



भारतीय दार्शनिक अनुसंधान परिषद्
(शिक्षा मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार), नई दिल्ली
Indian Council of Philosophical Research
(Ministry of Education, Government of India),
ICPR, Darshan Bhawan, Near Saket Metro Station, New Delhi,



Lecture Programme

July 29, 2022, 10.30 am

**WHAT DOES 'WHAT' MEAN? ABHINAVAGUPTA ON THE
SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF QUESTIONS**



Wh-questions ("What?" "Where?" "Who?" "When?" Etc. K-questions in Sanskrit) have a primal significance in philosophy in general and in Indian philosophy in particular. Not only is an entire Upaniṣad called Praśna Upaniṣad; the earliest text of Rg-Vedic metaphysics: the Nāsadīya hymn asks six Wh-questions and ends by a disjunctive answer to the meta-question:

"Who knows the answer to these questions?"

The great Kashmir Shaiva phenomenologist, aesthete and polymath Abhinavagupta addresses the issue of what is the meaning of a question in great detail in the first Ahnika of his magnum opus *Tantrāloka*. In this lecture we shall closely follow his analysis of the indispensability of the question-and-answer as the ideal format of logico-philosophical as well as contemplative-spiritual discourse. As a counterpoint, we shall briefly consider Śrīharṣa's skeptical attack against the very concept of a "what- question" as in "What is the proof of the existence of God" asked by an atheist or agnostic. The lecture will conclude with some contemporary Western semantics of interrogative sentences.



Professor Arindam Chakrabarti, is, currently, a Visiting Professor of Philosophy at Ashoka University, India. . He has been, for the last 25 years, Lenney Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at University of Hawaii Manoa. From 2018 till 2020 he held the Mattoo Chair of Indic Humanities at the department of Philosophy Stony Brook University. Professor Chakrabarti received his doctorate from Oxford University, England in 1982. From 1983 to 1988 he was a Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Calcutta, India. Between 1988 and 1992 he held the Spalding Visiting Fellowship at Wolfson College, Oxford, a Fellowship at the Institute of Advanced Study at

Edinburgh, Jacobsen Fellowship and tutorship at University College London and a Visiting Assistant Professorship at the University of Washington, Seattle. After being trained as an analytic philosopher of language at Oxford, Professor Chakrabarti has spent several years receiving traditional training in Indian logic (Navya Nyāya) and metaphysics. He authored many well received books "Apoha: Buddhist Nominalism and Human Cognition", "Denying Existence, Epistemology", "Meaning and Metaphysics After Matilal", "Knowing from Words" and "Mahābhārata Now: Narrative, Aesthetics, Ethics" etc. He has around 100 research papers to his credit.

Please find below the Invitation Card and Google Link for the registration in the Lecture Programme which is organized by ICPR on 29th July, 2022 at 10:30 A.M

1. Invitation Card:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe6TzokB5EHAR2adW0zS9XWplsAKwHtPtwYwQIPH-pyASA09g/viewform?usp=sf_link

2. Google Meet joining info:

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/wkx-npdv-mms>