

IDEAS IN INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

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Ideas in Indian Political Thought

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UNIT 1

DHARMA AND DANDA: KAUTILYA

NOTES

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1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, students should be able to:

- Understand the concept of religion and its different dimensions
- Explain the meaning of interpretation state and religion according to Kautilya
- Discuss the interrelationship of Dharma and Danda in ancient Indian politics



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1.2 INTRODUCTION

Within *Arthashastra* Tradition, Kautilya's is the only complete work that is available to us. Kautilya in his *Arthashastra* salutes Shukra and Brihaspati as pioneers of *Arthashastra* tradition and also recognizes his indebtedness to their teaching. After Kautilya, Kamandaka's *Nitisara*, Mitramisra's *Rajanitiprakasha* and Anantadeva's *Rajadharmakustubha* and the epic *Mahabharata* also reflect traits of *Arthashastra* tradition. For Kautilya 'Artha' meant subsistence. *Arthashastra*, therefore, would mean the mode of acquisition and preserving of land. More widely, it signifies the science (or art) of government and statecraft. Generally, texts in this tradition contained detailed examination of rulers and principles of state administration. The authors seem to apply the methods of the observation, analysis and deduction in respect of political life. Another important characteristic of writing in this tradition was the centrality given to *Dandaniti*. *Dandaniti* represented the science of politics and was primarily concerned with application of coercive authority of ruler.

1.3 CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF KAUTILYA'S ARTHASASTRA

The characteristic features of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* are as follows:

- It indicates strong tendency towards materialistic view of human ends.
- It is the doctrine of seven constituents of state-organic theory of the state.
- It provides authority and functions of the temporal ruler discussed in details.
- It provides centrality of *danda* as means to protect people and save *dharma*. *Danda* often seen as synonym to law.
- It includes a complete theory of government with king, *amatyas*, and administrative organization as its integral part with each being equally important.
- It concerns about geo-politics discussed for the first time. Glimpses of inter-state relationship are exhibited.



- Its concern about relative morality is central. Difference between Rajdharm (during normal times) and apadharm (during emergency) are very explicit.
- It shows scientific analysis of power in relative terms and holistic view of state power (bala). Realist perception of international relation.
- It developed politics as independent science, at least relative autonomous to the field of morality, ethics and theology.

1.4 DHARMA IN KAUTILYA'S ARTHASASTRA

According to Indian traditions, the pursuit of the purusharthas—ethical goodness (dharma), riches and power (artha), pleasure (kama), and spiritual transcendence (moksha)—requires favourable social and political conditions. Kautilya only ever addresses Dharma directly (i.e., Dharmasthiya). In relation to the major subject of the text, which is statecraft, he again fails to provide a precise definition of Dharma in this instance. However, he only provides a tract of ten verses, which appears to be another set of ending verses. The final verses of a chapter frequently don't provide a succinct summation or stick to the points made earlier. These verses might be copies of those found in previous sources. The verses under consideration serve to emphasise that Rajadharm is the only one responsible for guarding the other Dharmas and Varnasramas. Here, various ideas related to Rajadharm are discussed, including vyavahara, vivada, and danda. “*Atra satye sthito dharmah*” is the only phrase that appears to be a generic definition of Dharma in the context and this is merely a declaration that the Dharma is founded in reality. Thus, it is clear that Kautilya makes a valiant effort to prove that Dharma, particularly Trayidharma, is the source of political science (or at the very least, the source of his work). However, Varnasrama Dharma has nothing to do with the notion of Dharma found in the Vedas. The idea of Dharma as a universally sustaining abstract principle can be found in the early Vedic literature. The focus of the later Vedic tradition is on Yajnasamskara. Kautilya, who fervently supports Varnasramadharm, is opposed to the post-Vedic era's development of the notion of Dharma. Despite its complexity, dharm is widely seen to be the culmination of all human endeavours that serve to uphold, reinforce, and advance the cosmos' order of



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things. It encompasses a living thing's social, economic, moral, and sociological obligations to a society.

Arthashastra deals primarily with two sciences—*Varta* or economics, and *Dandaniti* or science of government. They together develop as *Arthashastra*, or the science of worldly prosperity and well-being. The *Arthashastra*, like the later *Shukranitisara*, is essentially a hand-book for the guidance of the governing group, manual for the practical politician. For the most part Kautilya prescribe for specific needs and uses tested administrative procedures. Kautilya's *Arthashastra*'s significance in the great tradition can be noted as following:

1. Kautilya was truly a realist and he has dealt with all problems which were faced by the kings of his times and suggested pragmatic solutions in the field of statecraft.
2. Among all the great writers on politics, he is the only one who has written independently on the subject, i.e., on politics separated from religion, ethics, or morality.
3. He gave to the country a strong and centralized administration, as had not been known to the Indians before.

There has been a controversy about the date of its composition. Winternitz, Dr. Jolly and Keith hold the view that it was composed in the early centuries of the Christian era. Winternitz says that if this work is the creation of Kautilya, why there is no account of the Mauryan Empire and system of government as described by the Greek historians. According to Dr Jolly, in respect of religion and laws there is great similarity between Kautilyan *Arthashastra* and Yajnavalkya Smriti, hence the *Arthashastra* should had been composed in the 3rd century, which is the period of Yajnavalkya Smritis's composition. But like all ancient texts there remain authentic controversy regarding date and authorship of these texts. What we know however is that the manuscripts were first discovered in 1904 when some wandering monks brought some palm leaves to Mysore Oriental Library. R. Shamasastri, the librarian recognized it as *Arthashastra* and gradually translated it in English and published in various European Journals in 1908. It contained 15 Books, 150 Chapters and 180 topics. R. P. Kangle calls *Arthashastra* as the 'science of politics', A. L. Basham calls it the 'Treatises on Polity'; and D. D. Kosambi considered it as the 'science of material gain'.



1.5 ORIGIN OF THE STATE

In the course of a dialogue, Kautilya tells that the state originated when people got weary of the law of the fish (Matsya Nyaya), or widespread of anarchy in society due to greed and selfishness, they selected Manu to be their first king. It was settled that the king would receive one-sixth of the grains, one-tenth of the merchandise and of the gold as his due share. This revenue enabled the king to ensure the security and well-being of the subjects.

1.6 ENDS AND FUNCTION OF THE STATE

The ends of the state according to Kautilya, were not merely the maintenance of peace and order or protection of the people but to enable the individual to attain highest self-development with the help of the state.

Functions of the state included:

- *Protection*: It means guarding the country both against internal troubles as well as foreign aggression;
- *Maintaining Common Law*: The state was expected to maintain the common law as embodied in the ancient customs and usages of the land;
- *Upholding Social Order*: The third function of the state was the protection of *dharma* of the land, within the sphere of which both the state and the society moved. According to Kautilya, the duty of the king consisted in protecting his subjects with justice. A king upsetting the social order would prove the vanity of the royal scepter (danda);
- *Promotion of the People's Welfare*: The Hindu king knew the ideal that in the happiness of his subjects was hidden his happiness and in their welfare is his welfare. Whatever pleased him was not considered as good, but whatever pleased his subjects was considered as good for him.



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1.7 SAPTANGA THEORY (SEVEN LIMBS OF THE STATE)

Kautilya nowhere exactly defines the state or sovereignty, but he defines seven elements. Like human body, the body-politics is supposed to possess various limbs (angas). Undoubtedly, Kautilya presented an organic theory of state, where each of these parts were given specific duty and overall welfare and flourishing of the state depended on the performance of these parts. Every element is supposed to be at par in importance to others; but their importance depended upon the achievements obtained by them. Kautilya states these elements as, swami (king), amatyas (ministers), janapada (territory), durga (forts), kosha (treasury), danda (royal scepter), and mitra (allies). It is explained in detail below.

1. **Swamy (King):** Even a glance, the *Arthashastra* will convince anyone that Kautilya was a strong advocate of monarchy. As a matter of the fact, he keenly desired to establish the rule of a strong and powerful king over country. But it was also expected to perform social welfarism to keep the people happy. In fact Kautilyas' entire classic has been written with the King at centre.
2. **Amatya (Ministers):** The most important function of the amatya (ministers) was to render advice to the king. Kautilya insists that the king should appoint three to four counsellors. Probably the reason of not making too many ministers was to protect and maintain state secrecy. As regard the quality of the minister, who constitutes an important element of sovereignty, Kautilya says that he must be a native and born in high family, influential, and well trained in all kind of arts. He must be wise, bold, eloquent, skilful, and intelligent. He must be pure in character, loyal in devotion, and endowed with excellent conduct. He must be enthusiastic and affectionate. But he must be free from procrastination and fickle-mindedness. Their recruitment was to be based on principles of merit and King could employ certain parameters to judge the efficiency of these ministers. King had to test the ministers time to time for loyalty and based on that they were to be rewarded or punished. If any minister was found to be plotting against the King or fails the tests, they were not only to be removed but also killed as they share many secrets which they could split if left alive.



- 3. Janapada (Territory):** Janapada includes the territory and the people. The king is asked to look personally into the affairs of the state. This makes one to assume that the state has to be small if personal attention is to be given. There are indications that a janapada is to contain 800 grams with a *sthanika* at its centre. It should be fertile land with abundance of forest, rivers, mountains and minerals. As for people Kautilya says that loyalty is the most essential characteristics expected. They should pay taxes on time, should be hardworking, religious, disciplined and ready to even die for the country.
- 4. Durg (Fort):** The fourth element of sovereignty in the *Arthashastra* is the fort (durg). Kautilaya says that the construction of defensive fortification on all quarters of the boundary is symbol of strength, provided they are situated on the strategically best suited regions, such as a water fortification on an island in the midst of a river, or a plain surrounded by low ground, a mountainous fortification such as rocky track or a cave, a desert fortification in areas of a wild tract devoid of water and a forest fortification full of water. It would be used to garrison soldiers, store food grains for emergency and also act as hideout for king when there is danger.
- 5. Kosha (Treasury):** The treasury is the fifth element of the state. According to Kautilya, the treasury accumulated by righteous and legitimate manner should be retained by the king. The king may inherit the treasury which must be filled with gold, silver, precious stones, jewels, and gems and it should be capable of outstanding the strain of expenditure during times of calamities of long duration. If needed, then the king can increase his treasury through increased taxation. Kautilya sets different kinds of taxes but maintains that it should never be oppressive. He also suggests that the treasury should be judiciously used and not be wasted in personal aggrandizement and show-off.
- 6. Danda (Army):** Next important element in order of priority is army. Kautilya suggests the need for a standing army and non-dependence on mercenaries. The basic qualities of a good army according to Kautilya are that recruitment is fair and based on inheritance, they should be loyal, strong, and full of vigour and energy. The army must be invincible and endowed with the power of endurance, trained in fighting various kinds of battles, and skilful in handling various forms of weapons. The army should not bring in any state of instability in the kingdom

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but it should be ready to share the sorrow of the king in time of calamities. He also mentions that the army men should be paid well and families should be cared so that the soldiers are not worried about their future while at war. Soldiers must be ready to die for the country but king also must ascertain that they are well equipped with right kind of weapons and are provided with whatever is required to keep them happy and loyal.

7. **Mitra (Ally):** The last element is the friend of the king, who is always ready to help the king and is also capable to help him in time of war and natural calamity. King should continuously increase the numbers of friends and should send gifts and pleasantries as mark of friendship. Allies are equally important for economic activities and trade relations.

Kautilya believes that if any one of the elements of state falls in trouble, it threatens the overall setup and should be considered a serious issue.

Qualities of the King:

The qualities of the king, according to Kautilya are: born of a high family, godly, possessed of valour, virtuous, truthful, not of a contradictory nature, grateful, having large aims, highly enthusiastic, not addicted to procrastination, powerful to control his neighboring kings, of resolute mind, having an assembly of ministers of no mean quality, and possessed of a taste for discipline. These are qualities of a high order and of an inviting nature. Further, Kautilya prescribes restraint of the organs of the sense. Success in study and discipline depends on the restraint of the organs of sense, which can be forced by abandoning lust, anger, greed, vanity (mana), haughtiness (mada), and overjoy (harsha).

Kautilya proposes a very strict and disciplined training program. He emphasized the importance of character-building for young Prince. He argues that vices could be related to pleasures as well as wrath. Among vices related to pleasures that should be controlled, he mentions hunting, gambling, sleeping by day, excess indulgence with women, drunkenness, excess love for dancing, singing, music and useless travel. At the same time, the vices due to wrath that should be avoided included tale-bearing, violence, treachery, envy, slandering, unjust seizure of property, reviling, and assault. Kautilya also advocated extreme care in personal safety of the King and for this the Palace was to be guarded by series of circles of warriors. He was supposed to have



multiple bedrooms and not even the closest associate should know which bedroom he was using on a particular night. The troubles of the king may be either internal or external. Internal troubles are more serious than external troubles, which are like the danger arising from a lurking snake. Troubles due to a minister are more serious than the other kind of internal troubles. Hence, the king should keep under his own control the power of finance and the army. Kautilya being a realist suggested the King to use spies even to test the loyalty of his ministers from time to time. Further, being a realist, he suggests that no threat, however trivial, should be overlooked.

Duties of the King:

For Kautilya, King was central to all activities in the state. Therefore, the expectations were also very high and he had to perform multiple functions, such as:

- **Executive:** The foremost duty of the King was to protect and provide security to the people. *Lokashema* or welfare of all was to be the principle on which the quality of his administration was to be judged. This included maintaining law and order and peace in society and acting against all forms of aggression, either internal or external. Other than these, he was also expected to help the people during natural calamities.
- **Judicial:** King was the ex-official head of the judiciary and the highest body for appeals. Kautilya suggests that the principles of dharma should always be followed while administering justice and king should be cautious that no one is punished without proper inquiry and evidences.
- **Legislative:** Some legislative activity was added in the Kautilya state in the form of the legislative edict (*sasana-adesh*). However, King should always make laws keeping in the principles of dharma in mind. All laws must be discussed with learned and experienced people for guidance and no law made should be arbitrary.
- **Administrative:** These included the appointment of the minister and the control exercised over them by the king. Appointing the right person to the right post and assigning work to them according to their capacities is a significant administrative function.
- **Ecclesiastical:** He appointed the high priests. The domestic priest and the officiating priests appointed by the king performed his domestic rites and the



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sacrifices. Kautilya suggested that King should respect priests and give good amount of donations to the religious institutions as it created a sense of legitimacy for him in the heart of masses who were mostly religious.

- **Revenue:** It was his duty to see that the treasury was not depleted. He also looked into the accounts of receipts and expenditure. He appointed the Controller General, who was responsible for collecting the revenue. He was responsible to maintain taxes and control inflation. Also, Kautilya suggested for a rational system of taxation so that the poor do not feel oppressed.
- **Military:** As supreme commander of the army, the king had the duty of inspecting the process of recruitment of soldiers as well as to see that they are well paid and their families are taken care of. Further, he should also keep an eye on the condition of elephants, the horses, the chariots used by the army and the infantry. During wars and in peace time, he should keep his soldiers motivated and reward achievements graciously.
- **Enlightened:** Patronage of learned men, of those who were experts in different fields of knowledge was an added benefit to the king and he should ensure that these learned men are taken care of and are used for guidance.

Kautilya was firm believer in royal paternalism. Kautilya's king was to be a benevolent despot-responsible only to himself, accountable to none, like the father in the management of the children, guided only by his affections and the duties which affection implants in the paternal heart. Kautilya gives to the welfare of the citizens the first place in all considerations of policy; the good of the people and their sustained happiness were the main ends for the service of which he chalked out an elaborate administrative system.

1.8 THE THEORY OF 'RAJAMANDALA' (INTER-STATE RELATIONSHIP OR MANDALA THEORY)

Kautilya formulated a detailed theory of foreign policy and inter-state relations. For him the constant expansion of territory was not only a strategic tactics but an important duty of King. He refers to the King as *vijigishu* (the one desirous of conquest). Inter-state relationship, according to Kautilya, was important because no state existed in



isolation. In reality, he assumes that every state is in constant search for power over other land. His theory of international relations is based on the maxim that a friend's friend is likely to be a friend and an enemy's friend an enemy. This theory popularly known as *rajamandala* or *Mandala* theory assumes a set of four concentric circles consisting of a set of twelve states with three in each circle. At the center of this political network was of the political system ruled by the *vijigishu*. The next set is represented by *ari* (the enemy state). The third set represented the *Madhyama* king who could turn out to be an ally or an enemy and intervene on the side of the victor by supporting him or decide to be neutral (*udasina*) or an enemy (*ari*). The fourth circle represented the *Udasina* states which were largely non-interfering and neutral considering their distance from the centre. The relationship between the *vijigishu* keeps varying as he progresses in his conquest.

- Circle I:** Comprising of *Vijigishu*, his friend and his friend's friend
- Circle II:** Comprising *Ari* (enemy), his friend and his friend's friend
- Circle III:** Comprising *Madhyama* King, his friend, his friend's friend
- Circle IV:** Consisting of *Udasina* King, his friend and his friend's friend.

Spatial location and distribution of state system are two important geopolitical aspects related to interstate relations. There are certain basic assumptions on which his theory is based:

- a) No state can exist in isolation.
- b) There are no permanent friends or foes.
- c) Bordering state can never be friends.
- d) States become friends or allies according to geographical positions.

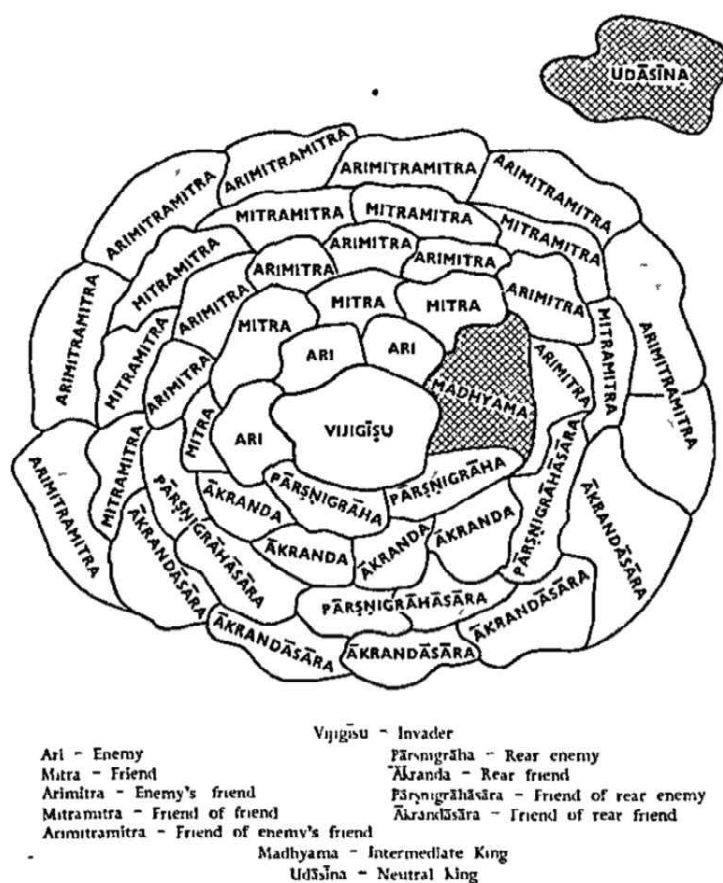
Based on the relative location, Kautilya claims that the conquering King can predict the nature of other states both in front and in the rear. The move in the mandala is like one in the game of chess where one presumes the next move of other and based on that plan one's own move. In front of the *vijigishu*, bordering its state is the *ari* (enemy), sharing the border with the enemy state would be conqueror's friend (*mitra*), next to him sharing its border would be *ari mitra* (friend of enemy). Next to *ari mitra* is *mitra mitra* (conqueror's friend's friend) and sharing its border is enemy's friend's friend (*arimitra mitra*). Similarly in the rear of the conqueror, there would be an enemy of the rear who could attack from back (*Parshnigraha*). Sharing its border

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would be *vijigishu*'s friend of the rear (*Aakranda*). Next is the friend of the rearward enemy (*Parshnigrahasaara*), and next to it is the ally of the rearward friend (*Aakrandasaara*). These are the relations of state immediately in front or rear of the conquering king. Other than these he conceives of the *Madhyama* king who is the intermediary king and therefore initially indifferent, but during process of conquest there is every possibility of him either joining the *vijigishu* or his enemy as an ally. Then there is the *Udasina* king who occupies territory far beyond the above states and hence in a position to assert its neutrality.



A HYPOTHETICAL ILLUSTRATION OF THE MANḌALA THEORY.

Fig. 1.1 Hypothetical Illusion of Mandala Theory

Source: Political Theory of Ancient India: A Study of Kingship from the earliest times to circa A.D. 300 by John W. Spellman (Oxford University Press: London, 1964)



Kautilya also talks about international policy during peace times. These include conciliation (*sama*); presents (*dana*); dissensions (*bheda*); and punishment (*danda*). He also discusses in great details the six-fold policies or Shadgunas as war tactics. It is explained in detail below:

1. **Sandhi (Alliance):** The mutual good faith and conducive to mutual interest is termed as sandhi. Kautilya seems to favour peace over war and asserts that whenever the output of peace and war are of equal value, king should favour peace over war because war is always costly and has that indeterminacy attached with it.
2. **Vigraha (War):** War is inevitable if attempts for peace fail. It is an attempt to compel others to accept one's supremacy and sovereignty. Kautilya claims that when the king is convinced of success, he can go to war anytime. War becomes imminent in the policy of expansionism. War could be of different kinds: open battle; treacherous battle; and silent battle. When fought in daylight and in well-defined locality it is open war. Threatening on one front but attacking from back, destroying enemy when he is in trouble or winning war by bribing opposite army forms part of treacherous war. Silent battle is fought with help of secret agents without directly engaging in war.
3. **Yaan (Military Expedition and March):** A king can march if it disturbs the plans of the enemies. Marching can also confuse the enemy and act as a natural deterrence. However, Kautilya suggests that marching should be always look like one is prepared for war and should include allies because it might turn into real war anytime.
4. **Aasana (Halting):** Halting is also a very significant strategy. Kautilya suggests that king can halt at the borders to exhibit his preparedness for war but at the same time he should know when he can pause the war in case, he needs to buy time to bring in additional force or wait for an ally to join his side.
5. **Samashray (Seeking Protection):** Seeking protection is yet another significant strategy for the king needs to survive to fight another day. So, if king faces sure shot defeat, he should seek protection from a powerful king. Obviously, the terms would not be as according to the king, but it is also a rational choice as the last resort.



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6. **Dvedibhaava (Duplicity):** Kautilya is not a moralist. He is a realist and suggests that for the larger interest of the kingdom, king can use the strategy of duplicity. Duplicity can be initiated by using secret agents through bribing the ministers and army men of the enemy state or by not following the terms of sandhi when the need be.

The strategy of the victory is contingent on four factors;

- Relative power equation among the victors.
- Objectives or empirical deviations from the ideal policy prescribed.
- Classification of the motivations of the warriors involved.
- The unanticipated and unpredictable of the chance factors.

An important feature of the Arthashastra is that it presupposes wars of conquest to be a fit purpose for an ambitious king and devotes a great deal of space to advise on how to defeat all the other kings in the area. But the discussion of the Mandala theory and the idea of *dharmavijaya* show that the Mauryan pursuit of all India dominion was necessarily its background. The Arthashastra's model king does not annex defeated kingdoms, submerge their rulers, and absorb them into his own state apparatus. On the contrary, the ideal of conquest according to dharma (as opposed to *asuravijaya* and *lobhavijaya*) obliges him to deal leniently with his conquered foe, perhaps re-installing him or placing a relative on the throne. The throne does not disappear. Tributes will certainly be asked for, but the vassal kingdom so far as we can see keeps most of its autonomy. However, all these are context-dependent and subject to the interest of the conquering King. Kautilya suggests that before any expedition, king should assess the power of the other kings and characterizes them as *samrajya* (equal state); *heenarajya* (weaker king); and *balwaanrajya* (strong king). Relative strength however is to be calculated based on an overall assessment of not only strength of army or physical strength (*utsaaha bal*) but also *mantra bal* (intellectual power) and *prabhu bal* (economic power).



1.9 KAUTILYA: THEORY OF DANDA

Kautilya has discussed the judicial system as well as the Danda system. Regarding Danda, Kautilya has emphasised that the Danda given by the king to bring the people on the right path should neither be more than the need and justification nor less. The king should decide for proper Danda thoughtfully. Kautilya does not follow the principle of equality about Danda. In this regard, keeping in mind the weak condition of women and children, they have arranged for relatively less danda for them and in this regard, discrimination has also been made based on the varna system. Kautilya is of the view that the Danda should be conducive to the crime and the Danda should be given with proper knowledge of the gender and stage and circumstances of the crime. He has provided three types of Dandas for criminals: corporal Danda, economic Danda, and prison. Under physical danda, flogging, hanging hands and feet upside down, brahmin and upper-class criminals should go, marking the criminal mark on the forehead by hanging upside down, tying their hands and hanging upside down. Arrangements have been made to ensure that there is no death penalty for serious crimes. Monetary danda is mainly classified into three categories: first, medium, and good courage danda. The range of the first courage Danda should be 48 to 96. The position, gender, and position of medium from 200 to 500 p.m. and best from 500 to 1,000 p.m. are stated. Apart from this, penalties of different amounts have been prescribed for various offences. In this way, strict Danda have been arranged by Kautilya, and should be done. As a physical Danda, the Danda of rust piercing, flogging, hanging inverted, etc., has been expressed. Theology it seems to be inhuman in nature but it cannot be denied that these methods of Danda were prevalent in ancient India and other acharyas of ancient India supported harsh Danda even by relative primacy. Therefore, it has to be said that Kautilya is more practical than idealistic in arranging Danda.

Next important element in order of priority is army. Kautilya suggests the need for a standing army and non-dependence on mercenaries. The basic qualities of a good army according to Kautilya are that recruitment is fair and based on inheritance, they should be loyal, strong, full of vigour, and energy. The army must be invincible and endowed with the power of endurance, trained in fighting various kinds of battles,



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skilful in handling various forms of weapons. The army should not bring in any state of instability in the kingdom, but it should be ready to share the sorrow of the king in time of calamities. He also mentions that the army men should be paid well, and families should be cared so that the soldiers are not worried about their future while at war. Soldiers must be ready to die for the country, but king also must ascertain that they are well equipped with right kind of weapons and are provided with whatever is required to keep them happy and loyal.

Indian philosophers acknowledge the predominance of demonic tendencies in human life and that is why the power of Danda has been given a lot of importance by them. The importance of Danda in politics can be gauged from the fact that it has been named as a Danda policy by many writers. In Kautilya's Arthashastra, he gives the highest importance to penal policy and makes all other sciences subordinate to him. According to Manu's statement, Danda is the ruler.

1.10 ESPIONAGE SYSTEM

Espionage in the Arthashastra polity occupied a very important place in the function of the state (or the king). Spies disguised in several forms remained busy in conveying important news of the kingdom to the king. He believed that a strong and efficient espionage system was crucial for king in both internal as well as external affairs. He classifies spies into two categories: *samstha* ('the establishment', where the agents are stationed in a single place, the headquarters); and *samcaras*, ('the rover', agents who move from place to place). These are further subdivided into categories.

Samsthas are stationed at the capital and help king get all the information from within the capital. Equally, they are used to test the *amatyas* and other administrative officers from time to time to check their loyalty towards the king. They are of five kinds specializing in different functions: *Kapatika* (sharp disciple with capacity to guess the minds of others); *Udaasthita* (ascetic at centre of monks); *Grihapatika* (spy posing as farmer); *Vaidehaka* (merchant spy at centre of traders); *Taapasa* (bogus ascetic made a secret agent but poses as seer). These spies are mainly responsible for ascertaining the purity or impurity of king's servants.



Samcaras are special agents trained for both information gathering and assassinating. They are used against enemies and can also be stationed in other kingdoms (both of allies and enemies) to perform secret services. They are primarily categorized as: *Sattrin* (an orphan trained as agent by state); *Tiksna* (assassin who secretly liquidates all enemies of state); *Rasada* (a chemist and poison-giver); *Bhiksuki* (Brahmin nun who spies on families that trust them). They are expected both to collect information and inflict punishments.

Other than this he talks of Ubhayavetana spies who were engaged in foreign state. They play important role in propaganda setting and creating dissension in the other state when need to be. Women also play a significant role as secret agents disguising as dancers and prostitutes in foreign states. They are given the task of luring the ministers and kings of foreign lands, befriend them and extract secrets. When needed, they are also expected to secretly kill the enemy using poison or other substances.

1.11 KAUTILYA AND MACHIAVELLI

One of the most significant comparisons that is often forwarded by scholars is that between Kautilya and Machiavelli. Some scholars have gone so far as to call Kautilya as 'Indian Machiavelli' or 'Oriental Machiavelli'. Machiavelli, the political thinker and statesman of Italy during the Renaissance, is considered widely as the first modern thinker. He was a realist thinker who was not a votary of the purity of means rather focused on achievement of ends. He wrote in '*The Prince*' that the ruler, in order to succeed must learn, how not to be good with the people whom he regarded as utterly selfish and wicked. This text of Machiavelli is often compared with Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. Following the line it is asserted that 'like Machiavelli, Kautilya has also made a distinction between morality of the ruler and the ruled and both of them have put the ruler above the ordinary canons of morality. There are also other striking similarities between Kautilya and Machiavelli. Both of them, though belonging to different times and environment lived in an age of transition.' Machiavelli and Kautilya avoided discriminating between good and evil and writing from the standpoint the



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ruling elite they can find their interest almost entirely to the affairs of state and man's political behaviour. Both of them persuade almost the same goal, that is, how power can be maintained and enlarged. Their views on the nature of statecraft also are very similar. The focus in both the text is on the King. He is pivotal and the entire strategy of statecraft depends on the efficiency of the king. Therefore, both of them advocated centralized monarchy as best form of government.

They focus extensively on the training and education of young prince and establish politics as an autonomous field separating it from ethics and morality. For example, both of them believe that if it is for the larger interest of his subjects, King can overlook the principles of morality. He should be ready to use unfair means even treachery if it was aimed at larger good of his people, for he is to be judged solely based on how he improved the life of his people. In fact, both of them suggest different set of moral principles for common masses and King, and within these principles they consciously make distinction between King's duty during normal times and during emergencies. Both of them also asserted that King need not be religious in personal life, but he should be wise enough to use religion for creating social bonds among people and should never insult religion in public. Even in the field of international relations, they reflect similar attitude. They both support unification of smaller kingdoms and developing a larger and united kingdom which is self-sufficient. At the same time both of them favour expansionism as an important policy for the King. There are also similarities in the way they define the role of spies and propaganda for the king.

But Kautilya's comparison with Machiavelli in this respect cannot be pushed too far. It is said of the Machiavelli that he was neither moral nor immoral but was unmoral. But even this cannot be said of Kautilya. Kautilya sought out to be refabricate the craking (social) edifice, and his approach to politics, that is why, tends to be integral. He refers to the trivarga-dharma, arthaa (the material well-being) and kama (sensual pleasure) as the goal of life. However, equally significant is the fact that the whole conception of danda in Kautilya is structured in order to uphold dharma and it is this aspect that guides his assertion in *Arthashastra*. Further, the state envisaged in Kautilya's *Arthashastra* subordinates moral principle of the necessity of its own existence and welfare, and the same attitude is assumed towards religion. Also, objectionable is the inherent eurocentrism in the claim of Kautilya as 'Oriental Machiavelli'. Kautilya



produced his scholarship many centuries before Machiavelli and in a completely different place in history. Forced comparison often does not do justice with the unique characteristic of individual authors and their contribution in their fields. It also creates doubts about authenticity and autonomy of these thinkers and is therefore avoidable.

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Conclusion

Kautilya has described in detail the origin of the state, the work of the state, the religion, and the punishment. Along with the internal functions and nature of the state, he supports the Mandal principle regarding state relations, which still appears relevant today. For the security, peace, and welfare of the people in the state, Kautilya gave the principles of religion and punishment and established the concept of a strong state by describing a system like secret practice. In the end, it can be said that Kautilya envisioned a smooth and stable state, which is relevant even today.

In-Text Questions

Multiple Choice Questions (1-10)

1. What is the central theme of Kautilya's Arthashastra?
A) Religion
B) Statecraft and governance
C) Literature
D) Poetry
2. Which term refers to the concept of 'law of the fish' as described by Kautilya?
A) Matsya Nyaya
B) Rajadharma
C) Dandaniti
D) Varnasrama Dharma
3. Which of the following is NOT a part of Kautilya's Saptanga theory?
A) King (Swami)
B) Army (Danda)
C) Treasury (Kosha)
D) Religion (Dharma)
4. Kautilya's concept of Rajamandala refers to which of the following?
A) The duties of a king
B) The king's advisors
C) Inter-State relationships
D) The fortification of a state



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5. What is the primary function of Danda according to Kautilya?
 - A) To collect taxes
 - B) To protect dharma and enforce laws
 - C) To expand the kingdom
 - D) To perform religious rituals
6. Which science does Arthashastra combine with Dandaniti according to Kautilya?
 - A) Varta (Economics)
 - B) Ayurveda (Medicine)
 - C) Shastravidya (Martial Arts)
 - D) Jyotisha (Astrology)
7. Kautilya's Arthashastra is primarily concerned with which aspect of governance?
 - A) Religious doctrine
 - B) Moral philosophy
 - C) Economic prosperity and statecraft
 - D) Warfare techniques
8. The role of spies in Kautilya's Arthashastra is to:
 - A) Collect taxes
 - B) Perform religious duties
 - C) Test loyalty and gather intelligence
 - D) Build infrastructure
9. What does Kautilya suggest as the most crucial quality for a king?
 - A) Wealth
 - B) Valour
 - C) Eloquence
 - D) Restraint of the senses
10. In the context of Kautilya's teachings, the term 'Kosha' refers to:
 - A) Army
 - B) Treasury
 - C) Territory
 - D) Allies

Fill in the Blanks (11-20)

11. Kautilya's Arthashastra is considered a significant text in the field of _____.
12. The theory that describes the 'Seven Limbs of the State' is known as the _____ Theory.
13. According to Kautilya, _____ is the king's primary duty, involving the protection and welfare of his subjects.
14. The concept of _____ Nyaya is used by Kautilya to describe the state of anarchy where the strong prey upon the weak.



15. In Kautilya's theory, the _____ serves as the source of state power and protection of dharma.
16. The term _____ in Kautilya's Arthashastra refers to the treasury, essential for the state's stability and prosperity.
17. According to Kautilya, a king should maintain a well-organized _____ to protect the state from external threats.
18. The concept of _____ refers to Kautilya's approach to inter-state relationships and diplomacy.
19. Kautilya emphasizes the importance of _____ as an essential trait for ministers in the state.
20. _____ is considered by Kautilya as a combination of Varta and Dandaniti, forming the basis of state governance.

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1.12 SUMMARY

- Kautilya in his Arthashastra salutes Shukra and Brihaspati as pioneers of Arthashastra tradition and also recognizes his indebtedness to their teaching.
- After Kautilya, Kamandaka's Nitisara, Mitramisra's Rajanitiprakasha and Anantadeva's Rajadharmakustubha and the epic Mahabharata also reflect traits of Arthashastra tradition.
- According to Indian traditions, the pursuit of the purusharthas—ethical goodness (dharma), riches and power (artha), pleasure (kama), and spiritual transcendence (moksha)—requires favourable social and political conditions.
- “Atra satye sthito dharmah” is the only phrase that appears to be a generic definition of Dharma in the context and this is merely a declaration that the Dharma is founded in reality.
- Kautilya makes a valiant effort to prove that Dharma, particularly Trayidharma, is the source of political science.



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- Arthashastra deals primarily with two sciences—Varta or economics, and Dandaniti or science of government. They together develop as Arthashastra, or the science of worldly prosperity and well-being.
- According to Dr Jolly, in respect of religion and laws there is great similarity between Kautilyan Arthashastra and Yajnavalkya Smriti, hence the Arthashastra should have been composed in the 3rd century, which is the period of Yajnavalkya Smriti's composition.
- Manuscripts were first discovered in 1904 when some wandering monks brought some palm leaves to Mysore Oriental Library. R. Shamasastri, the librarian recognized it as Arthashastra and gradually translated it in English and published in various European Journals in 1908.
- The ends of the state according to Kautilya, were not merely the maintenance of peace and order or protection of the people but to enable the individual to attain highest self-development with the help of the state.
- Kautilya states the seven elements as, swami (king), amatyas (ministers), janapada (territory), durga (forts), kosha (treasury), danda (royal scepter), and mitra (allies). Kautilya believes that if any one of the elements of state falls in trouble, it threatens the overall setup and should be considered a serious issue.
- Arthashastra will convince anyone that Kautilya was a strong advocate of monarchy.
- According to Kautilya, the treasury accumulated by righteous and legitimate manner should be retained by the king.
- The qualities of the king, according to Kautilya are: born of a high family, godly, possessed of valour, virtuous, truthful, not of a contradictory nature, grateful, having large aims, highly enthusiastic, not addicted to procrastination, powerful to control his neighboring kings, of resolute mind, having an assembly of ministers of no mean quality, and possessed of a taste for discipline.
- Kautilya suggested that King should respect priests and give good amount of donations to the religious institutions as it created a sense of legitimacy for him in the heart of masses who were mostly religious.
- Kautilya's king was to be a benevolent despot-responsible only to himself, accountable to none, like the father in the management of the children, guided



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only by his affections and the duties which affection implants in the paternal heart.

- Spatial location and distribution of state system are two important geopolitical aspects related to interstate relations.
- Based on the relative location, Kautilya claims that the conquering King can predict the nature of other states both in front and in the rear.
- Kautilya also talks about international policy during peace times. These include conciliation (sama); presents (dana); dissensions (bheda); and punishment (danda). He also discusses in great details the six-fold policies or Shadgunas as war tactics.
- An important feature of the Arthashastra is that it presupposes wars of conquest to be a fit purpose for an ambitious king and devotes a great deal of space to advice on how to defeat all the other kings in the area.
- Kautilya suggests that before any expedition, king should assess the power of the other kings and characterizes them as samrajya (equal state); heenarajya (weaker king); and balwaanrajya (strong king).
- Kautilya has emphasised that the Danda given by the king to bring the people on the right path should neither be more than the need and justification nor less.
- Kautilya has provided three types of Dandas for criminals: corporal Danda, economic Danda, and prison.
- Under physical danda, flogging, hanging hands and feet upside down, Brahmin and upper-class criminals should go, marking the criminal mark on the forehead by hanging upside down, tying their hands and hanging upside down.
- The basic qualities of a good army according to Kautilya are that recruitment is fair and based on inheritance, they should be loyal, strong, full of vigour, and energy.
- Kautilya believed that a strong and efficient espionage system was crucial for king in both internal as well as external affairs. He classifies spies into two categories: samstha ('the establishment', where the agents are stationed in a single place, the headquarters); and samcaras, ('the rover', agents who move from place to place).



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- Samcaras are special agents trained for both information gathering and assassinating. They are used against enemies and can also be stationed in other kingdoms (both of allies and enemies) to perform secret services.
- One of the most significant comparisons that is often forwarded by scholars is that between Kautilya and Machiavelli.
- Some scholars have gone so far as to call Kautilya as ‘Indian Machiavelli’ or ‘Oriental Machiavelli’.
- Machiavelli is a political thinker and statesman of Italy during the Renaissance. He is considered widely as the first modern thinker. He was a realist thinker who was not a votary of the purity of means rather focused on achievement of ends.
- Kautilya produced his scholarship many centuries before Machiavelli and in a completely different place in history.

1.13 GLOSSARY

- **Arthashastra:** It is an ancient Indian text on statecraft, economic policy, and military strategy, traditionally attributed to Kautilya. For Kautilya ‘Artha’ meant subsistence. Arthashastra, therefore, would mean the mode of acquisition and preserving of land
- **Dandaniti:** It refers to the ancient Indian concept of the science of law, governance, and punishment, primarily concerned with maintaining order and justice in the state.
- **Dharma:** It refers to the ethical and moral principles or duties that guide an individual’s actions and responsibilities in accordance with their role in society and the universe.
- **Shukranitisara:** It is a classical Sanskrit text on statecraft and politics attributed to Shukra, an ancient Indian sage. It offers guidelines on governance, diplomacy, and political strategy.



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- **Lokashema:** It refers to the well-being or welfare of the people in a political context, emphasizing the importance of ensuring the public's happiness and prosperity.
- **Vijigishu:** It is a term from ancient Indian political texts, meaning "one who desires to conquer" or "a conqueror." It refers to a ruler or leader who seeks to expand their dominion through military conquest.
- **Ari:** It is a Sanskrit term meaning "enemy" or "foe." In the context of ancient Indian texts, it refers to an adversary or rival, often in military or political situations.
- **Sandhi (alliance):** The mutual good faith and conducive to mutual interest is termed as sandhi.
- **Danda:** It is a Sanskrit term that means "punishment" or "penalty." In ancient Indian political philosophy, it refers to the use of force or disciplinary measures to enforce law and order.
- **Espionage System:** It refers to the organized practice of gathering confidential or secret information about other states or entities, often for political or military purposes. In ancient Indian texts like the *Arthashastra*, it includes methods of spying and intelligence gathering to assess threats, monitor rivals, and maintain state security.

1.14 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

1. B) Statecraft and governance
2. A) Matsya Nyaya
3. D) Religion (Dharma)
4. C) Inter-State relationships
5. B) To protect dharma and enforce laws
6. A) Varta (Economics)
7. C) Economic prosperity and statecraft



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8. C) Test loyalty and gather intelligence
9. D) Restraint of the senses
10. B) Treasury
11. Statecraft
12. Saptanga
13. Lokashema
14. Matsya
15. Danda
16. Kosha
17. Army
18. Rajamandala
19. Loyalty
20. Arthasastra

1.15 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

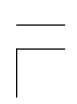
1. What is Dharma in Indian tradition on reference to Kautilya?
2. What is Saptanga Theory? Do you think the King has a pivotal role in Kautilya's theory of State? Explain.
3. Critically analyze Kautilya's theory of Danda.
4. Discuss Kautilya's understanding of International relations with reference to Rajamandala theory. Do you think it is relevant in the contemporary times? Comment.
5. Explain Kautilya's views on Espionage system and its importance for the state.



1.16 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT 2

GENDER: TARABAI SHINDE

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Structure

- 2.1 Learning Objectives
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Life and Works: Tarabai Shinde
- 2.4 Women Position in Maharashtra in Late 19th Century
- 2.5 Gender Issues in Colonial India
- 2.6 Practice and Custom of Marriage
- 2.7 Idea of Public and Private Sphere
- 2.8 Providing Social Criticism to Colonisers and Indian Men
- 2.9 Summary
- 2.10 Glossary
- 2.11 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 2.12 Self-Assessment Questions
- 2.13 References/Suggested Readings

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, students should be able to:

- Analyse the differences between the global feminist movement and the gender issues specific to Indian society during colonial times
- Explore how Indian social reformers used vernacular literature to critique colonial hegemony and address gender inequalities
- Examine the contributions of Tarabai Shinde as a radical social reformer in challenging conventional gender norms and advocating for women's rights in nineteenth-century Maharashtra



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- Evaluate the effects of British colonial policies on reinforcing patriarchal structures and restricting women's rights in Indian society
- Reflect on the impact of Tarabai Shinde's work on contemporary gender issues and feminist movements in India

2.2 INTRODUCTION

There are significant differences between the overarching global narrative and the gender issues that are prevalent in Indian society. Colonial authoritarian rule perpetuated the myth that Indians lacked the political savvy necessary to govern themselves effectively. However, coloniser hegemony is susceptible to criticism on the basis of vernacular literature, which was written by a number of social reformers in India. The narrative included that the Western female philosophers handled the gender question and the beginnings of feminism in their country first, and subsequently, it became a global movement. This is the grand narrative that has been generated. On the other hand, the idea of feminism and gender concerns can be traced back to radical modern intellectuals in India through their vernacular works. In the late nineteenth century, Tarabai Shinde was one of the individuals in the society of Maharashtra who questioned the gender relations in Indian society. Tarabai Shinde was a radical social reformer from Maharashtra.

She challenged the conventional gendered conventions that society upheld at the time. She spoke about the issues related to increasing representation or characteristics associated with femininity in contexts where they were traditionally absent or undervalued and brought attention to the privileges that males had in both the institution of marriage and in society as a whole. She used comparative and dialectic reasoning to draw a parallel comparison between the situation of widows and other groups in society. The reformer was active in the nineteenth century and contributed significantly to the discussion over the roles of men and women within the context of the institution of

Gender: Tarabai Shinde



marriage. According to Ramchandra Guha, Tarabai Shinde is a member of the subaltern feminist movement that has been credited as one of the “makers of modern India.”¹

The remarkable work that Tarabai Shinde has written in Marathi is titled *Stripurusha Tulna*. The work was later translated into English by the British historian Rosalind O’ Hanlon and given the title *Comparison between Men and Women*. Very few people are aware of Tarabai Shinde’s contribution and the remarkable work that she has written. Hanlon is well-known for her extraordinary contributions to the Jyotirao Phule project. She mentioned in her writings that Phule had appreciated Tarabai’s writing in Marathi. Tarabai indicated how males mistreated women and were the cause of the oppression. Tarabai’s literary style, on the other hand, was extremely entertaining to the reader; she employed sarcasm, stairways, and critical analysis of popular mythical myths. Hanlon asserted that Tarabai offered a critique of the gender dynamics that existed in colonial India.

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2.3 LIFE AND WORKS: TARABAI SHINDE

Tarabai Shinde (1850–1910) was a feminist activist who protested patriarchy and caste in 19th century in India. She comes from a Maratha family and was born in the town of Buldana, which is located in the Berar district, Maharashtra in modern-day India. Her family owned the land and they had lived there for generations. Tarabai’s father held the position of the senior clerk in the office of the deputy commissioner of Buldana. Although, her father did not participate in the movement to a significant degree, but he was a member of Jyotirao Phule’s Satyashodak Samaj as well.

At that time in Buldana, there was no local girl’s school when Tarabai was growing up, so she received all of her primary education from her parents at home. She could read and write in the Marathi language and was proficient in English as well. Tarabai got married at a very young age, and her spouse continued to live with Tarabai’s family, due to which she was criticised by the society for violating traditions and norms of society.



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Her work, *Stri Purusha Tulna*, was first published in 1882. This work investigates the role of men and women in Maharashtra's society, as well as their relationship in the institutions and practices of marriage. This piece of literature was written by Tarabai in a particular historical setting. Tarabai was shocked after confronting the widow's emotions and vulnerability. Through her writing, she launched an assessment of men. She highlighted that the social-religious principles used to criticise women are often not applied to men, and she pointed out the disparity between the two. Her poetry represented strong resentment and rage that she felt as a result of her own subjective experiences and insights in that particular period. While she was writing, she had argued that bringing about social change is challenging in an environment that is predominantly influenced by Brahmanical and patriarchal values. First, one must address and reform these institutions for any meaningful change to take root in society.

In-Text Questions

1. What myth did colonial authoritarian rule perpetuate about Indians, and how was it criticised?
2. How did Tarabai Shinde use comparative and dialectic reasoning in her critique of gender relations in Indian society?
3. What was the primary focus of Tarabai Shinde's work "Stri Purusha Tulna" and how did it contribute to the discussion on gender dynamics in colonial India?

2.4 WOMEN POSITION IN MAHARASHTRA IN LATE 19TH CENTURY

The literature and culture of Maharashtra both have a long history documenting the active participation of women in the public sphere. Many well-known Bhakti poets were women from the surrounding areas. In the course of history, princesses and queens often served as advisors to their male royal kin and, on occasion, even assumed the role of monarch in lieu of a male ruler who had not yet reached the appropriate age. On the other side, members of the Brahman community pushed for their daughters



Gender: Tarabai Shinde

to receive education and become literate. Even in the late nineteenth century, Brahman women in Maharashtra were pursuing careers as medical professionals and educators. Periodicals written in Marathi were initially published by them throughout the nineteenth century.² The statements made by Tarabai in that particular setting played an essential role because she called into question the presumption that men are superior. It was a crucial period for Tarabai because both men and women were advocating for widow remarriage, new institutions for the education of young girls were opening, and traditional customs such as Sati were on the verge of being abolished.

However, the manner in which Tarabai had fundamentally questioned the social conventions and cultural biases that serve as the basis for patriarchy and male supremacy is particularly noteworthy. Her commentary sheds light on how women of her social class regarded their place in colonial society as a result of their experiences. Tarabai noted many castes, in an effort to elevate their status, emulated the practices of Chitpavan Brahmans while restricting the ability of their widows to remarry. Also the practice of *pardah* infuriated her, and she voiced her opposition to it. She stated, “You keep women imprisoned in your home while you work to elevate yourself and establish yourself as Mr. Sir and so forth. You begin your life by amassing all rights in your possession, and then men proceed to relegate womankind to an obscure area and lock her away in *pardah*.”

2.5 GENDER ISSUES IN COLONIAL INDIA

Tarabai Shinde, a pioneering feminist thinker from Maharashtra, made significant contributions to the discourse on gender issues in colonial India. Her seminal work, “*Stri Purush Tulana*” (A Comparison Between Women and Men), published in 1882, provides a detailed critique of the societal norms and practices that perpetuated gender inequality during this period. This analysis explores the various gender issues highlighted by Tarabai Shinde, providing detailed insights into her perspectives and arguments without using any derogatory or offensive terms for sex, caste, or community.

Colonial India was characterised by a patriarchal social structure where men held primary authority in both the public and private spheres. Women were expected

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to adhere to traditional roles centred around the household, including duties as wives, mothers, and daughters. These roles were often restrictive and limited women's opportunities for personal and professional growth.

The British colonial administration introduced several policies and legal frameworks that affected gender relations. While some reforms aimed to improve the status of women, such as banning practices like sati (the self-immolation of widows), other policies often reinforced traditional gender roles and hierarchies.

Key Gender Issues

Tarabai Shinde's critique focused on the double standards that existed in society regarding the behaviour and roles of men and women. She pointed out that women were judged and controlled by strict social and religious norms, while men were often exempted from these same standards. This hypocrisy was a significant focus of her critique, as she argued that these double standards perpetuated gender inequality and injustice.

Tarabai was a strong advocate for women's education, recognising it as a crucial tool for empowerment and social change. She criticised the limited educational opportunities available to women and argued that educating women was essential for their personal development and for challenging the patriarchal norms that restricted their lives. Education, in her view, was a means to achieve greater autonomy and agency for women.

Tarabai's critique extended to the institution of marriage and the domestic life of women. She highlighted the unequal power dynamics within marriages, where women were often treated as subordinate to their husbands. She criticised the societal expectations that confined women to the roles of wives and mothers, limiting their opportunities for personal and professional growth. Her work called for a re-evaluation of these norms and advocated for more equitable relationships within marriages.

One of the most poignant issues Tarabai addressed was the treatment of widows in Indian society. Widows were often subjected to severe social stigma and discriminatory practices, such as being forced to live in isolation and deprived of basic rights and dignities. Tarabai condemned these practices and called for a more humane and respectful treatment of widows, emphasising their right to lead fulfilling lives.



Gender: Tarabai Shinde

Tarabai also touched upon the economic dependence of women and their limited access to labour opportunities. She argued that women's economic dependence on men reinforced their subordinate status and restricted their ability to achieve independence and self-sufficiency. By advocating for greater economic opportunities for women, Tarabai highlighted the importance of financial independence in achieving gender equality.

Tarabai Shinde critically examined various religious and social practices that reinforced gender inequality. She argued that many of these practices were based on misinterpretations of religious texts and were used to justify the subjugation of women. By challenging these practices, Tarabai called for a more equitable and just interpretation of religious and social norms that respected the dignity and rights of women.

Impact and Legacy

Tarabai Shinde's work was ground-breaking in its advocacy for women's rights. Her fearless critique of societal norms and her call for gender equality resonated with many and helped to lay the intellectual groundwork for future feminist movements in India.

Her writings influenced other social reformers and activists who were working towards the betterment of women's status in society. Her emphasis on education, economic independence, and the re-evaluation of social norms inspired many to continue the fight for gender equality.

Tarabai Shinde's legacy as a pioneering feminist thinker continues to inspire contemporary discussions on gender issues. Her work remains relevant today, as it addresses fundamental questions about equality, justice, and the role of women in society.

In-Text Questions

4. What significant role did Tarabai Shinde play in addressing gender issues in colonial India?
5. What did Tarabai Shinde criticize about the institution of marriage in colonial India?
6. How did Tarabai Shinde view women's education?

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2.6 PRACTICE AND CUSTOM OF MARRIAGE

Tarabai Shinde critiqued how marriage practices reinforced patriarchal structures that subordinated women. She argued that women were often treated as property to be exchanged between families, with little consideration for their personal desires or aspirations. Shinde highlighted the lack of consent and agency for women in the process of marriage. She argued that women were often married off at a young age, sometimes without their consent, and that their wishes were disregarded in favour of familial and societal expectations. Central to Shinde's critique was the observation of gender inequality within marriages.

Shinde advocated for women's education as a means to empower them within marital relationships. She believed that educated women would be better equipped to assert their rights and challenge oppressive customs that restricted their autonomy. Shinde called for legal reforms to ensure that women had the right to consent to their marriages and that their interests were protected within marital contracts. She argued for changes in inheritance laws and property rights to empower women economically within the institution of marriage.

2.7 IDEA OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPHERE

The private sphere traditionally encompasses the domestic realm, including household management, caregiving, child-rearing, and emotional labour. Women have historically been assigned primary responsibility for these roles, often without recognition or compensation. Feminists critique the confinement of women to the private sphere, arguing that it has limited their opportunities for social and economic advancement. This confinement has also reinforced stereotypes about women's roles as caregivers and undermined their autonomy and agency. Feminists challenge traditional gender norms associated with the private sphere, advocating for a redistribution of caregiving responsibilities and recognition of unpaid labour. They argue for policies that support



work-life balance, parental leave, and affordable childcare to empower women's participation in both spheres.

Tarabai went on to explain how the restrictions imposed by these standards limited women's mobility. While she did not explicitly delineate between public and private spheres as Western feminist theorists did, her critiques can be understood within a framework that examines the division of roles and responsibilities based on gender. Her advocacy for women's rights encompassed challenging societal norms that confined women to domestic roles (private sphere) and advocating for their inclusion and participation in broader social and political spheres (public sphere).

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2.8 PROVIDING SOCIAL CRITICISM TO COLONISERS AND INDIAN MEN

Tarabai Shinde criticised the impact of colonial policies on Indian society, particularly how they reinforced patriarchal norms and restricted women's rights. She argued that colonial authorities often overlooked or perpetuated gender inequalities in their governance and administration. Shinde advocated for women's education as a means of empowerment against colonial oppression. She believed that education would enable women to challenge colonial narratives and assert their rights within both familial and societal contexts. Shinde criticised cultural imperialism imposed by colonial rulers, which often undermined indigenous traditions and customs, including those related to gender roles and women's status. She emphasised the importance of preserving and respecting Indian cultural values while advocating for progressive reforms.

Tarabai Shinde challenged Indian men's roles in perpetuating patriarchal structures that marginalised women. She criticised traditional norms that restricted women's autonomy, education, and participation in public life, arguing that these norms were upheld by male-dominated social systems. Shinde advocated for legal and social reforms that would dismantle discriminatory practices and ensure gender equality. She called for reforms in marriage laws, inheritance rights, and societal attitudes towards women, challenging Indian men to support progressive changes that benefit women's



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empowerment. Shinde highlighted gender double standards within Indian society, where men enjoyed greater freedoms and privileges compared to women. She critiqued how these standards restricted women's rights and opportunities.

In-Text Questions

7. What did Tarabai Shinde critique about the process of marriage in her society?
8. How did Tarabai Shinde view the role of women's education in marital relationships?
9. What was one of Tarabai Shinde's criticisms of colonial policies in India?

2.9 SUMMARY

- The global feminist narrative differs from the gender issues in Indian society, where colonial rule perpetuated myths about Indian governance abilities.
- Feminism and gender concerns in India trace back to radical modern intellectuals through their vernacular works.
- In the late nineteenth century, Tarabai Shinde, a radical social reformer from Maharashtra, challenged gender conventions in Indian society.
- Shinde spoke out against the societal norms that undervalued femininity and highlighted male privileges in marriage and society.
- She used comparative reasoning to draw parallels between the situation of widows and other societal groups.
- Shinde's work 'Stri Purusha Tulna' was written in response to the emotional and social challenges faced by widows in Maharashtra.
- Shinde critiqued marriage practices that subordinated women, advocating for consent, education, and legal reforms to empower women.
- Shinde's work implicitly challenged the traditional confinement of women to the private sphere, advocating for their participation in broader societal roles.



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- Shinde criticised colonial policies that reinforced patriarchal norms and restricted women's rights.
- She opposed the cultural imperialism of colonial rulers that undermined indigenous gender roles and women's status.
- Shinde challenged Indian men for perpetuating patriarchal structures and advocated for legal and social reforms to ensure gender equality.
- She highlighted the importance of women's economic independence in achieving gender equality.
- Tarabai Shinde's pioneering feminist work continues to inspire contemporary discussions on gender issues in India.

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2.10 GLOSSARY

- **Patriarchal:** It refers to relating to a system where men hold primary power and predominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, and control of property.
- **Vernacular Literature:** Vernacular literature is the literature that is written in the native language of a region, reflecting local culture and issues.
- **Social Reformers:** Social reformers are the individuals advocating for changes in society to address social issues and injustices.
- **Colonial Hegemony:** It refers to the dominance of colonial rulers over the colonised population, often justified by myths of superiority.
- **Gendered Conventions:** These are the social norms and practices that define and limit roles based on gender.
- **Cultural Imperialism:** It referred to the imposition of one culture over another, often seen in colonial contexts where colonisers' culture is enforced over indigenous traditions.



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2.11 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

1. Colonial authoritarian rule perpetuated the myth that Indians lacked the political savvy necessary to govern themselves effectively. This myth was criticised through vernacular literature written by Indian social reformers, who demonstrated that Indians had their own intellectual traditions and political understanding.
2. Tarabai Shinde used comparative and dialectic reasoning to draw parallel comparisons between the situation of widows and other groups in society, highlighting the privileges males had in both the institution of marriage and in society as a whole.
3. The primary focus of “Stri Purusha Tulna” was on the critique of traditional gender roles and the disparities in social-religious principles applied to men and women. It contributed to the discussion on gender dynamics in colonial India by highlighting the oppression of women and advocating for gender equality through a critical analysis of societal norms and practices.
4. Tarabai Shinde made significant contributions to the discourse on gender issues, critiquing societal norms that perpetuated gender inequality through her seminal work “Stri Purush Tulana.”
5. She criticised the unequal power dynamics within marriages, where women were often treated as subordinate to their husbands and confined to restrictive roles as wives and mothers.
6. She saw women’s education as crucial for empowerment and social change, advocating for greater educational opportunities to challenge patriarchal norms and achieve autonomy and agency for women.
7. She critiqued that women were often treated as property, married off at a young age without consent, and their wishes disregarded in favour of familial and societal expectations.
8. She believed that women’s education would empower them to assert their rights and challenge oppressive customs within marriage.



9. She argued that colonial policies reinforced patriarchal norms and restricted women's rights, often overlooking or perpetuating gender inequalities.

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2.12 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. What are the significant differences between the global feminist narrative and gender issues in Indian society?
2. How did Indian social reformers use vernacular literature to criticise colonial hegemony?
3. In what ways did Tarabai Shinde challenge gender conventions in nineteenth-century Indian society?
4. What historical context influenced Tarabai Shinde's work 'Stri Purusha Tulna'?
5. How did Shinde's critique address the institution of marriage and the roles of men and women within it?
6. What were Shinde's views on the impact of colonial policies on gender relations in India?
7. How has Tarabai Shinde's legacy continued to influence contemporary discussions on gender issues?

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UNIT 3
CULTURE AND NATIONALISM:
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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Structure

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- 3.2 Introduction
- 3.3 Philosophical Sources of Vivekananda's Thought and his Major Works
- 3.4 Vivekananda's Political Thinking
 - 3.4.1 Thoughts on Nationalism
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 - 3.4.3 Message of Power and Dependence
- 3.5 Social Philosophy
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- 3.11 References/Suggested Readings

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3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, students should be able to:

- Discuss the views of the conscience on nationalism
- Analyse Vivekananda's views on religion and culture
- Explain Vivekananda's work on social reform and nation building

3.2 INTRODUCTION

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) was an Indian Hindu monk, philosopher, and spiritual leader. He is credited with spreading the Vedic and Yoga teachings of India to the West. He is well renowned for his work in promoting India's spiritual and cultural legacy as well as efforts to bridge the gap between Eastern and Western cultures. Swami Vivekananda established the principles of the moral foundations of India's nationalism and made significant contributions to strengthening religion and culture. He dedicated his entire life as an inspired activist for the moral and social revival of India. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshav Chandra Sen, and Gopal Krishna Gokhale believed that England had a special goal in India, while Vivekananda, Dayanand, and Gandhi, believed that India had a special message for the West. Swami Vivekananda, also known as the Hindu Napoleon, travelled to America and Europe several times to spread Indian philosophy and culture. The world knows him as a great scholar who has taken Indian civilization and culture to the global stage.

3.3 PHILOSOPHICAL SOURCES OF VIVEKANANDA'S THOUGHT AND HIS MAJOR WORKS

The philosophical sources of Vivekananda's thought are as follows:

1. **First source:** The sources of Vivekananda's philosophy are Vedic traditions and Vedanta. Vivekananda is placed in the category of Shankaracharya,



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Ramanuja, Madhavacharya, Ballabhacharya, Nimbakacharya, etc. He was a supporter of Advaita Vedanta. He was both an advaitarian and a mayanist, and he attempted to find a middle ground between the two.

2. **Second source:** The second source of Vivekananda's political philosophy was his contact with Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Paramahansa was a mystic saint, and his mystic experiences were the result of years of continuous penance, samadhis, and yoga.
3. **Third source:** The third source of Vivekananda's political thought was his own life experiences. He had travelled all over the world, and the truth he gave to the world reflects his own personal experience.

From the point of view of political thought, his three main works are:

- Lectures from Colombo to Almora,
- Modern India
- Our Duties to the Masses

The following are considered to be among his other major works:

- The Mission of Vedanta
- Karma Yoga
- Maya & Illusion
- Towards youth

Ramakrishna Mission compiled Swami Vivekananda's works into eight volumes of a book titled "*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda.*"

Advaita Vedantism:

Vivekananda's Advaita Vedantism had three major sources:

1. The great tradition of the Vedas and Vedanta.
2. His close relationship with Ramakrishna Paramahansa.
3. His own important experiences that he had during his world tour. These sources were the pillars of his entire spiritual ideology. These were the grounds on which he advocated the monotheism of the Upanishads.

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Vivekananda considered only Brahma to be true and called it Sachchidananda. He became the messenger of this Brahma and worked tirelessly to make it practical. Vivekananda's Advaita Vedanta had the following three main pillars:

1. The true nature of human beings is divine. Man is not only the body, intellect, or mind; he is also the soul. His soul is the unexpressed Brahm. Brahm, in the form of the soul that is beyond the periphery of body and mind. It is a part of the Brahm-like God or the divine, which is why he is immortal and has all the qualities that Brahm possesses.
2. The goal of life is the realisation of this divine power. He says, "If you cannot worship your brother/man, the manifested God, how can you worship a God who is unmanifested?"
3. The basic goal of all religions is the same. If there is only one Brahman or God in each of us, then there can be no relationship other than the relationship of love and service between man and man. Thus, Vedanta gives man the message of universal love and service.

Vivekananda considered the coordination of knowledge, devotion, and karma yoga as essential for the realisation of Brahman in the form of Sachchidananda. The message of India is the message of Vedanta. It demands faith in oneself and others. By following this, man can become brave, courageous, strong, and holy.

He also believes that human intelligence begins with dualism, rises to specific duality, and eventually dissipates into Advaita. That is why he wanted India to once again get the glory of the past in the field of thinking, on the basis of Vedanta.

3.4 VIVEKANANDA'S POLITICAL THINKING

Let us discuss the political thought of Vivekananda.

3.4.1 Thoughts on Nationalism

With the aim of creating a powerful and self-reliant India, Vivekananda gave the message of Vedanta philosophy to the world. He tried to awaken the decaying Indians in the

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era of freedom movement and presented the idea of nationalism, which also called him the spokesperson of Indian nationalism. Like Hegel, Vivekananda also believed that the life of every nation was an expression of a major element. In his view, religion has been one of the most important regulatory elements in India. He believed that different types of caste, language, religion, and culture exist in India, but there is also a common basis between all these, which he calls the Saksha religious tradition, on the basis of which the spirit of nationalism can develop. He believed that the basis of national unity in Europe was the idea of politics, whereas, on the contrary, in Asia, its basis was religion. In the words of Vivekananda, *“Just as music has a dominant tone, there is a main element in the life of every nation, and all other elements are centered in the same element.”* Religion is an important aspect of Indian culture. Thus, he introduced a religious theory of nationalism. The idea was also supported by Vipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh.

Vivekananda propounded the religious doctrine of nationalism because he believed that, in the future, religion would become the backbone of India’s national life. He believed that the future greatness of the nation could only be built on the foundation of the importance of its past. Ignoring the past is tantamount to prohibiting the life of the nation. Therefore, Indian nationalism has to be built on a strong foundation of the historical heritage of the past.

Vivekananda used to say that in the past, the expression of India’s creative genius came mainly from the field of religion. Religion had acted as a creative force to maintain unity and stability in India. Even when political power became loose and weak, religion contributed to its restoration. Therefore, Vivekananda declared that national life should be organised on the basis of religious teachings. In his view, religion meant experiencing the eternal element. They did not consider social differences and old Pongapanthi stereotypes as religions. He used to say that religion has been the basis of Indian life continuously, so all reforms should be done through religion. Therefore, the spiritual or religious doctrine of nationalism is Vivekananda’s important contribution to political thought. Like Bankim Chandra, Vivekananda also considered India a divine goddess. The idea that Bharat is the visible manifestation of Mother India became the driving force behind the nationalists and revolutionaries of Bengal.

Vivekananda was an exponent of the importance of the nation. According to him, *“India has to conquer the West with its spirituality, India has to unite and conquer the whole world once again with its might”*.



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Under the political conditions of the time, Vivekananda could present nationalism in this form. Since he was a sanyasi, he wanted to stay away from political controversies, and if he openly supported political freedom, the British government would lock him up in prison, which would have resulted in his power being destroyed in vain and hampering the work of religious and moral revival of the countrymen that he loved most. Vivekananda was the messenger of Indian nationalism. When he told the countrymen, “*Read Bankim Chandra and accept his sanatan dharma and his patriotic thoughts,*” “*Consider the service of your birthplace as your greatest duty.*” “*O brave man! Be fearless, have courage, be proud of the fact that you are an Indian, and declare with pride*”, “*I am Indian, and every Indian is my brother.*”

Therefore, he felt that the basis of the greatness of the nation’s future should be the greatness of its past. Forgetting the past would mean the destruction of the overall character of the nation. He used to say that religion has been the basis of Indian life continuously, so all reforms should be done through religion; only then the majority of the people of the country will be able to accept them. Therefore, the spiritual or religious doctrine of nationalism can be called Vivekananda’s first important gift.

3.4.2 The Concept of Freedom

The form of freedom presented by Swamiji was not limited but very detailed. He said that the whole world is mainly searching for freedom through its continuous pace. In a speech in London, he said, “*What is this world?*” It emerges from freedom and depends on freedom. Vivekananda was not only a supporter of spiritual freedom, or freedom from the shackles and temptations of Maya, but he also wanted material, or external, freedom for man. He believed in the principle of the natural rights of man. Regarding natural rights, he wrote that “*freedom does not necessarily mean that if I and you want to grab someone’s property, we should not be prevented from doing so, but natural rights mean that we should be allowed to use our body, intellect, and wealth according to our own will and we should not harm others, and all members of society should be given money, equal rights to education, and knowledge.*” Vivekananda also hoped that the freedom that was born in America on July 5, 1776, would someday be recognised all over the world.

According to Vivekananda, freedom is the main principle of the Upanishads. The Upanishads support all sides of freedom whether it is spiritual or political, physical



or mental. Thus, Vivekananda's vision of freedom was very broad. According to him, in fact, the whole world is engaged in the search for freedom. Freedom is the "only condition of life, happiness, and prosperity."

Vivekananda always fought for spiritual freedom. According to him, every person should have the freedom to voluntarily use and follow their soul, intellect, body, and wealth. The obstacles that stand in the way of freedom must be resisted. We should neither harm anyone nor let anyone else hurt us.

He did not directly challenge the moral tenets of British imperialism, but he persisted in saying things that were uniquely Indian in order to liberate India from foreign burden and influence.

As far as freedom of thought is concerned, he believed that this freedom is "The only condition for the development and welfare of life." In the absence of this freedom, man, race, and nation will all deviate from the path of progress and go on the path of decline.

3.4.3 Message of Power and Dependence

Vivekananda was an outstanding patriot and had an unwavering love for the country in his heart, but he did not openly support the political liberation of the country. They couldn't even do that. There were two reasons for this: first, he was a monk and did not want to get involved in political or legal marriages. Secondly, in those days, British imperialist power was firmly entrenched in India. If Vivekananda had openly supported political freedom, he would certainly have been put in jail. The result would have been that their power would have been lost in vain. The work of religious and moral revival among the countrymen that he loved the most would have been hampered.

Although Vivekananda did not explicitly propound any anti-nationalist ideology against British imperialism, he indirectly had a big hand in strengthening Indian nationalism. He emphasised moral power in place of political freedom and social justice. Without power, no one's existence is possible, and one cannot fight for rights in the absence of power. In principle, Vivekananda presented the ideals of power and fearlessness to the people.

Vivekananda took refuge in Vedanta and preached power accumulation and fearlessness for the country. Not directly, but the lesson of fearlessness has a lot of



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political significance. Vivekananda's arrogance proved very helpful in providing consciousness to the nation. Protecting self-pride and masculinity later became a source of inspiration for Bengali youth.

Political Views

Vivekananda had no faith in politics and did not participate in any political activities or movements. Yet, the philosophy of politics found in his speeches and writings takes him far beyond the political thinkers of the West. The various political views of Vivekananda can be presented as follows:

- **Faith in the Ability and Dignity of a Person:** Vivekananda's concept was that "nation" is the name of a group of individuals. Therefore, qualities like masculinity, human dignity, and respect should be developed in every person. In the absence of healthy and prosperous people, a moral and decent society cannot be talked about. While he spoke of the development of the individual, he was also opposed to social pressure on him.

He considered human beings to be the creators of his future. He considered him to be his best being, because he is the only creature who has the ability to attain salvation.

He believed in the concept of a universal human being and wanted him to, without any discrimination, get everything that was human.

The forest was built on the foundation of social service and the liberation of the individual. Vivekananda wanted these noble ideals to be established and promoted once again.

- **Belief in Spiritual Equality:** According to Vivekananda, if each of us has the same part of God in the form of a soul, then there can be no relationship between human beings other than the relationship of love and service. The presence of divine power in the form of the soul in each of us gives us a sense of spiritual equality.
- **Concept of Natural Rights:** Vivekananda believed in the natural rights of mankind. His natural rights were not only concerned with removing obstacles but also about the opportunity for everyone to exercise their physical, mental,



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and spiritual power in such a way that no one else's freedom was affected. Every person should have the natural right to earn wealth and knowledge equally. The essence of all the Upanishads, according to Vivekananda, is the realisation of these rights. He also believed that every human being has the birthright to attain perfection and liberation and should be ready to make the greatest sacrifice for its attainment.

- **Concept of Resistance:** Vivekananda also accepted the fact that, in the absence of strength, valour, and fearlessness, we can neither secure our existence nor protect our rights. He indirectly conveyed the message that the people of India can overcome foreign power and achieve their national independence only through strength, fearlessness, self-confidence, and valour.

According to Vivekananda, *"If there is any sin in the world, it is weakness, remove weakness."* Therefore, what India needs today is "iron fronts, manacles, and a strong mind power that cannot be stopped." "Only when India stands fearlessly on the basis of its own strength will atrocities and oppression be resisted." Vivekananda's courage, self-confidence, and fearlessness became the "theory of resistance."

- **Priority of Discharge of Duty:** Vivekananda laid more emphasis on the discharge of duties than on the attainment of rights. He wanted all individuals and their groups to perform their duties and responsibilities honestly. According to him, man's pride is not in the fact that he insists on his rights but in the fact that he willingly, without any fear or greed, performs his duties and responsibilities. If he continues to do so, he will get all his rights sooner or later. Perhaps that is why he found the message of the Gita's selfless action very relevant.
- **Concept of an Ideal State:** According to Vivekananda, the four varnas rule human society alternately. The Brahmin-Purohit state is for the rule of knowledge and the progress of science. The Kshatriya state is cruel and unjust. In the Vaishya kingdom, the silent power of crushing and sucking blood is very severe, and in the kingdom of laborers, or Shudras, there will be an equal distribution of material qualities, but, at the same time, the level of civilization will fall. There will be great publicity for ordinary education, but the number of people with extraordinary talent will be reduced. According to him, an ideal state would be



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one in which the balance of knowledge from the Brahmin period, the valour of the Kshatriya period, the propagation of the Vaishya period, and the equality of the Shudra period could be maintained.

- **Internationalism and World Brotherhood:** Vivekananda was truly an internationalist. After the conclusion of the All-Religions Conference in Chicago, it was said: “*Where all the other delegates kept discussing the god of their own religion, only Vivekananda spoke of the god of all.*” He believed that all religions were branches of the tree of God. Therefore, all religions are possible. All religions are equal worshippers of Brahma. All religions accept that there is a part of God in every soul, and that is why self-salvation is the true path. The general rules, ethics are equally acceptable to all religions. All religions recognise God’s nourishing form, regard him as a benevolent force, and guide him towards development, progress, and morality.

3.5 SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

Vivekananda was a forthright preacher of India’s cultural greatness, and fought like a destructive warrior against the prevailing social illiteracy. Their social perspectives are discussed in the following sub sections.

3.5.1 Caste System and Untouchability

Vivekananda was strongly opposed to casteism. He exposed the authoritarian attitude of the Brahmins, on the basis of which they deprived the so-called lower castes, especially the Shudras, of Vedic knowledge and its benefits. He kept the poor people bound by meaningless and complex religious activities, customs, and rituals. On the other hand, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas exploited these classes politically and economically.

He also condemned the practice of untouchability arising out of casteism. He used to ask everyone, “*What are we doing for the progress, education, and livelihood of these neglected people?*” In fact, instead of doing anything in this direction, we not only do not touch them but also run away from their company. Is this



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humanism? Therefore, he wanted that, first of all, the neglected and exploited sections be saved from anti-violence. They should be educated completely and equally. More attention should be paid to their education. He believed that “*If a Brahmin needs a teacher; Chandal needs ten; because nature has done it, society does it.*” Since subtle intelligence has not been given to him since birth, more help should be given to him.

Knowing that it would not be possible to completely destroy casteism, he considered it appropriate and imperative that the lowest classes be brought to the highest level. They should be made aware of their culture, educated, and given suitable opportunities to earn a livelihood. Unless casteism and the untouchability emanating from it are put to an end, India will not develop, and it will not be able to regain its traditional place as the spiritual leader of the world.

Vivekananda recognised that total abolition of caste distinctions was impossible but that they could be corrected and given a new form. He used to say that there is no caste discrimination in spiritual or religious life. A Brahmin and a Shudra attain equal rights when they are sannyasis. Swamiji writes that by educating the people of the lower class, you will be compassionate to the common man, you will open the chains of their slavery, and you will uplift the entire nation.

3.5.2 Ideas Related to Idol Worship

Swamiji was not opposed to idol worship. According to him, idol worship is a means of preparing the mind for godly experiences. This is the initial stage in the process of spiritual development.

3.5.3 Support of Indian Culture and Values

Swami Vivekananda believed that every civilization or culture has a special life centre and a major feature or trend. According to him, the life-center of Indian culture is spirituality and religion. Spirituality means a way of life oriented towards the ultimate purpose or goal of life, which is the attainment of the Supreme Soul or God. Swami Vivekananda once described himself as a “condensed India.” His life and teachings are of incomparable value to the West in gaining an understanding of the mind of Asia.

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Vivekananda strongly criticised the imitation of Europe in social life. He wrote that “*we should develop according to our nature.*” It is impossible to try to follow the way of life that foreign countries have imposed on us. When you see that it is not possible for Europeans to give up their few centuries of culture, how can you abandon your twenty-century-old, sparkling culture? It can’t be. Therefore, it is impossible and foolish to Europeanize India. For the material development of the nation, he wanted to develop the qualities of generosity, celibacy, love, sacrifice, and restraint among the people.

In this way, Vivekananda awakened the reverence of Indians towards Hinduism. He mesmerised the people of America with his religious knowledge, amazing eloquence, and personality at the Chicago World Conference of Religions. In 1895, he founded the Ramakrishna Mission there. He established many centres of missions in India, of which Banaras, Calcutta, Bangalore, etc. are famous. Swamiji was a sanyasi of Dharma, a brilliant speaker, a great scholar of Vedanta, and a shining scholar of truthfulness.

3.5.4 Conservative and Communal Views

Vivekananda not only advocated spiritualisation, secularisation, and all-religion harmony but was also strongly opposed to stereotypes, irrelevant customs, rituals, and many evil acts done in the name of religion. He believed that all this lowers our moral standards, so we should sacrifice it.

He also wanted people not to sit in the small confines of their religious sects. They should practice their religion, but at the same time, by accepting the good things of other religions, they should expand themselves and their religion and increase its quality. True religion brings people together, not divides them. In the name of religion, believers of all religions should unite under the flag of monotheism and become citizens of a vast spiritual world. Have equality, tolerance, and respect for all religions. Give up communalism altogether because it not only leads to the decline of religion but also corrupts both politics and politicians. It devastates the entire society.

3.5.5 Child Marriage

Vivekananda was also opposed to the practice of child marriage. According to him, child marriage leads to untimely children, who are often weak and sick. Also, having



children at a young age reduces the age of women. Therefore, in the interest of women and infants, he opposed this practice and wanted to destroy it completely.

3.5.6 Lack of Education

According to Vivekananda, the reason for the miserable condition of the people is a lack of education. He desired that everyone have the right and opportunity to receive a complete education without regard to caste, religion, gender, or other factors. Unless education reaches the doorsteps of the poor, how will India be saved?

He was a harsh critic of the then-current educational system, which educated Indians solely to serve as clerks for the British administration. He was in favour of Gurukul education and wanted children to study religious texts, among other subjects. At the same time, English as a contact language should also be taught to them so that they can know about the current scientific progress and benefit from it.

3.5.7 Poverty

Vivekananda's sympathy with the poor knew no bounds. He launched a movement to improve the condition of the poor, oppressed, and exploited sections. He resolved to go from village to village and serve the poor. He used to say that talking about religion to a hungry man was futile. Until the poverty of the people is removed and they become able to earn their livelihood, everything is in vain.

3.5.8 The Process of Social Reform

Vivekananda was in favour of gradual reforms. He was not ready to compromise with the social exploiters. He understood that the exploiter would remain exploitative. It would be almost impossible to prepare him to work for the welfare of the exploited. On the other hand, if the pace of social reform is limited and slow, then reforms will come easily. They will become part of the social system. They will be absorbed into society. Society, sooner or later, will be willing to accept them mentally. But, on the other hand, if the path of revolution is adopted for this work or if an attempt is made to bring them in immediately, society will not be able to tolerate it, and there may be some kind of anarchy, and it may be difficult for anyone to do anything. Because of their



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religion and their duty, educated people will have to take the initiative in this work on their own. He considered every educated Indian to be a “traitor and a traitor” if they did not fight to protect society from these evils.

3.6 CONCEPT OF RELIGION

According to Vivekananda, religion gives strength to both the individual and the nation. According to him, “*Religion that does not transmit power is not religion.*” He considered power is more important than religion. According to him, “*Life is the name of strength, and death is the name of weakness.*” The main purpose of his sermons was to create an atmosphere of fearlessness. In a political context, his concepts of power and fearlessness can be called the principles of resistance. He was a patriot whose passionate patriotism he wanted to integrate with the force of the Kshatriyas. He had a desire to attain the ultimate truth from the very beginning. He himself devoted his will, power, and strength to the spiritual renaissance of India. His concept of the soul was that of an energy (power) based on the Upanishads that was omnipresent.

3.6.1 The Universal Form of Hinduism

According to Vivekananda, Hinduism is the universal symbol of moral humanism and spiritual idealism. Hinduism is based on such moral and spiritual rules, which are essential for the upliftment of humanity. He believed that in the future, religion would become the backbone of India’s national life. Therefore, Indian nationalism has to be built on the firm foundation of the historical heritage of the past. Our spirituality is in our blood. This is the lifeblood of our national life.

The true Hindu religion, according to him, is to approach and see God, to be fulfilled as that universal Father, God. Vivekananda believed that our country is our awakened deity. He believed in the possibilities of all religions. That is why he considered the confluence of Hinduism and Islam inevitable.

According to Vivekananda, India has to once again conquer the world spiritually. Hinduism must be aggressively adopted in order to achieve freedom from inequality and injustice through valour and fearlessness. According to him, there is no other



religion quite like Hinduism, which preaches the glory of humanity with such a loud voice.

For Vivekananda, Hinduism had a broad truth that could give refuge to the most serious philosophical genius in his heart through justice, Sankhya, and Vedanta. He was a representative of the entire chain of Hinduism, from the Vedas to Vaishnavism.

Vivekananda was a son of India who inspired the West with the spiritual message of India. He did this because he wanted to add the spiritual roots of the East to the culture of the West. He believed that Indian ideology would once again conquer England.

In 1893, Vivekananda went to Chicago to give a speech at the Conference of All Religions. In that conference, leaders of all religions spoke of their religion and tried to describe it as superior to others. Vivekananda was the only speaker who spoke of a great man, not the saffron of all religions. He emphasised that there are certain basic moral values that all religions accept equally. All religions weave a thread of unity through humanity. Vivekananda not only made these holy people realise their dignity, but he also made Hinduism sit on a very high seat in the World Assembly. Through his visits to America and Europe in 1893–1895 and 1898, he restored Hinduism's power and morality to the world.

Through his visits to America and Europe, he tried to prove that Hinduism was becoming popular again and that its spiritual, moral, cultural, and philosophical spread was increasing in the world. Asia is once again morally encouraging the West. At the All Religions Conference in Chicago, he declared, *"I am proud that I am a follower of a religion that has given the message of tolerance and global acceptance to the world."* Hinduism is tolerant because, according to it, different religions lead to the same goal, just as all rivers reach the sea.

3.6.2 Concept of World Religion

Swami Vivekananda spoken ten or eleven times at the All Religions Conference held in Chicago. He emphasised the idea of a world religion every time, in which all human beings can unite by crossing the boundaries of country and time. He said that every religion has the same truth and has given birth to good people. He asked: *"Did Lord Krishna not say to Arjuna on the battlefield: 'Like a thread in a garland of pearls, I live in every religion'?"* Further clarifying this, Swami Vivekananda said

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that he, who is the Brahman of Hindus is the Ahura Mazda of Parsis, Buddha of Buddhists, brother of Jews, father of Christians in heaven, and Allah of Muslims. By accepting this uniformity, he came to the conclusion that a Christian does not have to be a Hindu, a Muslim, or a Buddhist, or that a Hindu must become a Christian or a Muslim, but that everyone should imbibe the spirit of another religion. At the same time, one should also protect one's privacy and develop oneself according to the laws of the development of one's own religion. According to Vivekananda, the religions of the world are not opposed to each other, they are just different states of the same eternal religion. Therefore, we should adopt all religions equally. They should be respected, and without any discrimination, they and their followers should be treated equally, and every religion should see a reflection of their own.

In-Text Questions

Multiple Choice Questions (1-10)

1. What was the primary source of Swami Vivekananda's philosophical thought?
A) Buddhism
B) Christianity
C) Vedic traditions and Vedanta
D) Islam
2. Which of the following was NOT a major work of Swami Vivekananda?
A) Lectures from Colombo to Almora
B) Modern India
C) The Bhagavad Gita
D) Karma Yoga
3. What did Swami Vivekananda consider the most important element in Indian life that contributed to nationalism?
A) Political unity
B) Economic growth
C) Religious tradition
D) Military strength
4. According to Swami Vivekananda, the primary goal of life is the realization of:
A) Material wealth
B) Political power
C) Divine power
D) Social status



5. Swami Vivekananda's concept of nationalism was heavily influenced by:
- A) European political theories
 - B) Vedanta philosophy
 - C) Western industrialization
 - D) Marxist ideology
6. Vivekananda's Advaita Vedanta teaches that the true nature of human beings is:
- A) Mortal
 - B) Divine
 - C) Sinful
 - D) Temporary
7. Which of the following concepts did Swami Vivekananda emphasize as essential for the realization of Brahman?
- A) Wealth accumulation
 - B) Political power
 - C) Coordination of knowledge, devotion, and karma yoga
 - D) Economic development
8. What did Swami Vivekananda believe was the main principle of the Upanishads?
- A) Freedom
 - B) Wealth
 - C) Power
 - D) Happiness
9. According to Swami Vivekananda, what should be the basis of all reforms in India?
- A) Political ideologies
 - B) Economic policies
 - C) Religious teachings
 - D) Social customs
10. What did Swami Vivekananda consider as the foundation of Indian nationalism?
- A) Economic independence
 - B) Military strength
 - C) Historical heritage
 - D) Political unity

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Fill in the Blanks (11-20)

11. Swami Vivekananda's philosophy was rooted in _____.
12. The philosophical foundation of Vivekananda's Advaita Vedanta was influenced by _____.
13. Vivekananda believed that the goal of life is the realization of _____.
14. According to Vivekananda, the primary source of India's national unity is _____.
15. One of Vivekananda's major works includes _____.
16. Swami Vivekananda considered _____ as the main principle of the Upanishads.
17. The _____ philosophy emphasized the divine nature of human beings.
18. According to Vivekananda, all reforms in India should be done through _____.
19. Swami Vivekananda believed that _____ was central to his understanding of human relationships.
20. Vivekananda's concept of nationalism was built on the _____ of India's past.

3.7 SUMMARY

- Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) was an Indian Hindu monk, philosopher, and spiritual leader. He is credited with spreading the Vedic and Yoga teachings of India to the West.
- Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshav Chandra Sen, and Gopal Krishna Gokhale believed that England had a special goal in India, while Vivekananda, Dayanand, and Gandhi, believed that India had a special message for the West.
- Swami Vivekananda, also known as the Hindu Napoleon, travelled to America and Europe several times to spread Indian philosophy and culture.



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- Vivekananda is placed in the category of Shankaracharya, Ramanuja, Madhavacharya, Ballabhacharya, Nimbakacharya, etc. He was a supporter of Advaita Vedanta.
- Ramakrishna Mission compiled Swami Vivekananda's works into eight volumes of a book titled "*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda.*"
- Vivekananda considered only Brahma to be true and called it Sachchidananda. He became the messenger of this Brahma and worked tirelessly to make it practical.
- Brahm, in the form of the soul that is beyond the periphery of body and mind.
- Vivekananda considered the coordination of knowledge, devotion, and karma yoga as essential for the realisation of Brahman in the form of Sachchidananda.
- Vivekananda was an exponent of the importance of the nation. According to him, "India has to conquer the West with its spirituality, India has to unite and conquer the whole world once again with its might".
- The spiritual or religious doctrine of nationalism can be called Vivekananda's first important gift.
- Vivekananda was not only a supporter of spiritual freedom, or freedom from the shackles and temptations of Maya, but he also wanted material, or external, freedom for man.
- Vivekananda was an outstanding patriot and had an unwavering love for the country in his heart, but he did not openly support the political liberation of the country.
- Vivekananda had no faith in politics and did not participate in any political activities or movements.
- Vivekananda's concept was that "nation" is the name of a group of individuals. Therefore, qualities like masculinity, human dignity, and respect should be developed in every person.
- Vivekananda also accepted the fact that, in the absence of strength, valour, and fearlessness, we can neither secure our existence nor protect our rights.



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- According to Vivekananda, an ideal state would be one in which the balance of knowledge from the Brahmin period, the valour of the Kshatriya period, the propagation of the Vaishya period, and the equality of the Shudra period could be maintained.
- After the conclusion of the All-Religions Conference in Chicago, it was said: “Where all the other delegates kept discussing the god of their own religion, only Vivekananda spoke of the god of all.” He believed that all religions were branches of the tree of God.
- Vivekananda was strongly opposed to casteism. He exposed the authoritarian attitude of the Brahmins, on the basis of which they deprived the so-called lower castes, especially the Shudras, of Vedic knowledge and its benefits.
- Vivekananda used to be saddened to think that in the hands of Brahmins, Sanatan Dharma had become so trivial and corrupt that it was now confined to untouchability.
- Swamiji strongly opposed the doctrine of brahmins’ authoritarianism because this principle was based on the notion of depriving the Shudras of spiritual knowledge.
- Swamiji writes that by educating the people of the lower class, you will be compassionate to the common man, you will open the chains of their slavery, and you will uplift the entire nation.
- Swamiji was not opposed to idol worship. According to him, idol worship is a means of preparing the mind for godly experiences. This is the initial stage in the process of spiritual development.
- Vivekananda not only advocated spiritualization, secularization, and all-religion harmony but was also strongly opposed to stereotypes, irrelevant customs, rituals, and many evil acts done in the name of religion.
- Vivekananda wanted people to practice their religion, but at the same time, by accepting the good things of other religions, they should expand themselves and their religion and increase its quality.
- Vivekananda was also opposed to the practice of child marriage. According to him, child marriage leads to untimely children, who are often weak and sick. Also, having children at a young age reduces the age of women. Therefore, in



the interest of women and infants, he opposed this practice and wanted to destroy it completely.

- According to Vivekananda, the reason for the miserable condition of the people is a lack of education. He desired that everyone have the right and opportunity to receive a complete education without regard to caste, religion, gender, or other factors.
- According to Vivekananda, Hinduism is the universal symbol of moral humanism and spiritual idealism.
- Hinduism is based on such moral and spiritual rules, which are essential for the upliftment of humanity.
- For Vivekananda, Hinduism had a broad truth that could give refuge to the most serious philosophical genius in his heart through justice, Sankhya, and Vedanta.
- Vivekananda was a son of India who inspired the West with the spiritual message of India. He did this because he wanted to add the spiritual roots of the East to the culture of the West.
- Swami Vivekananda spoken ten or eleven times at the All Religions Conference held in Chicago. He emphasised the idea of a world religion every time, in which all human beings can unite by crossing the boundaries of country and time.

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3.8 GLOSSARY

- **Vedic Teaching:** It refers to the instructional and philosophical traditions derived from the Vedas, the ancient sacred texts of Hinduism. These teachings encompass a range of subjects including rituals, ethics, cosmology, and spiritual knowledge, aiming to guide individuals in their moral, spiritual, and societal duties.
- **Yoga:** It is a practice and philosophical system originating from ancient India that aims to achieve harmony of the mind, body, and spirit through physical postures, breath control, meditation, and ethical principles.



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- **Advaitarian:** It is someone who adheres to the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta, which is a non-dualistic school of thought in Hinduism. It asserts that the individual soul (Atman) and the ultimate reality (Brahman) are one and the same, rejecting any distinction between them.
- **Mayanist:** It is a scholar or expert who studies the history, culture, language, and archaeology of the Maya civilization.
- **Paramahansa:** It is a title used in Hinduism and related traditions to denote a highly revered and enlightened spiritual teacher or master, often meaning “supreme swan” and implying a person who has transcended worldly concerns and achieved a high level of spiritual realization.
- **Brahm:** It is a term in Hindu philosophy that refers to the supreme, unchanging reality or cosmic principle, often considered synonymous with Brahman. It represents the ultimate, formless, and infinite reality that underlies and transcends the material universe.
- **Spirituality:** It is a way of life oriented towards the ultimate purpose or goal of life, which is the attainment of the Supreme Soul or God.

3.9 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

1. C) Vedic traditions and Vedanta
2. C) The Bhagavad Gita
3. C) Religious tradition
4. C) Divine power
5. b) Vedanta philosophy
6. B) Divine
7. C) Coordination of knowledge, devotion, and karma yoga
8. A) Freedom
9. C) Religious teachings



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10. C) Historical heritage
11. Vedic traditions and Vedanta
12. Ramakrishna Paramahansa
13. Divine power
14. Religion
15. Lectures from Colombo to Almora
16. Freedom
17. Advaita Vedanta
18. Religion
19. Spiritual equality
20. Historical heritage

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3.10 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Analyze the political views of Swami Vivekananda.
2. What do you mean by nationalism? Examine Vivekananda's views on nationalism.
3. Explain Vivekananda's views on religion and culture.

3.11 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT 4

SWARAJ: GANDHI

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Structure

- 4.1 Learning Objectives
- 4.2 Introduction
- 4.3 City and Village
- 4.4 Gram Swaraj
- 4.5 Critique of Industrialisation
- 4.6 Critique of Machinery
- 4.7 Summary
- 4.8 Glossary
- 4.9 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 4.10 Self-Assessment Questions
- 4.11 References/Suggested Readings

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, students should be able to:

- Understand the concept of Swaraj
- Explain how Gandhi criticise industrialisation
- Discuss the criticism of Machinery by Gandhi



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4.2 INTRODUCTION

In the modern Indian political discourse, the sharp contrast between the urbanised west and the poverty-stricken villages of India had been a constant reminder that both western imperialism and its exploitative nature has kept multitudes of Indian people living in the Indian villages in total servitude and destitution. The Indian situation is comparable to the miserable conditions of the peasantry under the Czarist regime and with Gandhi's intimate knowledge of Tolstoy's concerns and writings he was well acquainted with the pathetic conditions of the peasantry of Czarist Russia. In the early twentieth century, in the background of the rise of Japan and its psychological impact on a section of the Indian intelligentsia and its nationalist leaders, Gandhi, in the *Hind Swaraj* (1909) categorically ruled out the applicability of that model in the Indian condition.

Famine was a regular feature during the British colonial rule and in this situation the utmost necessity of rural reconstruction became an important component of the nationalist discourse in the wake of the *swadeshi* movement in Bengal at the time of the Partition of Bengal. Rabindranath Tagore wrote an important essay entitled *Swadeshi Samaj* (1904) in which there was an appeal for self-help in reconstructing the villages and to solve the acute water shortage from which it suffers perennially. At this time there were lot of projections of parallel nationalist self-supportive, educational, industrial, and cooperative enterprises to alleviate the miseries of the rural poor. However, none of these attempts had a comprehensive plan of an alternative development strategy for rural reconstruction and to reduce the gulf between the cities and the villages. Gandhi provided a philosophy of a village centred life which he described as the *gram swaraj*.

4.3 CITY AND VILLAGE

Within the larger framework of Gandhi's concern for majority alleviation he put the idea of the *Gram Swaraj* at the very centre of his social, political, and economic philosophy. Since the overwhelming majority of Indians live in villages, Gandhi's primary



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concern is to concentrate on this important segment and provide a blueprint by which the face of rural India would drastically change for the better. The cities, remarks Gandhi, do not represent India. They are alien to it. He considers the cities as artificial, facilitating the exploitation by the imperialist powers; of sharing the plunder of the villages with the imperialist powers. “I regard the growth of cities as an evil thing. The British have exploited India through its cities. The latter have exploited the villages. The blood of the villages is the cement with which the edifice of the cities is built.”

Little do town-dwellers know how the semi-starved masses of India are slowly sinking to lifelessness. Little do they know that their miserable comfort represents the brokerage they get for the work they do for the foreign exploiter, that the profits and the brokerage are sucked from the masses. Little do they realise that the government established by law in British India is carried on for this exploitation of the masses. . . . “I have no doubt whatsoever that both England and town-dwellers in India will have to answer, if there is a God above for this crime against humanity which is perhaps unequalled in history.”

Gandhi provided an alternative of total rural reconstruction and rebuilding in the process of which the entire Indian situation would change. He identifies the survival of the Indian nation with that of the meaningful survival of the villages reviving the traditional ways and means of the rural life which have degenerated because of the superstitious beliefs and neglect of this aspect by western imperialism. He is conscious of the enormous gap that exists between the villages and the cities in education, culture, medicine, recreation, and employment opportunities. The gulf increases and Gandhi wants to stop this process and allow the village to grow and prosper. Even though he is very critical of the cities, he never wants to eliminate them. He wants to reform them and place them in a natural setting. Furthermore, though Gandhi does not provide for concrete picture of the city’s structure, he makes three general suggestions:

1. “The blood that is inflating the arteries of the cities run once again the blood vessels of the villages”.
2. The cities did not need to send its people back to the village, rather “they should re-adjust their lives so as to cease to sponge upon the poor village folk and make to the latter what reparation is possible, even at this late hour, by helping to resuscitate their ruined economy” and



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3. “In my picture of the rural economy, the cities would take their natural place and do not appear as unnatural, congested sports, or boils on the body politics, as they are today”.

Understanding the importance of the dynamics of power, Gandhi begins his argument pleading for the empowerment of the small village communities which would derive sustenance with cottage industries that would provide the economic bases of the rural society. Emphasising the darker side of industrialisation which devastates the rural life and uproots thousands of people from their natural habitat, the cottage industries would provide the economic basis of a small community which is in a position to manage and to enhance the quality of life and happiness as Gandhi is convinced that the fulfilment and happiness of people is manifested when they live in small communities rather than in larger urbanised rootless communities.

Gandhi wants the development of a new partnership between the villages and the cities, a vision that Marx and Engels also had. He does not want prosperity in the cities at the expense of the village, where the majority of the Indian population live. The villages are as important as the cities, if not more. His views on industrialisation and modern technology might help us to understand his extraordinary emphasis on the need for regenerating village life.

4.4 GRAM SWARAJ

Gandhi is a virulent critic of all models of western industrialisation as though they produce material goods but are alien to our moral values. The village panchayat system and the village republic could create both a participatory model of democracy and would also allow an escape route to avoid the perils of western industrialisation. *Gram Swaraj* will be the essential framework of this alternative model with the promotion of self-sufficiency in providing the material conditions essential for fulfilling the needs of the individual and enhance the elements of self-respect and pride in oneself. Gandhi is conscious that the present-day conditions of the villages are far from the ideal that he desires and it is because of this consciousness that he argues for a reformed rural setting where truth and nonviolence would co-exist in a situation of harmony and promotion and practice of rural virtues of cooperation and performance of duties. His



close associate, J. C. Kumarappa coins the term ‘villagism’, which Gandhi gladly accepts as an essential framework of realising rural *swaraj*. Gandhi desires a complete economic revival of India with *satya* and *ahimsa* as its foundation and the credit for preparing a blueprint along these lines goes to Kumarappa.

The framework for the village *swaraj* is provided in the two books of Kumarappa: *Why The Village Movement: A Plea For Village Centred Economic Order* and *Capitalism, Socialism And Villagism*. The first book is considered as the first normative statement of Gandhian economics and could be regarded as the manifesto of Gandhi’s economic vision. Kumarappa is of the view that as economic autonomy for the individual is essential for freedom and that as majority of Indians live in rural areas, the village economy has to be the basis of India’s social well-being. In the rapid process of industrialisation and urbanisation it is the countryside that suffers the most. He observes that “there can be no industrialisation without predation” and that agriculture was and is the greatest among all the occupations. Writing about the impact of industry and agriculture on the natural world, Kumarappa states:

“In case of agricultural civilisation, the system ordained by nature is not interfered to any great extent. If there is a variation at all, it follows a natural mutation. The agriculturalist only aids nature or intensifies in a short time what takes places in nature in a long period. Under the economic system of the industrial society we find variations from nature are very violent in that a large supply of goods is produced irrespective of demand, and then the demand is artificially created for goods by means of clever advertisements.”

Kumarappa is against the use of chemical fertilizers and favours the use of organic manure as a way of ‘Economy of Permanence’ as against the man-made ‘Economy of Transience’. He strongly favours the use of night soil as manure thereby converting human waste into wealth and in overcoming the prejudices of caste. He criticises the British for their poor maintenance of irrigation tanks and urges the conservation of ground water. He also favours small industry as a means of resource preservation. He argues that we should make Mother Nature our great teacher and never do anything that is contrary to her ways, if we do that we will be annihilated sooner or later. “Water from the sea rises as vapour and falls on land in refreshing showers and returns back to the sea again. A nation that forgets or ignores this fundamental process in forming its institutions will disintegrate”. Kumarappa recognises the decay and regeneration in the



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‘cycle of life’ as a fundamental process in which all creatures cooperate. Violence results if “this cycle is broken at any stage, at any time, consciously or unconsciously”. He supports an economy that is close to the natural order as that is deeply moral with well-defined rights and ethical obligations on every participant and contributes to the welfare of all. Crucial to Kumarappa’s conception of an ideal society is the understanding that the economic freedom holds the key to individual’s autonomy and that economic freedom forms the basis for political and social freedom. A non-violent social organisation is predicated on providing complete autonomy for every individual. The key to individual autonomy lies in the nature and purpose of work; if work unleashes the creative energies in the human being, it would lead to happiness. He also realised centralisation as the primary road block to individual autonomy and freedom.

Gandhi clarifies that *swaraj* is self-rule and self-restraint grounded in the moral autonomy of the individual. He sees an intimate link between *swaraj* and *swadeshi* or self-reliance. “*Swaraj for me means freedom for the meanest of my countrymen. I am not interested in freeing India merely from the English yoke. I am bent upon freeing India from any yoke whatsoever. I have no desire to exchange ‘king log’ for ‘king stork’ ... there is no freedom for India so long as one man, no matter how highly placed he may be, holds in the hollow of his hands, the life, property and honour of millions of human beings. It is an artificial, unnatural and uncivilized institution. The end of it is an essential preliminary of Swaraj*”.

4.5 CRITIQUE OF INDUSTRIALISATION

In the *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi severely criticises modern technology and the ill-effects of modern industrialisation so much that he does not compromise with any of its forms. The basic cause of human misery and the ‘sin’ of modern civilisation is the advent of technology and industrialisation. This view apparently takes shape during his formative years with his direct contact with the English process of modern industrialisation and his experiences in South Africa. Charles Dickens, Karl Marx, Thomas Hill Green, and the Fabian socialists describe the horrors of the English capitalist industrial society. Towards the end of the 19th century, while Gandhi was still in England, factory legislations and enlargement of franchise ameliorated many of the evils of industrialisation.

Swaraj: Gandhi



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But they only diminished and did not eliminate the major effects of industrialisation. Gandhi could easily grasp the dark side of industrialisation. In the early 20th century, many thinkers started to emphasise that modern industrial civilisation was not an unmixed blessing. The expressionist movement in philosophy and art were clamouring against the miseries of the emerging industrial giants. Philosophers like Bertrand Russell shared this anxiety. Eliot expressed it best in the following lines:

*We are the hollow men,
We are the hollow women;
Leaning together,
Headpiece filled with straw, Alas!*

This revolt against the industrial revolution is represented in India by Tagore's conception of freedom and Gandhi's denunciation of the West. Gandhi does not deny the immense rise in productivity and the consequent rise in the standard of living in the West. He does, however he deny the claim that industrialisation in its current form advanced human civilisation by promoting happiness and well-being among common people. He concedes that, because of industrialisation, in certain spheres like housing, the people have begun to live better as compared to earlier times. These advances are hailed as an advancement of civilisation, promoting 'bodily happiness'. Earlier, people wore skins and used spears as weapons. But, now, they wore a wide range of clothing and used firearms. If people in other parts of the world accepted the modern European practices, "they should have achieved civilisation. Furthermore, technology had enormously enhanced man's productive power and his capacity to accumulate wealth. These are also signs of civilisation; but, there was also another side to the picture now, self-destruction".

Gandhi's indignation at the consequences of industrialisation is apparent. With a remarkable affinity to Marx's criticism of Adam Smith, Gandhi rejects the claims of the advancement as the present economic order is based on inequality. Gandhi, like Marx, also points out to the relative fall under the present industrial system. In spite of improved productive capacity, inequality persists and the workers live on subsistence wages. The prescription for eradicating inequality is the abolition of industrial civilisation. He found human salvation are in turn to nature. The hidden meaning of the *Hind Swaraj* is the need for the freedom of the working class and the common people. This becomes



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evident from the Italian example. Gandhi clearly states that Mazzini's Italy is still in slavery, it does not cater to the needs and aspirations of the ordinary people. Political independence by itself is irrelevant unless there is improvement and elevation in the lives of the ordinary people, the poor, the underprivileged, and the toiling masses.

Dalton states that: "*The substance of the view of civilisation advanced in Hind Swaraj remained intact throughout Gandhi's life and deeply affected his conception of the nature of the good society.*" At its worst, this view manifests itself in a negative suspicion of the West and a highly provincial world outlook. At its best, it moulded a theory of the good society suited to the Indian situation; a theory of social order of small communities, each seeking attainment of individual freedom and social equality through mutual cooperation and respect. This was his vision of *Sarvodaya*, the 'Welfare of All': the pattern of an Indian society that had indeed achieved *Swaraj*.

Gandhi's economic point of view, as Gyan Chand points out, like his political and social viewpoints, "was and is an integral part of Gandhi's whole philosophy of life; and it can be fully understood and duly appreciated only if this basic fact is borne in mind". This perspective broadens the whole concept of economic life and includes:

1. The primary importance of man in production, distribution and exchange. In other words, the primary purpose of the economy is the well-being, growth, and development of man.
2. Specially, this principle applies to the use of machinery in the production process. "Machinery for man and not man for machinery has to be the cardinal principle mechanised production".
3. From the preceding point of view, industrialisation involving mass production, centralisation of initiative, power, authority, and policy formulation is undesirable and is to be reduced to the barest minimum.
4. A logical consequence of this is that decentralisation of production is to be carried to the maximum possible extent.
5. "Small communities of producers means economic and social democracy, reduction of inequalities within a very limited range and decentralized initiative".



6. These changes have far reaching implications and can only be brought about with radical changes in society.

The radical changes need a social transformation that would be non-violent through mass awakening, widely diffused social awareness and the use of the people's power for fundamental social transformation. This awakening and awareness would be based on a vision of a society based on justice, equality, and freedom. The goal of economic equality is what unites Gandhi with the socialists but where they depart is with regard to the means of reaching that goal. For the socialists, the basis of economic equality is the abolition of private property and the social ownership of the means of production. Gandhi desires economic equality but without wanting to abolish private property. He expects the rich to act as trustees of the entire society. Since they would act neither for private gain nor for profit, there would be differences in the amount of wealth, but there would be no differences in services and lifestyles. Private ownership would continue for Gandhi, except in large-scale industries where it would be imbued with public purpose. The development of social spirit and socialist consciousness are the two cardinal principles of Gandhi's concept of trusteeship. The deeper meaning of his concept of trusteeship is akin to the Weberian notion of puritan ethics, which does not decry the increase in production but prohibited conscious consumption. It has a Calvinistic overtone and is beneficial to societies like ours where wide disparities are an eyesore and exist without any effective social sanction and control.

Gandhi acknowledges the existence of social conflict and different conflicting class interests but he believes that such conflicts would be resolved by non-violent mass action. He is all used to the existence of conflict in three sectors:

1. Conflict of labour and capital in industry;
2. Conflict of tenant and landlord in agriculture; and
3. Conflict of village and city.

He is confident that these conflicts could be resolved through trusteeship and passive resistance with the help of non-violence without class war. Gandhi rejects the idea of revolutionary seizure of state power and stresses on the transformation of relationship through peaceful transfer of power. While Marx rejected capitalism but not industrialisation, Gandhi wanted to restrict industrialisation.



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4.6 CRITIQUE OF MACHINERY

Gandhi is keen to limit and not eradicate machinery. His views on machinery and modern industry are derived from the influence that John Ruskin (1819-1900) had on him. He supports mechanisation, which would help the individual and not encroach upon individuality. He clarifies about the misconceptions to his opposition to machines.

“How can I be proud when I know that even this body is a most delicate piece of machinery? The spinning wheel is a machine; a little toothpick is a machine. What I object to is the craze for machinery, not machinery as such. The craze is for what they call labour-saving machinery. Men go on ‘saving labour’ till thousands are without work and thrown on the open streets to die of starvation. I want to save time and labour, not for fraction of mankind but for all. I want concentration of wealth, not in the hands of a few, but in the hands of all. Today, machinery merely helps a few to ride on the backs of millions. The impetus behind it all is not the philanthropy to save labour, but greed. It is against this constitution of things that I am fighting with all my might. The supreme consideration is man. The machine should not tend to atrophy the limits of man. The machine should not tend to atrophy the limbs of man. For instance, I would make intelligent exceptions. Take the case of the singer’s sewing machinery. It is one of the few useful things ever invented, and there is a romance about the device itself’.

Gandhi supports those machines that are necessary to satisfy the basic human needs. He also feels that industries should be socially owned by which he means welfare of society. He wants limited industrialisation to satisfy limited wants such as food production, shelter, health care and basic education. He also points out the impersonal and monotonous life that industrialisation entails. But he is ready to accept it, if it helps to satisfy the basic human requirements and if it is socially controlled. He is aware of the enormous differences among countries and points out that the choice of technique depends on circumstances. Countries like India with abundant labour and large-scale unemployment and underemployment should restrict the use of machinery.

Gandhi’s antagonism to the use of machinery and industrialisation set him apart not only from earlier Indian thinkers like Ranade and Gokhale but also among some of his contemporaries like Jawaharlal Nehru. Gandhi rejects mechanised industrialisation on moral and economic grounds. He considers machines as sins of modern civilisation.



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He dislikes the migration of people from villages to cities in search of jobs, low wages and poor working conditions of workers, and unemployment. He laments about the under-utilisation of available labour in view of the seasonal nature of agriculture which depends heavily on monsoons. He points out that machines displace human or animal labour, instead of merely supplementing it or increasing its efficiency. Unlike human labour, there are no physical limits to the growth and expansion of machines. Gandhi's case against machines is "because they deprive men of their employment and render them jobless. I oppose them not because they are machines but because they create unemployment. If one machine does the work of a hundred men, then where are we to employ those hundred men?"

Gandhi points out that the aggregate demand for labour is given and that as a result of specialisation in the production process, workers have highly specific skills and cannot be employed elsewhere in the economy even if there arises an opportunity for employment. In general, he rejects machines because it displaces human labour and is disturbed by the fact that with the proliferation of highly mechanised capital intensive industries in a country like India with high population, it would lead to large scale unemployment with damaging social effects. Large scale mechanisation also leads to concentration of production and distribution in few hands and that would result in concentration of economic power.

Gandhi stressed on self-reliance through labour for all citizens of future India and he is categorical that winning and maintenance of freedom is impossible without such work discipline. It is for this reason that the spinning-wheel takes pride of place in this campaign, as he believes that it provides the best means through which the poor could earn a supplementary income or save money by producing their own cloth. Spinning-wheel, for Gandhi, epitomises the spirit of self-reliance.

According to Gandhi, the cause of poverty is the covetousness of the rich and the exploitation of the needy by the greedy. Incomes would have to be redistributed for raising the output and fulfilment of the basic needs of the masses; this would depend a lot on limiting the wants of the rich. If the masses are prepared to reject the evils of capital accumulation, "they would strive to attain a more just distribution of the products of labour. Under the new outlook multiplicity of material wants will not be the aim of the life, the aim will be rather their restriction consistently with comfort. We shall cease to think of getting what we can, but we shall decline to receive what all cannot get". To



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get rid of poverty there is a need for a revolutionary change in prevailing attitudes to consumption and to wealth in affluent societies as well as in the poorer countries which are caught up in the 'revolution of rising expectations.'

Gandhi's *Swaraj* is far removed from the Marxist ideal of a socialist stateless, classless utopia. Like the Marxists and the socialists, he desires an egalitarian society but opposes their deterministic view of history and human nature, and their espousal of violent revolutionary changes. Like Marx, he accepts social conflict but does not think that violence is adequate to resolve it. He admits that violence has helped in bringing about political liberty in certain cases but it "has always brought the form and not the substance of freedom" for "the results of violent revolution are always liable to be lost by violent counter revolution". For Gandhi, commitment to non-violence is total but it is the non-violence of the brave. A non-violent revolutionary does not advocate a revolutionary seizure of state power but a transformation of relationships culminating in a peaceful transfer of power.

Gandhi, like Marx, accepts that contemporary situation is full of conflict but differs from Marx in focusing on the conflict between the city and the village. Marx's philosophy is essentially urban-oriented as he dismisses village culture as an 'idiocy'. Gandhi contends that India lives in its villages and that city culture is not only exploitative but also unequal. Gandhi, unlike Marx, rejects the notion of class struggle, class polarisation and antagonisms. He admits his attraction to the Marxist ideal but expressed doubts about the means to achieve it. He also, unlike Marx, rejects large-scale industrialisation and common ownership of property. Gandhi accepts, like Aristotle, that property is necessary and acknowledges the talent in those individuals who have the ability to create wealth but insists that this wealth be used for common good. Gandhi proposes the Trusteeship system to ensure harmony between the property owners and the non-propertied. Like Marx, he is conscious of the notion of relative fall. Under the present industrial system, despite enormous and improved productive capacity, inequality not only persists but has also increased. In this sense, he accepts Marx's criticism of Adam Smith for ignoring social nature of our needs. However, while Marx only rejects industrial capitalism, Gandhi rejects Western civilisation along with its attendant features like mechanisation and industrialisation as it is based on extreme inequality and it dehumanises the human being. Like the Marxists and the socialists, Gandhi desires an egalitarian, just and non-exploitative society.



If we differentiate between the transient and the permanent, the local and the perennial, the essential Gandhi emerges in a different perspective bringing out the similarities between Gandhi and Marx. There is an agreement on basic issues though their methods of reaching the ideal differ. Both accept the imperfection of the modern society since it is based on conflict and inequality. Both dislike mechanical interpretation and emphasise the dynamic role of the human being in bringing about the necessary transformation in society. Both are confident of human capacity to transcend the present stage of irrational existence and reach a higher stage based on harmony and fulfilment of individual needs. The only Western parallel to Gandhi is Rousseau, for like Rousseau, he too idealises a glorious past but realises that since there is no going back, salvation lies in small, independent, self-governing, and self-sufficient communities. Gandhi's ideal is an "anarchist society where each individual is a law to himself, living peacefully and with goodwill towards all, controlling all his passions and living by his own labour". The Indian Marxists underrated Gandhi's social criticisms and his resolve to bring about a better and equitable social order.

In-Text Questions

Multiple-Choice Questions (1-5)

1. What is Gandhi's primary concern in his social, political, and economic philosophy?
 - A) Development of cities
 - B) Economic growth through industrialization
 - C) Transformation of rural India through Gram Swaraj
 - D) Modernization of agricultural practices
2. Gandhi's alternative to industrial civilization is based on which of the following?
 - A) Capitalism
 - B) Socialism
 - C) Gram Swaraj and rural self-sufficiency
 - D) Urbanization



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3. Who coined the term 'villagism,' which Gandhi gladly accepted?
A) Rabindranath Tagore B) Jawaharlal Nehru
C) J. C. Kumarappa D) Charles Dickens
4. According to Gandhi, what should be the relationship between cities and villages?
A) Cities should dominate villages
B) Villages should be eliminated
C) Cities and villages should have a new partnership where both prosper
D) Villages should serve as resources for cities
5. What is the essential framework of Gandhi's alternative model of development?
A) Industrialization B) Capitalism
C) Gram Swaraj D) Urbanization

Fill in the blanks (6-10)

6. Gandhi's primary concern in his philosophy is to concentrate on the _____ provide a blueprint for transforming rural India.
7. The term 'villagism' was coined by _____, a close associate of Gandhi.
8. Gandhi's critique of _____ emphasizes that it devastates rural life and uproots thousands from their natural habitat.
9. According to Gandhi, _____ is the essential framework for creating a participatory model of democracy in rural India.
10. Gandhi's vision of rural development emphasizes _____ and _____ as foundational principles.

4.7 SUMMARY

- Gandhi is a severe critic of contemporary society and is conscious of its divisions, structural fallacies and many inadequacies.
- Gandhi emphasises the human factor in any kind of revolutionary transformation as he desires the elimination of misery and conflict.



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- Gandhi provides a framework for resolving conflicts and for building a social, political and economic order based on consensus. Both his commitment to non-violence and his own initiatives in resolving conflicts between the different segments were with the aim of establishing a non-exploitative, equal and just order.
- Gandhi sought to transform by relying on moral persuasion and pressure on the propertied and the advantaged.
- The idea of moral coercion lay at the heart of non-violent *Satyagraha*.
- Rabindranath Tagore, like Gandhi, is conscious of the acute differences and conflicts in the Indian society but believes that it is society and not politics that has to be the primary focus.
- The distinctiveness of Gandhi's outlook is that he points to the gap that exists between the village and the city and that the gulf would increase in the coming future.
- Gandhi's desire is to narrow the gap and create a framework for the village to grow and prosper without destroying the city. He desires their reform so that a new partnership could evolve between the village and the city.
- Gandhi also points out to the differences among countries. Countries like India with abundant labour and, unemployment and underemployment ought to restrict the use of machinery. On both these scores, the Gandhi's blueprint is of immense importance to us.
- The prosperity of the village is the key to create a new balanced India, for checking the uncontrollable migration to cities that are bursting in its seams and not in a position to offer the means for decent and dignified life and also ensuring a balance between agriculture and industry.

4.8 GLOSSARY

- **Swaraj:** It means self-rule or self-governance. In the context of Gandhi's philosophy, it refers to the autonomy of individuals grounded in moral values and self-restraint.



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- **Gram Swaraj:** It is a concept by Gandhi advocating for village self-rule, focusing on the empowerment of village communities and promoting a decentralized, self-sufficient economy that resists the perils of industrialization.
- **Industrialization:** It is the process of developing industries on a wide scale, which Gandhi criticized for undermining rural communities and leading to economic exploitation.
- **Villagism:** It is a term coined by J.C. Kumarappa and adopted by Gandhi, referring to an economic and social model that prioritizes village life and its virtues, promoting decentralization and small-scale industry.
- **Trusteeship:** It is a concept by Gandhi where the wealthy act as trustees of their wealth, using it for the benefit of society rather than for personal gain.
- **Non-violence (Ahimsa):** It is a principle of non-harm, central to Gandhi's philosophy, which advocates for resolving conflicts without violence.
- **Decentralization:** It is the redistribution of power and resources away from central authorities to local or regional levels.
- **Cottage Industries:** These are small-scale, home-based industries that produce goods using traditional methods, often seen as a counter to large-scale industrialization.
- **Swadeshi:** It is a principle of self-reliance and the use of domestically produced goods, promoted by Gandhi as part of the independence movement.

4.9 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

1. C) Transformation of rural India through Gram Swaraj
2. C) Gram Swaraj and rural self-sufficiency
3. C) J. C. Kumarappa
4. C) Cities and villages should have a new partnership where both prosper



5. C) Gram Swaraj
6. Village
7. J. C. Kumarappa
8. Industrialization
9. Gram Swaraj
10. Truth, Nonviolence

4.10 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Define Swaraj. Discuss the different dimensions of Swaraj.
2. What is the concept of Gram Swaraj?
3. Critically Examine Gandhi's concept of Swaraj.

4.11 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READING

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UNIT 5

NYAYA: AMBEDKAR

NOTES

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Structure

- 5.1 Learning Objectives
- 5.2 Introduction
- 5.3 Important Events in Ambedkar's Career as Politician and Activist
- 5.4 Important Works
- 5.5 Caste
- 5.6 Untouchability
- 5.7 Annihilation of Caste: Summary of the Text
- 5.8 Ambedkar's Idea of Social Justice
- 5.9 Ambedkar on Nation and Nationalism
- 5.10 Democracy
- 5.11 Constitution and Constitutional Morality
- 5.12 Poona Pact (1932)
- 5.13 Dr. Ambedkar's Economic Views
- 5.14 Ambedkar on the Position of Women in Indian Society
- 5.15 Summary
- 5.16 Glossary
- 5.17 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 5.18 Self-Assessment Questions
- 5.19 References/Suggested Readings

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, students should be able to:

- Discuss the important events in Ambedkar's career as politician and activist and his important works



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- Understand the concept of caste and untouchability
- Explain the role of Ambedkar in the annihilation of caste
- Analyse Ambedkar's idea of social justice and nation and nationalism
- Describe the perspective of Ambedkar on democracy, constitution, and constitutional morality
- Understand the importance of Poona Pact (1932)
- Examine Ambedkar's economic views and his views on the position of women in Indian society

5.2 INTRODUCTION

Born on 14 April 1891, in the Mahar community (an 'Untouchable' caste) at Mhow, Madhya Pradesh, Ambedkar went on to become one of the leading figures of Indian history, most famously for his role as the chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution. He graduated from Elphinstone College of Bombay University majoring in English and Persian. He received a generous scholarship from Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III of Baroda to pursue a postgraduate degree from Columbia University at United States of America. Later he joined the London School of Economics in 1915, where he worked on his doctoral thesis titled "The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution" and could only get his degree in Economics in 1927. In 1917, his scholarship expired and he had to return to serve in the administration of the Baroda State. His experiences of working there introduced him to humiliations, which he could directly relate with his being born in the untouchable community. Eventually, he left for Bombay, where after initial hardships, he was got job as Professor of Political Economy Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics.

In January 1920, Ambedkar started his fortnight magazine *Mooknayak*, which along with the other journals he started, he used to expose the humiliation and discrimination faced by Dalit community. He also developed strategies to make them conscious of their state of being and organize them to fight for their dignity and self-respect. In 1920, with the support of Shahu Maharaj of Kohlapur he organized the first All India Conference of the Depressed Classes in Nagpur. Since 1923, when he



returned from London, he actively participated in various organizational activities, including active politics, to fight for social justice and transform the exploitative social structures in favour of an inclusive system favouring the principles of equality, liberty, and fraternity.

5.3 IMPORTANT EVENTS IN AMBEDKAR'S CAREER AS POLITICIAN AND ACTIVIST

The important events in Ambedkar's career as politician and activist include:

- He made representation before Southborough committee in January 1919 demanding separate electorate for depressed classes as conceded to Muslims.
- Started a magazine fortnightly called *Mooknayak* on 31 January, 1920.
- Collaborated with Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur in forming Depressed Classes Forum in 1920.
- In 1924, Ambedkar formed the Bahiskrit Hitkarni Sabha.
- In 1927, he led the Mahad Satyagraha for the right of the Untouchables to have access to wells and tanks.
- In April 1927, he began journal called *Bahiskrit Bharat*.
- Formed Samaj Samata Sangh in September 1927 and Samata Sainik Dal in December 1927 for aggressively pursuing the agenda of social equality.
- Played a prominent part in Kalaram Temple movement in 1930, Nasik for entry of depressed classes in it.
- On 29 August Ambedkar was appointed the Chairman of Drafting Committee for the Constitution.
- Became the President of All India Depressed Classes Congress in Nagpur in 1930.
- Started a fortnightly called *Janata*, in 1934, later published as *Prabuddh Bharat* from 1956.
- Poona Pact 1932.



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- Anti-Untouchability League formed by Congress, later named as Harijan Sevak Sangh, he accepted membership of executive council. He differed and opposed Gandhi's understanding and strategy for removing untouchability and resigned from it in 1933.
- On 13 October 1935 in the depressed classes meeting at Nashik, for the first time he suggested that people belonging to depressed classes should leave Hinduism as he was convinced that Hinduism could not be reformed.
- In 1936 wrote *Annihilation of Caste* for Jat Pat Todak Mandal.
- On 15 August 1936, he founded the Independent Labour Party (ILP).
- In 1942, he found Scheduled Caste Federation (SCF). He began to project it as third party other than Hindus and Muslims in the constitutional developments sought in India.
- Became a Law Minister in Nehru's Cabinet.
- Resigned from Nehru Cabinet in 1951 due to differences over Hindu Code Bill.
- 14 October, 1956, he converted to Buddhism.

5.4 IMPORTANT WORKS

Following are the important works of Ambedkar:

- The Buddha and His Dhamma (1956)
- Who were the Shudras (1946)
- What the Congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables (1945)
- Mr. Gandhi and the Emancipation of the Untouchables (1942)
- Pakistan or the Partition of India (1940)
- Annihilation of Caste (1936)
- The Problem of the Rupee, its Origin and its solution (1923)
- The Problem of Provincial Finance in British India (1925)



5.5 CASTE

Ambedkar's views on the origins of caste and the genesis of caste system witnessed some important transformations over the years. Earlier, he had claimed that main feature of caste was endogamy. Once certain caste categories started practicing endogamy drawing strict boundaries, it was gradually adopted by other groups. Although in his later writings as well, Ambedkar emphasized on endogamy as the main feature of caste system, he gradually added to it other aspects as well. These included the subjects of division of labour and labourers, refusals to inter-dine, and strict restriction on social mobility. According to him, graded inequality, became the mainstay of caste system and it had become an essential characteristic of the Hindu society. It is therefore that he was convinced that the only solution to the problem of caste was its annihilation. He suggested inter-caste marriage and inter-dinning for the purpose although the latter by itself was too weak to forge any enduring bonds.

Ambedkar essay "Castes in India, Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development" in 1917 can be seen as his first serious attempt to analyse the caste system in India. He pointed that since its inception, the Hindu society was divided into classes that they also referred as varnas which included *Brahmins* (the priestly class), the *Kshatriyas* (the warrior class), the *Vaishayas* (the trading class) and the *Shudras* (the artisan class and others involved in what society claims as menial jobs). This earlier system was more open with provisions of social mobility in case one learnt the traits required qualities of that particular class. However, gradually this open characteristic was lost and the system became hierarchical and closed. This was the beginning of what is understood as the caste categories in the modern sense. The starting point is traced to the decision by priestly class to detach themselves as a unit from rest of society and adopting a closed policy refusing to intermarry, inter-dine as well as free interaction or acquiring their characteristics to be included in the caste group. This was followed by an emphasis on birth being the sole criterion to define one's identity to belong to a particular caste. These therefore emerged as the main features of caste system.

Ambedkar extensively criticized the caste system in India and argued that it was the fundamental reason for lack of unity and fraternity among Hindus. Caste consciousness, according to him, led to the degeneration of Hindu society and had



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long term repercussions on Indian society in general. The lack of mobility within castes and rigidity of the system based on the constructed logic of purity and pollution had negative consequences on the values of equality, liberty, and fraternity; which according to Ambedkar were the building blocks for any idea of democracy or nation. To make things worse, the system received sanctity from the religious scriptures which also stress on penalties if it was not followed. As a result, Ambedkar was convinced that the change in the system required a structural change in the Hindu religion.

5.6 UNTOUCHABILITY

Ambedkar rebutted the understanding about the possible relation between race and caste system or Untouchability, and rejected the position that caste had developed in relation to race. He also distinguished the institution of untouchability from caste although he agreed that untouchability was reinforced by caste system and that the higher castes were primarily responsible for both. Ambedkar criticized the Hindu scriptures and sacred texts that justified the prevalence of caste system and also legitimized it. In his monograph titled “*The Untouchables: Who were they and why they became Untouchables?*” published in 1948, he tried to analyse the genesis of untouchability as a social practice. He opined that in ancient times during the tribal wars, those who were defeated were broken from their groups and wandered around. He calls them ‘*Broken Men*’. When the idea of civilization and settled society developed, these settled families faced constant threat from the nomadic tribes, who survived on stolen cattle and property. The settled communities did not have the capacity to counter the raiding nomadic tribes as they were engaged in agriculture for survival. The broken men also needed resources for survival and hence a form of contract was reached where the broken men agreed to defend and serve the settled communities against the nomads. When the question about their settlement was raised, the settled communities refused to allow them to settle among them and provided them land in the outskirts. That is how they started living outside the settled villages and were gradually excluded from all others, culturally. It was these broken men who later became untouchables. Such broken men gradually became the followers of Buddhism as it emphasized on



equality and dignity of each individual. When the Brahmins regained power and control over society, under pressure many of these returned to the Hindu fold, whereas many among them continued embracing Buddhism thereby coming in direct contradiction to the Brahmins. Though this historical explanation lacks any evidence to back it up, it is certain that Untouchability developed as a discriminating practice due to the practices of purity/pollution among caste Hindus. Untouchability, according to Ambedkar, was not only against the principles of equality and fraternity but also against basic Human Rights as it denied self-respect and dignity to the untouchables.

He felt that it was difficult for outsider to understand the phenomena of untouchability and explored modes of presenting the same. Once explained, he thought human sympathy would be forthcoming towards alleviating the plight of the untouchables, but at some time anticipated hurdles to be crossed, hurdles made of age-old prejudice, interest, religious retribution, the burden of the social pyramid above and the feeble resource that the 'Untouchables' could muster. He opined that the Untouchables had to fight their own battles. He discussed attempt to deny the existence of untouchability and to reduce the proportion of population in order to deny them adequate political presence. He suggested that the untouchables should educate, organize, and agitate for the cause of self-dignity and self-respect. In his analysis of the problem and suggesting for reforms, he differed fundamentally from Gandhi. He opposed the Gandhian attempt to remove Untouchability and termed it as mere façade aimed at buying over the 'Untouchables' with kindness by calling them 'harijans'. He presented voluminous empirical data to defend such a thesis, and suggested his own strategies to confront untouchability, warning Untouchables not to fall into trap of Gandhism.

5.7 ANNIHILATION OF CASTE: SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

Text written as speech for lecture at meeting of Jat Pat Todak Mandal. Organizers had problems with some passages and asked him to reconsider, he refused and cancelled his lecture and got it published later. In this text, Ambedkar highlights the anomalies associated with caste system and logic of its defenders as well as decimated those



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defences. He also talks about problems of caste and how to resolve it. For example, two main arguments forwarded by the advocates and defenders of caste system are:

- a) It is a form of division of labour and improves efficiency in society.
- b) Caste system was meant to ensure purity of race and blood.

Ambedkar countered these claims by arguing that caste system was not only a division of labour but also division of labourers. No civilized society allows hierarchy and denial of mobility based on birth. In caste, social status of parents and birth was an important factor or determinant and it went against the logic of merit. Caste does not allow job mobility and there is no freedom of choosing occupation. As a result, natural inclinations and talents are prevented from developing. To the second claim, Ambedkar responded by arguing that there is no pure race in world as anthropologists have shown. There have been intermixtures all around. Caste system developed much after such comingling had taken place. Secondly, race and caste are different. Race was based on biological differences but caste was not based on that. No racial affinity between Brahmins of different regions of India or between backward communities of different areas. It is social division of people of the same race.

Caste system, according to Ambedkar was a product of design aimed for personal benefits of certain sections who were dominant and got imposed everywhere. In India, he argues, there was no consciousness of kind, but only consciousness of caste. It is such a divisive system that it prevents common activity and prevents unity among Hindus that defines community. Further the subdivisions within caste make it even more complicated and a hurdle for oneness and unity. Caste not only discriminates but also creates hierarchy and preservation seen important. There is constant attempt to pull down those who want to liberate and improve life style. It also makes Hindus intolerant as preventive and punitive aspects attached against those who want to break barriers of caste. The fear of social boycott kills public spirit and consciousness. He also criticizes those who defend Varna system by posing it as different from caste. He argues that chaturvarnya as a system was impracticable, harmful, and miserable. He argues that Varna system was the predecessor of caste and both equally undermined human potential to develop its potential and capacities by fixing into categories that are predetermined.



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For Ambedkar his ideal would be based on the principles of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. Ideal society, in his views, should be mobile, and based on 'social endosmosis' - an inclusive view about common sharing. He argues that the problem is not the presence of division of society into different groups as it was widely practiced in all societies, which exhibit at least some form of division. The question should rather be: How varied are interests within the group? How strong are forces and sanctions that divide the groups than forces that unite? If the groups have similar interests and the divisions are not rigid and if the factors acting as glue within those societies is more than divisive forces, there should not be a problem. But in caste system it is not so. It has a rigid structure with sanctions from religious scriptures and exhibits serious preventive and punitive system of punishments attached with any form of mobility.

Caste is a notion, a state of mind. It requires notional change. The best solution for Ambedkar is the practices of intermarriage and interdining as these practices are against the idea of purity and pollution that is significant for continuing caste in Hindu society. But Ambedkar is also mindful that Hindus observe caste as they are deeply religious and the legitimacy or sanction for caste system is received from shastras. The remedy can therefore only be to dismantle the belief in the sanctity of shastras as it is shastras that prevent inter-dining and intermarriage.

In fact, Ambedkar suggests that we need a complete overhaul in the structure of religion. He differentiates between religion based on principles and that based on rules. Rules are practical but rigid, they enslave you and restrict you. Principles are intellectual and only show the path of right and wrong. They are not imposed. Religious act must be responsible. It must be based on principles and not rules. Moral and ethical discussions should be part of it but no sanctions and rules to slave them. Hindu religion is full of rules and hence regressive. He is not against religion. He also suggests some religious reforms that could help Hindu religion to become inclusive. It includes:

1. One standard book acceptable to all Hindus and followed by all. All other books and its preaching should be prevented by law.
2. Priesthood be removed, at least should not be hereditary. Anyone who has good knowledge can become priest. An examination should be held by state to qualify as priest and it should be open for all.



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3. No ceremony should be allowed to be performed by priest who does not qualify the exam. It should be held illegal. Priests should not have any immunities in law. Their numbers should be restricted by state as required.
4. A new doctrinal basis to religion is required. He stressed on a democratic religion based on the values of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

5.8 AMBEDKAR'S IDEA OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Social justice refers to those aspects of policies of the state, either socio-economic or political, which aims at bringing the marginalized and the disadvantaged sections to the mainstream. In the Indian context, Ambedkar was the chief architect of the principles of social justice as present in our constitution. He was confident that only by granting political justice the life or world of the depressed classes could not be altered, and special provisions had to be made for their socio-economic and cultural inclusion in the Indian society where they could lead a life of self-respect and dignity. Any substantial transformation in their lives required a fundamental alteration in the way social relations were devised and for this there was a need to devise principles that had legal sanction.

He was certain that such principles and policies had to be both protective as well as promotive in nature. On the one hand, he advocated the need for political representation for these sections, which means having special provisions to ensure that the formal democratic set-up was inclusive and truly representative and these disadvantaged groups had a fair opportunity to participate in the policy-making process that were to impact their lives. For this, he advocated the policy of reservations during the Constituent Assembly debates.

But political representation was not in itself enough. Therefore, he favoured reservations also in public employment. Such provisions could help in restructuring the social structure in two important ways. Firstly, it would grant them social recognition and respect in society. Secondly, an assured employment would also help them to improve their economic condition and bring them out of their miserable economic condition in which they were forced to live for long. Along with these, employability could inculcate among the members of the depressed classes a sense of dignity and self-respect. All these helped in a renewed understanding about the discourse of rights



in the Indian context, where it was no more seen in terms of privilege rather understood in an inclusive sense as a means of social transformation. Preferential treatment in its new avatar was not about benevolence from the dominant section of the community but a legal commitment that the nation collectively made to the disadvantaged sections through its constitution. It was a guarantee that if these rights were compromised, they could approach the courts in this regard. Other than this, he also supported other measures like making the practice of untouchability illegal. So, empowering the disadvantaged groups included for him both protective and promotional policies that should be undertaken by the state to balance the social structure and make space for social endosmosis and inclusion.

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5.9 AMBEDKAR ON NATION AND NATIONALISM

Using the essay of French nationalist Earnest Renan, “*What is a Nation?*” Ambedkar argued that nation is a specific form of ‘consciousness of kind’, ‘social endosmosis’, and ‘social amalgamation’ - an ideal society suffused with the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Nationalism is defined as aspiration to have a separate and self-determined political fraternity. On the question of Pakistan and later during reorganization of states, Ambedkar realized and pointed out time and again the advantages of cultural/linguistic homogeneity for the smooth functioning of democracy. In 1940, after the demand for Pakistan was pushed by Muslim league, he wrote “*Pakistan or the Partition of India*”. He felt that the appeal for Pakistan was due to failure of congress for social reforms and democratize society. He argued that once an identity became a political force then consequences of its formation have to be faced. He questioned the leadership of nationalist movement in India based on various issues like their elite nature and their non-commitment on the issues related to minorities and marginalized classes. Ambedkar argued that political unity is not sufficient for a nation, it is social unity that is crucial. Also democracy and its values like liberty, equality, and fraternity are equally central for nation - both procedural and substantive.

For Ambedkar nationalism was a strong emotional feeling and it was not possible to remove it. However, he equally opined that in absence of integration, inclusiveness and respect for human rights, true nationalism could not be evolved. He did not believe



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in aggressive form of nationalism as he considered it irrational and it could give rise to intolerance among people. At the same time, he was convinced that any nationalism based on religion could not promote the ideals of democracy. Therefore, for him the Indian nationalism ought to be based on social endosmosis where citizens of all sections get due recognition and respect.

Ambedkar believed that colonialism had its own dangers and critiqued based on its different aspects, primarily economic of the way it endangered local economy. At the same time, he thought that replacing British rule by the rule of those people who did not have faith in the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity or those who were against principles of socio-economic equality was equally dangerous. Such people could misuse power in the name of nationalism. He therefore insisted on accountable and responsible governance based on the values of democracy.

He insisted that fight against caste was more difficult but more important than swaraj. In swaraj, people readily come together with you, when against caste system they will oppose you. Social reform of Hinduism was more important than swaraj. Merely Political freedom, he argued, was worthless, as there is possibility, in absence of unity that you become slave again. So, social unity based on reforms shall develop that unity could be the ideal basis for nationalism in India.

5.10 DEMOCRACY

Ambedkar's vision about democracy was deeply influenced by the ideas of Sidney and Beatrice Webb, the leading members of Fabian Socialism in Britain as well as Harold Laski. He was equally influenced by Hobson and Hobhouse in conceiving about the transformatory potential of the democratic state. He was certain that democracy had potential to seriously alter the social and economic life of the common masses without resorting to violence. His primary concern was the role that democracy could achieve in reducing socio-economic inequalities. That was the reason why he firmly held that political democracy must be accompanied with social and economic democracy. Within the democratic set-up Ambedkar was a great admirer of the Parliamentary form of government. He pointed at the three features of this system that

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scored much above any other. Firstly, it was based on open competition and there was no role of hereditary rule. Secondly, it allowed for decentralization of power and no single person or body could claim its authority. Thirdly, the representatives had to win the confidence of the people and this made them more accountable.

He also pointed out the essential conditions for the successful working of democracy. It includes:

1. A democratic society must do everything to reduce inequality in society. If there are glaring inequalities, it may become the cause for revolution and may threaten the Parliamentary system.
2. Statutory provisions must be developed in order to protect the oppressed classes from suffering and to safeguard their interests.
3. In order to ensure a system of scrutiny along with check and balance, an effective opposition was necessary. It could ensure that the party in power did not misuse its position and became responsible to the Parliament.
4. He supported the idea of permanent civil services for the implementation of the policies formulated by the government. He also favoured a recruitment based on merit in the civil services unlike, for example, the 'Spoils System' of USA.
5. He warned against the possibility of tyranny of the majority as democracies by its very nature favoured the majority. Therefore, he believed that effective mechanism to ensure safety, redressal of grievances and protection of interests of minorities must be put in place.
6. Citizens must be educated and trained in the values promoted by the constitution.
7. Ambedkar like Harold Laski believed that democracy was not only a form of government but a way of life and the role of citizens became very crucial for its smooth running. Therefore, he suggested that democratic systems should try to develop a moral order which its citizens conform to. According to Ambedkar, conscientiousness was an important virtue for sustenance of democracy.



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5.11 CONSTITUTION AND CONSTITUTIONAL MORALITY

Ambedkar believed that however good a constitution may be, it depended on those who worked upon it. Constitution could only provide broad contours of different organs and functions. It totally depended on the people who operated there and political parties whether they would uphold constitutional methods or not cannot be predicted. He opined that earlier also India lost independence due to internal forces that divided our power and capacity. Caste and class divisions were a truth in Hindu society, but the political parties representing their interests should keep in mind that interest of the country was more important than the sectarian interests of the groups.

Ambedkar held that if the constitution was to be protected and democracy was to be preserved, constitutional morality was important. First, there was a need to hold fast to constitutional methods in our fight for social and economic objectives. It must mean citizens would abandon methods of revolution, but also method of civil disobedience, non-cooperation, and satyagraha. When there was constitution that recognized the rights citizens did not need such political posturing that hampered the spirit of constitution. When there was no constitution, Ambedkar argued, such “unconstitutional methods” could be employed but not after the constitution was adopted. He called such methods as nothing but “grammar of anarchy”. Secondly, Ambedkar argued that we should observe caution that not to lay liberty even on the feet of a great man. Respect their greatness but not make them hero because in India we have tendency for ‘bhakti’ or hero worship as it might lead to eventual dictatorship. It is good for religion not for democracy. Third, not to be content with mere political democracy but rather strive to make Indian democracy, a social democracy as well. Social democracy meant a way of life that recognized equality, liberty, and fraternity as fundamental values for the collective being of the citizens. They formed a union of trinity that must be uphold at all costs. He held that there was complete absence of equality on social plane in India because of the discriminatory caste system and on economic plane there was a huge gap between the rich and the poor. Social and economic inequality produced a contradiction that was not good for political democracy in the long run.



At the same time there was also a deficit of the value of fraternity in Indian society. Fraternity meant a sense of common brotherhood that gave solidarity and unity to social life. Therefore, he claimed that till the time castes existed, India could not develop as a nation in the truest sense. So, there was a need to overcome and do away with these as castes are anti-national as it divided people.

5.12 POONA PACT (1932)

In the backdrop of Communal Award of 1932, it granted separate electorate to the Untouchables. Gandhi resorted to a fast unto death against the Award as he was threatened at the Round Table Conference. The Award left space for changes if the communities concerned suggested an alternative scheme, a leeway Ambedkar used to negotiate on behalf of the Depressed Classes, resulting in the Poona Pact which was signed between him and Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya on 24 September, 1932 at Yerwada Jail in Poona. The core of this pact was the promise of a joint electorate with reservations for Depressed Classes, but it did not satisfy anyone eventually. The terms of this pact included the reservation of 148 seats for members of Depressed Classes, almost twice the seats promised to them under separate electorate. Further, the candidates for these seats would be selected by the Electoral College including all eligible electorates from among depressed classes and four of the candidates getting highest votes would be the official candidates for the elections by general electorates. In the Central Legislatures as well, 18% of seats allotted for British India would be reserved for Depressed Classes. It also had provision for earmarking an adequate amount of funds to improve the educational facilities for Depressed Classes.

The orthodox Hindus rallied against Gandhi for conceding to a great share of seats to the depressed classes, while Ambedkar later held that joint electorate was nothing but a ploy, whereby only those members of Depressed Classes, who were close to caste Hindus and were acceptable to them, could get elected and not those who authentically wished to represent the untouchables and speak for them.



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5.13 DR. AMBEDKAR'S ECONOMIC VIEWS

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was an economist by education and training. His higher degrees in both Columbia University and London School of Economics and Political Science were in the field of Economics. Based on his research outputs, he also published three important works in the areas of public finance which included *Administration and Finance of the East India Company (1915)*, *The Evolution of the Public Finance in British India: A Study in the Provincial Decentralization of Imperial Finance (1925)*, and *The Problem of Rupee: Its Origin and Solution (1923)*.

Based on the data from 1792-93 to 1857-58, Ambedkar in *Administration and Finance of the East India Company* presented a gross critique of the British East India Company's economic policies in India by highlighting how it had gradually ruined Indian economy. He claimed that by the time the Company rule ended in India after the Mutiny of 1857, the burden of the entire debt accumulated by it during its conquest of India was put on the Indian people who were already burdened by poverty produced by the Company's policies in India. Further, he also highlighted large scale transfer of wealth in the form of tributes, gifts and transfers from India to England by the Company officials. He also exposed the uneven trade policies followed by the British that was set to benefit the colonial power and destroy indigenous economy. He points at the fact that in terms of tariff policies, imports from Britain were taxed at much lower rate, making its access in Indian market smooth and easy, whereas exports from India to Britain had to face heavy export duties. This uneven structure led to destruction of local industrial capacity and manufacturing base and promoting the interests of British industries.

In his next work, *The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India*, Ambedkar studied the relationship between the Centre and the Provinces between 1823 to 1921. His analysis highlighted the problems with the British economic policies in India. The uneven relationship was reflected in the fact that revenue collecting powers and legislative powers were concentrated in the hands of the Centre but the expenditure was primarily the responsibility of the Provinces. This arrangement based on diarchy produced chaos at the level of public finance. Ambedkar also highlighted the unjust system of taxation where the entire burden fell on the poor and the collection,

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rather than being invested for public welfare was being used for lavish lifestyle and privileges of the elites including zamindars and government officials. Due to the uneven forms of taxation policy the overall tax collection had also gradually shrunk and led to large scale shortfall in revenue collections.

In 1923, Ambedkar published *The Problem of Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution*. It discussed the evolution of currency system in India since the nineteenth century. It further analysed the efficiency of the prevailing system and exchange rate in India and suggested possible reforms. He found that an overvalued rupee was in line with British commercial interests as it could ensure that the exports from Britain to India were cheaper, whereas on the contrary, the Indian industrialists were lobbying for devaluation as it would support exports from India. Ambedkar however favoured a stable currency system and held that it could only be achieved by stabilizing its purchasing power. The British had adopted Gold-Exchange Standard instead of Gold Standard following the suggestions of famous economist John Maynard Keynes, whereas Ambedkar argued that Gold Standard would be most suited for stabilizing the value of rupee and creation of a stable monetary system in India, as Gold-Exchange Standard lacked stability and predictability.

Other than his intellectual contributions, Ambedkar also played significant role in giving direction to India's economic growth. He introduced key reforms in the labour laws, laid foundations of river valley projects and electricity production houses. He understood the deep linkages between agriculture, infrastructure development, industrialization, education, and poverty alleviation. He believed that no sector could develop in isolation and there needed to be a proper coordination among different sectors to achieve a balanced economic growth. He favoured land reforms but with a cautious approach taking into consideration the local dynamics of social, political and other dynamics. He also advocated the idea of expanding the total cultivable land by transforming the wastelands by the help of science and technology. The converted land could be distributed among the landless. However, he also understood the limitations of agriculture in generating wealth and therefore favoured the idea of promoting cottage and small-scale industries. His emphasis on hydro-electric river projects like Damodar, Son, and Mahanadi was based on the foresightedness that electricity generation was an important infrastructural requirement for the establishment of large-scale industries. He also opined that proper forest cover was important for



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ecological balance, but also because it could ensure ample rainfall which was important for agriculture. Thus, as visible, he promoted the idea of sustainable development as well as integrative developmental strategy.

5.14 AMBEDKAR ON THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN INDIAN SOCIETY

Dr. Ambedkar believed that endogamy was the primary and key characteristic of the caste system. He asserted that in order to maintain the sex ratio and perpetuate endogamy and thereby the caste system, four different practices were deployed:

- a) The practice of sati
- b) Enforced widowhood
- c) Enforced celibacy
- d) The marriage of child brides with older men and widowers

These practices are exploitative for women and thus Ambedkar underlines the fact that castes are maintained through the sexual exploitation of women. Ambedkar also argues that in ancient India, women enjoyed a high social status.

Therefore, he argued for women's right to justice, equality and security. The Hindu code bill brought forth a text that had possibilities for the liberation of women. Women were at the core of the Hindu Code Bill and through the laws on property, marriage and divorce, he sought to enhance the cause of women. For instance, men could marry many times but similar right was not granted to women. Hindu code bill changed it to uniform principle of monogamy for both genders. Also, as in Hindu law marriage was sacrament, a break in this or divorce was not possible. Ambedkar saw this as unjust and sought to amend it. He also wanted that women should be granted right to inheritance equal to sons which was denied to them under Act of Inheritance 1937. He advocated the Hindu Code Bill as an effective tool to transform the hierarchies embedded in the Hindu families and the caste system to put them in line with the values promoted by the Indian constitution. When there was pressure on the government from different sections of conservative Hindus not to amend these laws, he wrote to



Nehru that the bill had for him extraordinary importance and appealed to him to leave no stone unturned to convince the opponents. When government under tremendous pressure from opponents decided to tone down the bill and remove some significant clauses, he dared to resign on the women's question as the Law Minister of Nehru Cabinet. He conceived the Bill as a historic opportunity to address the women's question.

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In-Text Questions

Multiple Choice Questions (1-9)

1. What significant event marked Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's contribution to Indian history?
 - A) Leading the Indian National Congress
 - B) Chairing the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution
 - C) Establishing the first Dalit political party
 - D) Founding the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)
2. Which magazine did Ambedkar start in January 1920?
 - A) Bahiskrit Bharat
 - B) Mooknayak
 - C) Janata
 - D) Prabuddh Bharat
3. What was Ambedkar's first major publication on the caste system in India?
 - A) The Problem of the Rupee
 - B) Who Were the Shudras?
 - C) Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis, and Development
 - D) The Untouchables: Who Were They and Why They Became Untouchables?
4. Ambedkar's essay "Annihilation of Caste" was originally written for which purpose?
 - A) A political manifesto
 - B) A speech for Jat Pat Todak Mandal
 - C) A publication in a journal
 - D) A discussion in the Constituent Assembly

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15. Ambedkar's 1936 text that critiques the caste system is titled _____.
16. Ambedkar believed that caste is primarily a _____ and requires a notional change.
17. According to Ambedkar, untouchability was reinforced by the _____ system.
18. Ambedkar was the Chairman of the _____ Committee for the Indian Constitution.
19. In 1956, Ambedkar converted to _____.

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5.15 SUMMARY

- Dr. B. R. Ambedkar is popularly heralded as the architect of the Indian constitution.
- As the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee Ambedkar's interventions and guidance played a significant role in making Indian constitution inclusive.
- Ambedkar was a statist with firm commitment to constitutional democracy. He saw in it the transformatory potential to redefine and reconstruct Indian society based on the principles of Equality, Liberty, and Fraternity.
- Regardless of Ambedkar's differences with the Congress leaders, he worked tirelessly to ensure that the cause of social justice was not compromised and that the depressed classes could lead a life of self-respect and dignity.
- Ambedkar's most significant contribution remains in his dedication and hard work to improve the life world of the marginalized sections in the Indian society and his attempts to create an egalitarian social order.

5.16 GLOSSARY

- **Fraternity:** It refers to a sense of brothers and sisterhood among the country's citizens and a sense of belonging.



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- **Constituent Assembly:** It is an assembly of chosen representatives who gather to draft a constitution.
- **Caste:** It is a hierarchical social system in India, deeply rooted in Hindu society, characterized by endogamy, division of labor, and strict social boundaries.
- **Untouchability:** It is a form of social discrimination in India where certain groups, labeled as “Untouchables” or Dalits, are ostracized and denied basic rights due to their caste.
- **Annihilation of Caste:** It is a seminal work by Ambedkar where he critiques the caste system and proposes reforms, including inter-caste marriage and dining, to dismantle it.
- **Social Justice:** It is a concept emphasizing the need for policies that address the socio-economic and political marginalization of disadvantaged groups.
- **Poona Pact (1932):** It is an agreement between Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi on the representation of the Depressed Classes (Dalits) in the Indian legislature.
- **Democracy:** It is a system of government where power is vested in the people. Ambedkar’s concept of democracy extended beyond political structures to include social and economic dimensions, emphasizing equality, liberty, and fraternity.
- **Constitutional Morality:** It is a principle stressed by Ambedkar, referring to adherence to the principles of the Constitution, such as justice, equality, and fraternity, in both governance and social life.
- **Bahiskrit Bharat:** It is a journal started by Ambedkar in 1927 aimed at raising awareness among the Depressed Classes and mobilizing them against social injustices.
- **Mooknayak:** It is the first magazine started by Ambedkar in 1920, used as a platform to highlight the plight of Dalits and advocate for their rights.
- **Scheduled Caste Federation (SCF):** It is a political party founded by Ambedkar in 1942 to represent the interests of the Scheduled Castes in India, positioning itself as a third party distinct from Hindu and Muslim political groups.



5.17 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

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1. B) Chairing the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution
2. B) Mooknayak
3. C) Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis, and Development
4. B) A speech for Jat Pat Todak Mandal
5. A) Endogamy
6. C) Religious scriptures
7. A) Pakistan or the Partition of India
8. C) 1936
9. D) Both protective and promotive policies
10. April 14, 1891
11. Mahad
12. Mooknayak
13. The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution
14. 1932
15. Annihilation of Caste
16. Notion/State of Mind
17. Caste
18. Drafting
19. Buddhism

5.18 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- 1 What according to Ambedkar was the panacea for the caste-ridden Indian society?



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2. What is Constitutional morality? Analyse Ambedkar's suggestions about maintaining constitutional morality in a democratic society.
3. Discuss the economic ideas of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.
4. Why does Ambedkar believe that political democracy in absence of social democracy was insufficient? What are his suggestions in this regard?
5. Critically examine Ambedkar's understanding of patriarchy in the Indian context.

5.19 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT 6

HINDUTVA: SAVARKAR

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Structure

- 6.1 Learning Objectives
- 6.2 Introduction
- 6.3 V.D. Savarkar: An Introduction
- 6.4 Views of Savarkar on Hindutva
- 6.5 Savarkar and Militarisation
- 6.6 Savarkar and Cultural Nationalism
- 6.7 Summary
- 6.8 Glossary
- 6.9 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 6.10 Self-Assessment Questions
- 6.11 References/Suggested Readings

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, students should be able to:

- Understand the political philosophy of Savarkar
- Explain the concept of the Hindutva
- Discuss the ideas of Savarkar on militarisation
- Describe the views of Savarkar on cultural nationalism

6.2 INTRODUCTION

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, a prominent figure in India's struggle for independence, was a multifaceted personality whose political views have left a lasting impact on the

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nation's ideological landscape. Savarkar's political philosophy centered on the idea of cultural nationalism, emphasising the unification of Hindus based on a shared cultural and civilisational heritage. He distinguished between the religious aspects of Hinduism and the broader cultural identity encapsulated by Hindutva, advocating for a cohesive national identity to counter colonial domination and internal divisions. Savarkar's political ideology was marked by a strong emphasis on self-reliance, national pride, and the revival of India's ancient glory, all aimed at achieving true sovereignty and cultural revival.

6.3 V.D. SAVARKAR: AN INTRODUCTION

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar belonged to the caste of *Chitpavan* Brahmins. The Savarkars originally hailed from Konkan, a land symbolising the great feat of reclamation performed by Parashurama. During the final days of Peshwa rule, the Savarkars were an important family. They were *jagirdars* of a small village named Rahuri and enjoyed the honour of palanquin for their acknowledged distinction in Sanskrit scholarship. The blood, bones, and brains of such ancestors carved out this grand figure of the Indian revolution, Vinayak Savarkar, who declared war for the liberation of *Hindustan*.

6.4 VIEWS OF SAVARKAR ON HINDUTVA

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, commonly known as Veer Savarkar, was a prominent figure in the Indian independence movement and a key proponent of the ideology of Hindutva. Savarkar's views on *Hindutva* are articulated in his seminal work, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*, which was published in 1923.

Savarkar defined Hindutva as the essence of being Hindu, emphasising a cultural and civilisational ethos rather than a strictly religious identity. He distinguished between Hinduism, the religious practice, and Hindutva, the cultural nationalism. He defined Hindutva as a cultural and national identity that goes beyond religious connotations.

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According to him, Hindutva encompasses the cultural, historical, and spiritual ethos of the Indian subcontinent. He argued that Hindutva is not limited to Hinduism as a religion but is a broader concept that includes the shared heritage and values of all those who consider India to be their holy land and ancestral land.

Criteria for Hindutva

Some of the criteria are discussed as follows:

- 1. Geographical Unity:** Savarkar emphasised the importance of geographical unity in defining Hindutva. He believed that the Indian subcontinent, which he referred to as 'Hindustan', was the common land for all Hindus. This includes not only those who practice Hinduism but also those who share a cultural and historical connection to the land.
- 2. Cultural Unity:** Savarkar placed significant emphasis on cultural unity. He believed that the shared customs, traditions, languages, and heritage of the people of India are integral to the concept of Hindutva.

Distinction between Hindutva and Hinduism

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar articulated a clear distinction between Hindutva and Hinduism in his writings. According to Savarkar, Hindutva extends beyond the religious scope of Hinduism to encompass a broader cultural and political identity. Hinduism is an ancient and diverse religious tradition focused on spiritual growth, ethical living, and philosophical inquiry, characterised by its various sects, rituals, deities, and scriptures. In contrast, Hindutva, as defined by Savarkar, refers to the collective identity of those who regard India as their motherland (matrubhumi), and holy land (punyabhumi), including cultural, historical, and linguistic elements that unite the people of India. While Hinduism centers on religious beliefs and practices, Hindutva emphasises a national identity rooted in the historical and cultural experiences of the Indian subcontinent. This distinction underscores Hindutva's focus on national unity and cultural heritage, whereas Hinduism remains primarily a religious and spiritual system.



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Nationalism and Patriotism

According to Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, nationalism and patriotism are intertwined yet distinct concepts. Savarkar's notion of nationalism is deeply rooted in the cultural and historical identity of India, emphasising the unity and collective identity of the people based on shared heritage, values, and traditions. He believed that nationalism is about fostering a sense of belonging and loyalty to the nation, transcending individual and regional differences to create a cohesive and unified society. On the other hand, patriotism, in Savarkar's view, is the love and devotion individuals have for their country, expressed through actions and attitudes that support and defend the nation. While patriotism is an emotional and personal sentiment, nationalism, as Savarkar articulated, is a broader, more ideological commitment to the nation's cultural and historical continuity. Both concepts, according to Savarkar, are essential for building a strong, resilient nation where people are united by a common sense of purpose and identity.

Inclusivity and Exclusivity

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's perspectives on inclusivity and exclusivity are nuanced and central to his ideology of Hindutva. Savarkar's concept of inclusivity is based on the cultural and historical unity of the Indian subcontinent. This definition was meant to encompass a wide range of cultural and historical experiences, promoting a sense of national unity among diverse groups. However, his views also had an element of exclusivity, as they emphasised the primacy of a cultural identity that was deeply rooted in the Hindu tradition. This exclusivity was not intended to derogate other religions or communities but rather to assert a specific cultural narrative that Savarkar felt was essential for the cohesion and strength of the nation. Thus, while he advocated for a broad and inclusive national identity, it was also distinctively tied to a Hindu cultural framework. This dual approach aimed to foster unity while maintaining a strong cultural identity.

In-Text Questions

1. When was the Savarkar's seminal work *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?* published?
2. What was the view of Savarkar on cultural unity?



6.5 SAVARAKAR AND MILITARISATION

Many people criticised Savarkar for his repeated emphasis on an increase in military power. Savarkar's advocacy for militarisation must be understood within the historical context of British colonial rule in India. During this period, many Indian leaders were grappling with how to resist colonial oppression and achieve national sovereignty. Savarkar believed that a strong and militarised nation was essential for both securing independence and ensuring the future security and prosperity of India.

Savarkar argued that a strong military was essential for the defense of the nation. He believed that India needed to build its military capabilities to protect itself from external threats and to assert its sovereignty on the global stage. A well-trained and well-equipped military was, in his view, a crucial component of a resilient and independent nation. Militarisation, for Savarkar, was also about fostering self-reliance. He believed that dependence on foreign powers for security was a vulnerability that India could not afford. By developing its own military strength, India could ensure its own defense and reduce its reliance on external forces.

Savarkar saw militarisation as a means to instill a sense of pride and discipline among the Indian populace. He believed that military training and service would cultivate virtues such as bravery, discipline, and patriotism. These qualities were essential for building a strong and cohesive national identity. Savarkar advocated for widespread military training among Indian youth. He believed that physical fitness, training in arms, and familiarity with military tactics were important for creating a pool of capable individuals who could defend the nation in times of need. He proposed the formation of an organised group of volunteers that could function as a reserve force. These volunteers would receive regular military training and could be called upon to serve in times of national emergency. Savarkar also emphasised the importance of developing a domestic defense industry. He believed that India needed to produce its own arms and equipment to ensure self-sufficiency in defense capabilities. This would reduce dependence on foreign suppliers and enhance national security.



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6.6 SAVARKAR AND CULTURAL NATIONALISM

It is also true that the ideal of politics itself must be a human state, encompassing all mankind as its citizens and the earth as its motherland. If India with one-fifth of the human race could be united irrespective of religious, racial and cultural diversities, merging them all into a homogeneous whole, it would be a gigantic stride taken by mankind towards the realisation of that humanistic political ideal. The new concept of Indian nationality was founded on the only common bond of a territorial unity of India.

Cultural nationalism, as envisioned by Savarkar, is the idea that a nation is defined not merely by its political boundaries but by its shared cultural, historical, and spiritual heritage. For Savarkar, the essence of a nation lies in its cultural identity, which includes language, traditions, customs, and values that bind its people together.

Key Elements of Cultural Nationalism

The key elements are discussed as follows:

1. Historical Continuity

Savarkar placed significant importance on the historical continuity of Indian civilisation. He believed that the history of India, with its rich and diverse cultural traditions, provides a strong foundation for national identity. According to Savarkar, this continuity from ancient times to the present day is a testament to the resilience and unity of Indian culture.

- **Ancient Heritage:** Savarkar highlighted the significance of ancient Indian texts, epics, and traditions that have been preserved over millennia. He argued that these ancient cultural elements form the bedrock of Indian identity.
- **Medieval and Modern Contributions:** He also acknowledged the contributions of various periods, including the medieval and modern eras, to India's cultural diversity. This includes contributions from different dynasties, communities, and movements that have enriched India's cultural heritage.



2. Common Cultural Heritage

Central to Savarkar's cultural nationalism is the idea of a common cultural heritage that transcends regional and linguistic differences. This shared heritage includes festivals, rituals, languages, arts, and social customs.

- **Festivals and Rituals:** Many festivals and rituals observed across India, are seen as unifying factors that bring people together in celebration and shared practices.
- **Arts and Literature:** Savarkar emphasised the importance of Indian art forms, literature, music, and dance as expressions of cultural identity that resonate across the country.

3. Language and Literature

Savarkar believed that language plays a crucial role in fostering national unity and cultural identity. He advocated for the promotion of Indian languages and literature as vehicles for cultural expression.

- **Promotion of Sanskrit and Vernacular Languages:** He supported the revival of Sanskrit as a classical language that connects various regional languages. At the same time, he emphasised the importance of vernacular languages in everyday communication and cultural transmission.
- **Literary Heritage:** Savarkar encouraged the study and preservation of classical and contemporary Indian literature, which he believed encapsulated the moral and philosophical values of Indian culture.

4. Religious and Spiritual Values

While Hindutva, as proposed by Savarkar, is often associated with Hinduism, his concept of cultural nationalism includes the broader spiritual and ethical values that are intrinsic to Indian civilisation.

- **Inclusivity of Spiritual Traditions:** Savarkar acknowledged the contributions of various spiritual traditions in shaping Indian culture. He believed that these diverse traditions contribute to the moral and ethical fabric of the nation.



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- **Moral and Ethical Values:** He emphasised values such as truth, duty, and compassion, which are common to many Indian religious and philosophical traditions. These values, according to Savarkar, are essential for the moral upliftment and unity of the nation.

5. National Unity and Integration

Savarkar's cultural nationalism aimed at fostering national unity by integrating diverse regional, linguistic, and cultural traditions into a cohesive national identity.

- **Unity in Diversity:** He believed that India's strength lies in its diversity and that recognising and celebrating this diversity is essential for national unity. Savarkar argued that all Indians, regardless of their regional or linguistic backgrounds, share a common cultural heritage.
- **Against Fragmentation:** He was concerned about any form of social, religious, or linguistic fragmentation that could weaken national unity. He advocated for policies and practices that promote integration and solidarity among different communities.

6. Role of Education

Savarkar placed great emphasis on the role of education in promoting cultural nationalism. He believed that a well-rounded education system should impart knowledge of India's cultural heritage and instill national pride.

- **Cultural Education:** He advocated for an education system that includes the study of Indian history, languages, literature, and arts. This, he believed, would help students appreciate their cultural roots and foster a sense of national identity.
- **Moral and Ethical Training:** Alongside cultural education, Savarkar stressed the importance of moral and ethical training. He believed that instilling values such as patriotism, discipline, and civic responsibility in the youth was crucial for building a strong and united nation.



In-Text Questions

3. Why was a strong and militarised nation essential?
4. How could India ensure its own defence and reduce its reliance on external forces?
5. Define cultural nationalism.

6.7 SUMMARY

- Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, commonly known as Veer Savarkar, was a prominent figure in the Indian independence movement and a key proponent of the ideology of Hindutva.
- Savarkar's views on *Hindutva* are articulated in his seminal work, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*, which was published in 1923.
- Savarkar defined Hindutva as the essence of being Hindu, emphasising a cultural and civilisational ethos rather than a strictly religious identity.
- Savarkar distinguished between Hinduism, the religious practice, and Hindutva, the cultural nationalism.
- According to Savarkar, Hindutva encompasses the cultural, historical, and spiritual ethos of the Indian subcontinent. He argued that Hindutva is not limited to Hinduism as a religion but is a broader concept that includes the shared heritage and values of all those who consider India to be their holy land and ancestral land.
- Savarkar articulated a clear distinction between Hindutva and Hinduism in his writings.
- According to Savarkar, Hindutva extends beyond the religious scope of Hinduism to encompass a broader cultural and political identity.



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- While Hinduism centers on religious beliefs and practices, Hindutva emphasizes a national identity rooted in the historical and cultural experiences of the Indian subcontinent.
- Savarkar's notion of nationalism is deeply rooted in the cultural and historical identity of India, emphasising the unity and collective identity of the people based on shared heritage, values, and traditions.
- Savarkar's perspectives on inclusivity and exclusivity are nuanced and central to his ideology of Hindutva.
- Savarkar's concept of inclusivity is based on the cultural and historical unity of the Indian subcontinent.
- Many people criticised Savarkar for his repeated emphasis on an increase in military power.
- Savarkar argued that a strong military was essential for the defense of the nation. He believed that India needed to build its military capabilities to protect itself from external threats and to assert its sovereignty on the global stage.
- Savarkar advocated for widespread military training among Indian youth. He believed that physical fitness, training in arms, and familiarity with military tactics were important for creating a pool of capable individuals who could defend the nation in times of need.
- Savarkar also emphasised the importance of developing a domestic defense industry. He believed that India needed to produce its own arms and equipment to ensure self-sufficiency in defense capabilities.
- Cultural nationalism, as envisioned by Savarkar, is the idea that a nation is defined not merely by its political boundaries but by its shared cultural, historical, and spiritual heritage.
- Savarkar placed significant importance on the historical continuity of Indian civilisation. He believed that the history of India, with its rich and diverse cultural traditions, provides a strong foundation for national identity.
- Central to Savarkar's cultural nationalism is the idea of a common cultural heritage that transcends regional and linguistic differences.



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- Savarkar believed that language plays a crucial role in fostering national unity and cultural identity.
- While Hindutva, as proposed by Savarkar, is often associated with Hinduism, his concept of cultural nationalism includes the broader spiritual and ethical values that are intrinsic to Indian civilisation.
- Savarkar placed great emphasis on the role of education in promoting cultural nationalism.

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6.8 GLOSSARY

- **Jagirdars:** They were feudal landholders in medieval and early modern India who received land grants (jagirs) in return for administrative or military services.
- **Hindutva:** It is an ideology that emphasises India as a Hindu nation, encompassing cultural, historical, and nationalistic dimensions.
- **Militarisation:** It is the process of emphasising or increasing the role of military forces and strategies in a society or government.

6.9 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

1. Savarkar's views on Hindutva are articulated in his seminal work, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*, which was published in 1923.
2. Savarkar placed significant emphasis on cultural unity. He believed that the shared customs, traditions, languages, and heritage of the people of India are integral to the concept of Hindutva.
3. Savarkar believed that a strong and militarised nation was essential for both securing independence and ensuring the future security and prosperity of India.
4. By developing its own military strength, India could ensure its own defense and reduce its reliance on external forces.



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5. Cultural nationalism, as envisioned by Savarkar, is the idea that a nation is defined not merely by its political boundaries but by its shared cultural, historical, and spiritual heritage.

6.10 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. How does Savarkar define Hindutva?
2. Distinguish between Hindutva and Hinduism.
3. Discuss Savarkar's advocacy for militarisation in the context of British colonial rule in India.
4. Explain the concept of cultural nationalism and its key elements.

6.11 REFERENCES/SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT 7

INTEGRAL HUMANISM: DEENDAYAL UPADHYAYA

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Structure

- 7.1 Learning Objectives
- 7.2 Introduction
- 7.3 Origin of Humanism and its Development
- 7.4 Deendayal Upadhyaya: A Brief Life Sketch
- 7.5 Integral Humanism
- 7.6 Summary
- 7.7 Glossary
- 7.8 Answers to In-Text Questions
- 7.9 Self-Assessment Questions
- 7.10 References/Suggested Readings

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, students should be able to:

- Understand the term “humanism”
- Discuss the history of the notion of humanism
- Explain how to develop conceptual understanding of various features of Integral Humanism, as propounded by Deendayal Upadhyaya
- Describe the “Integral Humanism” doctrine’s current relevance in various ways

7.2 INTRODUCTION

Deendayal Upadhyaya created a set of ideas that were known as “Integral Humanism”. Today, he is being credited for bringing the poorest of the poor at the forefront of

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statecraft through this guiding principle. Hence, it becomes important to have an in-depth understanding of the Integral Humanism doctrine. In order to do it, this unit focuses on establishing a fundamental idea of what humanism is. Additionally, it will also trace the chronological development of the concept “humanism”. Further, a brief life sketch of great visionary like Deendayal Upadhyaya would inform readers of the context in which this idea was created. The unit will then focus on defining the philosophy of Integral Humanism with reference to Deendayal Upadhyaya. It will also highlight important features of the doctrine as given by Upadhyaya. The unit will end with outlining the relevance and importance of “Integral Humanism” in the 21st century.

What is “Humanism”?

Before understanding the philosophy of integral humanism, it is important to understand, the concept of “Humanism” as given in western and Indian thoughts. “Humanism” comes from the Latin term “humanitas”, which described the principles of liberal education in ancient Rome. In the 16th century, the word “humanism” first appeared in English during the Italian Renaissance under the name “umanista”. According to Oxford publications, Germany used the term “Humanismus” for the first time in the 19th century. Pioneering historian of humanism were Jacob Burckhardt and Georg Voigt. Later on in the twentieth century, humanism word got its meaning as a natural philosophy based on life.

Different scholars and historians have given their own definitions and interpretations to the idea of Humanism. According to American philosopher Sidney Hook, Humanists are not in favor of dictatorship, church, or any kind of established religion. They are also against the imposition of one culture and do not support the use of violence for social reforms. Additionally, Hook stated that humanists favor the eradication of hunger and advancements in housing, health, and education. In his book *Humanism*, H. J. Blackham asserted that humanism is based on the premise of individual’s autonomy, and that each person is responsible for both their own life and the life of all mankind. Humanism is never less than this. Everyone has a duty to enhance society’s socioeconomic conditions. N. K. Devaraja, wrote the book *Humanism in Indian Thought*, defined humanism as a mindset and method towards an individual life and principles being regarded as phenomenon exclusive to humanity. Its distinguishing traits are thus interest and concern for man’s intellect and morality for discerning



perception of good and truth. D. D. Bandiste, states that humanism is broadly man centered philosophy. Similar to this, Jeaneane D. Fowler, 1999 said that the notion of humanism places a major emphasis on the dignity and freedom of individual and rejects all claims to a deity.

In terms of philosophy, humanism rejects both naturalism and supernaturalism. According to Edward P. Cheyney, who states and supports it, “Humanism as a technical term and as an intellectual or moral conception has always leaned heavily on its etymology. That which is characteristically human, not supernatural, that which belongs to man and not to external nature, that which raises man to his greatest height or gives him, as man, his greatest satisfaction, is apt to be called humanism.”

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7.3 ORIGIN OF HUMANISM AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

Humanism is a historically man-centric perspective that may be seen in the Greek era. As the philosopher Protagoras popularized the axiom that “man is the measure of all things”. However, during the early medieval period, humanism was unable to become a topic of academic attention. At that time, knowledge was subdued by the dominant philosophies of church, and to the scholasticism. Throughout the medieval period, which was characterized by a complete decline, degeneration, and decay in the principles of life; superstitions and dogmas had a significant impact. It was only during the Renaissance period that Humanistic philosophy revived, and it continued through the Reformation and the Enlightenment era.

The Italian poet Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374), known as “father of humanism” said that “the difficulties a man faces needs to be the prime concern of study and research”. The “humanities” movement was greatly influenced by Petrarch’s knowledge and enthusiasm for ancient Latin literature, which later spread from Italy to entire Western Europe. It is important to remember that the fundamental component of humanism was education. Humanism professed both the critique of the medieval church and the unrestricted study of religious texts as its two main principal tenets. The term “humanism” was now referred to as a movement that represented significant changes on the literary and intellectual front from the Middle Ages to the Modern Era.



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The arrival of Modern Humanism also highlighted its long battle against religious authoritarianism and autocracy.

By the end of eighteenth century, its purview had expanded, but the term “humanism” didn’t become widely accepted until the nineteenth. Humanists were now emphasizing the independence of man and working to create a system that would guarantee it. Individualism and classical liberalism are emerged as a result. Laissez faire became a fundamental tenet, paving the way for unrestrained individualism, uncontrolled competition, and the rise of capitalism. However, the tendency led to the emergence of an unknowingly profit-making society where human values were undermined and humanism became decadent. Such a system could not guarantee everyone’s welfare and happiness. Consequently, a novel concept was then spread, placed emphasis on humanitarian approach. The basic issues like poverty, unemployment, and social security still existed, but made it easier to meet the need and demand of society.

These western liberal ideals were criticized by Karl Marx, father of socialist humanism. He advocated for releasing the oppressed from the grasp of the exploiters and spoke out against the exploitation of the unprivileged. This made their ideas more fundamentally humanist. The Marxian idea, however, had some inherent flaws, such as its increased emphasis on the economic aspects of a person’s life while ignoring other crucial aspects such as social, political, and cultural. Further, it professed that the dictatorship of proletariat would establish complete state control which meant denial of autonomy and freedom of man.

Today, with the advancement of information technology, the interaction and access among people belonging to diverged societies and cultures has become easier. Such developments have created opportunities in various fields such as education, science, commerce etc. As a result, the developed and affluent societies have expanded, which created global inequalities. Other significant issues like pollution, ecological imbalances, ozone depletion, etc. are of primary concern right now for both scientists and humanists around the world. Western humanistic thought is inadequate to explain these developmental changes. They lacked an integral conception of development as well as the vision of interconnectedness. According to Radhakamal Mukherjee in his work, *The way of Humanism-East and West*, western humanistic thinking lacked a spiritual cosmic vision.



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In India, the philosophical base for humanistic tradition can be traced from Upanishadic-Vedantic texts. The Upanishads have often attached importance to eternal entities like *Brahman* and *Atman*. In Indian thinking, according to Dr. S. Radhakrishnan's writings, God is perceived in man rather than in separate form or separated from him. Both God and man were elevated in this "nara-Narayan" notion. In the book *Humanism and Indian Culture*, written by C. P. M. Namboodiry, he said that Indian culture paints a picture of unity in diversity. Many different elements of nature exist in harmony in addition to integrals. Being a creation, man does not view himself as unique from other creations.

Humanistic thinking is reflected in the law of karma. Man's fate is based on his own actions, both good and bad according to the rule of Karma. In Indian thinking, the primary objectives of a person's life are also outlined in the moment of the four purusharthas (*Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha*). They place a strong emphasis on how all facets of human personality should be developed in tandem. Adi-Shankara, an early Upanishad interpreter, stressed the significance of knowledge as the only route to *nirvana (moksha)*. The ideal humanism, in Shankara's view, was the *Advaitic* paradigm of spiritual humanism, which held that, regardless of its physical location or political structure, the entire world was treated to be one community.

All races in Indian society carried same aspirations. The essential thing was the unity of *atman*. Man, being one of the creations of cosmos, needed to realize the oneness with nature. There was a sense of belongingness among human being that existed in *Advaitic Vedantic* vision of spiritual humanism. However, this vision of Shankara can be said to lack the practical and rational aspect of life.

However, with the passage of time, the ancient inclinations and scholarships disappeared. A surge in wicked customs such child marriages, female infanticide, and *bali* (human sacrifice) can be seen. The idea of four *chatur varnas* (caste) and the taboos against certain foods and beverages arose as a result of the stagnation of society. Later, medieval Islamic dominance brought about the taming of old Indian thinking, which persisted under British administration for a considerable period of time. This had two effects on Indian minds: on the one hand, it contributed to the spread of Western education and ideas, and on the other, it encouraged logical thinking. According to popular opinion, the Indian Renaissance took place in the second part of the nineteenth century.



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The founder of the Hindu Renaissance and Reform Movement, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, credited European thought as the inspiration for his work. Although, he didn't outright reject Hindu thought, he wished for a synthesis of both the ideas expressed in the Upanishads and the philosophies of the European enlightenment. He said that the foundations of Hinduism was the value of "reason" as taught in the Upanishad. Vivekananda elevated the status of the individual man. Through Advaita Vedanta, he proclaimed a Humanism that was representative of world peace and the general wellbeing of humanity; *Sarve bhavantu sukinoh Sarve santu nirmaya*. Rabindranath Tagore was another profound humanist of Indian thought. For him, man "is a sovereign who built his world and ruled it". According to him, Humanism was the service and love towards fellow being.

Besides, these three humanists, another prominent humanist was Gandhi. For him, everyone is the children of same God. The service of all human beings becomes necessary for service to God. His concept of "Sarvodaya" aims at uplifting everyone and puts major focus on "a man as a whole". M N Roy, another great humanist thinker gave "Radical humanism", also called as Integral Humanism. His views were that man rose from the background of physical universe and after the long process of biological evolution. Man is therefore an integral part of the cosmos. The existing ideologies and institutions had degraded the freedom of man; to overcome this, man had to follow the traditions of Humanism and moral radicalism. Similarly, Jawaharlal Nehru is another very important celebrated humanist of India. For him, India should lessen her religiosity and move towards scientism. In his book *The Discovery of India*, Nehru has called for scientific humanism. His opinions on non-alignment strategies and peaceful coexistence provide a global perspective on humanism.

Hence, in the end we can note that Western humanism focused more on establishing dignity, autonomy, and individuality, while on the contrary, Indian humanist saw man as the product of God. Indian humanism has been largely ingrained into the spiritual philosophy of India. Even the modern Indian thinkers have been noted to propound to the spiritual humanism.

In-Text Questions

1. Who is known as the father of Humanism?
2. What are the primary objectives of person's life in Indian thinking?



7.4 DEENDAYAL UPADHYAYA: A BRIEF LIFE SKETCH

Deendayal Upadhyaya had a very rough start of life, fondly called as *Deena* and he was born on September 25, 1916 in a village known as Nagla Chanderbhan in Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh. His father Bhagwati Prasad and mother Rampyari passed away when Deendayal was only seven years old. He and his little brother were taken under the care of his maternal grandfather Chunni Lal Shukla. However, it was his maternal uncle Radha Raman who took care of them and had admitted Deendayal into the academics and always motivated him to excel. Deendayal had his early schooling at Gangapur and Sikar in Rajasthan. His younger brother died in 1934 due to tuberculosis, which left Deendayal all alone. Deendayal was good at academics and secured distinction in every exam. For this, he was given gold medals and monthly scholarships by Maharaja Kalyan Singh of Sikar and G D Birla. In 1937, after passing the intermediate examination, Deendayal went to Kanpur to join Sanatana Dharma college. He stayed at the college hostel and befriended Sunder Singh Bhandari and Balwant Mahashabde. It was due to their insistence that Deendayal joined Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in 1937. He later came in contact with Dr. Hedgewar, the founder of RSS. Slowly, his interest towards the organisation grew and he had started devoting more time to the organisation. With passing of BA degree in 1939, Deendayal began his social life from Kanpur.

He later joined college at Agra to continue his master's degree but it was discontinued due to the illness of his cousin Rama Devi. Later on, Deendayal was asked by his uncle to appear at administrative service examination, which he successfully passed. However, Deendayal had no inclination for the government job, so, he did not join the service. Being a brilliant student, Deendayal got multiple opportunities to get a job and lead a comfortable life but Deendayal turned down all offers. At one case, he was offered headmastership with salary increment of three to four times, but he refused all. This showed his firm determination and his extraordinary sense of sacrifice.

The main reason behind the refusal of these job offers could be seen due to his growing fascination towards the RSS. He was also disturbed by the conditions which were prevailing in the country at that time. According to him, the situation in the country



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was going out of hand, where British soldiers could take away sisters, women, and assault the victims in the broad daylight, and they, as a citizen of India could do nothing, except writing research papers. In the view of these circumstances, Deendayal wanted to provide his services for the upliftment of the country and to make it strong and prosperous. For him, it was only the ideas and principles of RSS, that could strengthen the country. He was ready to dedicate his entire life for the work and mission of RSS.

The freedom struggle against British colonialism was at peak, when Deendayal started working fulltime for RSS. He was strongly opposed to the rising Islamic fundamentalism as propounded by Muslim league. He worked to combat this rising fundamentalism. He worked as *Pracharak* at Lakhimpur Kheri, Uttar Pradesh.

Deendayal has been credited for steering and gearing up the organizational structure and ideals workings of RSS. In 1945, he founded *Rashtra Dharma Prakasan* and launched a monthly magazine, titled, *Rashtra Dharma*. After India got independence, Deendayal continued his works with RSS and was regarded as future architect and a vehicle for carrying out programs of RSS in the political arena. On the insistence of M S Golwalkar, he joined the political party- Bharatiya Jan Sangh (BJS). He was made its general secretary in 1952. He addressed the annual function of RSS in Nairobi, Africa. In 1964, he released a significant document titled “Integral Humanism, the Basis of BJS Program”. After being general secretary for fifteen years, he was elevated to the position of president of BJS in 1967. However, after serving only 43 days as president he was found dead at Mughal Sarai in 1968.

Deendayal made an immense contribution towards the ideological upliftment of RSS, and BJS, as an organisation. His idea of Integral Humanism will be taken up in the following section.

7.5 INTEGRAL HUMANISM

The philosophy of Integral Humanism as propounded by Deendayal could be better understood by analysing its social, political, and economic dimensions. As we know, Humanism is a man-centered philosophy, it becomes crucial to highlight the basic viewpoints of Deendayal, first, as a man and then ways to deal with his relations, society, and universe.

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For Deendayal, man is the complex amalgamation of elements (*tattvas*). An individual consists of—body, mind, intelligence, and the soul. According to Deendayal, these four elements, cannot be considered separately but needs to be viewed in an integrated manner. For a complete human being leading a balanced life, full integration of these elements is required. In this context, he has taken up the Upanishad texts that declare- *nyamatama balheenen labhya*, meaning weakling cannot realize the self. And for Dharma, *shareer madhyam khalu dharam sadhnam*, meaning the body is truly the primary instrument to discharge the responsibilities. His conception of an individual is different from Charvaka, who sees man made up of elements: earth, water, fire and air. For Deendayal, the philosophy of Vedanta was closer to his conceptual understanding. His basic idea was that man should be seen more than a physical entity. Like, other modern Indian thinkers (Aurobindo, Radhakrishnan), Deendayal asserted that man has both rational and spiritual soul.

About human nature, Deendayal observed that Human nature has both tendencies of anger, greed along with love and sacrifice. All these characteristics of human present basic natures of human being. For Deendayal, there are bipartite division of human nature- *Asuri bhava* (demonic disposition) and *Devi bhava* (Goddess disposition). The former is based upon self-interest while the latter is focused on selfless service. He accords primacy to *devi-bhava* that leads man towards divinity. Man being an evolutionary human being, is capable of attaining perfection by discovering his true nature. It is only through the selfless service that one achieves self-perfection or *devi bhava*. He illustrated this by giving example of farmer who considers it his duty to feed insects, birds, cows, dogs and men in yajna.

Further, Deendayal states that goal of all human activities is to achieve bliss and felicity. For this, man tries to attain happiness which should not be confined to physical pleasures only but it needs to establish relations with others too. This results in human attaining both bodily happiness as well as mental happiness. Another source of pleasure highlighted by Deendayal is attained by the satisfaction of one's intellectual hunger. This hunger leads to man finding answers to the riddles of various questions. But the highest and eternal happiness can only be achieved by the happiness of soul.

The experience of *Brahmanubhav* (eternal experience), it leads to the expansion of human consciousness which then leads to the blurring out of boundaries between private and public. Man, then becomes more and more selfless. The Western conception



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of happiness propounded by Utilitarian scholars like J S Mill, Jeremy Bentham differs from that of Deendayal whose conception of happiness is more holistic but hierarchical. He lays emphasis on achieving fourfold happiness by stressing on *Purusharthas* (*Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha*). He regards all *Purusharthas* equally important. Artha is essential for material prosperity, Dharma is essential for society, Kama is required for bodily pleasure, and Moksha is needed for the soul. These *Purusharthas* according to him are complementary to each other. All are collectively required for fulfillment and advancement of happiness.

Now, man as we know, is a social being and he cannot live in isolation. According to Deendayal, society is an enlarged man with thousand legs, thousand heads, and thousand feet. Similar to how a person develops, society does so naturally. He saw the individual and society as two halved of the same coin. He contends that we should take care of society as well as ourselves. According to him, *Atmeeyta* (selfhood) serves as the foundation for peaceful relationships between individuals and society. All in all, Deendayal draws his conception of Indian society from Hindu philosophy. The understanding of cosmic man is clearly stated in Vedic (*Purusha Sukta*). Further, he has also highlighted that it is important to see the similarity between the Deendayal's organic conception of society with that of *Chatur-Varna*. Another important factor to be noted when looking into the social dimension of integral humanism is that Deendayal also dealt with relation of man with humanity and universe. He believed in the principle *Yat pinde tad brahmande* (what is in microcosm is also in macrocosm). In meaning, the entire cosmos is manifested in single unified system. All diverse forms of universe are all integrally attached to one another. Hence, Deendayal does not accept the idea of Mayavada, as stated by Shankara (*Brahman* is real, Universe is illusion). Unlike Shankara, for Deendayal both *Brahman* and world are real.

Now, examining the political dimension of Integral humanism we can analyse his idea of nation, state, and government. A nation has four things, in Deendayal's views. First and foremost, it is the territory and people, we refer to as our country. Next, it is the collective will. Third, it is a system through which the Dharma is invoked. And finally, it is the principles of life. These four elements combined formed the nation. People in a nation live with a purpose, ideal, and mission in mind. Additionally, he emphasised the idea of *Ekjan*, which stands for one people, one nation. To him, *Ekjan* represents a living thing. It cannot be created synthetically. Similar customs and

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memories bind people together. Its strength depends on this shared understanding of the nation or *Chiti*. All this leads to the rise of national identity. Deendayal has also put emphasis on Bharatiya Sanskriti, which is not static.

Although Deendayal is not opposed to accepting Western concepts, he does not see them as the only legitimate source of knowledge. He strongly supports Indian culture and thinks that India should play a significant role in the global arena. He desired a powerful and affluent India. He made a point of turning India into *Sujala and Suphala* (laden with fruits and overflowing water). Though, Deendayal was an internationalist as well as a nationalist. His philosophy's cornerstone was the favouring of reciprocal cooperation. He views nation and state as two distinct things, with a nation being natural and a state being man made. Nation is permanent while state is temporary. In his opinion, the social contract between the citizen and the state is what creates the state. He emphasises the value of the nation and desires for it to grow strong, independent, and awake. He has advocated for national autonomy. *Swarajya* should be governed by and serve the needs of the people. The idea of democracy has also had an impact on him. According to him, the effectiveness of democracy in India will depend on the citizens' sense of civic duty and sense of belonging to their country. He is a supporter of *Dharma Rajya*. **Dharma Rajya**, while not a theocratic state, upholds a culture that allows people to practice the religion of their choice and live in peace. While also opposing federal states, Dharma Rajya is more concerned with establishing unitary states.

In this unitary state, power will be developed all the way down to the local level in order to ensure that the people living there are not forgotten. Therefore, Deendayal's interpretation of *Dharma Rajya* differs from Gandhi's *Ram Rajya*, which seeks to achieve enlightened anarchy, whereas Dharma Rajya holds that a strong state is necessary for social order. Deendayal Upadhyaya and M N Roy both support the devolution of power, but Deendayal's views of devolution are less comprehensive and inclusive than Roy.

Deendayal Upadhyaya has highlighted his economic idea through his philosophy of Integral Humanism. He is against capitalistic system of production and lays blame on it for the economic condition and degeneration that are present in the society. In the capitalist system, material value holds the most significant and central position, which causes imbalances in the natural world. The principal drawback, as noted by Deendayal

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for this system is that, it makes the machines a competitor of human labour, which results in displacement of human beings to poverty. However, Deendayal is also opposed to the socialist system. For him, socialism also failed to establish the importance of human being and contented themselves merely to the transfer of ownership to the states.

Deendayal's concept of Antyodaya translates to "rise of the last person", focuses on uplifting the most marginalised and disadvantaged sections of society. It emphasises that the true measure of a society's progress lies in its ability to improve the lives of its poorest and most valuable members. Antyodaya advocates for policies and initiatives that ensure basic needs such as food, shelter, education, and healthcare are accessible to all, especially those at the bottom of the socio-economic pyramid. This approach aims to create a more equitable society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive, and social justice is prioritised. Antyodaya is a key component of Deendayal Upadhyaya's broader philosophy of Integral Humanism. 'Antyodaya' is the guiding philosophy of the current Indian government.

According to Deendayal, it is only the Indian economic system that can help in integral development of human being. The Indian system is the blend of the two economic systems. Man is the central concern of such system. The Indian culture and tradition focus on man not merely as a source of material desires but as a spiritual being. It focusses also on non-materialistic values of life like *Dharma* and *Moksha*.

Deendayal was known to fight for the ownership rights of the workers. He gave importance to not only rights but duties. Both of them are needed for the development of man. One must learn to earn his bread but feed others also. He propounded the idea of "equitable distribution" and emphasised on the importance of family. For Deendayal, joint family is the practical unit of country which seeks to preserve the social sense in an individual. Further, he has also focussed on the idea of 'trusteeship' as the basis of a family system. Trusteeship also finds expression in the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi. It means voluntary cooperation and surrendering personal belongings to the society.

Swadeshi and decentralisation were other two ideas that were thoroughly supported by Deendayal. For him, swadeshi should become the cornerstone of reconstruction of Indian economy. He emphasised on decentralisation pattern of economy, which places man-the highest creation of God to its rightful position. Deendayal further, has laid his emphasis on the importance of agriculture for country



like India. The development of agriculture would lead to the generation of market surplus leading to growth and development of the industry. With increasing agricultural income, one can industrialize the nation. He also laid much concern on the development of industries. For him, industries were necessary because without it one cannot reduce the number of dependent people on agriculture. The main aim of Deendayal was to make India self-reliant country. His economic ideas were humanistic and revolving around man.

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In-Text Questions

3. What are the four things given by Deendayal together formed a nation?
4. State the difference between Deendayal's Dharma Rajya and Gandhi's Ram Rajya.

7.6 SUMMARY

- Deendayal Upadhyaya's idea of Integral humanism has been discussed by highlighting three dimensions-social, political, and economic. His conception of Integral Humanism is deeply rooted in Indian philosophy like Vedanta.
- In the conception of this idea, he is similar to many other Indian Modern thinkers like Sri Aurobindo, S Radhakrishna, Mahatma Gandhi, and also Western thinkers like St. Thomas.
- For him, his ideas revolved around the idea of man. He believed in the inward divinity of man.
- He advocated establishment of balanced claims of *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*.
- The idea of *Chatur-Varna* is also highlighted in his idea of Integral society. Through these notions, Deendayal has tried to establish relation between man and society, man and nature, and man and universe.
- The notion of Indian nation is central to the idea of Integral humanism for Deendayal. Though, he is not completely against the acceptance of Western ideas, but stays away from blindly following the Western footsteps.



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- He is against foreign dominion or alien rule over any country. He wants India not to be over reliant on any country.
- Integral Humanism emphasises the harmony between development, culture and nature, advocating for progress that respects and preserves cultural heritage and the environment.
- On the whole, one can say Deendayal's ideas revolve around man and aim at his development. There are certain shortcomings and inconsistencies in his views, but his ideas remain relevant even today and will continue to be in future.
- He is credited for enlightening Indian thought through his philosophy.
- His commitment to serve poor, marginalised and villages of India continues to inspire us.
- The idea is of great significance for man and mankind as a whole. Therefore, Integral humanism aims at the establishment of a well-knit harmonious order of development of man and mankind.

7.7 GLOSSARY

- **Doctrine:** It is a synthesis of various rules, principles, norms, interpretive guidelines and values.
- **Scholasticism:** It is a method of learning and it places a strong emphasis on dialectical reasoning to extend knowledge by inference and to resolve contradictions.
- **Laissez Faire:** It is a policy of minimum governmental interference in the economic affairs of individuals and society.
- **Theocratic State:** It is a state that is governed by a government that derives its authority directly from a religion.



7.8 ANSWERS TO IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

1. The Italian poet Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374), known as “father of humanism” said that “the difficulties a man faces needs to be the prime concern of study and research”.
2. In Indian thinking, the primary objectives of a person’s life are also outlined in the moment of the four purusharthas (*Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha*).
3. In Deendayal’s view, a nation has four things. First and foremost, it is the territory and people, we refer to as our country. Next, it is the collective will. Third, it is a system through which the Dharma is invoked. And finally, it is the principles of life. These four elements combined formed the nation.
4. Deendayal’s interpretation of *Dharma Rajya* differs from Gandhi’s *Ram Rajya*, which seeks to achieve enlightened anarchy, whereas Dharma Rajya holds that a strong state is necessary for social order.

7.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. What is Humanism? Describe its origin and development.
2. What is meant by Integral Humanism? Explain the ideas of Integral Humanism of Deendayal Upadhyay.
3. Examine the social and political philosophy of Deendayal Upadhyay.

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