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## Modernity and Post-modernity Quest in Srimadbhagvadgita

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### ABSTRACT

The present paper aims to enquire and analyze the modern periodization of history after 18th century into two major continuums: modernity and post- modernity which re-define the modern capitalist society; the continuity of debate poses various challenges and questions to seek the answers of various problems associated with these major phenomena. The paper is an attempt to provide answers to the problems through philosophical aspects of Srimadbhagvadgita. The core moral values discussed in Srimadbhagvadgita which is the most prominent part of greatest epic of Indian Knowledge system (IKS). The Srimadbhagvadgita as “Mahabharata” provides suitable and viable solutions to problems besieged with meta narratives of modernity and post-modernity of modern civilization. The paper will discuss definitive outcomes of application of Srimadbhagvadgita’s philosophy to seek solution and realization of goal of moral and mental peace for global community.

**Keywords:** Capitalism, modernity, post-modernity, globalization, Enlightenment, periodization, Srimadbhagvadgita.

### INTRODUCTION

The modern civilization has been developed under the scanner of narratives controlled by the western scholarship since the rise of the colonization from 1860’s . The historical process then been analysed by the scholars based on narratives written accordingly to colonial notions, where every native society perceived through the prism of colonialism, it described native societies as uncivilised and barbaric, and western scholarship was critical of traditional cultures and customs. The characterization of subjugated colonized societies as backward needs the justification of colonial rule, so the vicarious ideas of “civilizing mission” and “social Darwinism” had to be imposed to justify the colonial subjugation of east. The philosophical ideas of

west divided the period of history, or epochs into two broad categories, the phase beginning from enlightenment till second world war was designated as 'Modernity'. By 1970's second phase describe as the post- Modernism. These two phases usually represented the era of industrial capitalism and finally leads to the globalization of 21<sup>st</sup> century. This era witness spurt in economic and technological development throughout western world and leads to progress and prosperity. The cultural fields such as arts, literature, social sciences, politics, economics were classified under the parameters of these two broad categories of Modernism and post- Modernism.

### **Idea of Modernity & Modernism and unfolding of problems**

The project of modernity, according to these accounts, had its origins in the Enlightenment, though it came to fruition in the nineteenth century. The social scientists define the modernity according to their own perceptions but general agreement among all stated parameters of modern society. The so-called Enlightenment project is supposed to represent rationalism, technocentrism, the standardization of knowledge and production, a belief in linear progress and in universal, absolute truths. The major narratives which built up around modernity and modernism had the same standardized ideas such as modernity specifically has ushered a new era and produced the ideology of liberty and equality, free will, scientific inquiry, and constitutional values to govern the society, the major milestones of this era usually regarded as the American and French Revolution when traditional superstructure or governance model dominated by the Monarchy and conservatism were replaced by replaced by the free will, the modernity project not only transformed the political culture of the western world but arts, architecture, literature and other relevant fields underwent under transformation, the scholars believe that the epoch of modernity continued till the end of Second World War.

The concept of modernity belongs to a standard view of history, the one that takes capitalism for granted as the outcome of already existing tendencies, even natural laws, when and where they are given a chance. In the evolutionary process leading from early forms of exchange to modern industrial capitalism, modernity kicks in when these shackled economic forces, and the economic rationality of the bourgeois, are liberated from traditional constraints.<sup>1</sup>

### **Post- Modernism and critique of industrial Society**

Postmodernism can be seen as the reaction against modernity. That's why it is called anti- modernity. But in terms of binary equation, it is not simply anti modern. Its development has been done through a long process of critical engagement resulting into modernity. The ideology of postmodernism has been criticized and attacked for the philosophy, culture and politics which were generated by the theory of modernity. Postmodernism has positioned itself regarding the theory of modernism, very much like theories of modernity, there is no unified theory of postmodernism, If anything, the

situation is even more diffuse and chaotic. The range is vast, and it covers the whole spectrum from mild critique of modernity to total nihilism but although postmodernism derives its definition from many sources, the one common thread running through them is the critique of modernity. The major ideology whose works constitute the corpus from which post modernism is formulated are Foucault, Deleuze, Lyotard, Baudrillard, Deleuze, Guattari, White etc.<sup>2</sup> classical, social, and political theory lays a greater emphasis on nation states. Under the umbrella of globalization, the states and societies have undergone fundamental changes. Postmodernism argues that nation states are losing importance under globalization as the world is becoming interdependent. The technological and electronic revolution has created heterogeneity, pluralization, individualization, differentiation, and fragmentation over homogenization of earlier times. The postmodern world is one where technology within the confines of consumerist capitalism is creating diversity and pluralization. Immanuel Wallerstein argues that the history of the world capitalist system has been trending towards cultural heterogeneity rather than cultural homogenization.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the processes of fragmentation of the state in the world system along with cultural differentiation are taking place simultaneously.

### **The Enigma of modernism and post- modernism and solutions in Srimadbhavagita**

The modern civilization as explained by these two epistemological ideologies has many advantages and disadvantages, the major benefits of industrialization achieved are improvement in standard of livings, stability in income, universalization of meta narratives and suitable opportunities for economic growth of various social groups within the western societies,<sup>4</sup> the identification of various new technologies ease the lives of people and globalization which is the byproduct of post- modernism helped in the dissemination of technology and information at global level, the nature of these ideologies pave the way for consumerism and consumption based societies and mass production, unleashed demand for luxurious products and market forces overpower the economies of nation states.

This era of mass production and consumerism resulted in lopsided development it automatically created a massive economic wedge between the social groups, the new vistas of *have* and *have nots* emerges out, industrial society had differentiation based on power and prestige and appropriation of resources by one group or class establish the domination over society.<sup>5</sup>

The classification based on economic criterion unleashed the many discriminatory aspects of the industrial society and individualistic character resulted in various psychological and emotional outbursts which automatically disturb the mental health of the people, because of it, people move to philosophy of Indian knowledge system to sought mental peace and tranquility in their lives, the evils of consumerism and competition beset the major emotional problems like anger, depression, sorrow, loneliness, deprivation and demotivation , here comes the role of Srimadbhavadgita, song celestial, divine voice of lord Krishna, a recipe for solution of all problems of postindustrial society or modernism and post- modernism

ideology of globalized World.<sup>6</sup> The Industrial world witnessed umpteen psychological problems related to stress of fast life, breaking up of families, loneliness, competition to generate more and more resources resulted in distress, mental illness and to resolve these problems people sought refuge in eastern spiritualism, the Indian Knowledge System provide solutions to these impending emotional problems of the western world, Srimadbhagavadgita is antidote to the all psychological and emotional problems associated with industrial society in following excerpts from Srimadbhagavadgita these issues been explained.<sup>7</sup>

**Srimadbhagavadgita verses or shlokas to resolve the problematic emotional issues related to modern civilization.**

Recitation, chanting practice, and absorption of essence in daily routine resolve the following.

**1. Anger:** Chapter 2, Shloka 56

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।  
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥ २.५६ ॥

Chapter 5, Shloka 26

कामक्रोधवियुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसाम् ।  
अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥ ५.२६ ॥

**2. Confusion:** chapter 2, shloka 7

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसंमूढचेताः ।  
यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥२.७ ॥

: chapter 3, shloka 2

व्यामिश्रेणेव वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहयसीव मे ।  
तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥ ३.२ ॥

**3. Envy:** Chapter 12, shloka 13,14

अद्वेषा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।  
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥ १२.१३ ॥

सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।  
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ १२.१४ ॥

**4. Depression:** Chapter 2, shloka 3,14

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।  
 क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥ २.३ ॥  
 मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।  
 आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥ २.१४ ॥

**5. Fear:** Chapter 4, shloka 10

वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।  
 बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥ ४.१० ॥

Chapter 11, shloka 50

सञ्जय उवाच —

इत्यर्जुनं वासुदेवस्तथोक्त्वा  
 स्वकं रूपं दर्शयामास भूयः ।  
 आश्वासयामास च भीतमेनं  
 भूत्वा पुनःसौम्यवपुर्महात्मा ॥ ११.५० ॥ ४

## CONCLUSION

The major problems associated with the modern civilization needs solutions these are found in the Srimadbhgvadgita we have seen that all impending issues sought answers in the Srimadbgagvadgita.The modern civilization urgently needs to assess the teaching of Srimadbhagvadgita and follow what has been said in the teachings of Srimadbhavadvadgita.

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