

Chapter - 7

India's Cultural Roots

Q.1 Facts that Matter

- 1. Vedas :** There are four main Vedas- Rigveda, Samaveda, Atharvaveda, Yajurveda with the Rig Veda being the oldest one. The Vedas, India's earliest texts, gave rise to several schools of thought.
- 2. Upanishads :** The Upanishads are a collection of ancient Indian texts that form the philosophical basis of Hinduism.
- 3. Causes of Human suffering :** Craving and Attachment (Tanha), Ignorance (Avidya), The three poison- Greed, hate & delusion, Impermanence.
- 4. Significance of Banyan tree :** It is known as the tree of life, a symbol of life and fertility. One who knows this tree is the knower of Vedas.
- 5. Parigraha and Aparigraha:** Parigraha-Accumulation, to seize, grasping. Aparigraha- Non-possession , non-attachment and Non-greediness.
- 6. Vardhamana :** Lord Mahavir was named Vardhamana, which means 'one who grow'. He abandoned the wordly life at the age of 30 and attained 'Kaivalya'.

Q.2 Multiple Choice Questions

- 1. What does the word 'Veda' mean in Sanskrit?**
b) Knowledge
- 2. Which of the following is NOT a Vedic deity?**
d) Mahavira
- 3. What is the meaning of 'ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti'?**
a) Truth is one, but sages call it by many names
- 4. Which school of thought introduced the concept of atman?**
c) Vedanta
- 5. _____, a tribal deity is worshipped in Arunachal Pradesh?**
a) Donyipolo
- 6. According to Buddhism, state are the causes of human suffering?**
a) Ignorance and attachment
- 7. What is the meaning of "aparigraha" in Jainism?**
b) Non-possession

8. Which of the following correctly describes the origin of Indian culture?
 - b) Indian culture has multiple roots including the Indus, Harappan and Sindhu-Sarasvati civilisations.
9. What is the primary focus of the Chârvâka school of thought?
 - b) Materialism and denial of life after death
10. What is the significance of the banyan tree in Indian culture?
 - b) It symbolizes interconnectedness and longevity

Q.3 Picture based Question.

1. Identify the tribal deity depicted in the above picture.
Lord Jagannath
2. In which part of India is the deity worshipped?
Odisha
3. Give examples of tribal gods worshipped by various communities in southern and eastern parts of India.
In eastern India, the Mundas & Santhal tribals worship Singbonga, a supreme deity who created the whole world.
Toda tribals of the Nilgris, Tamil Nadu worship mountain peaks.

Q.4 Fill in the blanks

1. The Rig Veda is considered the most ancient of the four Vedas.
2. Siddhartha Gautama, who came to be known as the Buddha, was born in Lumbini.
3. Sabha and Samiti refers to a collective gathering or assembly in Vedic society.
4. Ascetic is someone who engages in a rigorous discipline to attain a higher consciousness.
5. The Vedic hymns were composed by Rishis and rishikas.

Q.5 Match the items given in Column A with their correct pair in Column B.

Column A	Column B
1. Principle of Non-Violence	b. Ahimsa
2. Anekantavada	d. Non- Possession
3. Yoga	e. Patanjali
4. Liberation from the cycle of birth and death	a. Nirvana
5. Jainism	c. Vardhamâna

Q.6 Assertion & Reason based Questions

- a) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
- b) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A.

- c) A is true, but R is false.
- d) A is false, but R is true.

Choose the correct option

1. **Assertion (A)** : The Vedas are considered the oldest texts of India.
Reason (R) : The Vedas were transmitted orally for thousands of years before being written down.
 2. **Assertion (A)** : Jainism and Buddhism emphasize ahimsa.
Reason (R) : Both religions advocate peaceful coexistence and non-injury to all living beings.
1. a) **Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.**
 2. a) **Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.**

Q.7 Case Study Based Question

Read the following extract and answer the questions:

- a. **What concept is being explained in this story?**
The concept of brahman, the divine essence that is the source of all existence.
- b. **How does the banyan seed illustrate the idea of brahman?**
The banyan seed, though appearing empty, contains the potential for a massive tree, symbolizing that brahman is the subtle essence behind all creation.
- c. **What is the significance of the phrase “You are that” in this context?**
It signifies that the individual self (atman) is ultimately one with the universal essence (brahman).

Q.8 Answer the following questions.

1. **Define Vedas.**
The Vedas are ancient Indian texts composed of hymns, prayers, and songs, which were recited orally.
2. **What did UNESCO recognize in 2008?**
UNESCO recognized Vedic chanting as a significant part of humanity’s oral and intangible heritage.
3. **What was the role of the Sangha in Buddhism?**
The Sangha is a community of monks and nuns dedicated to practicing and spreading the Buddha’s teachings.
4. **Define the term ‘Jain’.**
‘Jain’ derives from ‘jina,’ meaning ‘conqueror,’ referring to conquering ignorance.
5. **What does the term ‘Karma’ refer to?**
Karma is the principle of cause and effect in actions .

6. How was early Vedic society organized?

Early Vedic society had janas, or clans, like the Bharatas and Purus, each tied to northwest regions. The Rig Veda names over 30 such groups. They had kings (raja) and gatherings called sabha and samiti for decisions. People worked as farmers, weavers, potters, or priests, showing a simple, clan-based life shaped by Vedic hymns and community.

7. Vardhamana became Mahavira how?

Vardhamana, born in the 6th century BCE near Vaishali, left his royal life at 30 to seek wisdom. After 12 years of tough ascetic practice, he gained infinite knowledge, becoming Mahavira, or 'Great hero.' Known as a jina—conqueror of ignorance—he shared Jain teachings, influencing India with ideas of non-violence and truth from Bihar's plains.

8. How do folk and tribal traditions interact with leading philosophical schools in India?

Folk and tribal traditions in India have interacted with major philosophical schools through the exchange of deities, rituals and concepts. For instance, tribal deities and mother-goddess worship have influenced mainstream religions. Similarly, Hindu deities have been incorporated into tribal beliefs, creating unique versions of epics like the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. This interaction has enriched both folk and philosophical traditions, reflecting a dynamic cultural exchange.

9. Discuss the similarities and differences between Buddhism and Jainism, focusing on their core teachings.

Buddhism was founded by Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha) and Jainism was founded by Mahavira. Both religions emerged around the same time and share some core ideas, but differed in their approaches.

Similarities between Buddhism and Jainism include non-violence (ahimsa), karma (the principle of cause and effect) and rebirth, aiming to overcome suffering and ignorance.

Buddhism teaches that following the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path leads to Nirvana, or enlightenment. It emphasises a balanced approach known as the middle way, avoiding extremes. Whereas Jainism focusses on strict ascetic practices and renouncing material possessions. It introduced ideas like anekantavada (the belief that reality is complex and cannot be captured by a single perspective) and aparigraha (non-possessiveness), which are less emphasised in Buddhism.

10. Describe the significance of Upanishads.

The Upanishads are significant as they build upon Vedic concepts and introduce profound philosophical ideas. They explore the nature of brahman (the divine essence) and âtman (the Self), emphasizing the interconnectedness and unity of all existence. Key teachings include:

Brahman and Atman : The Upanishads teach that brahman is the ultimate reality and that the âtman within every being is one with brahman. This is expressed in mantras like "aham brahmâsmi" ("I am brahman") and "tat tvam asi" ("You are That").

Rebirth and Karma : They introduce the concepts of rebirth and karma, explaining how actions and their consequences shape life.

Unity and Interdependence : The texts highlight the interconnectedness of all beings and the importance of universal happiness, as seen in prayers like 'sarve bhavantu sukhinah' (may all creatures be happy).

Philosophical Inquiry : The Upanishads encourage questioning and deep exploration of life's mysteries, as illustrated in stories like Eshwataketu's learning about brahman and Nachiketa's quest for knowledge about life after death.

These teachings form the foundation of Vedanta and have deeply influenced Indian philosophy, spirituality, and culture.

'Spirituality is one's own experience'

'Love the Lord'

Let the children feel their inner self and express their feelings.

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