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**23**



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## INDIAN SOCIAL THINKERS

*In* this lesson, you will learn about the contributions that Indian social thinkers have made to the understanding of Indian society. You will also learn about their religious and intellectual contributions to the culture of India. We shall acquaint you with a brief account of the central ideas beginning with the Indus Valley Civilization till the advent of Swami Vivekanand.



### OBJECTIVES

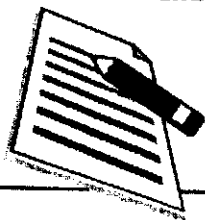
After reading this lesson, you will be able to:

- the history of early religions and philosophy of India; and
- understand the salient contributions made by some Indian social thinkers.

### 23.1 OVERVIEW

#### 23.1.1 The Earliest Civilization: Indus Valley Civilization (3000-2000 B.C.)

The early beginnings of social thoughts in India can be traced to the discoveries at Mohenjo-daro, where a city was built about five thousand years ago. From the traces that have been discovered, some ideas about the way of life of the people who lived at that time may be understood. Among the remains, there are terracota icons (figures) of the mother goddess (*shakti*), phallus (the male genital, *linga*), and a male god seated in the posture of a *yogi*. Many scholars regard this god as the earliest form of Lord Shiva. Some archaeologists say that there is enough



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indication that the worship of Shiva in the form of phallus might be traced to the Indus Valley.

### 23.1.2 The Vedas

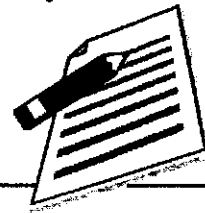
We know about the Aryans civilization and its social thoughts from the sacred books called the Vedas. The term Veda denotes the four collections of verses called Samhitas. They are Rigveda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, and Atharva Veda. The term Vedic literature denotes the whole mass of literature that the Aryans produced during the first thousand years or more of their settlement in India. The Vedic literature comprises Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and Upanishads. These four are placed in a chronological (time) sequence. They represent the four successive stages in the development of Vedic literature. The earliest text is Rigveda Samhita.

Of these, the *Rig Veda* was the first to be composed. It is regarded as the foundation of the Vedic literature. The *Rig Veda* is divided into ten chapters or books, called *mandalas*. The hymns were composed by Vedic sage or rights over very long period of time. The *Rig Veda* hymns are simple expressions of veryday desires of the early Vedic people for such material gains as cattle, horses and food. Sometimes they also contain prayers for victory in war, for rain or for children. They are addressed to such Rig Vedic deities *Indra*, *Agni*, *Varuna*, *Surya* and others. We, therefore, learn from the *Rig Veda* about the religious beliefs and social and economic life of the early Vedic people. For example, the prayers for many sons will indicate the importance of the male child in the family.

The *Sama Veda*, which was composed in the later Vedic period, is a collection of those portions of the *Rig Veda* which were meant to be sung during the performance of a *Yaja*. Since it is mostly the hymns of the *Rig Veda* which have been reproduced into the *Sama Veda*, the literary and historical value of the latter is lesser. But the importance of *Sama Veda* lies in its rhythm or melody which is supposed to possess a kind of magical power.

The *Yajur Veda* has come down to us in two forms: the *Shukla Yajur Veda* and *Krishna Yajur Veda*. The main difference between the two is that whereas the former contains only formulas or spells called *Yajus* from which the name *Yajur Veda* is derived, the latter contains discussions on the rituals connected with *yajans*.

The *Atharva Veda* which was the last to be composed, is mainly a compilation of the primitive magical charms designed to secure the fulfilment of a variety of desires, ranging from the cure for some disease to the winning of the lover's heart. Some of these ideas and beliefs may have been adopted by the Vedic people from the indigenous people with whom they came into close cultural contact.



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The next form of Vedic literature are the Brahmanas. They are written in prose and are in the form of commentaries on the four Vedas. The Aitareya, Kausitaki, Jaiminiya, Satapatha and Taittiriya are some of these Brahmanas.

The concluding portions or appendices to the Brahmanas were called Aranyakas or texts composed in forests. Perhaps, their content was of so secret a nature that they could be composed and studied only in the forests. They deal mainly with the subject of mysticism of the Yajna rituals. They give philosophical interpretation of these rituals.

The *Rig, Sama, Yajur and Atharva* are the four Vedas. The Aranyakas were probably composed in forests. The *Upanishads* form the major base of the later philosophical thinking in India.

### 23.1.3 The age of rethinking

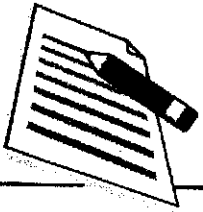
The period that followed the early Upanishads saw the emergence of belief in a personal god to be worshipped with devotion (*bhakti*). This view was opposed to the one of an impersonal God (*brahma*) to be realized through meditation and knowledge. This age also saw the rise of Buddhism and Jainism.

#### Gautam Buddha & Mahavir

Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, was born in a royal family. He lived for eighty years, dying in 487 B.C. He attained enlightenment (i.e., he became the Buddha) at the age of thirty-five. During the years 532–487 B.C., he systematized the fundamental principles of his thought, which came to be known as Buddhism.

Vardhmana Mahavira, usually regarded as the founder of Jainism, was born in Vaishali. He attained supreme knowledge at the age of forty-two. The effective period of his religious life may be placed between 497 and 467 B.C. But Jainism claims to be much older than this period. Jains believe that there were twenty-three 'teachers' (*tirthankara*) before Mahavira, and Mahavira was the last *tirthankara*. Jains have a rich tradition of tales woven around their twenty-four *tirthankaras*.

Buddhism does not acknowledge the presence of any supreme god. The ideas, therefore, built around god have no place in it. Neither does it have the idea of a personal god, one with whom one has relations of love and affection. In Buddhism, the only way to attain salvation (*nirvana*, i.e., permanent release from the cycle of birth and death) is by following a set of ethical and moral principles. It refuses to accept the principles of the Hindu social order, i.e., the *varna* and *jati* system. It does not lend support to the system of animal sacrifice.



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Jainism also consists of many of the elements that characterize Buddhism. It championed the practice of 'non-violence' (*ahimsa*), which is central to its ideology. Jainism puts a lot of emphasis on carrying out those practices (such as fasting, abstinence from sex, etc.) that purify human beings, because it believes that each individual's soul is eternal. There is no idea of one eternal soul in which the individual souls are believed to merge.

Impetus (driving force) to Jainism came from the Nanda kings and the emperor Chandragupta Maurya (321-296 B.C.). During the latter's rule, Jainism spread over the whole of India. But its expansion was also marked by the emergence of two sects, namely Digambara, whose ascetics remained 'sky-clad' (i.e., 'naked'), and Svetambara, whose ascetics wore white robes. Buddhism obtained a dominant position in India under the patronage of Emperor Ashoka (273-236 B.C.), the grandson of Chandragupta Maurya. Under Ashoka's patronage, Buddhism spread not only all over India but also far outside its boundaries. With the dominance of Buddhism, Jainism lost its stronghold in eastern India, but found a shelter in the south and west.

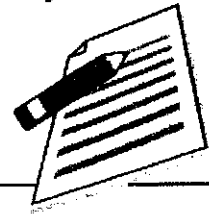
### INTEXT QUESTIONS 23.1

Fill in the blanks:

1. The beginnings of social thoughts in India may be traced to the \_\_\_\_\_ civilization.
2. The sacred books of the Aryans are collectively known as the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The term *yajna* means '\_\_\_\_\_'.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. The basic features of Hinduism flow from the works called the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The founder of Buddhism was born in a \_\_\_\_\_ family.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ was born in Vaishali.
7. The term \_\_\_\_\_ is used for the twenty-four teachers of Jainism.
8. The concept of non-violence is known as \_\_\_\_\_.
9. *Chaturvarna* means the division of Hindu society into \_\_\_\_\_.

### 23.2 RE-SURGENCE OF BRAHMANISM

Historians regard the fourth century A.D. as an important turning point in India. From that time, the Brahmanical religion (Hinduism) gradually became dominant. Both Buddhism and Jainism declined. By the twelfth century A.D., Buddhism had



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almost vanished from India, and Jainism was reduced to the position of a local sect in western and southern India. With the decline of Buddhism and Jainism, the Brahmanical religion gradually rose into prominence.

However, it was not homogeneous. It consisted of different sectarian groups, such as the Saiva, Sakta, and Vaisnava. As we know, Saivism dealt with the worship of Shiva. Saktism was concerned with the worship of the female counterpart of Shiva. Vaisnavism was based on the cult of Vishnu and his incarnations.

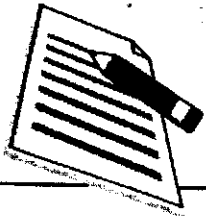
### 23.3 KAUTILYA'S STATE CRAFT

The earliest systematic treatise (a body of thoughts) on the science of politics is the Arthashastra, written by Kautilya, who was also known as Chanakya and Vishnugupta. By birth, he was Brahmin. Born and probably educated at Taxila, he began his career as a practitioner of medicine. He was a man of profound learning and was familiar with Greek and Persian intellectual traditions. He was a friend, counsellor, and prime minister of Chandragupta Maurya. He was the principal architect of the Maurya administration. His Arthashastra, a text divided into fifteen books (*adhyakshana*), might probably be a product of the later part of the fourth century B.C. The original text was believed to be lost in the beginning and was known from its quotations by later authors. In 1909, the full text of Arthashastra was recovered and published.

A study of Arthashastra makes it clear that the art of the administration of state must have developed over a long period of time. Kautilya himself acknowledges the contributions of his predecessors to the science of politics. He compiles their theories, and adds his comments on them. He opens his text with acknowledgements to two political thinkers, namely Sukra and Brahaspati. He also refers to four or five schools of thought, a dozen authors, and also to his teacher (*acharya*), whom he does not mention by name.

Kautilya says that the state has to perform two functions, namely, first, to protect and ensure the welfare of people, and second, to consolidate itself. The first function of the state is *tantra*, and the second, *drapa*. Arthashastra is arranged in a manner where *tantra* is taken up first, followed by *drapa*.

We said earlier that Arthashastra is divided into fifteen books. Books I to V deal with *tantra*. These books deal with the discipline and training of the king, his duties, the exercise of coercive authority (*danda*), bureaucratic set up, duties and responsibilities of the heads of various departments, hierarchy of officials, revenue accounts, civil and criminal laws, suppression of anti-social elements and payment of officials, etc. Books VI to XIV deal with *drapa*. Characteristics of the state; foreign policy; dangers and calamities that may befall the king; natural disasters,



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such as drought and flood, military campaigns and employment of secret agencies against enemies, are the issues discussed in these books. The last book of Arthashastra contains a glossary of the technical terms used in the science of politics.

Arthashastra is concerned with politics (*raja-niti*), political philosophy (*raja-dharma*), and the laws of punishment (*danda-niti*). But, an important observation is that Arthashastra treats economic aspects as an integral part of the state and social relations. Because of this, some experts say that Arthashastra is a text in political economy. One of the principal duties of the king is to manage the wealth of the state. The word *artha* has come to refer to economy and the financial aspects of the state.

Commentators on Arthashastra also say that Kautilya gave almost unlimited powers to the state. For him, each king should be considered as a potential world conqueror (*chakravarti*). The government regulated the economic life of the country. All the important industrial enterprises were the property of the state, which also owned mines, fisheries, farms, forests, fields and shipyards etc. The state should work directly with the labour of criminals and slaves. The enterprises could also be given to the contractors for running. Police secret agents and spies infiltrated all walks of life. Punishment was the order of the day. Punishment of criminals was rigorous.

### INTEXT QUESTIONS 23.2

Fill in the blanks with appropriate word or words:

1. The Code of Manu is called \_\_\_\_\_.
2. There are \_\_\_\_\_ verses in Manu-smriti.
3. The last *asrama* is called \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ was entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that the social system continued without problems.
5. The earliest systematic treatise in the science of politics is written by \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The other names of Kautilya were \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Kautilya was the chief architect of \_\_\_\_\_ administration.
8. Arthashastra is divided into \_\_\_\_\_ books.
9. Because economy is an integral aspect of the state administration, therefore some scholars say that Arthashastra is a text in \_\_\_\_\_.

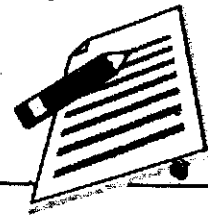
**23.4 MANU**

In this section, we shall provide a short account of the contribution of Manu. Manu's work, the Code of Manu, as it is called in English, is known as *Manu-smriti*, *Manava-dharmashastra*, and *Manu-samhita*. The present text possibly took its form during the Brahmanic revival in the first century B.C.

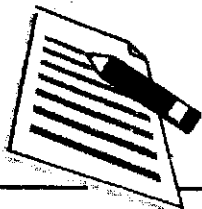
Manu-smriti consists of 2,685 verses. It is divided into twelve books. The first book carries an introductory section on creation. The second book gives the sources of law. It describes the first of the four 'vocations' (*asrama*) of life, i.e., of the 'celibate-student' (*brahamachari*), and gives an account of his duties. The third and fourth books deal with the second *asrama*, i.e. of the householder (*grahasta*), and the duties that should be followed. The occupations of the householder are also detailed out here. The fifth book describes the rules concerning women. The sixth book deals with the last two *asrama*, namely of forest dwelling (*vanaprastha*) and renunciation (*samnyasa*). Books seven, eight, and nine are concerned with the legal system, the sources of law, general political rules, duties of kings, civil and criminal laws, and domestic laws. The tenth book pertains to the origin, development, and rules of caste. It describes rules for the merchant caste (Vaishya), the menial caste (Sudra), and mixed castes. The general laws of morality, the nature of good and evil, gifts and sacrifice, and sins are the subject matter of the eleventh book. The last book comprising Manu-smriti takes up for discussion the future consequences of good and bad actions, the nature of the soul, the concept of release from the cycle of birth and death (called *moksa*), and the theory of re-birth.

Manu advises man to take control of his self-interests. This, however, does not imply that he should abstain from pleasure. Rather, the system of ideas Manu puts forward is that one must enjoy and derive pleasure in life, fulfilling one's passions (*kama*), and also achieving worldly success (*artha*). But, man should realize that *kama* and *artha* are not everything that man wants. Although one does not hold negative views towards pleasure and worldly achievements, one also realizes that the final aim of life should be to achieve permanent release from the world. This is possible when one adopts the ascetic life, the life of a *samnyasin*. But one should move to the existence of a forest dweller (*vanaprastha*), the stage before the life of a *samnyasin*, after having fulfilled one's duties as a householder.

Manu rationalized the existence of several social groups, in addition to the four *varnas*, to hypergamous and hypogamous marriages among the *varnas*. He called these social groups *jatis* and assigned specific occupations to each one of them, thus ensuring employment for everyone. The social groups were unequally placed, but each individual was important because he contributed to the entire system. Each social group followed its duty (*svadharma*), including occupation, and



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enjoyed a monopoly over it. However, it was dependent upon others for various services. Social solidarity (unity) resulted from the inter-dependence of these groups. One of the jobs of the king was to ensure the functioning of the system.

### INTEXT QUESTIONS 23.3

Write the answer in one sentence:

1. Name the six systems of philosophy that accepted the authority of Vedas.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. To which religion did Emperor Chandragupta Maurya lend his support?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Name the two sects of Jainism.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Who was the grandson of Chandragupta Maurya?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What do you understand by the term Saivism?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Name the emperor under whose patronage Buddhism flourished in India.

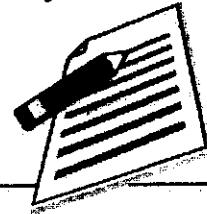
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### 23.5 VAISNAVA TEACHERS

Many reform movements have taken place in Hinduism. Vaisnava teachers made a significant contribution to the culture of the medieval age. They spread the message in local language for the benefit of people. They ignored the caste distinctions, admitting even the lowest castes in their folds. They rejected rituals and laid stress on morality and purity. Barring (excluding) saints like Ramananda and Chaitanya, the others altogether discarded the worship of idols and images. The disciples of Ramananda had their followers from different castes and classes.

One of the disciples of Ramananda, Kabir, was a Muslim weaver. Dadu was a cotton-cleaner, and Ravidasa was a leather worker. Their disciples were also from different castes and classes. For instance, Dharmadasa, a disciple of Kabir, was a merchant by caste. In turn, their followers were not only from different





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castes and classes, they were also from different religions. Because of this, there began a process of leveling and creating equality between people, but this affected only some parts of the society. Otherwise, the communities – such as the Hindus and Muslims – maintained their seclusion.

### 23.6 SIKHISM

The doctrine of one God was revived in the thoughts of Nanak (1469-1539), who is regarded as the founder of what has later come to be known as Sikhism. Nanak believed in the idea of one true God, without any name. He also believed that there is no intermediate agency between God and his subjects (the people). It discredited all rites and rituals as part of religion. There is no prophet. He put faith in one self-existent creator, whose true nature can not be expressed in words. God can be comprehended not by meditation but by faith and grace. Here, we trace the influence of the Bhakti cult on his thoughts.

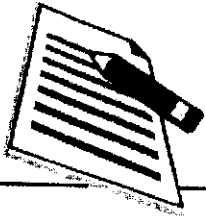
### 23.7 THE THOUGHTS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The eighteenth century was marked by the influence of Western thought. It led to certain religious reforms the nineteenth century. As a result, Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, and the Theosophical Society were founded. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Ramakrishna Paramhansa gave a distinct direction to Hinduism. His disciple, Swami Vivekananda, developed the Vedanta philosophy. We shall read about his contribution later in this chapter.

### INTEXT QUESTIONS 23.4

Which of the following statements is true or false. Write T after the statement that is true and F after the statement that is false.

1. Vaisnava teachers ignored caste distinctions.
2. Ramananda's disciples came from higher castes only.
3. Dadu was from the priestly caste.
4. Guru Nanak is regarded as the founder of a religion that has come to be known as Sikhism.
5. Dharmadasa was a disciple of Swami Ramakrishna Paramhansa.



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### 23.8 GAUTAMA BUDDHA

The term Buddha means 'enlightened', one who has attained the knowledge of life. Buddhism derives from the teachings of **Siddhartha Gautama**, a Hindu prince in a small kingdom in South Nepal in the sixth century B.C.

The central principle of Buddhism is that a particular way of life would lead to salvation (*nirvana, nibbana*), i.e., liberation from the life cycle. Buddhism recognizes the four 'noble truths':

- Life is suffering.
- The cause of sufferings rests in desires (*trishna, lobha*), the emotions of attachment (*moha*), and ignorance (*avidya*).
- As the desires cause jealousy, anger, and hatred, thus yielding sorrow, their elimination is a necessary condition for salvation.
- Therefore, one should follow the path leading to the state of desirelessness, because it is the only way to happiness (*sukh*), which is liberation.

Because human beings have desires, they are chained to the wheel of destiny, and pass from one body to another, suffering each time. At the end of their lives, most people have so much of desires left with them that they are reborn in another body. Once again, they start the cycle of desire and sorrow.

In order to start one's journey along the path of liberation, one should follow the Eightfold Path (*asthpatha*). It consists of right views, right attitude, right speech, right conduct, right means of livelihood, right effort or purpose, right mind control, and right meditation. This path will lead one from the state of selfishness (*ahamkara*) to that of compassion (*karuna*). It is by following a path of moral living that one will be able to break from the chain of re-birth, old age, and death. In Buddhism, there is neither, as we have read earlier, a concept of god nor of any attachment to any personal god. Besides the **Eightfold Path**, one must adhere to the **five principles**:

- Refrain from injuring living things.
- Refrain from taking what is not given.
- Refrain from all forms of sexual desires (*kama*).
- Refrain from all forms of falsehood, i.e., lies, in word and deed.
- Refrain from worldly enjoyments: no drugs, no drink, and no laziness.

The Buddhist should try to raise himself to a state of *brahmavihara*, i.e., where his body is inhabited by the divine entity. For this, he follows the four rules of:

- Loving kindness (*metta*): A Buddhist acquires a complete understanding of his fellow beings. He regards them as his own relatives, whose sufferings he knows.
- Compassion (*karuna*): Once the Buddhist knows that he is one of the elements in the entire existence, he tries to help others in their sufferings. He tries to help them come out of that.
- Joy (*mudita*): The Buddhist shares the joy he gets with all those who are in need of it. The Buddha is said to have said repeatedly: 'Let all be happy.'
- The state of being calm in mind and temper (*upekkha, upeksha*): Nothing must be allowed to disturb the clarity of the Buddhist mind. All strong emotions are harmful. Death does not frighten those who are not attached to life. In other words, one who is enlightened fears no one.

All this would guide one to the state of liberation.

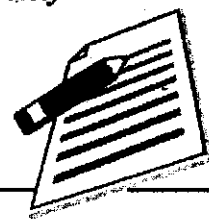
### 23.9 KABIR, A SAINT OF THE BHAKTI TRADITION

Kabir was a saint of the **fifteenth century**. Both Hindus and Muslims respect him. Although not much is known about his birth and biography, he was probably born in a family of Muslim weavers (*julaha*). His words have been compiled in a text called *Veijak*, and some of them have found a place in the *Guru Granth Sahib* of the Sikhs, which Guru Arjun compiled in the Punjab around 1604.

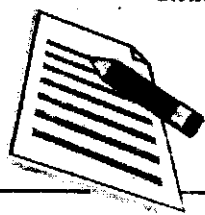
Liberal Hindus and Muslims see him as the champion of Hindu-Muslim unity. However, Kabir outrightly rejected the dichotomy of these religions. For him, there could be no revealed religion. He warned people against searching for truth in holy books. He also rejected the value of yogic exercises in reaching god. He believed in a simple and natural life. He himself wove cloth and like any other weaver, sold it in the market. For him, religious life did not imply a life of idleness. All men should work, earn their living, and help one another. One should not accumulate money, because accumulations would give rise to corruption. Therefore, wealth should remain in circulation. Kabir's view of the world is expressed in simple thoughts and in the language of the people.

Kabir's notion of god seems to go beyond the notion of a personal god, despite the fact that one may call him Ram or Khuda. They are just names for the all-pervading reality. Kabir speaks of the *satguru*, a teacher who speaks from the soul. The difference among faiths is only due to difference in names, but everywhere people are looking for the same god. Therefore, Kabir asked, why should there be quarrels between people of different faiths.

Because of his attacks on holy men, Kabir became an ideal of the downtrodden



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people. He was regarded as a great mystic, whose ideas cut across different religious groups and faiths. When Kabir was dying in a small town called Magahar (near Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh), his Hindu and Muslim followers wanted to take his body for a funeral in accordance with their religion. So, the story goes: Kabir retired in a tent and died, and his body also disappeared. Instead, that place had a heap of flowers, which was divided into two. The Muslims buried their share of flowers in Magahar, whereas the Hindus cremated their share at Kabir Chaura Math in Banaras. Today, members of both communities respect him as the messenger of truth, despite his views in favour of a universal religion.

### INTEXT QUESTIONS 23.5

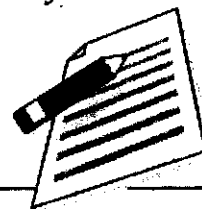
Answer the following questions in one sentence.

1. What is the meaning of the term Buddha?
2. Whose teachings comprise the body of Buddhism?
3. Give the principles of the Eightfold Path that Buddhists should follow.
4. To which century did Kabir belong?
5. Who was Kabir's teacher?
6. When was Guru Granth Sahib compiled?
7. Who compiled Guru Granth Sahib?
8. In which town did Kabir die?

### 23.10 SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Swami Vivekananda was born as **Narendranath Dutta**, on 12 January 1863 in an aristocratic Kayastha family in Bengal. In adolescence, Narendranath grew up to be a rationalist, that is, he would not accept anything on faith, but wanted a valid proof. At an early age, he came in contact with Keshub Chandra Sen, a member of Brahmo Samaj (the 'Society of God'), and was considerably impressed by his ideas and teachings, especially the idea that human beings can perfect themselves by their own efforts. Narendranath supported the social reform programmes of **Brahmo Samaj**, but did not accept the idea of rejecting the ascetic path of aszetics.

In November 1881, it was accidentally in the house of a devotee of Brahmo Samaj that Narendranath had a meeting with the great saint of Dakshineswar, **Ramakrishna Paramhansa (1836-1886)**, a devotee of goddess Kali. After



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that, he had a series of meetings with Ramakrishna, in which he often remained unconvinced about the spiritual experiences of the great ascetic. Finally, in one meeting, a mere touch of Ramakrishna made Narendranath gave an unforgettable spiritual experience. In 1885, Narendranath accepted Ramakrishna as his teacher and thus began a period of intensive religious training for him that lasted until Ramakrishna's death in April 1886.

Narendranath became a renouncer and proceeded on a pilgrimage. During this period, he developed an ideological position that combined the Vedanta philosophy with the devotional insights of Ramakrishna. All this was not supposed to remain at a theoretical level. Narendranath tried to combine this with social concerns that he identified with the Buddha and modern reformers. The most significant breakthrough in the life of Narendranath came in 1893 when he represented Hinduism in the World Parliament of Religions held in Chicago.

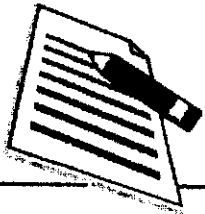
In his address at Chicago, and the other lectures that he delivered, he sought the support of the West for the revitalization of Hinduism. He accepted all religious faiths as true, but declared that the 'mother of all religions' was Hinduism. All forms of doubt and disbelief had a place within the Hindu thought. Vivekananda created a world wide religious movement based on the principles of Hinduism. With that purpose in mind and with the help of his Western disciples, he founded the Vedanta Society in New York in 1895, which had its offshoots in London and Boston. After spending four fruitful years abroad, Vivekananda returned to India in 1897. He founded the Ramakrishna Mission on 1 May 1897, which now has hundreds of its centers all over the world.

Vivekananda opposed child marriage, oppression of lower castes, and subjugation of women. He stressed the need for service to the poor, illiterate, and the sick. He believed that no religion or law was higher than 'service to mankind'. He called his religion 'practical Vedanta', because for him, religion must be put into practice only. Vivekananda's mission was to create a 'European society' with India's religion, i.e., a religious society where the needs of all were fulfilled. In other words, Vivekananda tried to combine in his thoughts both the spiritual and material aspects.

### INTEXT QUESTIONS 23.6

(✓) Tick mark the correct answer and X the wrong statement.

1. The worldly name of Swami Vivekananda was Narendranath Dutta.
2. Swami Vivekananda was a Brahmin by birth.



Notes

3. Swami Vivekananda did not accept an idea unless there was a proof for it.
4. Ramakrishna Paramhansa gave the idea of 'muscular Hinduism'.
5. Keshub Chandra Sen founded the Theosophical Society.



### WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- The growth of various social thoughts in India.
- A survey of these ideas right from the beginning of the Indus Valley Civilization to the recent times.
- The contributions that Manu, Chanakya, Buddha, Kabir, and Vivekananda have made to the Indian social thoughts.
- The Upanishads are the collective works of scholars in different times.
- The period that followed the early Upanishads saw the emergence of belief in a personal god to be worshipped with devotion (*bhakti*).
- During the period between 400 and 200 B.C., six systems of philosophy (namely, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Purva-Mimamsa, and Vedanta) emerged.
- Historians regard the fourth century A.D. as an important turning point in India. From that time, the Brahmanical religion (Hinduism) gradually came to a dominant place. Both Buddhism and Jainism declined.
- Christian communities were present in India as early as second century A.D.
- The followers of Zoroastrianism called Parsis were in India from the tenth century A.D.
- The doctrine of one god was revived in the thoughts of Nanak (1469-1539), who is regarded as the founder of what has later come to be known as Sikhism.
- Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, and the Theosophical Society were founded towards the end of the nineteenth century. Ramakrishna Paramhansa gave a distinct direction to Hinduism.
- The Code of Manu, as it is called in English, is known as *Manu-smriti*, *Manava-dharmashastra*, and *Manu-samhita*.
- The earliest systematic treatise (a body of thoughts) on the science of politics is the Arthashastra, written by Kautilya, who was also known as Chanakya and Vishnugupta.



Notes

- The term Buddha means 'enlightened', one who has attained the knowledge of life.
- Kabir was a saint of the fifteenth century. Both Hindus and Muslims respect him.
- Swami Vivekananda was the religious name of Narendranath Dutta, who was born on 12 January 1863 in an aristocratic Kayastha family in Bengal.
- Narendranath supported the social reform programmes of Brahmo Samaj, but did not accept the idea of rejecting the ascetic (hermitlike) path.
- Vivekananda's mission was to create a 'European society' with India's religion.



### TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Who was the founder of Buddhism? What are the four noble truths of Buddhism? Describe it.
2. Which religions came from outside? Describe them in your own words.
3. With which ideas does Manu-Smriti deal with? Discuss.
4. What does Kautilya's Arthashastra tell? Describe in your own words.
5. Why did Kabir become an ideal for lower classes? Discuss.



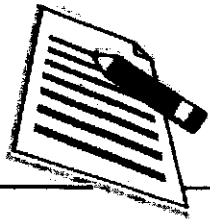
### ANSWER TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

23.1

- |                       |                |           |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------|
| 1) Mohanjodaro        | 2) Hinduism    | 3) Vedas  |
| 4) sacrifice          | 5) Upanishads  | 6) royal  |
| 7) Vardhamana Mahavir | 8) tirthankara | 9) ahimsa |
| 10) four puarnas      |                |           |

23.2

- 2) Jainism
- 3) Digambara, Svetambara
- 4) Emperor Ashoka
- 5) Saivism deals with the worship of Shiva
- 6) Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Islam



**Notes**

7) Parsis

8) End of seventh century, 712 A.D.

9) Ashoka

**23.3**

1) T

2) F

3) F

4) T

5) F

**23.4**

1) Manusmriti

2) 2,685

4) king

5) Kautilya

6) Chanakya and Vishnugupta

7) Maurya

8) fifteen

9) political economy

**23.5**

1. enlightened

2. Siddhartha Gautama

3. Right views, right attitude, right speech, right conduct, right means of livelihood, right efforts or purpose, right mind control and right meditation

4. fifteenth century

5. Ramananda

6. 1604

7. Guru Arjun

8. Magahar

**23.6**

1) T

2) F

3) T

4) F

5) F