
Anupama Goel & Seema Singh, *Reflections on Ancient Indian Jurisprudence in the Current Social & Judicial Set-Up*, First Edition, Mohan Law House, 2021.

Throughout the protracted period of the western colonization the Indian Jurist and the philosopher tenets and beliefs were dismissed or discerned inferior. However, this book offers a balanced scholarly view in regard to philosophy of law in ancient India. This review endeavors to evaluate and assess the effectiveness of all the theories discussed herein, highlight its weaknesses, while discussing its relevance in current academic space. This publication primarily focuses on the uniqueness of Indian society, and implies looking for solutions to current legal problems in its grounded history, importing structures from elsewhere risks ignoring its distinct challenges.

Prof. (Dr.) Anupama Goel, Professor of Law at National Law University, Delhi and Dr. Seema Singh Assistant Professor of Campus Law Centre, University of Delhi, Delhi; they both have compiled and edited the following volume. The prefaces written by them convey the book's focal theme, presenting a concise overview of the nation's past serving as a rationale for subsequent readings. The foreword is written Hon'ble Mr. Justice M. Rama Jois, Former Chief Justice of Punjab & Haryana High Court, wherein he gives his perspective; and erudite experience provides extensive practical expertise. It's a compilation of sixteen essays that encompasses the views of erudite jurists, eminent judges, distinguished scholars, and subject-matter experts. The authors aim to bring diverse perspectives, ranging from theoretical insights from the past to practical implications in present. First article by Justice K. Kanna explores the potential role of spiritual values in shaping individual and social life. The deprivation of *satya* or truthfulness in the legal system. There is drift in corruption and degradation in individuals and societal morality and this can only be ameliorated through *dharma* or individual moral code.

The articles by Dr. Viney Kapoor Mehra, Dr Anju Punet Singh and Krishna Kant Divedi focus on institutional metamorphosis from the ancient time. Dr. Mehra focuses on evidence-based verdict by judiciary. It doesn't matter if justice is fulfilled or not. In ancient philosophy the motive was not merely to secure justice, but also to ensure that it's embedded within the fabric of society. While Divedi focuses on the concept of speedy trial in India, examining transition from the instinct of basic survival to the feeling of revenge. While offering an understanding of legal processes such as, stages of investigation, enquiry, trial, bail and examination of the witness he asserts a speedy procedure of these. Suggests focusing on decentralization and ensuring an ancient India like-administration structure penetrating village level. Singh in a similar yet contrasting way talks about the changing administrative system, from the laws in the *Dharmasastra* to the codification of various laws, and focusing on the dispersion of justice contemporarily with cultural trauma of the past. Further Dr. Mehra articles devoted to the ancient judicial system explore the criminal and civil law practices. It delineates on adoption of *rex non potest peccare*, where the king can do no wrong, endowing administration perception of superiority, and assumption of highest authority. But *dharamshatra* articulates that even a king is under *dharma*. In the civil matter, where rich moneylenders are exploiting and capitalizing on the poor, *dvaigunya* and *damdupat* ensured that the rate of interest was fixed. Another notable theme explored is the environment by Amar Pal Singh and Seema Singh. A substantial number of existing laws are inadequate in addressing the escalating crises. They highlight the gradual detachment with the past ideas. Authors emphasize on ideas of *Aranyanisukta*, *Nadisukta*,

Apahsukta and *Prithvisukta* discerning nature as the expression of gods. They all envisage a personal bond with the natural environment on earth. Bhutan's happiness and a sensitive index impeded Buddhist philosophy to ensure sustainable development. The articles written by Ashish Mehra and Govind Geol engage with the issue of alternative dispute resolution, creating symbolism from similar cultures such as China. It exhibits avoidance of complexity and ensures timely solutions. The principal of *sama, dama, bheda, danda* ensured a four-level approach.

Additionally, an article on business law by Dr. Rishma Garg, provides details into *adamana* and *bhogyadhi* (mortgage and pledge), the liability and rights as mentioned in *the Smritis*. Likewise covering details of surety and guarantee practices. Pradip Kumar Das centralizes on the lack of protection of elderly people, elucidating in the eternal philosophy of mankind while discussing legal and judicial development: Rama Sharma and Mamata Sharma encourage dialogue on adequate compensation to rape victims. It emphasizes procedure ensuring all decisions are taken considering victim and dignity of women as a focal point of justice, suggesting varied principles from all the religions. Mriyunjay Kumar challenges colonial masters' notions of oriental despotism, criticizing the rationale of the system, contesting the idea behind the inorganic development of law. Alike Upasana Dhankhar implores the translation technique of Vedic texts, needing an associated system of interpretation as English words lack an equivalent of Sanskrit.

Punita Sharma emphasizes on the sources of Indian Jurisprudence, discussing the *Nyāya-sātra* she thoroughly assesses the traditional philosophical approach. Siddhartha Misra goes further back into the Indus Civilization uncovering the solution of present-day prejudice and bigotry in the peaceful coexistence of the Indus, offering measures to international. The last article is by Nistish Rai Parwani, discussing the notion of *Bharat* as a nation-state. The aim as mentioned in the book is, '*stop treating the legal system as the engine of social growth and rather make an attempt to treat the social system as the engine of legal growth.*'

Despite its contributions, the volume's primary limitation lies in the arrangement of the articles where the book could be divided in themes and then explored but it is arranged in haphazard manner. Also, the few ideas miss the historical development of *dharma*. Every society has its own constraints, ours lies in the *varna* or the caste system that was initially flexible. Regardless, with time, it turned out to be rigid and immobile, some arguments forget these evils. It also mentions *gram panchayat* as a solution to the judicial system or ADR but they lack in the standardization. There are local notions of hundreds of years that don't have any connection with the ancient principle of *dharma* and are very stringent and localized, retaining the depravity of the patriarchal and hierarchical society power being relished by the one belonging to the upper caste. Overall, it is a commendable work that synthesizes a wide range of information, bringing together extensive and varied information in one cohesive resource by *sixteen authors*. It is a valuable read for those who want to look beyond the conventional legal jurisprudence, where the emphasis is only on the western jurist, enriching the reader with new ideas and themes to explore. This book serves as an important reference for those engaged in policy planning and related disciplines as it directly provides solutions to prominent legal problems. Furthermore, providing direction to those seeking guidance for the research in a similar field, as it thoroughly examines the primary sources and gives a researcher a clue about traditional Indian Jurisprudence. It's also jotted down in a precise and unambiguous manner that any person who wants to acquire knowledge of the same can also read it.

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