

Review of: "A Survey: Looking for the best possible way of modern engagement with Traditional Indian knowledge"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This paper is interesting for at least two reasons. The first one is the demand from which it stems, namely the need to detect a plausible equilibrium – in cultural and intellectual terms – between the historical cultural tradition of India and the main results of the Western scientific research. The second one is the methodology it employs, i.e. a survey with a list of questions concerning for example the possibility of establishing relations between issues belonging to the Indian philosophical tradition and theories developed by the “Western” scientific research. The authors have posed these questions in the course of the “Nalanda Dialogs” to Indian scholars, reporting the results in the paper.

The background ambiguity is that “Western” scientific knowledge is universalistic in its implicit (but plausible) claims, but it is also historically situated (I refer to the epistemic contents of scientific knowledge, in an analytic sense in their pure abstractness, *not* to the whole Western main models of life). For this reason we need to consider the specification of its being “Western” as limited to only some – and maybe not central – aspects of it. In the scientific research there are many and important obscure sides, more or less connected to its colonialistic potential meaning (and not only), but it is difficult to deny its epistemic power (even if it is necessary to warn at the same time against the risks of reductionism and scientism).

It is absolutely true that the historical conditions of its birth risk to make it a tool for dominion, in the ways that are historically well known. But the choice to investigate the views of Indian scholars on the possible relations between their culture and scientific research is a good example of the tools that the scholars can use to give their contribution both for the progressive building of a not-only-Western model of science (and also of a not-only-Western dominant model of society and agency) and for the political contrast against the dangerous present possible – even if sometimes much more hidden than in the past – forms of colonialism.

The previous comments to the paper underlines some methodological limits of the research, but it seems to me that – even admitting some of these limits – they can be justified as intentionally accepted, in view of a subsequent and more exacting elaboration.