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By: Kshyama Sagar Meher



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QUESTION PAPER

June – 2023

(Solved)

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT IN MODERN INDIA

M.P.S.E.-4

Time: 2 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 50

Note: Attempt five questions in all, selecting at least two questions from each section. All questions carry equal marks.

SECTION-I

Q. 1. In what ways religion influenced the polity in pre-modern India?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 4, 'Religion and Polity' and Page No. 6, Q. No. 3.

Q. 2. Explain the relevance of social reform movement during colonial period.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 23, Q. No. 2 and Page No. 17, 'Social Reform and the Hindu Renaissance'.

Q. 3. Describe Jyotiba Phule's contribution as a social revolutionary.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 30, 'Jyotiba Phule: A Social Revolutionary'.

Q. 4. Discuss the salient features of Swami Vivekanand as theory of social change.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 57, Q. No. 7.

Q. 5. Write an essay on Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's contribution to modern education for Muslims.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-8, Page No. 72, 'Contribution to Modern Education'.

SECTION-II

Q. 6. Describe Pandita Rama Bai's contribution to women's rise and reform.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 88, Q. No. 3.

Q. 7. Write an essay on philosophical foundations of Gandhi's political orientation.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-10, Page No. 99, Q. No. 1.

Q. 8. Analyse Jawaharlal Nehru's views on Secularism.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-11, Page No. 113, Q. No. 1.

Q. 9. Examine Rabindranth Tagore's critique of nationalism.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-13, Page No. 130, Q. No. 2.

Q. 10. Describe the contribution of E.M.S. Namboodripad to the communist thought in India.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-14, Page No. 143, Q. No. 5

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QUESTION PAPER

December – 2022

(Solved)

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT IN MODERN INDIA

M.P.S.E.-4

Time: 2 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 50

Note: Attempt five questions in all, selecting at least two questions from each section. All questions carry equal marks.

SECTION-A

Q. 1. Discuss the relationship between religion and politics in pre-modern Indian political thought.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 4, 'Religion and Polity' and Page No. 6, Q. No. 3.

Q. 2. Describe the intellectual features of social reformers in the early phase of British colonial rule.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 18, 'Two Intellectual Moves of Reformers'.

Q. 3. Examine religious and political ideas of Swami Dayanand Saraswati.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 30, 'Religio-Political Ideas of Dayanand Saraswati'.

Q. 4. Describe Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's views on Hindu-Muslim unity.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-8, Page No. 72, 'Hindu-Muslim Unity'.

Q. 5. Analyse Sri Aurobindo's critique of political moderates in India.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 52, 'Sri Aurobindo Critique of Political Moderates in India'.

SECTION-B

Q. 6. Examine Jyotiba Phule's ideas on social revolution.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 30, 'Jyotiba Phule: A Social Revolutionary'.

Q. 7. Analyse Mahatma Gandhi's understanding of relationship between religion and politics.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-10, Page No. 94, 'Relationship between Religion and Politics'.

Q. 8. Critically examine Jawaharlal Nehru's views on parliamentary democracy.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-11, Page No. 109, 'On Parliamentary Democracy'.

Q. 9. Analyse the salient features of B.R. Ambedkar's ideological orientation.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-12, Page No. 117, 'Ideological Orientation'.

Q. 10. Examine socialist thought of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-15, Page No. 149, 'Socialist Thought of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia'.

■ ■

Sample Preview of The Chapter

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SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT IN MODERN INDIA

Pre-Modern Socio-Religious Political Thought in India: The Diverse Strands



INTRODUCTION

Indian civilization is as rich and diverse as the Greek civilization. India has ancient texts and state crafts which are comparable with the writings of Plato and Aristotle. Once upon a time people used to live in small groups based on kinship ties. When groups came together, society came into existence. Gradually, state and art of governance developed. Needs of the people led to the emergence of various structure and theories related to the state and governance. Hence, in the evolution of state and the ideas related to statecraft, socio-historical has remained a determinant factor. India has passed through various phases and undergone various political experiments since the Vedic period until the independence of the country from the British government. Modern Indian political thought has been shaped by all these traditions. In this chapter, we will discuss the major trends in pre-modern political thoughts. With reference to historical text like Manusmriti, Arthashastra, Ain-i-Akbari and Fatwa-i-Jahandari, we will also discuss how the Indian political thought has evolved over the years.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

STATE AND SOVEREIGNTY IN ANCIENT INDIA

In lineage society during the mid-first millennium BC, the basic unit was family under the control of the senior most male member. The head person exercised his authority over the clans through kinship and rituals.

The families were tied together because of the genealogical relationships. The kin connections and wealth led to differentiations between the ruler and the ruled in the society. The state system emerged because of the population growth, shift from pastoral to peasant economy, socio-cultural heterogeneity and various other factors. Romila Thaper in her seminal work on social formation (*History and Beyond*, collection of essays) says extensive trade, the fall of political elite and democratic process resulted in the shift towards state system. With the formation of state, the issue of governance became a major concern of the society. In *Mahabharata*, there is reference to *Matsyanyaya*, a condition in which small fishes become prey to big fishes. It happens in a society where there is no authority. To avoid such a crisis, people agreed to have a set of laws and they selected a person to become the ruler or appealed to the God for a king who will maintain law and order in the society. There are thus references to both Divine Origin of Kingship and Social Contract Theory of Kingship. Various studies however, suggest that the polity emerged as an independent domain. Monarchy was the dominant form of government in the early Indian polity. As mentioned in the *Shanti Parva* of the *Mahabharata*, there were seven constituents of the State—

(i) **Swamin or the Sovereign:** The king is considered as the head of this structure.

(ii) **Amatya or the Officials:** They come next to the king. Through the officials, the king governs the state.

(iii) **Janapada or the Territory:** It includes agricultural land, mines and forests.

(iv) **Durga or the Fort:** It refers to the fortification of the capital.

(v) **Kosa or the treasury:** It is the place where collected revenues are kept.

(vi) **Danda or the Army:** It refers to the power of law and of authority.

(vii) **Mitra or the Allies:** They are friendly states.

These are considered as the natural organs of the state.

Manusmriti was in favour of a political authority. It advocated that without a political authority, there would be disorder in society. The King's duty is to ensure justice in the society and protect the weak. Manu advocated for social hierarchy and caste system. Justice for him was based on the customs and practices of different castes. He said the king derived his authority from God, but he should be guided in practice by the *brahmanas*. His view was that *brahmanas* have knowledge and knowledge should rule. The state, according to Manu, should have villages, districts and provinces. The structure resembles the present day structure of administration. His system was based on the principle of decentralisation of authority. He said an assembly of the learned and the officers of the state should advise the king. Members should be objective and fearless while taking decisions on the basis of dharma. Village and district authorities should function independently and the king should interfere or help only when there was any requirement. The king's major concerns should be welfare of the people. The king should show them compassion to the best of his power. He should help the distressed, the helpless and the old.

Kautily's Arthashastra gives a more detailed picture of statecraft. Arthashastra deals with various functions and the methods of running the state. Kautilya was in favour of a strong monarchy, but he did not support the idea of absolute monarchy. In the earlier tradition, the king was guided by *brahmanas*, but in Arthashastra the king is considered as the last word in every thing. Arthashastra suggested how a king should control his senses and discharge his duties, how he should protect himself from various threats on his life and the importance of selection of right priests and counsellors. It also talks about the civil law with various measures for an effective

administration and criminal law for dealing with those people who are considered as a threat. Kautilya suggested that the king should be vigilant about the motives and integrity of his ministers. He also talked about bribery and corruption in administration. He said through reward and punishment, the king should set a standard for others to follow. The king is above others but not above dharma, which means obeying customary and sacred law and protection of his people's life and property. Kautilya considered this as the basic duty of a king. On friendly and hostile neighbours, he recommended organization of armies and spies to keep a watch on internal and external developments. He said the army should be placed under a divided command. The king should protect farmers from oppression and take care of the orphans, the aged and the helpless. A good king should take up welfare activities in the interest of all. The king should concern about the happiness of his people, otherwise he would lose people's support.

Danda is another important concept which is found in the ancient political tradition. *Danda* is the sense of coercion or punishment. *Danda* is meant for discipline. The king has every right to punish the guilty if the rules of the state are not obeyed by any individual or if anybody is involved in an activity which goes against the interest of the state. The Buddhist canonical literature advocated that a monarch should rule as per the law of truth and righteousness. The ruler should not permit any wrong doing in his territory and should look after the poor. A king was a chosen leader of the people and his main duty was to punish the wrongdoers and to protect his people.

Tiruvalluvar's Tiru-k-Kural, composed during the second century A.D., is one of the famous classics of Tamil literature. On polity, it suggested that essentials of a state include an adequate army, an industrious people, resources, ample food, alliance with foreign powers and dependable fortifications. It has also discussed about king's qualities and duties, ministers' responsibilities, importance of spies to keep watch on various activities within the state and diplomacy. It said statecraft is getting support without letting your weakness be known.

In the ancient Indian polity, there were references to republic even as monarchy was predominant. According to Greek and Roman accounts of India, since

327-324 B.C. when Alexander invaded India, there were many places governed by oligarchies. The Buddhist Pali canon also talks about the existence of many republics, mainly in the foothills of the Himalayas and in North Bihar. These republics were mostly tributary to the greater kingdoms but enjoyed internal autonomy. The Sakyas who were on the borders of modern Nepal and to whom the Buddha himself belonged is an example. The Vrijjian confederacy of the Lichhavis who resisted the great Ajatasatru is another example. In north India, between the Himalayas and the Ganges, during the 6th and 5th centuries B.C. a number of *Janapadas* existed. The *Janapadas* were managed independently by *Sanghas* or *Ganas*. Democratic values and public opinion were very much respected in ancient political tradition despite monarchical government. Both in Brahmanical and Buddhist literature have the details about the working of assemblies. They also talk about the process of decision making through election. In the Buddhist literature, there are rules related to the voting in monastic assemblies, their membership and quorums.

STATE AND SOVEREIGNTY IN MEDIEVAL INDIA

A different phase in the Indian political thought started with the coming of Islam in India and the set up of the Muslim political authority. The teaching of Prophet Muhammad and the belief in the universality of the law of the Koran became the centre of Islamic political thought. The Shariat is the final authority and the objective of the state is to serve the Shariat. Political ideas in Islam influence the Muslim elite in matters of governance. *Fatwa-i-Jahandari* and *Ain-i-Akbari*, written during the Muslim rule, talks about the nuances of governance during the Medieval period. In *Fatwa-i-Jahandari*, Khwaja Ziauddin Barani recapitulates and elaborates the political philosophy of the Sultanate on the basis of his earlier narrative, *Tarikh-i-Firozshahi*. The king was considered as the representative of God on earth and the source of all powers and functions of the state. Barani's opinion was that whatever means the king adopts to discharge his duties is justified so long as his purpose is the service of religion.

Al Barani said it is the duty of the Sultans to think carefully before implementing any policy on the likelihood of its success and failure and its effects on their position, on the religion and the state, and on the

army. Barani said the king should govern his state in such a way that he can reach nearer to God. The ideal of a good state is the welfare of the religion and the state. Barani suggested that a king should be guided by wise men. Bureaucracy is required to run the administration and Barani is an advocate of blue blood aristocracy. He also talks about the necessity of hierarchy and suggested that the Sultan and the people of the state should decide the composition, classification, nature and relation of bureaucracy. He opposed the promotion of low-born men and argued that the noble born men in the king's court will bring him honour, but if he favours low born men, they will disgrace him in both the worlds. According to Barani, the kingship is based on two pillars - administration and conquest. He said it is on the army that both the pillars depend. He also talked about king's concern regarding internal security and foreign relations.

According to Barani, dispensing of justice is a necessary function of a sovereign with the enforcement of the *Shariat*. The main concern of a king should be implementation of law and obedience to law. For Barani, there are four sources of law:

- (i) the *Koran*
- (ii) the *Ijma* (opinions and rulings of the majority of Muslim theologians),
- (iii) *Qiyas* (speculative method of deduction) and
- (iv) the *Hadish* (traditions of prophet)

Barani also suggested that *Zawabit* or state law as an important source of law in administering the state. State laws cannot be contradictory to the *Shariat* orders and its main aim is to regulate the works of various governmental departments and to foster loyalty. Barani also talks about the recognition of individual rights including the rights of wife, children, old servants and slaves. He considered the recognition of people's rights as the basis of the state. He suggested punishment as an essential means to maintain discipline in the state. Barani also refers to the death punishment to be awarded by the king. *Fatwa-i-Jahandari* describes the ways the original Islamic theory of kingship went through changes over the years in India. Barani was working in the Delhi Sultanate and the prevailing social order had influence on his political ideas.

Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* is another valuable text on statecraft. It explains the trend of political ideas during the Mughal rule in India. Abul Fazl, one of the

most important thinkers of the 16th century India, had contributed in formulating many of Akbar's political ideas. He talks about a true king and a selfish ruler. He says a true king should be concerned about people's well being. He is like a father who rules for the common welfare and is guided by the law of God. He should not think much about himself and power. Abul Fazl says royalty is a light emerging from God and a ray from the sun. Abul Fazl however, did not envisage any role for the intermediaries. Abul Fazl says the king himself should judge and interpret holy law. The intermediaries are not required for that. His belief was that the king should follow the principles of universal good and to fulfil his duty, he could go beyond the holy law. This was a significant shift in matters of governance compared to earlier political thinking. The reforms introduced by Akbar through the abolition of jizya collected from the non-Muslims or a ban on cow slaughter reflected the spirit of new political theory articulated in Ain-i-Akbari. Abul Fazl advocated strong centralized monarchical government and the distribution of works among various departments. According to Abul Fazl, society can be divided into four tiers:

- (i) Rulers and warriors in the first position,
- (ii) Learned people in the second category,
- (iii) Artisans and merchants in the third, and
- (iv) The labourers in the fourth category. He gave importance to each category for the welfare of the state.

RELIGION AND POLITY

Religion and politics cannot be separated. They are connected. This view was shared by both Gandhi and Maulana Azad. Gandhi's view was that those who talk about the separation of religion and politics do not know what religion is. Similarly, Maulana Azad said "There will be nothing left with us if we separate politics from religion". Religion and state are integrated in political philosophy in India. India has a unique civilization which has accommodated various religious traditions. Whether it is Buddhism, Jainism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity or Sikhism, the common factor is all religion talk is that they talk about moral values and one's duty towards the other and the society at large. All regions has references to the virtues of honesty, humility, selflessness and compassion for the poor are scattered in the teachings of various religious orders.

Tolerance and compassion for the humanity are inherent in the religious tradition of India. During Brahmanical domination, when a section of our society started looking for alternative ways to realise the ultimate truth and this search led to the emergence of Jainism and Buddhism. Many people including the rulers welcomed the new religions. When Islam came to India there might have been attempts by a few to make Islam, state religion but during that time Sufism or Akbar's *Tauhid-i-Ilahi* (called *Din-i-Ilahi*) which focused on universalism emerged. The period also saw the growth of Bhakti movement. The Bhakti doctrine preached human equality which is considered as direct impact of Islamic thought. The Sufi orders had an impact on the teachings of the Sikh Gurus. Guru Nanak had both Hindus and Muslim followers. During military campaign Shivaji, a Muslim chronicler wrote, tried to avoid any insulting action against the Muslims and if a copy of the *Quran* was captured by his soldiers, it was supposed to be respectfully restored to the Muslims.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1. Explain the major features of political ideas in Ancient India.

Ans. Monarchy was the dominant form of government in the early Indian polity. As mentioned in the *Shanti Parva* of the *Mahabharata*, there were seven constituents of the state:

- (i) *Swamin* or the sovereign,
- (ii) *Amatya* or the officials,
- (iii) *Janapada* or the territory,
- (iv) *Durga* or the fort,
- (v) *Kosa* or the treasury,
- (vi) *Danda* or the Army, and
- (vii) *Mitra* or the Allies.

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