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Q3(c)

"In law, a man is guilty when he violates the rights of others. In ethics, he is guilty if he only thinks of doing so." - Immanuel Kant.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2024 · GS IV · 10 marks · Ethics and Human Interface

Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in-human actions; dimensions of ethics; ethics - in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators; role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.

Core demand of the question

- (a) **Vivekananda**: learn the good from others; absorb in your own way; do not become a copy
- (b) **Patel**: faith without strength cannot finish a great work; both are needed
- (c) **Kant**: law punishes the act against others' rights; ethics already condemns the mere will to do it

Revision summary

Vivekananda asked India to learn the good from others and digest it, not to become a copy that scorns its own poor.

Patel held that faith without strength cannot complete a great public work, and strength without faith is only force.

- **Kant drew a line**: law waits for the rights-violating act; ethics already condemns the will to do it.

Together they train identity, delivery and inner integrity.

A dashboard, a riot plan and an unsent communal file are the present-tense tests.

Introduction

Three lamps, one present tense. **Vivekananda** warns a borrowing nation not to **become the lender**. **Patel** warns a pious officer that **faith without muscle** does not integrate a State. **Kant** warns that **ethics begins before the FIR**. Together they are **identity, capacity and inner law** - still the civil servant's kit.

Body**(a) Vivekananda: absorb, do not become others**

The line is against **imitation that erases the self**. Learn **germ theory, a good civil code, a working port**. Do not import **contempt for your own people** or a **costume of another civilisation**. "In your own way" is **digestion**, which is how India took the **Constitution's** borrowed furniture and still had to **grow constitutional morality (Ambedkar)** at home. For a civil servant this is **policy transfer with a field visit**: a Singapore dashboard that **excludes a tribal household** is not "world class". It is **becoming others** at the poor's cost. Atmanirbhar

is ethical when it is **self-respect plus learning**, not **xenophobia**. **Vivekananda's man-making** is character that can **use** a tool without **worshipping** the tool's country.

(b) Patel: faith and strength

Sardar Patel integrated **hundreds of States** with **negotiation, pressure and an army in reserve**. Faith without strength is a **prayer over a collapsing dam**. Strength without faith is **brutality**. The quote is **Weber's ethic of responsibility** plus **ethic of conviction** in one Indian mouth. A communal riot needs **belief in fraternity** and **a lathi that arrives**. A welfare scheme needs **belief in the widow** and **a payment system that works**. Mission-mode without values is **target cruelty**. Values without delivery are **a speech**. Patel's civil servant is the one who **files, moves, and still does not hate**.

(c) Kant: guilty in ethics at the thought of violating rights

Law, in a liberal State, generally waits for an **act** (and sometimes a **preparation**). Ethics, for **Kant**, looks at the **maxim**. If I **will** to falsify a muster, I have already used persons as **means**, even if the pen has not moved. This is not a call for a **thought police**. It is a call for **integrity before audit**. Professional ethics - a doctor imagining a **fake trial**, a judge imagining a **caste bias**, an officer imagining a **nephew's tender** - must **stop the will**, not only the gazette. Mens rea in criminal law is a cousin; **Kant** is stricter because **inner respect for the moral law** is the motive he wants, not fear of CBI. In the present context of **viral hate and silent communal files**, the quote says: **the tweet you almost sent** already failed ethics if it **willed harm**.

- **The three together: do not become a copy, do not be a weak believer, do not wait for the crime to begin in the street.**

Flow diagram

Vivekananda: absorb -> Civil servant
 Patel: faith plus strength -> Civil servant
 Kant: guilty at the will -> Civil servant

Conclusion

Vivekananda wants learning without self-erasure. Patel wants faith that can actually finish the work. **Kant** wants guilt to start when the will to violate a right is born, not only when the statute is broken. A public servant needs all three.

Facts & figures

Vivekananda on borrowing

He urged Indians to take science and organisation from the world without surrendering spiritual and civilisational self-respect.

Integration of States

Patel's work with V.P. Menon used diplomacy and, where needed, force; the quote matches that mix of conviction and capacity.

Categorical imperative

Kant's test: act only on a maxim you could will as universal law; using a person only as a tool fails it.

Constitutional morality

Ambedkar's reminder that forms must be learned; a borrowed Constitution still needs an Indian habit of obeying it.

Ethic of responsibility

Weber's idea that a political actor must own consequences, not only keep clean hands in intention.

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