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O.P. Jindal Global University

Sonipat Narela Road, Near Jagdishpur Village, Sonipat, Haryana - 131001



Jindal Global Law School
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“Framing the Predicament of Indian Thought: Gandhi, the Gita, and Ethical Action”



SPEAKER

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Dr. Vivek Dhareshwar is Scholar-in-Residence at the Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology, Bangalore. Previously, he was Senior Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore, of which institute, he was the Director between 2001 and 2004. From 1993 to 1997, Dr. Dhareshwar was at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta, where he was Fellow in the Social Basis of Culture and Sociology. He has also been on the Visiting Faculty of the Department of Anthropology, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA.

Dr. Dhareshwar obtained a Ph.D. from the History of Consciousness Program, University of California, Santa Cruz (1989). His masters' degree was in Modern Indian History, from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. His current research investigates the role of culture in learning different kinds of knowledges. He is working on two book projects: a philosophical exploration of the relationship between norms and experience; the idea of multiple sites of ethical learning in Gandhi. He has published widely in the areas of ethics, political theory and the philosophy of culture.

Abstract

Although there is such a thing as Indian thought, it seems to play no role in the way social sciences and philosophy are practiced in India or elsewhere. The problem is not only that we no longer employ terms such as atman, avidya, dharma to reflect on our experience; the terms that we do indeed use—sovereignty, secularism, rights, civil society and political society, corruption—seem to insulate our experience from our reflection. This paper will outline Gandhi's framing of our predicament in Hind Swaraj. It will then discuss three very different examples taken from our peculiar life with concepts that will also serve to clarify and illustrate the framework I am outlining. It will then very briefly discuss how Gandhi saw the Gita as showing him a way out of the predicament.

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