
DSC 2: Ideas and Institutions in Indian Political Thought

Course Objective

This paper seeks to introduce students to certain broadly familiar terms that provide conceptual and theoretical anchorage to social and political thought of ancient India. They explain the forms, structure and nature of government. The students will be taught about the institutions which existed and the broader norms, roles and responsibilities which guided the state and its important apparatuses. As it is difficult to bring in all the diverse traditions and institutions, attempts have been made to introduce those ones which have been most talked about. In this paper students are expected to explore the complex semantic history of these terms along with the conceptual shifts that resulted in their multiple readings and scholarly interpretations.

Course Learning Outcomes

- Students will be able to answer about the nature and form of statecraft that existed in Ancient India.
- They will be able to explain how the texts in ancient India interpreted Dharma and Danda
- Students will be able to answer what were sources and mechanisms to practice Nyaya in ancient India.
- They will be able to make distinction between Rashtra and Rajya.
- They will be able to explain the meaning and foundations of Varna and how are they different from caste.

Unit 1: Statecraft in Ancient India

Unit 2: Dharma, Dhamma, Danda

Unit 3: Nyaya, Niti

Unit 4: Sabha, Samiti

Unit 5: Rajya, Rashtra

Unit 6: Varna, Jati

Unit wise reading list

Dharma, Dhamma, Danda

Rupert Gethin, "He who sees Dhamma sees Dhammas: Dhamma in Early Buddhism" in *Journal of Indian Philosophy*. Vol 32, No5/6 (December 2004) pp.513-542

Margaret Chatterjee, "The Concept of Dharma" in M.C.Doesser and J.N.Kraay (eds.) *Facts and Values. Philosophical reflections from Western and Non-Western Perspectives*, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Dordrecht. 1986, PP177-188