

Analysing Bharatiya Sanskriti and Dharma-Rajya through the Lens of Deen Dayal Upadhyay

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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to analyse alternatives to the dominant philosophies and provide a direction for India's developmental path, Deendayal Upadhyay articulated the concept of Integral Humanism rooted deeply in the Bharatiya culture and Dharma leading to holistic development which encompasses social, economic and spiritual dimensions in an integrative manner. This research paper delves deeper into the idea of Integral Humanism which provides solutions through civilizational ethos and values in a cooperative rather than competitive approach to distinctions over bodily traits and objectives of mankind leading to overall development of both personality and the society through decentralised and self-reliant economy in Dharma-Rajya. This secondary research paper is based on the study of existing literature on integral humanism expounded in Upadhyay's lectures, the main motive is to understand the basic framework of our tradition and civilisation that has been built over time, advocating for the incorporation of indigenous knowledge patterns into decision making processes. The concepts emphasised below are based on the lectures delivered by Deendayal Upadhyay in the form of four lectures delivered in Bombay in April, 1965.

Keywords : Dharma, Integrative, Balance, Economy, Culture.

I. INTRODUCTION

Deendayal Upadhyay, a sociologist, an economist and a great philosopher whose philosophy is centred around humanism. He was well known as a modern interpreter of the ancient thoughts which enabled Bharatiya society to overcome various paradoxes (Singh, 2022). His concept of integral humanism has its own nature which is aimed at classless, casteless and conflict free social order (Singh M. , 2022). Deeply

concerned by prevailing social conflicts brought upon by individualism and selfishness, he stressed upon the need for collective action. Devoting his life to the RSS and its mission during the 1940s, he aimed to organise society based on its principles.

His philosophical postulations of 'Unity in Diversity' reflects the influence of Advaita Vedanta building up synergy of the individual, society, the universe and the ultimate supreme. It is integrative in

a sense that it aims to balance the needs of the person, the community and the cosmos(Deb). According to Deendayal, outward diversity of nature merely reflects its underlying unity. He believed that everything in nature represents different aspects of a single entity perceived with a sense of interconnectedness. The diversity in life is merely an expression of the internal unity (Upadhyaya, 2002).

The idea was delivered in the form of four lectures in April 1965. Attention to soul is unique characteristic of Bharatiya Culture (Singh S. , 2022). Questioning the basis of western philosophy which regards human nature as brutish and selfish, Deendayal Upadhyay states explains that we cannot consider them as ideals or standards of human behaviour. The concept of Dharma-Rajya holds together the central principles of governance which is duty oriented and is not limited to religion or law but has universal presence. According to him, humankind has four hierarchically organised attributes of body, mind, intellect and soul which corresponds to four universal objectives i.e. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Dharma forms the basic and moksha form the ultimate objective of humankind.

The concept seeks to synthesize the principles and practical application of its philosophy within the context of Indian tradition and governance. His philosophy demands an indigenous development model rather than mere imitation of the west. In this indigenous model of development, human beings should be at the centre and the stages of human life to be dealt in an integrative manner.

WHAT IS BHARATIYA CULTURE ?- Culture embodies the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief and behaviour, it shapes who we are and how we perceive the world around us. According to Upadhyay, “Unity in diversity and the expression of unity in various forms have remained central thought of Bharatiya Culture. If this truth is whole

wholeheartedly accepted, then there will not exist any cause for conflict among various powers. Conflict is not a sign of culture or nature, rather it is a system of perversion” (Upadhyaya, 2002). A fundamental difference between the west and our understanding is that the western philosophy considers each aspect separately and then combine it in a patchwork, while Indian understanding is interconnected based on cooperation between the four Purusharthas. Western proponents have regarded the satisfaction of bodily desires and needs as the aim while we regard body as an instrument of achieving our aims.

According to him, the flow of time cannot be reversed and we should attempt to reshape our life according to the ever-changing realities. The principles of ethics form the law of life in Bharatiya society. Culture never ignores nor denies nature rather it develops those elements in nature which are supportive in sustaining life in this universe. When culture is integrated through the principles of Dharma, human beings get culture and civilization (Singh S. , 2022). If culture does not form the basis of independence, then the whole movement would simply be reduced to narrow interest of a certain section. Independence can be meaningful if it is an expression of our culture.

The important characteristic of Bharatiya culture is that it interprets life as an integrated whole through mutual cooperation. Each element possesses its unique form, colour, properties and yet they are interconnected to a single identity. The cooperation between different life forms is crucial for sustaining life on this earth. We need to consider the society or the community and Deendayal Upadhyay emphasised that we need to consider society is an entity in its own self, a sovereign being like an individual. Society too has its own body, mind, intellect and soul and aspires harmony between an individual and the society (Deb). A man is integrated with Vyashti, Samashti, Srishti and Parameshthi is Virat. The four Purusharthas i.e. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha are innate in man

which work in a system to fulfil them (Banti Kumar, 2021).

According to Deendayal Upadhyay, when a group of people live with a goal, an ideal, a mission and look upon a particular piece of land as motherland, this group constitutes a Nation (Upadhyaya, 2002). A nation to has a soul, it is innate nature of a group which is inborn and is not born out of historical circumstances though it continues to modify itself based on the circumstances. He guides that every nation has unique cultural and societal essence known as 'Chitti' which gives it strength and vitality known as 'Virat'. without which a nation cannot become strong and flourish unless it realizes and utilizes its own unique consciousness. Acting as a touchstone of every action, it is fundamental building block to a nation from its very beginning. Chitti determines the direction in which the nation needs to advance culturally and is manifested in the action of every great man of a nation. Deendayal Upadhyay did not oppose embracing the newer ideas but suggests that only those should be integrated which aligns with the Bharatiya Culture, Conscience and Circumstances which can be done through Indianization of newer cultural forms (Deb). He contravened that western science and western way of life are two different things. While western sciences must be absorbed, thoughtless imitation of western lifestyle practices and culture must be avoided. His concept of nation is based on cultural self-determination (Singh M. , 2022).

STATE PERSPECTIVE – DHARMA-RAJYA-

Deendayal Upadhyay wanted democracy along Indian lines where everyone is taken care of. He favours Dharma-Rajya over Jana-Rajya (Deb). The main motive behind his theory was to reject the excessive individualism and to promote the importance of family and society. He rejected both Capitalism and Communism as the former negates all societal values while the latter crushed individualism as a part of large heartless machine (Sanjeet Singh, 2016). The co-

founder of BharatiyaJanaSangh introduces Dharma-Rajya to a society or a state that is guided by the principles of Dharma. In this context Dharma does not solely refers to religious principles but works with a broader understanding of duties, righteousness, virtues and the right way of living which is fundamental for a civilised life. Battles of religion and battles for Dharma are two different things. Religion means a creed or a sect, it does not mean Dharma which is a very wide concept concerned with all aspects of life (Upadhyaya, 2002). It does not propagate a theocratic state rather promotes acceptance to diversity and a state where everyone is free to profess religion of their choice.

State is not at the centre of national life; it is one of the several institutions that sustains Dharma. Even while our constitution is legally binding, it cannot conflict with the traditional values of this nation. As much as it does not align with our customs, it does not satisfy Dharma. The constitution of a country cannot be contrary to the natural innate laws. No political power is free to act contrary to Dharma which regulates their behaviour, action and thought process. Neither the legislature is higher not the judiciary, Dharma is higher than both and specify their limits (Upadhyaya, 2002). The leader of a governing body or the king have the duty to uphold Dharma to sustain the order. Since people do not have the authority to act against Dharma, even people are not sovereign. An elected government is really a government of thieves if it allows people to freely violate Dharma without taking legitimate action against them.

DeendayalUpadhyaya is against the federal state and want it to be replaced with a unitary one, instead he supports devolution of power. According to him, Dharma is exclusive source of sovereignty (Deb). It holds the highest position to any formal institution or power. The most important aspect in Deendayal Upadhyay's lecture on governance is of integrating minority and its voices by saying that might is not always right, he said, Dharma is not necessarily with

the majority or with the people. Dharma is eternal. What constitute good for the people can be decided with Dharma alone. A democratic government must be rooted in Dharma. In its definition, it stands for independence, by stands for democracy and for indicates Dharma (Upadhyaya, 2002). Since truth lies in Dharma, even if only one person stands for something that is in line with Dharma, it is the responsibility of that one person to walk on the path of truth and transform others and the state should not obstruct them.

According to Meenal Katarnikar, Article 51(A) of the Indian constitution provides the magna carta of Dharma-Rajya in the form of fundamental duties to every citizen. The eleven clauses of Article 51(A) with proper implementation can ensure the existence of Dharma-Rajya in India (Katarnikar, 2020).

APPLICATION OF HIS THOUGHT- The concept of integral humanism seeks to balance individual's role and his values within society and the universe under the ultimate authority of the supreme. The fundamental principles of Dharma are universal and eternal, yet they have to be adapted to changing time and place (Katarnikar, 2020). The current state of affairs requires solutions to the problems of everyday issues of poverty, food, housing, infrastructure, corruption, terrorism, border disputes, secessionist movements which requires an integrative solution to cater the needs of all within limited resources. Deen Dayal Upadhyay supports the concept of welfare state which provides minimum necessities, free education, medical care and specifically food as a birth right saying that in a society even those who do not work must have food (Singh M. , 2022).

There have been several secessionist movements going on in recent years as there are lacunas in various aspects of policy implementations creating a gap in the regions. These separatist tendencies can be dealt with humanistic attitude of authorities but the politicization

of problems often leads to complexities. Gaining the confidence of the people in these sensitive conditions is the most important step which can be attained through integral humanism and spirituality by addressing the needs with patience and due care (Pandey).

Dharma-Rajya assures the progress and consideration of the Seven M's in the economic context i.e. man, material, money, management, motive power, market and machine. The Seven M's that Professor Visvesvaraya mentioned were referenced by Deen Dayal Upadhyay. He states that Swadeshi and Decentralization are the two approaches which complement the Indian Context the best (Katarnikar, 2020). The present economic system, means of production and eco-destructive consumerism are fast disturbing the equilibrium of nature. New products are manufactured for satisfying ever increasing desires which threatens the very existence of humanity and civilisation (Upadhyaya, 2002). Through his ideas, he places emphasis on creating indigenous or Bharatiya technology that takes into account India's circumstances and resource availability. He was against the overuse and brutal exploitation of natural resources by placing limits to preserve the natural order (Deb).

Deen Dayal Upadhyay's Integral humanism opens up the individual not only to fellow humans but also with nature and the divine. A modern economy focused solely on profit must compete with people-based economy. For any economist of the future, the difficulty will be how to reconcile the former with modern economic aspirations. An economic system needs to ensure meaningful employment and minimum standard of living. His ideas continue to influence political thought and governance in India, particularly within the Bharatiya Janata party, which has adopted integral humanism as its foundational philosophy and has been articulating it with further implementation aspects and research and policy initiatives like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Jan Dhan

Yojana, National Education Policy, Skill India, etc(Deshmukh, n.d.). According to Deendayal Upadhyaya, our aim should not be only to preserve the culture but also to bring it back to life and make it relevant to the modern era. Prioritizing the welfare of the collective over one's own interests, Upadhyaya philosophy harmonizes Gandhian ideals such as Sarvodaya (development for all), Swadeshi (localization) and Gram Swaraj (rural self-governance). It promotes the cultural-national ethos, self-sufficiency and unity through integration.

CONCLUSION - Deendayal Upadhyay proposes an alternative model for development which is integral and sustainable in nature based on Indian ethos aimed at providing balanced life with dignity to individual, society as well as the nation. He attempts to address the issues of contemporary relevance through the ideas of Bharatiya culture and Dharma-Rajya in a way to transform and widen the conflict resolution discourse. Challenging both capitalism and socialism which result in dehumanisation of man, he tries to work for the happiness of all by reconstructing the economic and political domains on the lines of dharma with integration and cooperation.

It is important to bring forth new ideas, innovations, technologies with changing time dynamics but a balanced approach needs to be taken to incorporate civilisational values which forms the base of a society. Instead of blatant politicization and domination, the humans should command in mutual cooperation with nature in a collective sense. Deendayal Upadhyay undertook this task through preservation of nation's soul or Chiti by awakening Virat of the nation. His idea of nationalism embodies a non-hostile and non-exploitative stance towards the humanity through geo-cultural understanding of the nation transcending territorial boundaries.

Integral humanism helps in shaping people's personalities which in turn changes the perspective of

the whole society through ethical nurturing further modifying government officials thinking process in a positive manner. Deendayal Upadhyay's ideas are relevant in contemporary period, contributing an ideology and continue to redefine the bases of policies in our country by manifesting social cohesion, harmony and striking a balance between ancient ideas and newer demands.

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