



Chanakya Mandal Pariwar

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UPSC Mains 2023 Test Series

ESSAY - 1

Time : 3 Hrs. & Marks : 250

Question Paper specific instructions

(Please read each of the following instructions carefully before attempting the questions)

- The essay must be written in the medium authorized in the Admission Certificate which must be stated clearly on the cover of this Question-cum-answer (QCA) Booklet in the space provided. No marks will be given written in medium other than the authorized one.
- Word Limit, as specified, should be adhered to.
- Any page or portion of the page left blank in Question-cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.
- Write two essays, choosing one topic from each of the following Sections A and B, in about 1000-1200 words each. **125 x 2 = 250**



Chanakya Mandal Pariwar

Essay



Time : 3 Hrs.

Marks : 250

SECTION A

- 1) "What is needed today is Mindful and Deliberate Utilization, instead of Mindless and Destructive Consumption."
- 2) "The one who plants trees, knowing that he will never sit in their shade, has at least started to understand the meaning of life."
- 3) "We must raise both the ceiling and the floor."
- 4) The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing.

SECTION B

- 1) There was never a bad peace or a good war.
- 2) Our scientific power has outrun our spiritual power. We have guided missiles and misguided men.
- 3) "The death of dogma is the birth of morality."
- 4) Truth can be stated in a thousand different ways, yet each one can be true.

Section A

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1. What is needed today is mindful and deliberate utilisation, instead of mindless and destructive Consumption

Capitalism has turned us into Rats.
Chasing goods we don't need,
using money we don't have
and this all to impress people
we don't like..'

This was what the narrator proclaimed in the highly acclaimed movie 'fight club'. This was used to highlight the plight of most people, engulfed in commodity fetish. Protagonist, being one of them was busy buying furniture to find purpose in life.

good

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always so

The world presently is trapped into the anomie of infinite aspirations.

People are perpetually dissatisfied.

They want more, bigger and better. But, this material centrality has resulted into visible cracks.

These cracks are visible in growing global conflict, temperature, poverty along with the count of billionaires.

The solution probably lies in Need driven utilisation over want based Consumption.

Simple Living -

This essay will try to classify what is mindless Consumption and what is not.

Attempt will also be made to explore the ways in which humanity can meet meet its course, how can meaningful utilisation be promoted over blind and destructive materialism!

(2)

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इस इतिहास में
नहीं लिखना
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The Present State of Affairs

The world has never been so rich in the history of humanity. Presently, there are multiple companies like Apple, Alphabet, Tesla that have valuations exceeding GDP of many nations combined. This modern money mechanics has produced wealth at one side but it also has ignited the fire of infinite wants on the other side.

This can be seen with growing physical consumption. The best minds in the world are not even busy in developing the cure for cancer. But,

they are occupied in developing addictive products and marketing

'hooks'. This has rendered people and societies into mindless consumers.

This can be seen in the light of the fact that the price of a top tier

Pro-max mobile phone exceeds the

amount sanctioned for house construction under PM Awas yojana.

1.5L maybe sufficient to build a house for someone but it isn't enough for other's Annual mobile shopping.

Mental Consumption too has become excessively cluttered.

Big corporations are able to add more and more chaos noise to what one absorbs in their brain.

The 'Infinite Scroll' of Tik Toks and Instagram has led to erosion of mental peace. This has also

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resulted in Commodification of human consciousness. The leisure time is being used by the ~~orgs~~ Big Tech to sell more and more physical goods. Social media has further added to this chaos. Opinions today are formed and transformed based on twitten trends.

This has resulted in vulgarisation of values. The only definition of success is today is West centric Material driven. Values like 'Nishkaam Karma' are being deluted by the flashiest cars and funkier phone. People have become Consumer first and human second. The need today is to claim our 'Human-ness' first.

Being Mindful and Deliberate

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To become a Conscious human, one need to be mindful and deliberate in all aspects of life.

One must choose utilisation based on what they need over consumption driven by infinite wants.

EG



Individuals can realise this by simply adopting a mindful slow approach over emotional reactive approach.

A simple exercise of writing down why one needs the object can help them realise why they don't need it. This will help in realising Buddha's idea that how maya induces Dukkha.

thinking just & slow

Desires may bring happiness today. But, what induces pleasure also has potential to induce pain. The growing burden of lifestyle diseases along with

Increasing fast food sales is an evidence of the same.

Societies can also induce these meaningfulness driven values.

This inspiration can be taken from concepts like Zen and Calvinistic ethic. They both provide antidote to the web of maya in minimalism.

Happiness can be ~~more~~ maximised only by minimising clutter in the society. This is evident in increased adoption of ideas of the likes of 'Marie Kondo' in the Japanese culture.

Examples of such decluttered purposeful life can be seen in nations like Bhutan. It is way poorer materially than the likes of Singapore. But, it tops the chart of happiness and sustainability.

Similar is the case with Scandinavian Society. Finland has more millionaires per capita than UAE. But the former chose minimalism while the latter opted for opulence. But, these choices reflect in Finland being among top 5 in Global Happiness Index while UAE not being in the top 50. People driving decade old volvos are happier than those driving flashiest lamborghinis. This is not an accident but a direct causality.

But, being mindful and deliberate doesn't mean resigning to destiny. It doesn't mean choosing lethargy over activity. Often people mix both. This has led to ideologues highlighting the moral side of materialism.

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Materialism, Minimalism and Morality

In the pre Industrial revolution era, production was limited. So were the avenues of Consumption. This led to 'coerced' minimalism with maya being seen as the source of all evil. ✓

But, with the advent of the age of machines, the production potential of the society reached new heights. But, old moral fabric still saw materialism as the root of all evil. For instance, Catholic church called money lending (usury) a sin.

As production can't sustain without consumption, the 'capitalists' started to seek a moral backbone to boost consumption. ✓

उम्मीदवादी को
इस कठिनाई से
नहीं निवारण
किए।
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The pioneer of the Consumption Support group was Adam Smith. He was first to highlight that the 'wealth of Nations' is not limited. It is not a zero sum game.

As consumption will increase, so will the global pie. His idea of 'Greed is Good' was further propogated by economists like M. Friedman. (Wol & O & O) Wall Street

The foundation of American Society are based on this very idea. Benjamin Franklin propogated that self interest is social interest.

An individual's 'pursuit of happiness' and actions of self interest are auto aligned by the invisible hand of markets in the direction of the best interest for all.

This doctrine of Greed is Good has been the moral backbone of material driven society we have today.

criticd comment

Balancing Artha, Kama to attain Moksha

With world being divided into the narrow walls of Self interest, Conflicts are at a rage. There is no Consensus on global challenges with each acting as per their 'Self Interest'. Neither the world is able to agree on Combating Climate change nor on Combating Terrorism. Consensus couldn't be build even on the definition of terrorism.

or
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This highlights that this quest^{for} infinite 'Artha' (material) is baseless. As individual, societies and nations the need is to rebalance the objectives. A purposeful, sustainable existence

is needed. The relations between people should be given more value than those with things.

One should not shy away from hard work. That is their duty. But, the fruits of their labour must be consumed while keeping a mindful approach. One can learn from ~~Gandhi~~ Gandhi's idea of trusteeship. The wealth belongs to collective. One needs to manage it as a selfless trustee. Nations can adopt the same approach for natural resources. Corporations can adopt the same for profit filled coffers.

This all highlights the importance of the Biblical phrase,

'Bags of gold can never buy the happiness you are hunting for.'

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Section 13

4. Truth can be stated in a thousand different ways, yet each one can be true.

" Truth is what one perceives.
It is neither what is
nor what ought to be. "

These claims were made by
Neo Kantian philosopher William
Dilthey during the great method
debate of social sciences in Germany.

He claimed that social sciences ^{should}
should shed the deception of seeking
one 'ultimate' truth. One believes ⁱⁿ

what one thinks is true. For a
Catholic in 12th century, Earth
was at center of the universe.

~~What~~ today For the truths of
today, same can hold true in
future.

Humans have been indulged in the quest for reaching the ultimate truth since time immemorial. From religion in the past to sciences today, both had goal to reach that ultimate truth. But, is there only one means ~~and to~~ ~~one ends to~~ reach the true ends of truth?

This essay will try to explore the meaning of truth. What ends are available to reach it and is there any on ultimate truth. Light will also be shed on the need and way to balance one's own truth in this plurality of means 'true' means and 'true' ends.

So, there's no 'Truth'?

What is Truth?

Truth is defined by philosophers as what is real. This real should be ~~empirical~~ observable by sensory experiences according to empiricists. But, the proponents of the micro school also include the abstract in the definition of truth. For instances, some consider 'sun rises in the East' as true. But others highlight that 'East' is based on meaning we attach. Thus, what exists inside one's head is also true.

In Indian philosophy, empiricist were the likes of Charvakas. They considered only 'Pratyaksha' as satya. Denying all other worldly promises for this worldly pleasure. While monist schools found truth

inside the individual. With ideas like 'Aham Brahmasmi', they highlighted ^{the} presence of 'universe' with 'I'. not exactly

This highlights that definition of truth in itself is relative. For some nations 'the holy book' is truth. While in others freedom of speech and expression, secularism is truth. This ~~has~~ multiplicity has led to global conflicts and societal division. Each section is fighting for domination of its means and its 'true' ends over the other.

Plurality of means and ends

When Prince Siddhartha left home, he was on the quest to seek truth. This choice of means made him Buddha. When Ram left home, he left it to make his father's promise true. This made him 'Manjadar purshottam'. Thus, there is no single means or destination on the path of truth.

Despite such plurality of means and ends people have given everything to defend truth. Raja Harischandra was one of them. And so was Gandhiji. He stood for, spoke and acted in the 'truest' way possible. This made transformed Mohandas into Mahatma Gandhi.

True Truth has multiplicity of means and ends. But if one sticks to it in a parochial sense then no development will happen. For European societies, women were 'truly' inferior to men pre Renaissance. And for Indian Society, caste based division of labour was the 'truth'.

But, these all 'truths' were based on parochial choices made based on the dominant ideologies of those time. ~~But~~

This renders truth and the means adopted to reach it a function of Kaal (time), Sthan (place) and Patra (Character). A combination of above 3 points the picture of the accepted 'truth'.

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This can be best observed
 in ~~the~~ the case of diplomacy.
The 'truth' and 'means' keep on
changing for nations with
changing national interest.

This national interest is ✓
 functioning of nothing but
Time, place and character.

For instance, America was
committed to the 'true' cause
of democracy ~~to~~ ~~it~~ by invading
the oil rich nations. But,
 same commitment is not
 visible for poor nations in
South America or western
Africa.

The flexibility to accept varying means and ends that a person, society or nation has depends upon its value system.

Certain value systems are rigid and promote only one true god or book. For instance, Abrahamic Religions. While some may be more accepting and open, for example Hinduism. When missionaries arrived in India, their key concern was not if people will accept Jesus as a true god. The actual concern was the risk of Jesus being assimilated into the Hindu fold and becoming one of the true gods.

Thus, plurality exists on the path for truth. But, how accepting one is towards it depends on the values they have.

Some truths ^{are} truer than others ~~truths~~

The story '4 Blind men and the elephant' from Jainism highlights that multiple truths can define the same reality.

But, despite this plurality, are some truths truer than others?

~~descriptions~~ These universal truths are the truths that aligned

with promoting peace and brotherhood. Such truths aim at ending all suffering and promoting equal chances for all. Gandhiji was a proponent

of such truth and so was No Mandela, ML King Jr. Their methods might have differed but 'truth' connected them.

Some other 'True-er' truths are the truths of self

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discovery and improvement. All religions promote it. Hinduism promotes it in forms of ^{various} Ashrams while religions like protestantism promote it in the doctrine of predestination. → ex. 10 ✓

The 'trueness' of such truths is beyond the variability of Kaal, sthaan and patra. No one can deny the fact that suffering hurts irrespective of circumstances. But, understanding of these 'truer' truths can help ^{the inevitable} may not help in ending pain but, it will surely help in curbing the 'optional' suffering. ✓

The Duty to Seek Truth

This plurality creates confusion
If one should stop the 'clouded'
quest for truth. If one should
give up and resign to destiny.

~~But~~, This is not only wrong but
It also violates one's duties
as a conscious human.

Gandhiji's life was an
example of such quest for truth.
In South Africa, the quest for
truth of equality made him
stood for the rights of the
Coloured. This quest for truth
help him to realise the reality
on returning to India. He
readjusted his means to
fight against the 'truth' of
Colonialism. This gave birth to
Satyagraha based on moral
suasion.

With time Gandhi further realised new truths and kept evolving. From the days of 'Hand Swamy' to 1948, he kept evolving. This was possible only by the relentless quest of truth.

Thus despite plurality of means, if one keeps pursuing truth, they will experience self transformation. Each new truth, new means will make them a better, more inclusive person. This will in turn transform societies, nations and the world.

The 'fallibility' of 'truth' is no reason to end its quest. One cannot reach the ultimate truth but the ^{relentless} pursuit of it will be meaningful.

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