



SNS COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY



Coimbatore-35
An Autonomous Institution

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Affiliated to Anna University, Chennai

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

ESSENCE OF INDIAN
TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

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Society in ancient India:-

1. Society in ancient India had several distinguishing features. It was arranged in the form of four varnas.

2. The life of individual was divided into four stages or ashramas. There were rules regarding marriage, family etc.

Purusartha

1. The purpose of life was to attain four goals called purusarthas.

2. The concept of purusarthas is the fundamental principle of Indian social ethics.

3. The word purusartha means “attainments” or “life purposes”.

4. The aim of every person is to attain the four noble ends or purusartha. These four purusarthas are:-



A. Dharma :

1. Dharma or the principle of righteousness is considered to be the supreme of the purusarthas.
2. Dharma is derived from the Sanskrit root dhr, which connotes to sustain, support or uphold. Dharma has a wide range of meaning.
3. It is the essential foundation of something or of things in general, and thus signifies 'truth'.
4. It is that which is established, customary, proper and therefore, means 'traditional' or ceremonial.
5. It is one's duty, responsibility, imperative and thereby 'moral obligation'.
6. It is that which is right, virtuous, meritorious, and accordingly ethical.
7. It is that which is required, precepted, or permitted through religious authority, and thus legal.
8. Hence, dharma in ancient India was a code of conduct for members of the society

A yellow gear-shaped logo with a central emblem depicting a figure, possibly a deity or a historical figure, surrounded by various symbols.

B. Artha :

1. Artha is the second purusartha.
2. The term artha refers to worldly prosperity or wealth. It includes all the material means of life.
3. Kautilya maintains that wealth is the basis of human requirements and that social well-being depends ultimately on material prosperity.
4. Indian thinkers had recognised the pursuit of wealth as a legitimate human aspiration. But artha must be acquired by right means

A yellow gear-shaped icon with a central figure, possibly a deity or a person, surrounded by various symbols like a book, a lamp, and a lightning bolt.

C. Kama

1. Kama means worldly pleasures or sensual pleasures.
2. It refers to some of the innate desires and urges in human beings.

D. Moksha :

1. It is the ultimate purusartha.
2. Moksha means salvation or liberation from the cycle of birth and death.
3. It is the summum bonum of human existence



The Varnashrama system of ancient India:-

1. Various texts talk of varnashramadharma or the dharma of different classes and dharma in the different stages of life.
2. In ancient India there was a common dharma for all members of society which must be followed by all equally.
3. At the same time there were different codes of conduct for different classes or varnas called varna-dharma.
4. First reference of varna is seen in the Rig Veda. According to which varnas originated from the different organs of the Prajapati or the creator.
5. This varna hierarchy system was divided as follow

A yellow gear-shaped logo with a central emblem containing a figure and text, surrounded by various symbols like a book, a lamp, and a lightning bolt.

A. Brahmins :

1. Brahmins were at the top of varna hierarchy.
2. They were believed to possess great spiritual powers. Thus they had a divine existence.
3. In law, they claimed great privileges. Normally brahmins were exempt from execution, torture and corporal punishment.
4. The main functions prescribed for brahmins were learning, teaching and priesthood



B. Kshatriya :

1. The second class was the ruling class described as kshatriya.
2. Kshatriyas represented heroism, courage and strength. They constituted the warrior class.
3. The duty of kshatriyas was protection which had both internal and external aspects.
4. External protection meant to protect the society from external invasion where as internal protection meant governance in peace and protection from anarchy.
5. Kshatriyas had the right to possess arms

C. Vaishyas :

1. Vaishyas represented the trading and commercial class
2. Though they were entitled to the services of the priesthood and to the ceremony of yajñopavita, they were third in the social hierarchy.
3. The ideal vaishya possessed the expert knowledge of jewels, metals, cloth, threads, spices, perfumes etc.
4. In this sense vaishyas were the ancient Indian businessmen.

D. Shudras :

1. Shudras were at the bottom of the social hierarchy.
2. They pursued the task of serving the other three varnas .
3. They were not twice born. They were deprived of various rights.
4. They were in fact second class citizens, on the fringes of Aryan society

