, and prepares skewed citizenry.

Interdisciplinary studies. On the other hand, facilitate broader understanding of all ancillary disciplines/areas. In the process it takes a note of social sciences in its proposal for NSSF.

Unsurprisingly, humanities are altogether absent in the NKC's concerns and recommendations. By doing so, it overlooked the basic truth that science takes care of provision and humanities of vision. Both are essential for human for human existence, for humanities, by providing vision, make human beings different from other species. In the age of technology driven economy and society, it was natural that science and technology would be epicentral on the NKC radar, but that does not mean that humanities should altogether be written off. The NKC, like the university system, was suppose to attend to this lacuna, but failed to a large extent to do so, expecting a brief discussion of language (read English only).

It is also to be stated here that the present Indian university system has missed the opportunity of critiquing the tyranny of the existing methodology of study and research in social sciences. Coming as it does from the West, it strives to study human and social phenomena in terms of binary opposites an approach which is backed by differentiating intellect and supports adversarial relations pitching one against the other. Coincidentally, Indian tradition considers *abhedabuddhi* (non-differentiating intellect) superior to *bhedabuddhi* (differentiating intellect). The outward forms might appear to be different but there is the same element or spirit pervading underneath them. It would be nothing but an intellectual misfortune for the entire humanity, if this approach does not find space in Indian education system. The argument for Indocentricity of syllabi in Indian higher education with space for other system is not spurred merely by nationalistic/jingoistic emotionalism but by epistemological and social validity, for the ultimate end of educational pursuits, as in Indian tradition, is to further social harmony, not acrimony.

Humanities, moreover, are not so distantly related to ethical or value education which too finds no space in the NKC's considerations. The NKC proposed to make India a knowledge society with a place of respect for it in the 21st century. But the questions that we need to ask are: what is the objective of knowledge society? Is it enough to be a knowledge society? To be a knowledge society is a noble end in itself. But is it the ultimate end? Also, for every end some price is to be paid? What cost is to be paid for this end? The question here is: what is the ultimate end of knowledge or life for that matter? The ultimate end of knowledge is happiness, i.e., well-being—material, physical and spiritual. It is ensured by eliminating or at least by minimizing dependence on external sources or factors for happiness. Happiness is freedom from the cause of pain which is a consequence of desire. But which desire should or should not be fulfilled? Who can help us in this situation? Humanities inform us about the difference between good and bad desires. Leave aside answer to the question, the question might be news in a knowledge society; only wisdom society based on value education asks and answers this question. The society cannot afford its stoic silence on value or ethical education. Professional education—management, medical and legal—shorn of value-based ethical education will create anarchy and valuelessness in the society, for valuelessness of professionals is more dangerous than that of armatures. The NKC's sincerity in charting our strategies for making India a knowledge society cannot be faulted, but it should have borne in mind the words of Plekhnov, Lenin's mentor, who, on being asked about the roles of arts and literature, is said to have remarked that as long as there is humanity, there would be stupidity. So long as there is stupidity, there would be need for art and literature. In other words, the fate of humanity is interlinked with humanities, though mere humanities would also imbalance the situation. The way out is not in blind lopsided centrality of either science or social sciences or humanities but in their integration and interdisciplinary studies depending on demand of the issue, not on whims or limitations of the learners, scholars, teachers or the system.

Employability

One of the cruel, yet harsh realities staring the present higher education is its inability to bridge the gap between general/liberal education and professional education and provides jobs or means of sustenance to the majority of students, if not for all, as officials are needed for running the state, economic and social systems. Universities now are sites of seeking and making careers for students. Hence, there is a demand for vocationalization and professionalization of education in general and higher education in particular. Unfortunately, not more than a small number of Indian degree holders are employable. According to NASSCOM-McKinsey Report, India produces over 3.1 million graduates, including 0.5 million technical graduates with about 35% being computer engineers. The increasing demand in many sectors notwithstanding, most of these technical graduates remain unabsorbed. Only 25% of these technology graduates and 15% of the general graduates are found suitable for employment.

Despite the glorious failure of the education system, it is the demographic density that keeps the institutions going despite the non-employability of their products. Earlier the higher educationists, in a typically ostrich-like manner used to state arrogantly that employment is the concern of state or economists, and not theirs. Now, employability or placement is one of the major criteria of success or failure of the institution, and their accreditation at inter/national levels. Gone are the days when employment or service was considered the meanest of all professionals. In the northern Indian folk lore, the following saying attribute to Ghagh speaks about the low status attributed to job: '*Uttam kheti madhyayam van/Nishidh chakari bhikh nakam*'. It states that the best of all professions is farming; doing business is the next to it. Doing job with someone is low but the worst of all is begging alms. The highest position attached to farming suggests that the hierarchy of professions must have been prepared in an agrarian society in which there was no fierce competition among the many for the few positions, and farming enjoyed autonomy without reliance on any other agency, excepting the gods of nature like Indra, the rain-god, Varun, the god of wind, Agni, the fire-god. But being employed or in job was next to begging. But

situation has changed to an extent that getting employed is the most important objective of a student, and facilitating employment to the students is the most coveted goal of the present higher education.

The undeniable fact is that education should at least be able to provide the means of sustenance with dignity. Without food it would not be possible for the educated people to sustain themselves with mere degrees. So the teachers in higher education cannot escape the responsibility by stating that equipping students with vocational and professional skills is not their job but of the government and of the ministry of labour. The present higher education system has to think of ways of making its degree holders employable, preferably self-employable, or value-adding to the existing courses by incorporating skills components to the existing courses programmes.

The job-orientedness of education is desirable but obsession with it would make it lopsided, in the pursuit of job-oriented education, the students should not cease to be human beings. The world order has already reached the post-human society. Virtual has taken over not only real but human. Hence, the real challenge before human civilization is to sustain leftovers of its humanity. The obsession with employment and prestige attached to annual pay package and perks should not denude the education of its concern with learners/teachers with human values. The emphasis should, however, be on acquisition and imparting/ acquisition of skills, and re-establishing the relevance of labour and self-sustenance. However everything learnt for preparation for taking part in commercial or political battle of life does not have much to do with culture. All educated should preferably be employable, and carpenters, the trope which can be used for seekers of skill-oriented courses. But the system should also ensure that all carpenters, and those who are employed, are good human beings too.

Lead out

The basic purpose of interdisciplinarity is to critique the existing academic disciplines, and leave transformative impact through their canonization and integration. The academic

space for that matter is neither for establishment nor for establishing anything. It is for questioning the established truths and find out which is/are fact(s). Though it cannot stop the lies or non-truths from being bold, but it must see to it that lies do not get established as truths or facts. It does so by questioning not only the established truths but also proposed ones. Interdisciplinarity adds a new dimension to the basic function and duty of academic pursuits, as it allows questioning from other disciplines.

End Notes:

- 1** For the discussion of Indian knowledge systems, see 'Indian Intellectual Tradition', in Kapil Kapoor, *Literary Theory: Indian Conceptual Framework*, New Delhi, Affiliated East-West Press, (1998, 7-16)
- 2** "Aa no bhadrah kratvu yantu vishwatah." *Rgveda* (Let the best thoughts of the world come to me from all directions.)
- 3** For discussion and frameworks of comparative literary studies in the context of Indian linguistic and literary realities please Avdhesh Kumar Singh, "A Case of Comparative Literary Studies" *English Studies: Indian Perspectives*, ed. Makarand Paranjape et al, Delhi: Antara Books, 2005, 20-39.
- 4** Apart from the lack of interdisciplinary and comparative study of literature, the teaching of literature in Indian universities has been unimaginative, traditional lecture based in which learners remain passive and uninspired, and their literary sensibility, creative and critical faculties remain unenriched, as the best mind either strive to curb their talents in order to accommodate themselves to examination system or suffer its vicious ways. For the redundancy of literary studies in Indian universities, the sad state of teaching of literature is responsible.

No serious scholar/teacher of literature, however, could escape discussion of institutions like literary studies, Departments and universities that facilitate, condition (at times even hinder) teaching, learning and research of/in literature. Like TS Eliot, FR Leavis, RS Crane and Jacques Derrida in the West, Suresh Joshi

(1921-1986) in Gujarati wrote about the existing status of university and teaching language and literature in it particularly in his essay titled "*vidhyapitho: Samasyayo ane Margo*" ("Universities: Problems and Solutions"), and "*Vidyapeethman Sahityanu Shikshan*" (Literature Teaching in the University).

Namvar Singh, the noted critic in Hindi, discussed status of Hindi and its teaching in his essay "Vishvavidyalaya mein Hindi" ("Hindi in Universities"). Similarly in Gujarati, Suresh Joshi in his essay "*Vidyapeethman Sahityanu Shikshan*" (Literature Teaching in University), saw the dominance of politics and science in life as well as in social life, and decline in the fortune of literary studies by analyzing it in terms of religion, semantics and ethics. To him, in the given context, the responsibility of creative writing, literary criticism and profession of teaching has increased manifold. Hence only such 'a true teacher' of literature can serve the purpose that never ceases to be a student, and remains a true 'devotee' of literature. S/he employs her/his teaching in such a way that it proves useful for creating the favourable atmosphere for realizing those possibilities. Her/His effort should not be to establish new benchmark of quality by creating artificial difference between different parts of literature. Such a teacher, according to Joshi, takes care of various branches of study, useful to literature, and makes a conscious endeavour to remain acquainted with the contemporary trends, tendencies, and the newer thoughts emerging from the theoretical criticism and the epoch-making works her/his own, and other languages of the world. Also s/he should always be careful that her/his students do not become the victims of the limitations of his personal likes and dislikes that act as a hindrance in the students' independent development, for the students are not dustbin for her/his (teacher's) opinions gathered from here and there. By presenting many possible contradictory opinions, s/he should encourage a fundamental examination of a subject. Joshi subscribed to the view that teaching and learning are common pursuits. Rather than thinking that s/he is teaching the students, and that all are trying to learn something together

proves useful to the teacher because s/he does not have to lose what s/he learns from his students. If a teacher possesses the right vision of the values of literature, true insight into the responsibility of criticism, proper understanding of the barriers in the way of creating literature of the highest kind, his teaching itself can be the source of inspiration for good literature. Rather than asking the students to revere the traditions, s/he should establish the significance of original thinking in them. S/he should see to it that the true fervor for literature and research remains firm against the efforts for promotion at job or the trivial tendency to achieve superiority over others. His teaching of literature goes beyond teaching the prescribed texts, and opens up ways of creative writing, for the ultimate end of literature teaching is imparting and strengthening creative and critical faculties of learners. 'The true teacher of literature never underestimates the value of creative writing.'

Joshi did not remain content with the criticism of the present state of teaching literature, Gujarati to be precise in his case, but on the basis of his teaching experience he suggested practical and meaningful ways of teaching so that the students are equipped with critical faculties and their creative sensibility is enriched in the process. According to him, rather than prescribing a certain number of texts, the terms of the year should be divided in units, certain texts or parts of the texts should be chosen for every unit from a certain perspective, and a 'creative' re-reading should take place of the same. The text should be discussed from all perspectives giving rise to some fundamental questions, and these questions should be analysed. In this way, after preparing the primary orientation for criticism, students should be given two weeks' time and the list of books for further reading and they should be briefed as regards what kind of discussion is expected of them after the time given to them. After the two weeks' time period, based on the reading material, they should be asked relevant questions, to answer which they have to use their critical acumen; they should write the answers after giving it a good thought with the help of the reading

material sitting in a library. After checking these answers, the teacher should discuss the limitations or flaws in the answers and give details missing in it. After we divide the time period of the year in units, if we can arrange this sequential reading for each unit, it will be useful for the objective of studying literature, creating true love for literature and acquiring the critical acumen required for analyzing literature. The notable characteristic of this method is that studying a known text helps in honing the skills of discussing and examining an unknown text. And in this method, we can go beyond the rigid structure of textbooks and use books that can be useful to the fundamental objective of the study. We can avoid wasting a year on a lifeless text with the help of this method. In this method, textbook does not become the goal; it just becomes the means of creating the critical acumen. And then, there is a flexibility to incorporate works of different time periods and different languages.

If a student comes in direct contact with the textbook or the subject of his study, his mind would embark on thinking about it, questions would arise and the contemplation of these thoughts will gradually develop his critical acumen. In the growth of a student, it is apt that educators should, where necessary, use their insight which is an outcome of the long period of literary studies and efforts made in that direction and it should be used in a way that it is useful to the student. Are appropriate questions arising in the mind of a student, or is he repeating the borrowed questions of the traditional discussion? A teacher has to take special care of these questions in/of each student. Right questions arising in the mind is the base of intellectual vigilance. It stimulates zest in him and he may go way ahead of the teacher. S/He may ask questions which never occurred to the teacher and it may happen that s/he goes on to challenge the givens of her/his teacher. Only when such a situation arises that two watchful and keen minds will come into contact with each other and interact to enhance their knowledge.

In such a method, according to him, the teacher should remain watchful. If s/he has to teach a text by some modern poet, the teacher should study it ones again. Just by providing available information to the students, s/he should not consider his responsibility over. If the study of literature is done this way, the works, which can stand deeper scrutiny, will offer newer evaluation and ultimately be useful to the insight into literature which is evolving, to literary criticism and to creative writing. But has such a situation been created here? The works of Gujarati writers like Goverdhanram Tripathi, Nanalal and B. K. Thakore can stand some more analysis. He lamented the fact that the people of his tribe kept repeating the same things about them that have been said before. Consequently, Gujarati academia is yet to make a true estimate of Goverdhanram as a novelist, B. K. Thakore's concept of poetry and evaluation of his poems in the light of his concept of poetry, and a fresh study of the uniqueness and limitations of Nanalal's talents. He conceded to the fact that the present education system did not create the base for the exchange of ideas between the vigilant minds of the students and teachers of the last twenty years.

Joshi 's views advocating new approach of receiving literature in the university class room are relevant for us, as he pleaded for interactive learner-centric, creative and collaborative method of teaching and learning of literature. While seeking departure from the traditional lecture mode and insisting on fresh teaching, he left space for new approaches like interdisciplinarity. For instance, Goverdhanram Tripathi's assessment would be further enriched if his novel *Saraswatichandra* is read in the light of his non-fictional works during the period, and by keeping the magnum opus in terms of the rise of Indian novel in the 19th century, its sociology and ideology and cultural studies. During the period from 1887 to 1901, Tripathi had studied diverse subjects like history, philosophy, politics, logic and economics and wrote on them as well. Tripathi's *The Classical Poets of Gujarat and Their Influence on Society and Morals* (1894) is

an influence study that was written with historical method and can be useful for sociological and ethical reading of Gujarati literature.

Unfortunately, Suresh Joshi's pieces of advice to teachers of literature remain unheeded, proving that the teachers are bad learners, more so in case of teachers of literature, perhaps.

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