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Q5(a)

## **Elaborate the concept of constitutional morality as given by B.R.Ambedkar.**

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2018 · Sociology GS 2 · 10 marks · Perspectives on the study of Indian society  
Perspectives on the study of Indian society: Indology (G.S. Ghurye); Structural functionalism (M.N. Srinivas); Marxist sociology (A.R. Desai).

### **Core demand of the question**

- Elaborate the concept of constitutional morality as given by **B.R. Ambedkar**
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length

### **Revision summary**

Constitutional morality is loyalty to constitutional forms and spirit, not only to a majority.

**Ambedkar** needed it because caste custom contradicts equal citizenship.

It protects opposition, procedure, and lawful power.

It is the ethic that should close Beteille's disharmony.

Without the habit, the Constitution remains paper.

### **Introduction**

**Ambedkar** used constitutional morality to mean a public ethic of following the Constitution's forms, limits, and spirit, not only winning a majority. It is the habit that makes a written Constitution live among a people used to ranked custom.

### **Body**

#### **What he meant**

- **Grote's** phrase, which **Ambedkar** borrowed, names respect for constitutional procedures, opposition rights, and lawful power.
- **In India it had to fight caste morality:** graded inequality, endogamy, and the claim that sacred custom outranks the document.
- **Annihilation of caste** and equal citizenship are the social content; parliamentary form is the method.

#### **Why it was necessary**

- A people can have a Constitution and still obey khap, priest, or mob.
- **Andre Beteille's later disharmony is the field:** equality as law, hierarchy as honour. Constitutional morality is the work of closing that gap.

#### **Contemporary use**

- Courts invoke it for liberty and dignity, including gender and transgender personhood.

- It is not a licence for judges to ignore the text. It is a warning to majorities not to treat the text as optional.

### Flow diagram

Ambedkar -> Constitutional morality  
Constitutional morality -> Procedure opposition rights  
Constitutional morality -> Equal citizenship versus caste custom  
Constitutional morality -> Educative habit

### Conclusion

Constitutional morality, for **Ambedkar**, is cultivated respect for constitutional limits and for the equal civic worth the text declares. Without it, adult franchise becomes a headcount over a caste society. With it, the document can educate a disharmonic India.

### Facts & figures

#### Grote

Historian from whom **Ambedkar** took the phrase constitutional morality.

#### Constituent Assembly

Where **Ambedkar** warned that democracy needs this cultivated ethic.

#### Caste morality

The rival ethic of graded inequality that the Constitution must displace.

#### Annihilation of Caste

The social programme without which constitutional forms stay hollow.