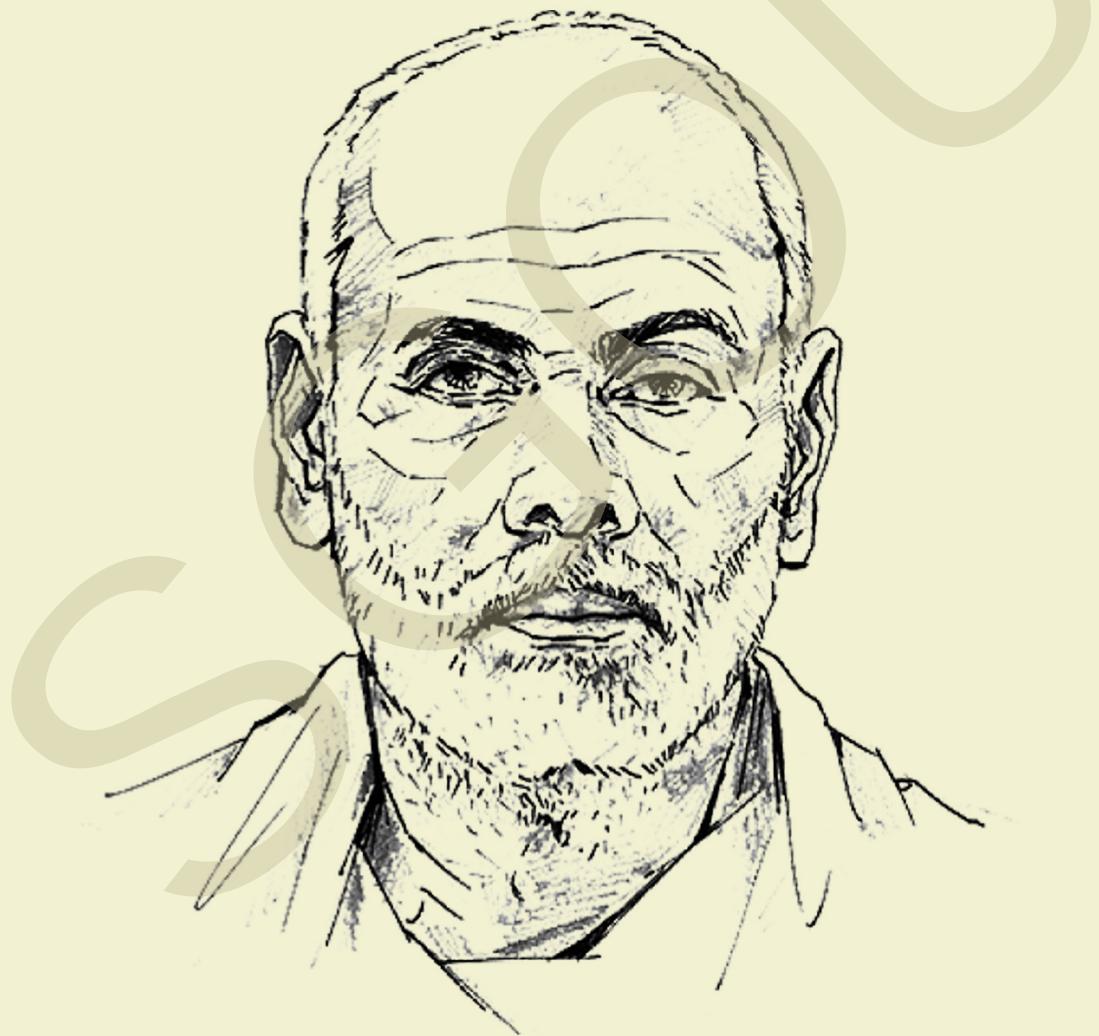


Introduction to the Philosophy of Sreenarayananaguru

COURSE CODE: B21PH01GE

Generic Elective Course
For Undergraduate Programmes
Self Learning Material



SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

Vision

To increase access of potential learners of all categories to higher education, research and training, and ensure equity through delivery of high quality processes and outcomes fostering inclusive educational empowerment for social advancement.

Mission

To be benchmarked as a model for conservation and dissemination of knowledge and skill on blended and virtual mode in education, training and research for normal, continuing, and adult learners.

Pathway

Access and Quality define Equity.

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(Model Question Paper Sets)**



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Academic Committee

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Rajendra Babu G.
Suvarna Kumar S.
Dr. Sirajull Muneer
Dr. Sairam R.
Dr. Soumyar V.

Development of the Content

MDDC

Review and Edit

Rajesh B.R.

Linguistics

Salim N., Dr. Anupriya Patra,
Akhiles U., Dr. Anu Alphons Sebastian,
Dr. Anfal M.

Scrutiny

Rajesh B.R., Dr. Vijay Francis,
Dr. Robin Luke Varghese,
Feleena C.L. Dr. Deepa P.

Design Control

Azeem Babu T.A.

Cover Design

Jobin J.

Co-ordination

Director, MDDC :

Dr. I.G. Shibi

Asst. Director, MDDC :

Dr. Sajeevkumar G.

Coordinator, Development:

Dr. Anfal M.

Coordinator, Distribution:

Dr. Sanitha K.K.



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MESSAGE FROM VICE CHANCELLOR

Dear learner,

I extend my heartfelt greetings and profound enthusiasm as I warmly welcome you to Sreenarayanaguru Open University. Established in September 2020 as a state-led endeavour to promote higher education through open and distance learning modes, our institution was shaped by the guiding principle that access and quality are the cornerstones of equity. We have firmly resolved to uphold the highest standards of education, setting the benchmark and charting the course.

The programmes offered by the Sreenarayanaguru Open University aim to strike a quality balance, ensuring students are equipped for both personal growth and professional excellence. The University embraces the widely acclaimed “blended format,” a practical framework that harmoniously integrates Self-Learning Materials, Classroom Counseling, and Virtual modes, fostering a dynamic and enriching experience for both learners and instructors.

Understanding the life and teachings of Sreenarayanaguru is vital to appreciating the philosophical and social foundations. This Generic Elective Course, Introduction to the Philosophy of Sreenarayanaguru, is designed as a primary-level offering for undergraduate learners. It familiarises learners with the basic philosophical roots of Guru's thought. The course aims to inspire critical reflection and value-based living through accessible content and contextual insights. The Self-Learning Material has been meticulously crafted, incorporating relevant examples to facilitate better comprehension.

Rest assured, the university's student support services will be at your disposal throughout your academic journey, readily available to address any concerns or grievances you may encounter. We encourage you to reach out to us freely regarding any matter about your academic programme. It is our sincere wish that you achieve the utmost success.

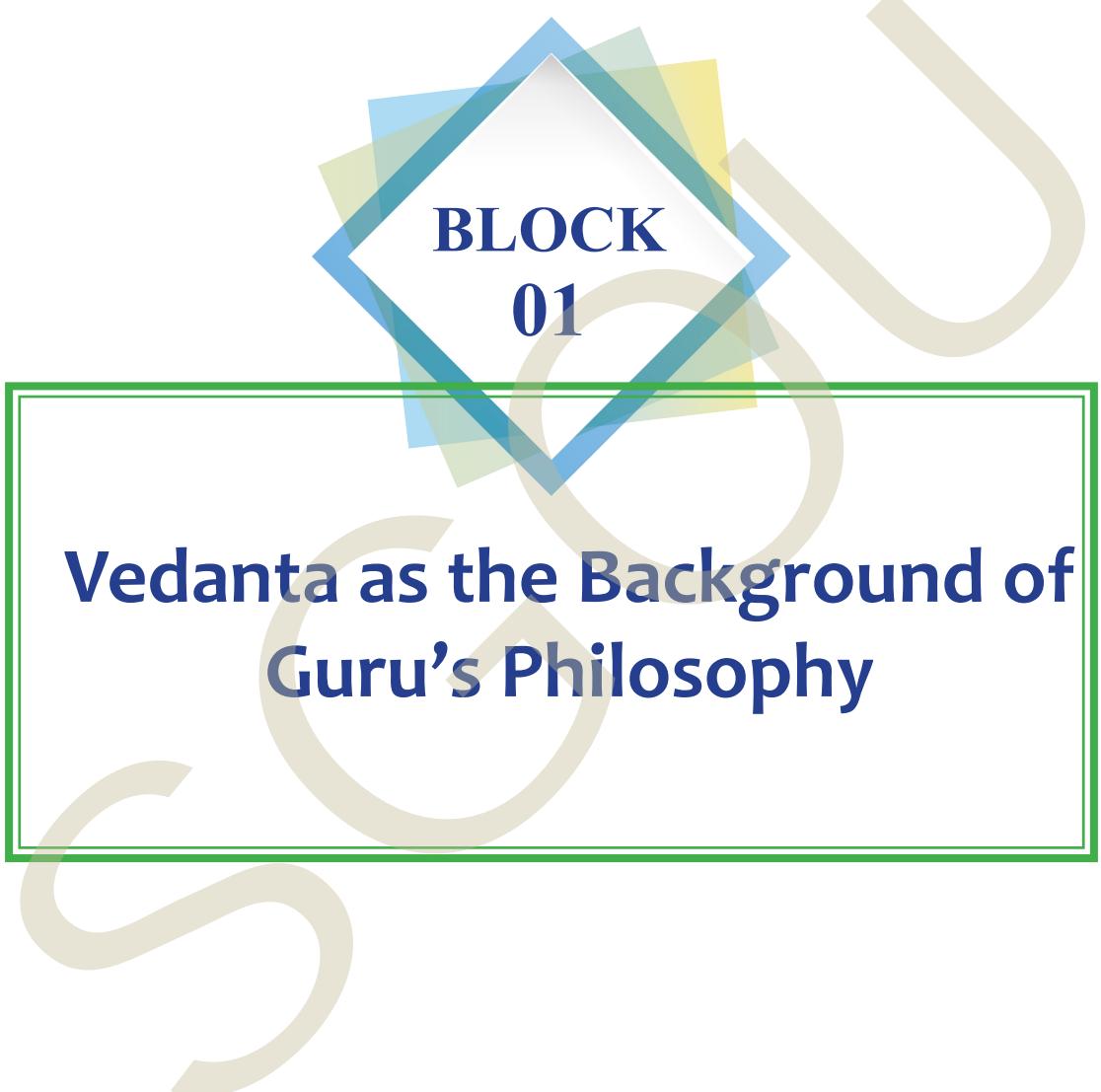


Warm regards.
Dr. Jagathy Raj V.P.

01-06-2025

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**BLOCK
01**

Vedanta as the Background of Guru's Philosophy



Unit 1

Introduction to Vedanta

L

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, learners will be able to:

- ◆ define the core concepts of Vedanta
- ◆ analyse the cycle of bondage and how Vedanta proposes Self-knowledge
- ◆ identify and interpret the five sheaths (koshas), three states of consciousness, and teaching methods like *adhyaropa-apavada*
- ◆ appreciate the practical application of Vedanta in life

P

Prerequisite

Understanding Vedanta requires a basic familiarity with Indian philosophical thought and the scriptural foundation of the Vedas, particularly the Upanishads. Vedanta, meaning “the end of the Vedas,” deals not with rituals or outer actions, but with inner transformation and the realisation of one’s true Self. Unlike earlier ritualistic portions of the Vedas, Vedanta shifts attention to questions of identity, consciousness, and liberation from the cycles of desire and suffering. It is essential that learners approach this unit with a curiosity about metaphysical ideas and a willingness to reflect deeply on the nature of self and reality. Knowledge of terms such as karma (action), bhoga (enjoyment), and moksha (liberation) will be helpful. This unit also explores the Vedantic method of teaching through *superimposition and negation*, the concept of illusion (*maya*), and how great thinkers like Adi Shankaracharya and Sree Narayana Guru applied Vedanta not just as a philosophy, but as a way of life that brings ethical clarity and social harmony. Learners are encouraged to bring a reflective and contemplative mindset to engage meaningfully with the unit.

K

Keywords

Vedanta, Brahman, Atman, Moksha, Maya, Koshas, Sree Narayana Guru

D

Discussion

1.1.1 What is Vedanta?

The word Vedanta means “the end of the Vedas” or “the end of knowledge”. It primarily refers to the Upanishads, along with the *Bhagavad Gita* and the Brahma Sutras. These texts shift the focus from rituals to inner questions, such as, “Who am I really?” Great teachers like Adi Shankara followed Vedanta, and later, Sree Narayana Guru used these ideas in his teachings. His works, such as *Atmopadesa Satakam* and *'Daiva Dasakam'*, reflect this tradition in a straightforward manner that ordinary people can understand.

1.1.2 Why Study Vedanta?

Vedanta tries to solve the problem of bondage, the feeling of being stuck in the cycle of desire, action, and pleasure. This cycle goes on forever unless we break it through Self-knowledge.

Cycle of Bondage:

1. An inner desire (vasana) comes up.
2. You act (karma) to get what you want.
3. You enjoy it (bhoga), but it strengthens your desires.
4. The cycle repeats.

The root of this problem is ignorance,

stemming from a lack of understanding of who we truly are.

1.1.3 What is Moksha (Liberation)?

Moksha means freedom from suffering, death, and rebirth. It comes through brahma-jnana (knowledge of the Supreme Reality). When this knowledge arises:

You go beyond fear and sorrow.

You feel profound peace and bliss.

You realise you are not the body or mind but something more profound and eternal.

1.1.4 What is Brahman?

Vedanta teaches that Brahman is the ultimate, unchanging, and absolute reality. It is pure existence, consciousness, and bliss (Sat-Chit-Ananda). It is not a faraway God but the very ground of all experience. All forms and beings are just appearances of this one Brahman. Sree Narayana Guru wrote, “All people are rooted in the one Self.” In his teachings, he stressed this unity of all beings.

1.1.5 What is Atman (the Self)?

Your true self (Atman) is not your body or your mind. It is the silent witness behind



Try this simple practice: sit quietly and watch your thoughts. The calm observer is your Atman.

your thoughts and feelings. Vedanta states that Atman is identical to Brahman. Guru used this teaching to fight caste and religious divisions, because all people share the same Self.

1.1.6 Adhyaropa–Apavada: Learning Through Superimposition

Vedanta often teaches by first adding a temporary idea (adhyaropa) and then removing it (apavada). Example: You mistake a rope for a snake. When you shine a light, you see it was only a rope. Similarly, the world appears separate, but it is merely an illusion, a manifestation of Brahman.

1.1.7 The Five Sheaths (Koshas)

Vedanta says five layers cover our true Self:

1. Annamaya – body made from food
2. Pranamaya – life energy (breath)
3. Manomaya – thoughts and emotions
4. Vijnanamaya – intellect and decision-making
5. Anandamaya – joy in deep sleep

These are not the Self, but help us understand our experience. Guru wanted to uplift people, not just physically, but mentally and spiritually.

1.1.8 Maya and Avidya: The Power of Illusion

Why do we forget our true nature? Because of Maya, the power that creates illusions, and Avidya (ignorance).

Maya has two powers:

- ◆ Avarana – hides the truth.
- ◆ Vikshepa – projects a false view.

This ignorance leads to division, pride, and suffering. Guru taught that caste and greed are forms of this ignorance.

1.1.9 Three States of Experience

Every person goes through:

1. Waking (Jagrata) – daily life
2. Dreaming (Svapna)
3. Deep sleep (Sushupti)

These are linked to cosmic levels:

- ◆ Virat – waking world
- ◆ Hiranyagarbha – dream world
- ◆ Isvara – the deep sleep source

Guru's verse compares bliss to a vast ocean that flows everywhere. Realising this unity is the goal of Vedanta.

1.1.10 Who Can Learn Vedanta?

A learner of Vedanta should have:

- ◆ Viveka – ability to tell the real from the false
- ◆ Vairagya – detachment from desires
- ◆ Calmness, focus, discipline
- ◆ A strong wish for freedom

Guru lived a simple life with these qualities. He is an example for all spiritual seekers.

1.1.11 How to Practise Vedanta?

There are three steps to practise Vedanta. They are steps:

1. Sravana – Listen to teachings.
2. Manana – Reflect on them.
3. Nididhyasana – Meditate deeply.

Guru's prayers, such as "Daivame kaathukollane," can help us meditate. Try repeating, "I am the witness, not the body."

1.1.12 Ethics in Daily Life

Vedanta is not just a theory. It teaches us to:

- ◆ Speak honestly
- ◆ Be kind to all beings
- ◆ Keep a simple lifestyle
- ◆ Let go of likes and dislikes

Guru said the same Self lives in every

person. So, we must care for others as ourselves.

1.1.13 Basic Ideas to Remember

- ◆ Five layers (body to bliss)
- ◆ Three states (waking, dream, sleep)
- ◆ One Self behind all experiences
- ◆ Famous sayings (Mahavakyas) like "Tat Tvam Asi" (You are That)

These help you understand and live Vedanta step by step.

1.1.14 Guru's Vision: Knowledge with Service

Guru used Vedanta to bring social change. His saying "One caste, one religion, one God for all" is based on the idea of unity. He built temples for all and opened schools that taught both scriptures and science. True knowledge should lead to love and service.



Recap

- ◆ Vedanta = end of knowledge (Upanishads, Gita, Brahma Sutras)
- ◆ Bondage = desire → action → pleasure → repeated suffering
- ◆ Moksha = liberation through Self-knowledge
- ◆ Brahman = ultimate, unchanging reality
- ◆ Atman = true Self, same as Brahman
- ◆ Maya & Avidya = causes of ignorance and illusion
- ◆ Vedanta in practice = ethical living + meditation + reflection





Objective Questions

1. What does the term 'Vedanta' literally mean?
2. Which texts are considered the core of Vedanta?
3. What is the root cause of bondage according to Vedanta?
4. Which of the following is *not* one of the five koshas?
5. What is the goal of Moksha?
6. Which Mahavakya means 'You are That'?
7. What does 'Adhyaropa–Apavada' mean in Vedantic method?
8. What are the three states of experience according to Vedanta?
9. Who stated 'All people are rooted in the one Self'?
10. Which of the following is a requirement for a Vedantic student?



Answers

1. End of the Vedas
2. Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Brahma Sutras
3. Ignorance
4. Atmanmaya
5. Freedom from birth and death
6. Tat Tvam Asi
7. Superimposition and negation
8. Waking, Dream, Deep Sleep
9. Sree Narayana Guru
10. Detachment (Vairagya)



Assignments

Practical

1. Rope-Snake Diary – Write down when you misunderstood someone and how clarity came.
2. Five-Sheath Scan – Close your eyes and notice your body, breath, thoughts, decisions, and the quiet behind them.
3. Mantra Practice – Breathe out “Tat Tvam Asi” (You are That), breathe in “Aham Brahmasmi” (I am Brahman).
4. Act of Service – Do one kind act this week without expecting anything in return.

Theoretical

5. Describe the concept of Brahman and Atman in Vedanta and explain how they are related. Illustrate with the teachings of Sree Narayana Guru.
6. Discuss the significance of Maya and Avidya in Vedanta. How do they hinder Self-realisation? Give examples to support your points.
7. Vedanta promotes not just inner knowledge but also ethical living. Explain how the teachings of Vedanta can be applied to contemporary social issues, drawing examples from Guru's vision.

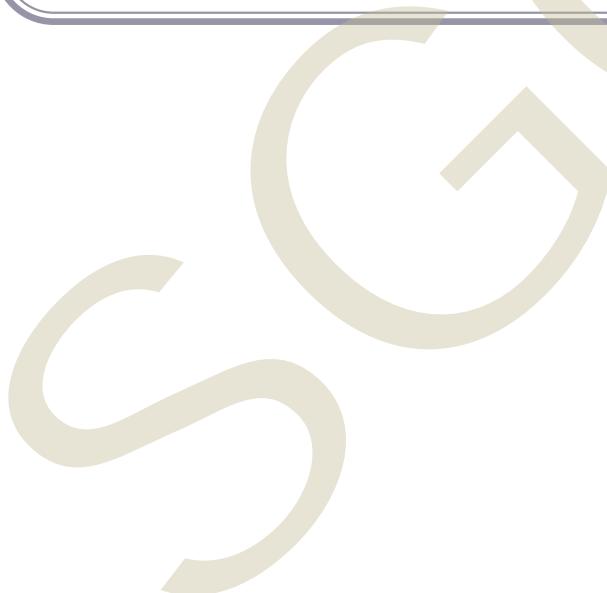


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Unit 2

Sree Narayana Guru's Re-valued Advaita Philosophy

L

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, learner will be able to:

- ◆ understand how Sree Narayana Guru reinterpreted classical Advaita to respond to real-world social issues.
- ◆ explain Guru's emphasis on unity, compassion, and action
- ◆ describe key concepts such as Bhāna Darśanam, Māyā, and Triputi
- ◆ recognise Guru's contributions to social reform, religious harmony, ecology, and human rights

P

Prerequisite

Classical Advaita Vedanta, largely shaped by Śaṅkara, emphasises non-duality and regards the phenomenal world as *mithyā* or illusory. While this offered a powerful metaphysical insight, it often led to social disengagement and spiritual elitism. Sree Narayana Guru, a 19th-century saint and reformer from Kerala, reinterpreted Advaita without diluting its core, anchoring it in social justice, ethical conduct, and inclusive spirituality. His "re-valued" Advaita maintained the core non-dualistic insight - "all is one" - while transforming its application. For Guru, the realisation of oneness also meant eradicating caste, embracing all religions, and loving all beings. His works such as *Darśanamāla*, *Matamīmāṃsā*, *Jīvakaruṇya Pañjaka*, and his radical actions at Aruvippuram and Sivagiri are proof of how Vedanta can be lived and not just learnt. This unit invites learners to approach Advaita as a tool for both inner freedom and outer reform, balancing reflection with ethical action and combining insight with compassion.



K

Keywords

Re-valued Advaita, Caste reform, Bhāna Darśanam, Tripuṭi, Compassion (Ānukampā), Religious harmony, Sivagiri

D

Discussion

1.2.1 Why is it called “Re-valued” Advaita?

Classical Advaita, as taught by Śaṅkara, asserts that only pure consciousness (Brahman) is real, and the world is merely an illusion. Many monks believed this meant we could ignore pain or social problems. In fact, Guru strictly followed the Advaita Vedanta Theory and practised it diligently.

Sree Narayana Guru agreed that everything is one, but said it's wrong to ignore injustice. If we are truly one, we should live like one united family. This fresh view is what scholars call “re-valued” Advaita.

1.2.2 Caste: The First Teacher

In Kerala, caste was not just a theory - it hurt people. Brahmins (Nambūdiris) and Nāyars were considered high; Ezhavas and Pulayas were considered low. The guru experienced this pain and sought a cure. He found it in Advaita, which taught oneness, and used it to fight caste.

One Caste, One Religion, One God

Guru's famous line is :

"ஒருஜாதி ஒரு மதம் ஒரு வெவவு மனுஷ்யர்..." (One caste, one religion, one God for all humans...) It means: there is only one human race, one spiritual path, one divine source - no real differences. It conveys, in a few seconds, what long lectures often fail to convey.

1.2.3 Joy Must Be Shared

In Matamīmāṃsā, verse 24, Guru says:

“If you understand the Self in all, your own happiness should flow into others' happiness. True bliss is shared bliss.”

1.2.4 Seeing Oneness in Everything

Guru said: “Everything that exists... must be seen as one.”

What looks different is actually one shining reality. If we don't see this unity within ourselves, the outer world becomes filled with fights. Try closing your eyes and imagine everything glowing with the same light.

Lesson: Real philosophy begins from real suffering, not from books.

1.2.5 Triputi (Knower-Knowing-Known) Melts Away

Advaita says the usual split between “I”, “the knowing”, and “what is known” fades away. Guru describes it: “Beyond the three worlds... a light shines after the triangle disappears.” This means that when the ego drops, what remains is pure awareness - like a lamp that lights itself.

The Ever-Present Witness

Guru says that even when the world sleeps, a light remains, this is the silent awareness that watches everything.

Try this: when upset, don't fight the feeling. Just watch it. The quiet watcher in you never changes, that's the true Self.

1.2.6 Re-thinking Māyā: Life as a Serious Playground

Classical Advaita calls the world “mithyā”, not fully real. Some take this to mean life doesn't matter. But Guru said: ignoring suffering mocks Advaita. He said life is like a stage where we must act with kindness. If we believe all are equal, we must treat all equally. The world may be passing, but each part of it asks for love and care.

1.2.7 Bhāna Darśanam – Let Consciousness Speak

In Darśanamāla, Guru talks about Bhāna - the pure moment before thought. He explains four parts of experience:

1. Gross (body, objects)
2. Subtle (thoughts, breath)
3. Cause (blank feeling, “I don't know”)
4. Turiya (the flash “I am Brahman”)

All are forms of the same light. Try this

simple exercise: hear a sound, feel your breath, sense the gap before the next thought - each is lit by the same awareness. That light is the real you.

1.2.8 Darśanamāla – Nine Windows, One Sky

Darśanamāla explores many worldviews - Sankhya, Yoga, Buddhism, Advaita - and shows they all lead to unity.

Lesson: You don't have to choose one belief too soon. Try them, keep what helps you see clearly. When all nine views open, you see the same sky of consciousness.

1.2.9 Four Bright Threads in Daily Life

According to the late scholar Sukumar Azhikode, the Guru's life was built on four things:

1. Advaita with hope
2. A “yes” to life
3. Love for all beings
4. Social work based on love

We must balance thinking and doing. Try this: every day, note down

- one insight,
- one thing you're grateful for,
- one kind act,
- one task for the community.

1.2.10 Aruvippuram – A Rock for Equality

In 1888, Guru carved a stone into a Shivalinga at Aruvippuram and let people of all



castes worship. This broke the caste rules of temple worship. Lesson: Real spirituality changes public life. If you see a shrine today that excludes people, remember Aruvippuram.

1.2.11 Aluva 1924 – Unity of All Faiths

In 1924, Guru started a Religious Parliament on the banks of the Periyar. People read the Quran, Bible, and Vedas side by side. One verse says: “The essence of all religions is one.” Lesson: Learn other faiths well. This deepens and humbles your own belief.

1.2.12 Ānukampā – Compassion is the Heart

During World War I, Guru wrote Anukampādaśakam, praising great spiritual leaders as “oceans of compassion”. He ended with: “Only those with compassion truly live.” Try repeating this thought in silence. Let it remove irritation. And remember: only preach what you are ready to live.

1.2.13 Ahimsā Pañjaka – Non-Violence Brings Joy

Guru wrote: “He who harms no one... reaches the highest joy.” True happiness comes from being harmless to people,

animals, even insects. Try sparing one insect or one angry word each day.

1.2.14 Ecology of Oneness – Love Beyond Humans

Guru saw all beings as spiritual brothers. In Jīvakarunya Pañjaka, he wrote: “All are brothers in spirit.” Lesson: Care for nature is part of Advaita. Start by reducing one piece of daily waste. Label the bin “Janthupraiyanī discipline” and observe how your mind changes.

1.2.15 Sivagiri – Spiritual Growth and Civic Work

Guru created Sivagiri to promote eight ideals: education, purity, farming, business, crafts, teamwork, health, and tech. Students there still eat in mixed-caste halls and learn both scripture and cleanliness. Lesson: Spirituality and social progress go hand in hand.

1.2.16 From Advaita to Human Rights

Guru’s idea - “One caste, one religion, one God” - inspired India’s Constitution. It shows that human rights are not only Western ideas - they also developed here. In essays on equality or justice, quoting the Guru adds both truth and cultural depth.

A Learner’s Roadmap – Study, Serve, Smile

Try these daily habits:

śravaṇa: Read five verses of Ātmopadeśa Śatakam in the morning

manana: Reflect or talk about one line

sevā: Do one small helpful act

End the day by whispering:

“Arul ullava nāṇa jīvī” – “Only those with compassion truly live.”

Practice this for 40 days. Slowly, your life will start to reflect the oneness the Guru taught.

R

Recap

- ◆ Guru's Advaita = unity + social justice
- ◆ Caste is a lived injustice, not just theory
- ◆ "One caste, one religion, one God"
- ◆ Bliss must be shared, not hoarded
- ◆ Tripuṭi dissolves into pure awareness
- ◆ Māyā ≠ neglecting suffering
- ◆ Darśanamāla = multiple paths to unity
- ◆ Ecology and ethics flow from oneness
- ◆ Sivagiri = practical spirituality
- ◆ Guru's ideas shaped India's Constitution

O

Objective Questions

1. What does "re-valued" Advaita mean in the teachings of Sree Narayana Guru?
2. According to Guru, where does real philosophy begin?
3. What is the famous phrase that expresses Guru's vision of unity?
4. What is the core message of verse 24 in *Matamīmāṃsā*?
5. What remains when Tripuṭi (knower, knowing, known) dissolves?
6. How did Guru describe the purpose of life in relation to Māyā?
7. What is the final stage of experience in Bhāna Darśanam?
8. What does *Darśanamāla* ultimately lead to through its nine systems?
9. What did Guru install at Aruvippuram?
10. What was promoted at the Religious Parliament at Aluva?





A

Answers

1. Responsibility
2. Suffering
3. Oneness
4. Sharing
5. Awareness
6. Compassion
7. Turiya
8. Unity
9. Shiva-linga
10. Harmony



A

Assignments

1. Explain how Sree Narayana Guru revalued traditional Advaita Vedanta to address caste and social inequality. Use key examples from his life and writings.
2. Discuss the concept of Bhāna Darśanam and its fourfold structure. How can this understanding help individuals experience non-duality in everyday life?
3. Critically evaluate the relevance of Guru's message "One caste, one religion, one God for all" in the context of modern India. How can this philosophy shape interfaith dialogue and human rights?



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Unit 3

Reason and Mysticism in Guru's Philosophy

L

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, learners will be able to:

- ◆ understand how Guru used both reason and mysticism.
- ◆ explain the ideas in *Darshanamala* and *Atmopadesha Shatakam*.
- ◆ see how clear thinking and deep experience go together.
- ◆ apply Guru's teachings to daily life with clarity and peace.

P

Prerequisite

To understand Sree Narayana Guru's unique philosophy, we must see how he used both reason and mysticism to guide people toward truth. Reason helps us think clearly and remove false beliefs, while mysticism helps us experience inner peace and unity. Unlike many thinkers who chose either logic or feeling, Guru used both together - like two wings of a bird. In *Darshanamala*, he presents a step-by-step logical method to understand the world, action, knowledge, and freedom. In *Atmopadesha Shatakam*, he expresses deep mystical insights through simple Malayalam poetry and beautiful symbols like lamps and dreams. Guru's approach is inclusive and practical. He does not speak just to scholars - his teachings reach all, helping people of any background to think better, feel deeper, and live more truthfully. Whether one is a student of science or spirituality, Guru's balance of reason and mysticism offers peace, clarity, and inner strength in a confusing world.



K

Keywords

Reason, Mysticism, Darshanamala, Atmopadesha Shatakam, Maya, Witness, Poetry

D

Discussion

1.3.1 Introduction

To understand Sree Narayana Guru's philosophy, we must look at two essential ways of knowing: reason and mysticism. These are not opposite paths; instead, they support each other. Reason helps us ask questions, think clearly, and remove false beliefs. Mysticism gives us deep, personal insight - something we realise within, not through logic alone.

Guru used both reason and mysticism like two eyes. Together, they help us see the truth more clearly. In this unit, we explore how Guru used reason in works like *Darshanamala*, and how his mystical vision comes alive in *Atmopadesha Shatakam*. We will also examine how his poetry effectively conveys these ideas. Malayalam verses are included to keep the original feeling.

1.3.2 Reason in Guru's Thought: Darshanamala

One of Guru's most logical works is *Darshanamala*, meaning "Garland of Philosophical Visions". Like a garland made of flowers, the book contains ten parts (called darshanas) linked together in order:

1. Adhyaropa (Superimposition)
2. Apavada (Negation)
3. Asatya (Untruth)

4. Maya (Illusion)
5. Bhana (Appearance)
6. Karma (Action)
7. Jnanam (Knowledge)
8. Bhakti (Devotion)
9. Yoga (Union)
10. Nirvana (Liberation)

Each section of the work is short but full of meaning. You can understand something even by reading just one section, but reading it fully gives a complete picture, from confusion to freedom.

Guru's writing is clear and simple, not like traditional debates that aim to win arguments. Instead, he calmly explains each idea step-by-step. In *Adhyaropa*, he shows how we wrongly see things. In *Apavada*, he shows how to correct those errors using reason. His method is: see the false, understand it, and remove it - not by blind belief but by thinking clearly.

Guru says:

"അയികും അർത്ഥങ്ങൾ ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുന്ന പല തത്ത്വചിന്തകളും ഇവിടെ ചുരുക്കമായി ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുന്നുവെന്ന് ശ്രദ്ധിക്കാവുന്നതാണ്. അതുകൊണ്ടുതന്നെ ഇതിനെ ദർശനമാല എന്നു വിളിക്കുന്നു."

(Darshanamala)

This book includes many deep ideas in a short form, that's why it is called *Darshanamala*.

1.3.3 Using Reason for a Better Life

For Guru, reason is not just for philosophy. It helps us live better. When we understand things clearly, we suffer less. Wrong ideas lead to fear, ego, and conflict. Right understanding brings peace and kindness. For example, people think the body or mind is the Self. Guru teaches that this is a mistake. The Self is beyond body and mind. Knowing this brings freedom.

In the sections on Karma and Jnanam, he explains that actions must come from knowledge. Without knowing who we are, our actions are based on ignorance. But when we act with true understanding, our actions become pure. Even in Bhakti (devotion), Guru uses reason. He says true devotion is not fear or desire - it is seeing unity. God is not separate. We must see the divine in all beings. This kind of understanding helps us grow - not just in knowledge, but in life.

1.3.4 Mysticism in Guru's Thought: *Atmopadesha Shatakam*

While *Darshanamala* is logical, *Atmopadesha Shatakam* shows Guru's mystical side. The name means "One Hundred Verses of Self-Instruction". The word Atmopadesha means teaching that comes from within, from one's own true self.

This work is written in simple but beautiful Malayalam. Guru uses common images - like dreams or lamps - to express deep truths. These images are not just poetic - they help us directly experience the truth inside us.

For example, in verse 88, he writes:

"സകലവുമുള്ളതുതന്ന തത്തചിന്താഗ്രഹന്തു സർവവുമേകമായി ശ്രദ്ധിക്കും

അകമുഖമായിരിയായ്ക്കിൽ
മായയാം വൻപുക പലതും ഭേദമേകിടുന്നു
പാരം"

(*Atmopadesha Shatakam*)

"Everything is one, but if we don't look within, Maya (illusion) confuses us."

This shows the core idea of non-duality - the truth is one, but it appears as many. We must turn inward to see this clearly.

(a) The Inner Light: Witness Consciousness

In verse 16, Guru uses the symbol of a lamp:

"വിലമതിയാത വിളക്കുഭക്കയും
വീണുപോർജിരുന്നതുമില്ലിതുകണ്ണപോയിരു
ണ്ണോ"

(*Atmopadesha Shatakam*)

"A priceless lamp that never goes out - we must see this."

This lamp is the Self - the light within that always shines. It doesn't rise or set. It is always present. Guru says we must notice this. This is witness consciousness - the silent awareness that watches everything.

(b) Discipline and Surrender

In verse 1, Guru says:

"കരുവിനു കണ്ണുകളഞ്ഞുമുള്ളടക്കി
തെരുതെരെ വീണുവണങ്ങിയോതിഫേണോ"

(*Atmopadesha Shatakam*, p. 41)

"Control the five senses, surrender humbly, and chant with devotion."

For Guru, mysticism is not just about feeling - it needs discipline. We must control the senses and surrender the ego. Realisation happens when the mind is steady and humble.

(c) Maya and the Need to Look Within

Maya, or illusion, is a central idea. It makes us believe in what is not real. In verse 88 (quoted above), Guru says that Maya is



like a great enemy that causes confusion. The only way to overcome it is to turn inward. Then we see all things as different forms of the same truth.

1.3.5 Poetry as Spiritual Teaching

Guru's poetry teaches us through feeling and vision, not just through logic. He uses simple symbols, such as a lamp, a dream, a snake, and a rope, to explain spiritual truths. The verses don't demand belief, they invite awareness.

Guru's poems don't just give information. They help us change - to feel quietness, wonder, and clarity. That's why his work is still powerful after so many years.

1.3.6 Bringing Reason and Mysticism Together

When we compare *Darshanamala* and *Atmopadesha Shatakam*, we see that reason and mysticism work together. One gives structure, the other gives experience.

Guru says:

"ഇതു യുക്തിമുഖേന സംസാരികളും ധൈര്യമാർക്കും മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്ന വിധത്തിൽ തയ്യാറാക്കിയിട്ടുണ്ട്"

(*Darshanamala*, p. 133)

"This is written clearly so that both ordinary people and scholars can understand it."

He wanted everyone to find the truth, not

just philosophers. His rational work clears the path. His mystical poetry helps us walk it.

1.3.7 Why This Matters to All Learners?

Even if you study science or economics, Guru's teachings can help you:

1. Think clearly – Learn how to remove false ideas
2. Stay calm – Find inner peace and balance
3. Be kind – Feel unity with others, become more ethical
4. Explore freely – Gain confidence to ask spiritual questions

Guru doesn't force beliefs. He says, "The truth is already within you."

Guru shows that reason and mysticism are like two wings of a bird. We need both to fly toward truth. In a world full of confusion, his teachings bring peace and clarity.

As Guru says:

"വിലമതിയാത വിളക്കുഡികയും വീണുപോൾിരുന്നതുമില്ലിതുകണ്ണുപോയിരിം"

(*Atmopadesha Shatakam*)

"A priceless lamp that never goes out - we must see this."

Let us see this lamp within ourselves. Let it light up our studies, our life, and our future.

R Recap

- ◆ Guru used both reason and mysticism
- ◆ *Darshanamala* gives logic and order
- ◆ *Atmopadesha Shatakam* shows inner truth
- ◆ Reason clears the path; mysticism walks it
- ◆ Symbols like lamps and dreams reveal deep truths
- ◆ Maya hides truth; awareness reveals it
- ◆ Knowledge must lead to action and devotion

O Objective Questions

1. What are the two main tools Guru used to understand truth?
2. What is the name of Guru's logical work with ten steps?
3. What does "Atmopadesha Shatakam" mean?
4. What symbol does Guru use in verse 16 to describe the Self?
5. What is the final goal described in *Darshanamala*?
6. What is the cause of confusion, according to verse 88?
7. What must be controlled to begin inner realisation, as per verse 1?
8. What is the role of reason in Bhakti, according to Guru?
9. What do the ten parts of *Darshanamala* represent?
10. Why did Guru write in simple language?





A

Answers

1. Reason and Mysticism
2. Darshanamala
3. Self-instruction
4. Lamp
5. Nirvana
6. Maya
7. Senses
8. Understanding
9. Steps
10. Clarity



A

Assignments

1. How does Guru use reason and mysticism together in his writings?
2. Explain how the symbol of the lamp shows the idea of the Self.
3. What does *Darshanamala* teach us about the path from illusion to freedom?

R

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Unit 4

Guru's Vision on Oneness – One Caste, One Religion, One God for Mankind

L

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, the learners will be able to:

- ◆ understand Guru's message of unity beyond caste and religion.
- ◆ recognise how his temple reforms supported social equality.
- ◆ explain the link between self-knowledge and treating others with respect.
- ◆ apply Guru's message to life, study, and community.

P

Prerequisite

Sree Narayana Guru's message of oneness, "One Caste, One Religion, One God for Mankind", is both spiritual and social. He believed that all people share the same divine essence, and that divisions such as caste or religion are human-made illusions born of ignorance. His vision was not limited to ideas; he built temples for all castes, replaced idols with mirrors to promote self-realisation, and wrote poems that teach us to see God within. For Guru, spirituality meant love, equality, and service to humanity. His teachings still inspire movements for justice, peace, and education. Students of any field can learn from his example - how to think clearly, live kindly, and build unity in diversity. Guru's vision is not about sameness - it is about realising the same truth in all.

K

Keywords

Oneness, Equality, Temple Reform, Self-Knowledge, Mirror Symbol, Social Harmony, Unity

D

Discussion

Introduction

One of the most powerful and inspiring messages of Sree Narayana Guru is about oneness. He taught that all human beings are equal, no matter their caste, religion, or background. His famous words, “Oru Jathi, Oru Matham, Oru Daivam Manushyanu” (One Caste, One Religion, One God for Mankind), are more than just a slogan. They express the heart of his spiritual vision. Guru believed that all people are part of the same truth.

1.4.1 All Humans Are Equal: No One Is Born High or Low

Guru’s idea of oneness did not come from politics. It came from deep spiritual understanding. He believed that the same light, or consciousness, exists in everyone. The differences we see - rich or poor, high or low, man or woman - are not real. They are created by society and human ignorance.

1.4.2 Temple Reforms: Putting Equality into Practice

Guru did not only speak about oneness - he acted on it. He broke old customs by building temples that all people could enter. For example, in 1888, he built the Aruvippuram Shiva Temple. When others questioned how a

non-Brahmin could install a deity, he calmly said, “I installed an Ezhava Shiva.” This was a powerful way of saying: God belongs to everyone.

In another temple, he installed a mirror instead of an idol. This was a message: look at yourself, and you will see God. He also installed images of Saraswati, Buddha, and Subrahmanya, showing respect for all traditions. His goal was not to create conflict, but to open minds.

1.4.3 Self-Knowledge: The Key to Equality

Guru believed that true knowledge comes from knowing yourself. When people realise that the same self exists in all, they naturally treat others with love and respect. That’s why the mirror in the temple is so meaningful. It teaches us to look inside.

He said:

“അരിവിലുമേറിയറിത്തിട്ടുനവൻ
സ്വത്വരുവിലുമേരാത്തു
പുറത്തുമുജജാലിക്കും,
കരുവിനു കണ്ണുകളഞ്ഞുമുള്ളടക്കി
തെരുതെരെ വീണുവണങ്ങിയോതിട്ടേണു”

(Atmopadesha Shatakam, Verse 1)

This means: the one who truly knows will shine from within and outside. But to



reach that, we must control our senses and surrender ego. This is both a spiritual and a social message.

1.4.4 Why Guru's Message Still Matters

Even today, the world suffers from division - based on caste, religion, race, and beliefs. Guru's vision is still very important. He did not ask people to fight hate with hate. He asked people to change their minds and hearts.

1.4.5 The Real Meaning of Guru's Famous Words

Let us look again at Guru's famous teaching:

One Caste

All people are one family. Birth does not make anyone higher or lower.

One Religion

All religions aim to lead people to truth, love, and peace. We must respect all paths.

One God

God is not many. There is only one divine

truth behind all names and forms.

Guru's teaching is not about making everyone the same. It is about seeing the same truth in everyone, beyond differences.

1.4.6 A Vision for All Students

Whether you study science, literature, politics, or economics, Guru's message can guide you. It teaches:

- ◆ Clear thinking
- ◆ Kindness to others
- ◆ Respect for all life
- ◆ Peaceful living

Guru gives us the tools to think clearly, live ethically, and grow spiritually. His words help us build a better world - one heart, one mind, one humanity.

"விலமதியாத விழகுபிக்கையுங்
வீணுபோலிருந்துமில்லிதுக்கண்டுபோயிட
என்"

(Atmopadesha Shatakam, Verse 16)

Guru says: "The priceless lamp is always shining - one must see it." Let us also see that light within ourselves and in everyone around us.

R Recap

- ◆ All humans are equal
- ◆ Caste is a man-made illusion
- ◆ Temples for all castes
- ◆ Mirror = symbol of self-realisation
- ◆ One truth behind all religions
- ◆ Self-knowledge creates respect
- ◆ Guru's message remains relevant today

O Objective Questions

1. What is Guru's famous teaching about unity?
2. Where did Guru install a Shiva-linga for all castes?
3. What symbol did Guru install instead of a deity in some temples?
4. What does the mirror in the temple teach us?
5. What must be surrendered to realise the true Self, according to Guru?
6. What does Guru mean by "One Caste"?
7. How should people treat other religions, according to Guru?
8. What is the source of the idea of oneness in Guru's teachings?
9. What does Guru say is always shining inside us?
10. How does Guru suggest we overcome social divisions?





A

Answers

1. Oneness
2. Aruvippuram
3. Mirror
4. Self
5. Ego
6. Equality
7. Respect
8. Spirituality
9. Lamp
10. Awareness



A

Assignments

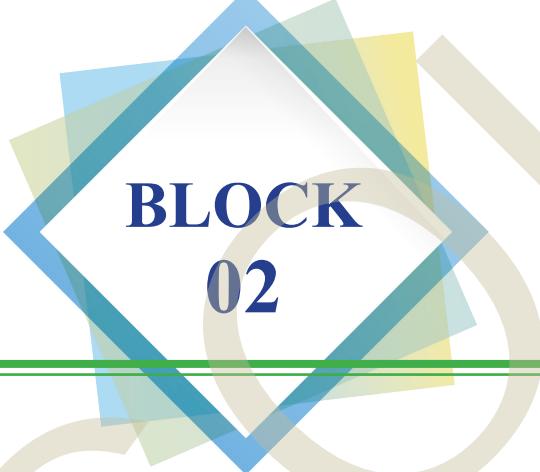
1. Explain how Guru's temple reforms supported the idea of social equality.
2. What is the meaning of installing a mirror instead of a statue?
3. How can Guru's teaching on oneness help today's society?



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**BLOCK
02**



Guru and Social Reformation

Unit 1

Liberation through Education

L

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ understand Guru's idea of education as a tool for social change
- ◆ explain the link between caste and denial of knowledge
- ◆ identify Guru's efforts to provide inclusive education
- ◆ apply Guru's values of self-growth, skill learning, and equality

P

Prerequisite

Sree Narayana Guru believed that education was the greatest tool to fight injustice and uplift humanity. At a time when caste-based discrimination and ignorance were widespread, Guru saw that true freedom could only come through knowledge. For him, education was not about exams or degrees but about self-awareness, dignity, and compassion. He challenged the monopoly over Sanskrit learning and created schools open to all, including women and the so-called lower castes. From building libraries in temples to starting vocational training centres and hostels, his efforts transformed society. Guru taught that knowledge should bring both inner light and material independence. His verses remind us that true learning makes one shine from within. Today, institutions named after him - including the Sreenarayananaguru Open University, established by the Government of Kerala - continue to carry forward this mission of inclusive, transformative education for all.



K

Keywords

Education, Liberation, Self-Knowledge, Equality, Sanskrit, Vocational Skills, Awareness

D

Discussion

2.1.1 Knowledge as the Key to Freedom

Sree Narayana Guru was one of the greatest social and spiritual reformers of modern Kerala. He believed that education is the most powerful way to achieve freedom. During his time, many people suffered because of caste discrimination, ignorance, and fear. They were not allowed to learn or grow. Guru believed that everyone - no matter their caste, class, or gender - should have access to knowledge.

For Guru, the aim of education was not just about getting a job. It was about becoming a better person, building a better society, and living with dignity.

2.1.2 Caste and the Importance of Education

During the time, upper castes controlled education, temples, and scriptures. Lower castes, like the Ezhavas (Guru's own community), were not allowed to learn Sanskrit or enter temples. Guru saw that this kept them poor and powerless. So, he made education the centre of his social reform work. He believed that knowledge gives people confidence and self-respect.

2.1.3 Guru's Message: "You Must Truly Become Literate"

In 1910, Guru addressed a group and said, "You must truly become literate." For him, literacy was not just reading and writing - it meant being aware, questioning injustice, and living with moral strength. He also said that girls must be educated, which was a bold idea at the time. He asked communities to support poor students and promote education for all.

2.1.4 Breaking the Monopoly over Knowledge

In those days, Sanskrit was only taught to Brahmins. Guru rejected this unfair system. He believed that no one has the right to stop others from gaining knowledge. Even though he did not go to a Brahmin school, he learned Sanskrit and taught it to everyone, regardless of caste. He opened schools that taught Sanskrit, Malayalam, and English, and welcomed students from all backgrounds.

In his poem 'Jati Nirnayam', he wrote:

"There are many castes, but they are not real - just false ideas."

He believed that everyone is equal and that caste is a man-made division.

Atmopadesha Shatakam, he wrote:

2.1.5 Advaita Ashram: A Centre of Learning

In 1913, Guru set up the Advaita Ashram at Aluva, which became a centre for spiritual and educational work. He started a Sanskrit school with 7 teachers and 60 students, teaching Sanskrit, Malayalam, English, and maths. The school accepted students of all castes, which was revolutionary at the time. He also started hostels and libraries to support learning.

2.1.6 Vocational Training: Learning Skills for Life

Guru believed that education should also help people achieve economic independence. At Varkala, he started a weaving school, teaching students useful skills free of charge. He respected all kinds of work and believed that education should lead to confidence and self-reliance. He said education must help people grow both mentally and materially - learning with the mind and working with the hands.

2.1.7 Women's Education

In those days, girls were usually not allowed to study. Guru said that no society can progress if women are not educated. He believed that educated women raise better families and build better communities. Education for women, he said, should also teach practical skills, good values, and self-confidence. He believed that the mind has no gender, and both men and women deserve equal opportunities to learn.

2.1.8 Inner Growth: Knowledge as Light

Guru always said that real education is not just about passing exams. It is about understanding yourself and the world. In

"അരിവില്ലുമേരിയറിഞ്ഞിടുന്നവൻ
തന്നുരുവില്ലുമെന്നതു പുറത്തുമുഞ്ഞാലിക്കും,
കരുവിനു കണ്ണുകളഞ്ഞുമുള്ളടക്കാൻ
തീരുതെരെ വിണ്ണു
വന്നങ്ങിയോതിഡണം. "

"The person who gains true knowledge shines inside and outside."

He believed that true education includes self-control, devotion, and awareness. For him, all knowledge - spiritual or worldly - is part of the same truth.

2.1.9 Temples and Education: The Mirror Message

At Kalavankode, Guru installed a mirror instead of a deity in a temple. This powerful act taught people to see the divine within themselves. He believed that worship should be based on awareness, not fear. He turned temples into learning centres, placing libraries and study spaces inside them.

2.1.10 Caste and True Value of a Person

Guru believed that a person's value should be based on their thoughts, actions, and knowledge, not on their caste. In Jati Nirnayam, he wrote: "Caste is not real - it is just confusion."

He asked:

"If we are all born the same way, what is the point of caste or religion?"

His gentle but powerful questions made people think deeply and helped bring change.

2.1.11 Guru's Work in Action

Guru did not just speak - he acted. His schools welcomed all, his weaving centre helped people earn, and his temples included



everyone. He also encouraged people to establish libraries, discussion groups, and reading rooms to disseminate knowledge.

His followers, like Kumaran Asan and R. Shankar, helped carry his message forward by promoting education for all. This laid the foundation for Kerala's high literacy and social awareness today.

2.1.12 Guru's Message Today

Even today, many people suffer due to lack of education and discrimination. Guru's message reminds us that education is a right, not a luxury. He taught that learning must make us wise, kind, and united.

He wrote:

"Let caste differences and religious hatred disappear.

Let every person take their rightful place in society."

2.1.13 Institutions in Guru's Name

Many schools and colleges have been established in the name of the Guru. These institutions focus on providing education to poor and marginalised groups. In 2020, the Sreenarayanaguru Open University (SGOU) was established by the Government of Kerala. It offers flexible, distance-learning courses for people who can not attend regular classes. This helps make Guru's dream of education for all a reality, even in the 21st century.

R Recap

- ◆ Education means freedom and dignity
- ◆ Guru fought caste barriers in learning
- ◆ Started schools for all, including girls
- ◆ Emphasised self-knowledge and skills
- ◆ Turned temples into learning centres
- ◆ True value lies in thoughts, not caste
- ◆ Message still relevant today

O Objective Questions

1. What did Guru believe was the key to freedom?
2. What language was restricted to upper castes in Guru's time?

3. What is the name of Guru's poem that questions caste?
4. In which year was the Advaita Ashram at Aluva established?
5. What was the purpose of the weaving school at Varkala?
6. What did Guru install in a temple to symbolise self-realisation?
7. What must education teach, according to Guru?
8. Which open university was started in Guru's name in 2020?
9. Who were Guru's key followers in the education movement?

A

Answers

1. Education
2. Ezhava
3. Sanskrit
4. Jati Nirnayam
5. 1913
6. Skills
7. Mirror
8. Awareness
9. SGOU
10. Asan and R.Shankar



A

Assignments

1. How did Guru use education to fight caste-based injustice?
2. What is the meaning of Guru's idea of true literacy?
3. How is Guru's message about education still important today?

R

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SGOU



Unit 2

Abolition of Social Evils

L

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learners will be able to:

- ◆ understand the key social evils that Guru challenged
- ◆ explain Guru's methods for fighting caste and untouchability
- ◆ recognise Guru's approach to religious reform and sobriety
- ◆ reflect on the role of education in ending inequality

P

Prerequisite

Sree Narayana Guru lived at a time when caste discrimination, untouchability, superstitions, and alcoholism were widespread and deeply rooted in society. These evils caused pain, poverty, and humiliation, especially among the lower castes. Guru understood that these problems were not natural but created by human ignorance and social customs. He did not believe in using violence to bring change. Instead, he used education, moral reasoning, spirituality, and peaceful reform. He opened temples to all, promoted literacy, supported vocational training, and guided people to live with dignity. Guru also fought against alcohol abuse and blind rituals. His famous works like *Jati Nirnayam* remind us that all humans are equal and caste is only a false idea. Guru's message - "Let caste and religious hatred disappear" - remains deeply relevant today, encouraging a society based on unity, equality, and compassion.

K

Keywords

Caste, Untouchability, Reform, Education, Alcoholism, Equality, Awareness

D

Discussion

2.2.1 Understanding Social Evils in Guru's context

During Sree Narayana Guru's time, society was plagued by many harmful practices. People were mistreated based on caste, and many suffered from untouchability, inequality, ignorance, and superstitions. These evils were often accepted as usual, despite causing pain and humiliation.

Guru believed that these problems were not natural or God-given, but created by people. He understood that a society with such cruelty could never truly grow. So, he worked to change society peacefully, using tools like education, spiritual teaching, temple reform, and community organisation.

He taught that real change starts in the mind of the individual and spreads to society. His famous message is that Let caste differences and religious hatred disappear. Let each person find their rightful place in society. This message explains Guru's dream - a society where everyone is respected and treated equally.

2.2.2 Caste Discrimination: Guru's Main Concern

Caste discrimination was the biggest problem at the time. People were judged by their birth. Those in the upper castes had

access to education, temples, and power, while lower castes were denied basic rights. They could not enter temples, learn scriptures, or walk freely on public roads.

The Guru himself was born into a lower caste, but he rejected the caste system completely. He believed all humans are equal. In his poem 'Jati Nirnayam', he wrote: "There are many castes, but they are not based on truth - just confusion."

He also asked:

"What is the use of caste or religion if they only divide people?"

Guru didn't encourage violence or hatred. Instead, he asked people to become aware, united, and self-respecting. His biggest message was: divinity belongs to everyone, not just one caste.

He also started the SNDP Yogam, an organisation that helped educate and uplift oppressed communities. It spread his message and brought positive change across Kerala.

2.2.3 Untouchability: A Cruel Practice

Untouchability treated some people as "impure" and kept them out of public life. They could not walk on public roads, use wells, or enter temples. They were often



forced to live separately. Guru completely opposed this practice. He said that real purity is in a person's actions, not their birth. A kind, honest person is better than someone who performs rituals but is full of pride.

He believed that even those who believed in untouchability were victims of ignorance. His goal was to free everyone - the oppressed and the oppressors - by spreading truth and understanding.

2.2.4 Reforming Religion: A New Path for All

In Guru's time, religion was misused to divide people. Only certain castes could enter temples or perform rituals. Others were told they were "impure." Guru believed that religion should bring peace and unity, not fear or hatred. So, he opened temples to all castes, and performed rituals himself, showing that everyone had a right to God. Guru did not ask anyone to leave their religion. Instead, he asked them to understand its true meaning - love, truth, and unity.

He also wrote in simple language, so that everyone could understand spiritual ideas. He made spiritual learning available to all, not just a few.

2.2.5 Alcohol: Fighting a Social Problem

Guru also worked to stop the growing problem of alcohol addiction. It affected poor families the most and led to violence, poverty, and shame. He believed that a society cannot improve if people are trapped in bad habits. He gave clear advice: avoid alcohol. This was not just personal advice - it became a community goal, especially during the Sivagiri pilgrimage.

He never blamed people who drank. Instead, he guided them with love and firmness to change their ways.

2.2.6 The Power of Education

Guru believed that ignorance is the root of all social evils. People followed caste and untouchability blindly because they had never learned to question them. So, he promoted education for all.

He helped build schools, libraries, and reading rooms. In his school at Aluva, students of all castes studied together. They learned not just languages and philosophy, but also discipline, morality, and equality. Guru said that true education must teach people to respect others, think clearly, and live wisely. He also supported vocational training - learning skills to earn a living. He believed that education, work, and moral values together can free people from suffering.

2.2.7 Guru's Practical Path

Guru believed that change must happen both in thinking and in daily life. During the Sivagiri pilgrimage, he suggested eight key focus areas like education, hygiene, devotion, organisation, agriculture, trade and commerce, cottage industry, and technical skill.

Guru told people to avoid alcohol, work honestly, and live with dignity. His followers carried this message forward by holding awareness meetings, helping people overcome harmful habits, and promoting community growth.

Guru's reform movement was peaceful, wise, and full of compassion. He did not fight with anger. He used truth, reason, and love to change society. He showed what a just society could look like - equal, united, and respectful.

He wrote: "Many castes are just different expressions of the same divine being."

(‘Jati Nirnayam’)

This means that we are all equal, and any system that divides us is based on false ideas.

2.2.8 Guru's Teachings Today

Even today, discrimination, superstition, inequality, and addiction still exist. Caste injustice and gender inequality continue in many places. In such times, Guru's message is more important than ever.

He taught that:

- ◆ All humans are equal.
- ◆ True religion means love, not hate.

◆ Education brings self-respect and growth.

◆ Work is dignity.

◆ Reform begins inside the mind.

He stated that change must come through education, awareness, and unity, rather than through violence. His teachings still guide people who believe in justice, equality, and human dignity.

His message remains clear:

Let caste and religious hatred disappear.

Let everyone stand with dignity in society.



Recap

- ◆ Caste and untouchability challenged
- ◆ Religion reformed for unity
- ◆ Alcohol discouraged
- ◆ Education promoted for all
- ◆ Vocational training supported
- ◆ SNDP Yogam founded
- ◆ Social reform through peace



Objective Questions

1. What was Guru's main concern among social evils?
2. What harmful practice kept people out of public life?
3. Which organisation did Guru found for reform?
4. What poem by Guru questions caste?

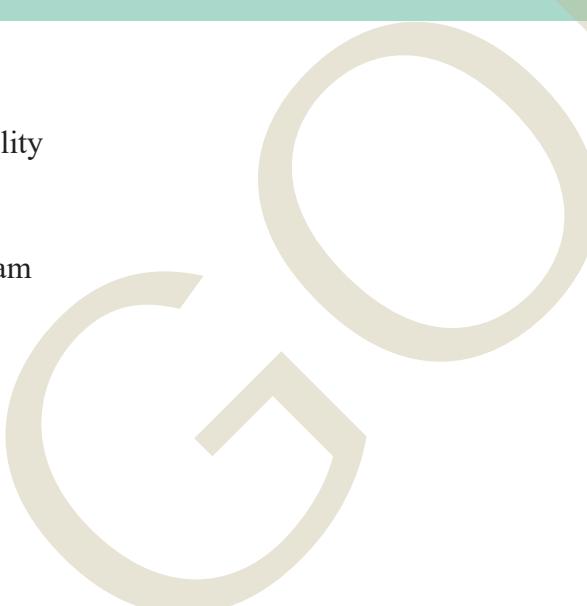


5. What substance did Guru strongly advise against?
6. What is the key tool to remove social evils?
7. What was installed in temples to symbolise self-realisation?
8. How did Guru suggest change should happen?
9. What annual pilgrimage promoted eight focus areas?
10. What value did Guru attach to all kinds of honest work?



Answers

1. Caste
2. Untouchability
3. SNDP
4. Jati Nirnayam
5. Alcohol
6. Education
7. Mirror
8. Peacefully
9. Sivagiri
10. Dignity



Assignments

1. How did Guru challenge untouchability and caste discrimination?
2. What steps did Guru take to reform religion and fight alcoholism?
3. Why is Guru's message still relevant in today's society?

R

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Unit 3

Guru on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

L

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- ♦ understand the status of women in Guru's time
- ♦ explain Guru's efforts for women's education and dignity
- ♦ recognise Guru's spiritual support for gender equality
- ♦ reflect on Guru's quiet, powerful way of social reform

P

Prerequisite

During the time of Sree Narayana Guru, women across different castes in Kerala faced severe discrimination, social control, and denial of education. Religious and caste-based rules allowed only men to learn, speak, and decide. Women were often kept out of schools, temples, and even family decisions. Lower-caste women were treated with deep disrespect, and upper-caste women were made to live in isolation or as partners without rights. Guru saw this suffering and worked to end it. He believed women must be educated, respected, and given equal opportunities in life and spirituality. His reforms included supporting girls' education, promoting widow remarriage, starting hostels and schools for women, and giving women spiritual recognition. Guru's gentle methods of truth, reason, and planning led to lasting changes. He showed that women are equal not only in society but also in the spiritual path. His message continues to inspire efforts for women's empowerment today.

K

Keywords

Gender, Equality, Education, Caste, Sanyasa, Respect, Empowerment

D

Discussion

2.3.1 The Difficult Lives of Women in Guru's Time

During Sree Narayana Guru's time, women in Kerala had very hard lives. Society was unfair and treated women as less important than men. Religious rules and caste customs kept women away from education, freedom, and respect. People believed that women were weak and not smart enough to make decisions. Books and old laws said women must always be under the control of men - first their father, then husband, and later, their sons.

As a result, women were forced to stay at home, serve their husbands, and had no chance to study or speak up. Society was afraid that if women got education, they would ask questions and fight injustice. So, like the lower castes, women were kept in ignorance and silence. Sree Narayana Guru saw this suffering and decided to change it.

2.3.2 How Caste Made Women's Lives Even Worse?

Women in different castes faced different types of suffering.

Nambudiri Women (Upper Caste Brahmins): Only the eldest son could marry and get family property. Most Nambudiri

women were not allowed to marry. They lived lonely lives, often as widows. സ്ത്രീകൾ തത്ത്വിചാരം മറക്കുടയ്ക്കുള്ളിൽ ജീവിതം, മണ്ണാപേടി, പുലാപേടി

Nair Women: They were treated unfairly in a system called Sambandham. Rich Nambudiri men had relationships with Nair women without marriage. These women had no rights, and their children were not accepted as legal heirs. Society told them it was their duty to have children for Brahmin men, which destroyed their dignity.

Avarna Women (Lower Castes): They suffered the most. They were not allowed to cover their upper bodies or wear ornaments in public. In 1829, a royal law said they must stay half-naked. Another cruel law said if an Avarna woman refused a man's sexual demand - even from her own caste - she could be punished with death. They had no right to protect their bodies or say no. A poem described their pain:

"In Kerala, no woman, except the Brahmin, has to be concerned about chastity."

This was the world Guru saw - a world where women had no respect, no freedom, and no safety.



2.3.3 Guru's Revolutionary Ideas

Sree Narayana Guru believed that all human beings are equal - men and women, high caste and low caste. He did not see women as weak or unimportant. He wanted women to be free, respected, and educated. He said that true spirituality means seeing the same divine spark in everyone. That includes women. He believed that giving women education and dignity was not just good for them, but good for the whole society.

Guru also showed this belief in his actions. He supported women's right to study, to work, and to live with self-respect. He wanted women to break free from the control of old, harmful customs. He knew that a society can only grow strong when its women are also strong.

2.3.4 A Vision of Equality

Sree Narayana Guru's fight for gender equality was part of his bigger vision of justice for all. Just like he stood against caste discrimination and untouchability, he also stood for women's rights. He taught that no one is born low or unworthy - not because of their caste, and not because of their gender. He believed in peaceful change - through education, love, and truth. His message is still important today, as many women around the world continue to face discrimination and injustice.

Guru's teachings remind us that every human deserves respect and freedom. When women are empowered, the whole society becomes better.

2.3.5 Guru's Spiritual Foundation for Gender Equality

Sree Narayana Guru's ideas about gender equality came from his deep spiritual

understanding, not from politics or outside pressure. His philosophy was based on 'Advaita' (non-duality), which teaches that all living beings are part of the same ultimate reality (Brahman). So, no one is higher or lower than another. For Guru, gender, caste, and class were just social labels, not the truth of the self. Once we realise this inner truth, discrimination makes no sense.

Guru saw both men and women as equal forms of the divine. This was not just a nice idea - it shaped how he lived, taught, and led. He never shouted against patriarchy or used harsh words. Instead, he quietly taught people to treat women with respect and dignity.

Traditionally, women were not allowed to study scriptures, perform temple rituals, or become monks (sanyasis). Guru challenged this. He stated that spiritual growth depends on one's inner discipline, rather than one's gender. Women, too, had the right to seek truth, study religious texts, and even choose a life of renunciation.

In 'Sree Narayana Dharma', he wrote that a woman who is calm, disciplined, free from attachment, and able to understand the eternal and the temporary, is fit for sanyasa just like a man. This verse quietly ends the idea that only men can renounce worldly life. Guru didn't fight with tradition; he stated the truth.

2.3.6 Guru's Educational Reform

Guru believed that education was key to freedom, especially for women. Without education, women remained trapped in fear, ignorance, and dependence. He said clearly that "girls too must be educated." This was bold at a time when people believed education would "spoil" women. Guru encouraged his followers to talk to respected families and convince them to educate their daughters.

Once some families started, others would follow. His methods were gentle but effective.

One strong example was the Sree Narayana Vidyarthini Sadanam, a hostel for girl students. It began with just one gold coin from Guru, given to T.V. Narayani Amma. With that, she rented a small house and started the hostel. The guru blessed the place, and it evolved into a respected institution that helped many impoverished girls learn and grow.

Guru also supported similar efforts in other places, like Ernakulam. He did not believe in charity - he wanted systematic change, and gave advice, resources, and blessings to help others build it.

2.3.7 Reforming Marriage and Family Life

Guru also saw that women suffered most within their families - through unfair marriages, outdated customs, and lack of respect. In Kerala at that time:

- ◆ Nambudiri women were often unmarried and lonely because only the eldest son was allowed to marry. സ്ത്രീക്കുള്ളിൽ ജീവിതം, മല്ലാപേടി, പുലപേടി
- ◆ Nair women had relationships without legal or spiritual support (Sambandham).
- ◆ Lower-caste women faced sexual exploitation and had no protection.

Guru did not attack these customs directly. Instead, he offered a new, respectful way of living. He promoted:

- ◆ Simple, respectful marriages instead of costly and caste-based ones.
- ◆ Widow remarriage, giving women a second chance at life.
- ◆ Rejecting dowry, caste pride, and harmful rituals.

He saw marriage as a partnership, not a power struggle. He taught that both husband and wife should respect and support each other.

ബാധാധർമ്മം (സ്വഹിണിത്വം)

വസതിക്കൊത്ത ഗുണമുള്ളവളായ്
വരവിൽ സമം
വ്യയവും ചെയ്യുകിൽ തന്റെ വാഴ്ചയ്ക്കു
തുണ്ടാമവൾ.
ഗുണം കുടുംബിനിക്കില്ലാതാകി,
ലെല്ലാമിരിക്കില്ലും
ഗുണമില്ല കുടുംബത്തിനി, ല്ലാതാകും
കുടുംബവും.
ഗുണം കുടുംബിനിക്കുണ്ടായീടിലെതി,
ല്ലവർക്കുതു
ഇല്ലാതെയാകിലെതുണ്ടാങ്ങാനു
മില്ലാതെയായിട്ടും
ചാതിത്രുശ്രദ്ധിയാകുന്ന ഗുണത്തോടൊത്തു
ചേർന്നിടിൽ
ഗുഹനായികയേക്കാളും വലുതെന്തു
ലഭിച്ചിടാൻ?
ദൈവത്തിനെതെത്താഫാതാമനുമാദനെത്താഴു
തെന്നുമേ
എഴുനേനല്ലപവൾ, പെരുമ്പു ചൊല്ലിടിൽ
മഴ പെയ്തിട്ടും.
തന്ന രക്ഷിച്ചു തന്ന പ്രാണനാമമനേപ്പേണി,
പേരിനെ
സുക്ഷിച്ചു ചോർച്ചയില്ലാതെ വാനീടിലവൾ
നാരിയാം.
അത്തിപുരത്തിൽ കാത്തീടിലെതുള്ളത്
വരെ സ്വയം
നാരിമാർ കാക്കണം സ്വാത്മചാരിത്യം
കൊണ്ടതുത്തമം.
നാരിമാർക്കിങ്ങുതൻ പ്രാണനാമപുജ
ലഭിക്കുകിൽ
ദേവലോകത്തിലും മേലാം ദ്രോഗരൂപാക്കേ
ലഭിച്ചിടാം.
പേരു രക്ഷിക്കുന്ന നല്ല, നാരിയില്ലാതെ
യായിടിൽ
പാരിടത്തിൽ സിംഹയാനം ഗൗരവം
തന്നിൽ വനിടാ
നാരീശ്വരം ഗുഹത്തിനു ഭൂതിമംഗളമായത്
സാരനാം പുത്രനിതു നേരായോരു
വിഭൂഷണം.

2.3.8 Changing Society Through Daily Life

Guru believed that real change starts at home. He told men: “do not preach equality if you mistreat women at home”. He wanted people to change their speech, attitude, and behavior in daily life. He asked followers



to speak respectfully to women, avoid rude jokes or controlling words, and treat women with kindness in daily interactions. For him, reform was not just about big actions - it was also about small, personal changes.

2.3.9 Women as Spiritual Equals

Most religions at that time considered women spiritually unfit. Women were kept away from rituals, scriptures, and 'moksha' (liberation). Guru strongly disagreed. He said that the soul has no gender, and anyone - man or woman - can reach spiritual freedom through effort and discipline.

His verse from 'Sree Narayana Dharma' declared that women can take sanyasa. His poem Ashramam also showed his desire for equal spiritual spaces: "Just as for men, so also for women - let separate schools and ashrams be established in all directions."

Guru wanted real institutions - schools and ashrams - where women could grow without fear or control. He knew that true

freedom needs safe and supportive spaces.

Guru's work for women was part of a bigger vision: a society where all people are treated as equals. His teachings gave women:

- ◆ Education
- ◆ Respect in family life
- ◆ Spiritual opportunities
- ◆ Institutional support

He never called himself a feminist, but his actions brought real and lasting change. He believed in quiet reform - with wisdom, planning, and kindness. His ideas helped shape Kerala's modern attitude towards women, with high literacy and social participation. Even today, Guru's message remains powerful: true reform comes through vision, compassion, and truth, not noise or conflict. He showed that real empowerment means knowing your worth, not copying others.

R Recap

- ◆ Women denied education
- ◆ Caste worsened gender roles
- ◆ Guru supported equal rights
- ◆ Sanyasa open to women
- ◆ Girls' hostels and schools started
- ◆ Marriage reformed with dignity
- ◆ Reform began at home
- ◆ Society denied women basic rights
- ◆ Guru saw all humans as divine

- ◆ Spiritual growth not limited by gender
- ◆ Caste made women's lives harder
- ◆ Guru encouraged women's self-respect
- ◆ Education was key to women's freedom
- ◆ Guru quietly opposed harmful traditions
- ◆ Equality rooted in Advaita philosophy
- ◆ Empowered women through institutions
- ◆ Women can take sanyasa too
- ◆ Reform started in homes and families
- ◆ Guru supported widow remarriage
- ◆ True change through thought and action
- ◆ Women deserve dignity and opportunity
- ◆ Social reform without noise or anger
- ◆ Guru gave women a voice through learning

O Objective Questions

1. What was the name of the system that harmed Nair women?
2. Who started Sree Narayana Vidyarthini Sadanam?
3. Which spiritual text of Guru declared women fit for sanyasa?
4. What was Guru's reform method -violence or peace?
5. What did Guru promote instead of dowry and caste pride?
6. What did Guru ask men to do in their daily behaviour?
7. What did Guru establish along with schools for women?





Answers

1. Sambandham
2. T.V. Narayani Amma
3. Sree Narayana Dharma
4. Peace
5. Simple marriage
6. Respect
7. Ashrams



Assignments

1. How did caste affect women differently in Guru's time?
2. What steps did Guru take to support women's education and spiritual growth?
3. Why is Guru's approach to gender equality still important today?



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Unit 4

Guru's Vision of Unity Through Social Organizations

L

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learners will be able to:

- ◆ understand why Guru believed in building unity through organizations
- ◆ explain how temples were redefined for social reform
- ◆ describe the role of SNDP Yogam in uplifting society
- ◆ identify Guru's approach to caste, education, and empowerment
- ◆ discuss the relevance of Guru's vision in modern times

P

Prerequisite

Sree Narayana Guru lived at a time when society was divided by caste and injustice. He knew that spiritual teachings alone could not change lives. So, he started building a network of temples, schools, ashrams, and organizations. These were not for rituals alone - they became centres of education, equality, and community service. His famous motto "Educate, Organize, Industrialize" helped unite oppressed communities and gave them dignity. This unit explores how Guru used institutions to build unity and social strength.

K

Keywords

SNDP Yogam, Unity, Educate, Organize, Industrialize, Temple Reform, Sabha, Gurukula, Social Empowerment



Discussion

2.4.1 Why Unity Was Important?

Sree Narayana Guru believed that spiritual freedom alone was not enough. For real peace and dignity, society itself needed to change. He knew that change is only possible when people come together, not through isolated efforts. So, he worked to build unity through institutions like temples, schools, ashrams, and community meetings.

During his time, Kerala was deeply divided by caste. The lower castes, especially the Ezhavas, were denied education, temple entry, and basic rights. Customs like 'anacharam' (bad traditions) and 'dura-charam' (evil practices) made sure these groups stayed oppressed. Guru knew that an individual alone could not fight this. Only unity through organized efforts could bring lasting change.

That's why he gave this famous formula:

"Educate, Organize, Industrialize"

- ◆ Educate – gain knowledge and confidence
- ◆ Organize – come together for strength
- ◆ Industrialize – become economically self-reliant

He believed that without these three, a community would remain weak.

2.4.2 Temples with a New Purpose

Guru redefined temples. Traditionally, temples were only for upper castes and focused on rituals. Guru changed this. He

said that worship must go hand in hand with service. In 1888, he installed a Shiva linga at Aruvippuram, showing that everyone had the right to build temples. Over time, he built over 100 temples across Kerala and Tamil Nadu - but these were not just for prayer. They also had spaces for learning, discussion, and community service.

He even said that a mirror could replace an idol, reminding people to see God in themselves. This symbolised equality and self-respect, breaking caste barriers. Guru also set rules for discipline in his ashrams. One of his verses reads:

"Just as for men, so also for women - let schools and ashrams be set up in all directions."

This showed his support for equal institutions for women, too.

2.4.3 Temples, Sabhas, Gurukulas – All Connected

Guru built a network of institutions:

- ◆ Temples – not just for worship but also for community use
- ◆ Sabhas (assemblies) – for meetings, education, and public discussions
- ◆ Gurukulas – residential schools for both spiritual and practical education

These were supported by a central organization: the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP Yogam). Guru made sure both men and women could learn, while also creating separate spaces when needed for cultural comfort. His goal was not to attack tradition, but to transform it wisely.



2.4.4 SNDP Yogam – A Historic Step

In 1903, Guru helped form the SNDP Yogam, a major step in organizing the community. He guided people like Dr. Palpu and Kumaran Asan in forming it. The Yogam promoted:

- ◆ Education for all
- ◆ Inclusive temples
- ◆ Vocational training
- ◆ Spreading Guru's teachings

Guru did not control the Yogam, but served as a spiritual guide. He encouraged democratic functioning based on truth and unity.

2.4.5 Facing Challenges with Wisdom

In the early days, the Yogam faced issues. Some thought it was only for Ezhavas or was purely religious. There were internal disagreements, too. Whenever problems arose, Guru reminded people that his vision was for all humanity, not just one caste. His message at Aruvippuram Temple still echoes:

“Caste difference and religious hatred must end;

Let each person stand in their rightful place.”

Guru kept the Yogam focused on equality for everyone, not caste pride.

2.4.6 Education and Industry for Empowerment

Following his three-part motto, the SNDP Yogam started:

- ◆ Schools, libraries, and hostels
- ◆ Reading rooms for self-learning
- ◆ Vocational centers and cooperative industries

Guru wanted economic freedom, so people could live with dignity and independence, not depend on landlords or upper castes. But he always linked material progress with spiritual values - teaching that without compassion and discipline, development is incomplete.

2.4.7 Going Beyond Caste: Guru's Larger Vision

Even though SNDP began for Ezhavas, Guru always taught universal unity. He rejected caste pride and the desire to become a “higher caste.” He said: true dignity comes from knowledge and service, not status. His famous message: “One Caste, One Religion, One God for Mankind” was a call to end division, not to erase identity. It promoted respect and unity.

His organizations welcomed people from all backgrounds. He did not ask them to convert or follow a specific path. What mattered was character, not caste.

2.4.8 Organizations as Tools for Brotherhood

Later in life, Guru spoke to all people, not just the oppressed. He said organizations must work for everyone's good, not just their own. He warned that pride and ego destroy unity. Organizations should be based on:

- ◆ Truth (satya)
- ◆ Compassion (daya)
- ◆ Non-violence (ahimsa)
- ◆ Self-discipline (niyama)

He instructed his followers to utilise institutions to serve and grow, rather than to gain power.

2.4.9 Disciples Who Continued His Vision

Guru's work did not stop with him. His disciples continued it:

- ◆ Kumaran Asan – spread his ideas through poetry and speeches
- ◆ T.K. Madhavan – carried his message into political activism (Vaikom Satyagraha)
- ◆ R. Sankar – became Chief Minister of Kerala, upholding Guru's values
- ◆ T.V. Narayani Amma – supported women's education and hostels

The SNDP Yogam continued to build schools, hospitals, and cultural centers, following Guru's teachings. His poem Ashramam says: "Just as for men, so also for women - let ashrams and schools be built everywhere." This showed that he wanted a comprehensive network of institutions for all people, especially those denied dignity.

2.4.10 A Model for All of India

Guru's methods inspired other reform movements in India, like the Self-Respect Movement and Ambedkar's social reforms. Although he stayed away from politics, his ideas helped shape the concepts of caste justice, education for all, and religious tolerance. His vision went beyond Kerala and beyond caste, offering a blueprint for true social unity.

2.4.11 Why Guru's Vision Still Matters Today

Guru's work was not just for his time

- it still matters today. The world is still divided by caste, religion, class, and gender. Guru's call for unity through values-based organizations is more important than ever.

His ideas of:

- ◆ Education – as a way to build self-respect
- ◆ Organization – for collective strength
- ◆ Industry – for economic freedom

remain powerful even today.

He did not build organizations for fame or control, but to help people live better lives. He believed that an ashram, temple, or school should be a place where people learn truth, serve others, and grow in character. His famous line, "One Caste, One Religion, One God for Mankind", reminds us that unity does not mean sameness, but mutual respect.

Guru's vision teaches that real change starts in the heart, but must be organized in action. He used love, truth, and peaceful action to transform society. That is why his institutions still stand strong today - not just as buildings, but as living centers of his teachings. His way shows us how to:

- ◆ Build unity across divisions.
- ◆ Educate people with compassion.
- ◆ Create institutions that serve all.
- ◆ Live with purpose, equality, and truth.



R Recap

- ◆ Guru taught that unity is essential for social progress
- ◆ He gave the practical message: *Educate, Organize, Industrialize*
- ◆ Built inclusive temples as places of worship and learning
- ◆ Mirror in temples symbolised self-realisation
- ◆ Formed SNDP Yogam to uplift marginalized communities
- ◆ Temples, sabhas, and gurukulas formed a network
- ◆ Institutions were open to all castes and women
- ◆ He rejected caste pride and promoted universal unity
- ◆ Guru promoted economic freedom through vocational work
- ◆ Followers like Kumaran Asan and R. Sankar continued his mission
- ◆ Guru's model became an inspiration for other Indian reformers
- ◆ Organizations must work with compassion, truth, and discipline
- ◆ His teachings are relevant even today for social unity

O Objective Questions

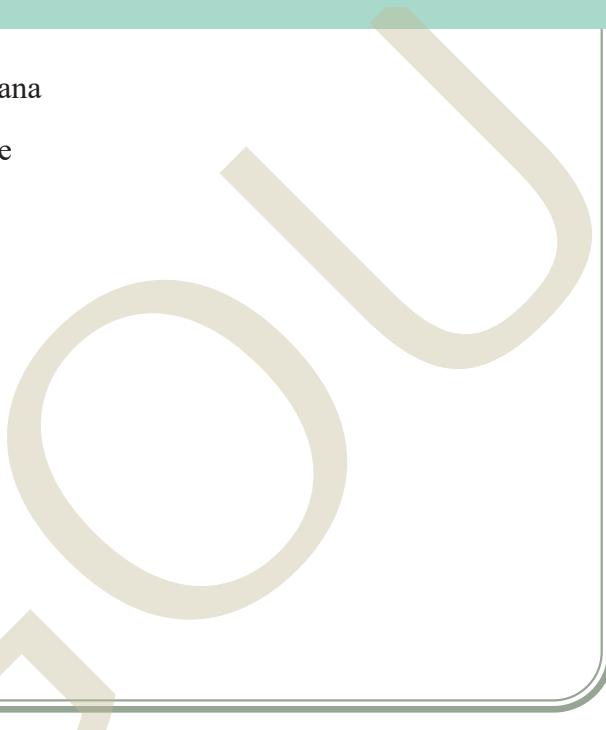
1. What does SNDP stand for?
2. What was Guru's three-part motto for community upliftment?
3. What did Guru install in place of an idol in some temples?
4. Who was one of Guru's key disciples who became Chief Minister of Kerala?
5. Which year was the SNDP Yogam formed?
6. What are Gurukulas?
7. What is the meaning of "Anacharam"?
8. What is the meaning of "Organize" in Guru's motto?

9. Which movement did Guru's work inspire beyond Kerala?
10. What quality did Guru say must guide organizations?



Answers

1. Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana
2. Educate, Organize, Industrialize
3. Mirror
4. R. Sankar
5. 1903
6. Learning centres
7. Harmful customs
8. Unity
9. Self-Respect Movement
10. Truth



Assignments

1. Explain Guru's motto "Educate, Organize, Industrialize" with examples.
2. Describe how Guru redefined temples as centres of equality and service.
3. Write a note on SNDP Yogam and its role in social reform.
4. How did Guru's organizations promote unity beyond caste?
5. Why is Guru's vision of social organizations relevant even today?



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QP CODE:

Reg. No :

Name :

Model Question Paper- set-I

Sixth Semester – UG Degree Examination

GENERIC ELECTIVE COURSE – B21PH01GE

INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF SREE NARAYANAGURU

(CBCS - UG)

2022 -23 Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

Section A

Answer any 10 questions. Each question carries 1 mark $(10 \times 1 = 10 \text{ marks})$

1. What does the term ‘Vedanta’ literally mean?
2. What is the goal of Moksha?
3. What symbol did Guru install instead of a deity in some temples?
4. What is the name of Guru’s poem questioning caste?
5. What does the mirror in the temple teach us?
6. What are the three steps of Vedantic practice?
7. Which organisation was founded with Guru’s guidance in 1903?
8. What does Guru’s famous teaching “One caste, one religion, one God” aim to promote?
9. What is the final stage of Bhāna Darśanam called?
10. Name one practical action Guru promoted at Sivagiri pilgrimage.
11. What did Guru say causes confusion, according to Atmopadesha Shatakam verse 88?



12. What is the name of Guru's logical work with ten darshanas?
13. What was the name of the hostel started for girls with Guru's blessing?
14. What language was traditionally restricted to upper castes?
15. Which caste was Guru born into?

Section B

Answer any 10 questions. Each question carries 2 marks $(10 \times 2 = 20$ marks)

16. Define Brahman according to Vedanta.
17. What is Bhāna Darśanam?
18. What is the meaning of "One caste" in Guru's vision?
19. What is Adhyaropa–Apavada?
20. What did Guru mean by installing a mirror in a temple?
21. Explain Guru's approach to caste reform.
22. What is the core idea behind the term "Re-valued Advaita"?
23. Mention two aims of the SNDP Yogam.
24. What is the importance of self-knowledge in Guru's teachings?
25. What is meant by the concept of Maya?
26. What is "Triputi" and how does Guru reinterpret it?
27. What did Guru promote to combat alcohol addiction?
28. What are the koshas in Vedanta?
29. What is the significance of the Sivagiri pilgrimage?
30. What was the main aim behind Guru's temple reforms?

Section C

Answer any 5 questions. Each question carries 4 marks $(5 \times 4 = 20$ marks)

31. Describe the role of reason in Guru's Darshanamala.
32. How did Guru promote education for women?

33. Explain the symbolism of the lamp in Atmopadesha Shatakam.
34. What are the three states of consciousness in Vedanta and how do they relate to Guru's philosophy?
35. Discuss Guru's idea of oneness in the context of social reform.
36. What are the four parts of experience according to Bhāna Darśanam?
37. How did Guru redefine the purpose of temples?
38. What did Guru mean by "real philosophy begins from real suffering"?
39. Describe the importance of education in Guru's reform movement.
40. How did Guru's teaching influence the Indian Constitution?

Section D

Answer any 2 questions. Each question carries 10 marks $(2 \times 10 = 20 \text{ marks})$

41. Discuss how Sree Narayana Guru revalued traditional Advaita to address caste and social inequality.
42. Explain how reason and mysticism are combined in Guru's philosophy with examples from his writings.
43. How did Guru use education as a tool for liberation, especially for oppressed communities and women?
44. Critically evaluate the message of "One caste, one religion, one God for mankind" in today's social context.





QP CODE:

Reg. No :

Name :

Model Question Paper- set-II

Sixth Semester – UG Degree Examination

GENERIC ELECTIVE COURSE – B21PH01GE

INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF SREE NARAYANAGURU

(CBCS - UG)

2022-23 Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

Section A

Answer any 10 questions. Each question carries 1 mark (10×1 = 10 marks)

1. What is the literal meaning of the term “Atmopadesha Shatakam”?
2. What is the Vedantic term for liberation or freedom from rebirth?
3. What are the five sheaths (koshas) said to cover the Self?
4. Which power of Maya hides the truth?
5. Which Guru’s verse states that compassion is the essence of life?
6. What did Guru install at Aruvippuram in 1888?
7. What is meant by Turīya in Vedanta?
8. Who founded the SNDP Yogam along with Guru?
9. Name the book in which Guru presents ten philosophical visions.
10. What symbol did Guru use to represent the Self in his poetry?
11. What is the Advaita explanation for the illusion of separateness?
12. Which temple reform message by Guru invited all castes to participate?

13. In Guru's teachings, what should true education lead to?
14. What is the ultimate goal described in Darshanamala?
15. What is the name of Guru's poem that supports spiritual renunciation for women?

Section B

Answer any 10 questions. Each question carries 2 marks $(10 \times 2 = 20 \text{ marks})$

16. What is the significance of the phrase "Tat Tvam Asi" in Vedanta?
17. What is Maya according to Vedanta, and how does it affect our perception?
18. Describe one key idea from Bhāna Darśanam.
19. What is the relationship between Atman and Brahman in Vedanta?
20. What does Guru mean by "shared bliss" in Matamīmāṃsā?
21. What did Guru aim to achieve through the installation of mirrors in temples?
22. How did Guru view education as a tool against caste discrimination?
23. Name two key reforms introduced by Guru to uplift women.
24. What is meant by "spiritual democracy" in the context of Guru's teachings?
25. What is the Triputi concept, and how is it resolved in Guru's philosophy?
26. What was the educational focus of the Advaita Ashram at Aluva?
27. What is the deeper meaning behind Guru's quote "The lamp never goes out"?
28. Explain Guru's idea of religion based on unity and love.
29. State two key features of Guru's practical spirituality.
30. How did Guru's vision redefine the role of temples in society?

Section C

Answer any 5 questions. Each question carries 4 marks $(5 \times 4 = 20 \text{ marks})$

31. Explain how Sree Narayana Guru redefined Advaita to address real-life issues.



32. What are the three states of experience and how do they relate to the cosmic Self?

33. Describe the structure and purpose of Darshanamala.

34. How did Guru use poetic symbols like dream and lamp to teach mysticism?

35. What were Guru's main objectives behind starting the SNDP Yogam?

36. How does Guru's teaching on gender equality reflect Advaita philosophy?

37. Explain the role of "mirror" in Guru's temple symbolism.

38. What is meant by "Educate, Organize, Industrialize" in Guru's vision?

39. How did Guru address alcoholism as a social problem?

40. Discuss Guru's views on the importance of work and vocational training.

Section D

Answer any 2 questions. Each question carries 10 marks (2×10 = 20 marks)

41. Discuss the ways in which Guru integrated spiritual insight and social action in his life and teachings.

42. Explain Guru's contributions to women's education and gender reform with suitable examples.

43. Describe the message of unity as expressed in Guru's poetry and temple reforms.

44. Analyse the structure and message of Atmopadesha Shatakam as a mystical text of self-realisation.

സർവ്വകലാശാലാസീതം

വിദ്യയാൽ സ്വത്രത്രാക്കണം
വിശ്വപ്രഭരായി മാറണം
ഗഹപ്രസാദമായ് വിളങ്ങണം
സുരൂപ്രകാശമേ നയിക്കണേ

കൂദിരുട്ടിൽ നിന്നു തെങ്ങങ്ങളെ
സുരൂവായിയിൽ തെളിക്കണം
സ്വനേഹദീപ്തിയായ് വിളങ്ങണം
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SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

Regional Centres

Kozhikode

Govt. Arts and Science College
Meenchantha, Kozhikode,
Kerala, Pin: 673002
Ph: 04952920228
email: rckdirector@sgou.ac.in

Thalassery

Govt. Brennen College
Dharmadam, Thalassery,
Kannur, Pin: 670106
Ph: 04902990494
email: rctdirector@sgou.ac.in

Tripunithura

Govt. College
Tripunithura, Ernakulam,
Kerala, Pin: 682301
Ph: 04842927436
email: rcedirector@sgou.ac.in

Pattambi

Sree Neelakanta Govt. Sanskrit College
Pattambi, Palakkad,
Kerala, Pin: 679303
Ph: 04662912009
email: rcpdirector@sgou.ac.in

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**INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY
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Sreenarayananaguru Open University

Kollam, Kerala Pin- 691601, email: info@sgou.ac.in, www.sgou.ac.in Ph: +91 474 2966841

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