



Mains Practice Question

Q: Though growth of Nationalism is attributed to the Western influence but Swami Vivekananda's nationalism is deeply rooted in Indian spirituality and morality. Discuss (250 words)

05 Dec, 2018 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

Approach

- Define nationalism from western perspective and how was it different from Vivekananda's perspective
- In body, identify different dimensions/ values on which Vivekananda's nationalism was based and point where it diverged from western nationalism
- In conclusion, suggest how this idea of nationalism embodied India's culture more comprehensively and how it impacted India's freedom struggle and ideas of other freedom fighters and leaders.

Introduction

- The idea of nationalism came to India during colonial rule which embodied the idea of loyalty to one's nation-state, defined by territorial boundaries.
- Swami Vivekananda's nationalism, which took birth during the colonial rule and mass poverty and suffering of the masses, was based on **Indian spirituality, morality and religion** and considered nation to be composed of masses rather than territories.
- It relied on belief in nationalism as an effective and adequate instrument for the fulfillment of India's destiny.

Body

- Vivekananda's nationalism was premised essentially on values of **Humanism and Universalism**, cardinal features of Indian spiritual culture, which imparted to it greater depth and a philosophical and spiritual undertone.
- These values of nationalism were derived from his **deep concern for masses, freedom and equality** through which one expresses self, and spiritual integration of all on the basis of universal brotherhood.
- Vivekananda felt that Indian nationalism had to be built on the stable foundation of the **past historical heritage** comprising religion and spirituality, through which Indians will draw pride and self-respect.
- His emphasis on idea that 'Religion in India has been a creative force of integration and stability', led him to revive eternal things of the **Vedas and Upanishads** to strengthen nation's growth and faith in its individuality.
- Vivekananda's nationalism is also premised upon "**Karmyoga**" a system of ethics to attain freedom, both political and spiritual, through selfless service and readiness for supreme sacrifices in duty of motherland and countrymen.
- In this the way the idea of nationalism of Vivekananda was different from the materialistic and secular western form of nationalism which emphasized more on the idea of nation state.

Way Forward

- Swami Vivekananda saw the spirituality as point of convergence for all religious forces of diverse India capable of unifying into a national current. Like Vivekananda, Aurobindo Ghosh and Mahatma Gandhi also realized that religion and spirituality are in the veins of Indians and worked for India's unification through awakening the force of religion and spirituality.

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