

UNIQUE STUDY POINT

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Class: VI	Subject: Social Science	Session: 2025-26
Chapter: 07 - India's Cultural Roots	Time: 1½ Hours	Max. Marks: 40

General Instructions:

1. All questions are compulsory.
2. This question paper contains 20 questions divided into five sections A, B, C, D and E.
3. Section A contains 10 MCQs of 1 mark each.
4. Section B contains 4 questions of 2 marks each.
5. Section C contains 3 questions of 3 marks each.
6. Section D contains 1 question of 5 marks.
7. Section E contains 2 Case Study Based questions of 4 marks each.

SECTION A - Multiple Choice Questions (1 mark each)

- Q1.** How many Vedas are there in total?
- (a) Two
 - (b) Three
 - (c) Four
 - (d) Five
- Q2.** What does "ṛitam" mean in Vedic culture?
- (a) Prayer and worship
 - (b) Truth and order
 - (c) Fire and energy
 - (d) Peace and harmony
- Q3.** Which tree did Buddha meditate under to attain enlightenment?
- (a) Banyan tree
 - (b) Neem tree
 - (c) Pipal tree
 - (d) Mango tree
- Q4.** What is the community of Buddhist monks called?
- (a) Sangha
 - (b) Sabha
 - (c) Samiti
 - (d) Samaj
- Q5.** At what age did Mahāvīra leave his home?
- (a) 25 years
 - (b) 30 years
 - (c) 35 years
 - (d) 40 years

Q6. How many years did Mahāvīra practice asceticism before achieving enlightenment?

- (a) 8 years
- (b) 10 years
- (c) 12 years
- (d) 15 years

Q7. Which of the following is NOT a Vedic deity?

- (a) Indra
- (b) Agni
- (c) Buddha
- (d) Varuṇa

Q8. What does "brahman" refer to in Vedantic philosophy?

- (a) A priestly class
- (b) A divine essence
- (c) A sacred text
- (d) A ritual practice

Q9. How many tribes were there in India according to 2011 census?

- (a) 500
- (b) 600
- (c) 705
- (d) 800

Q10. The Upanishads introduced the concept of:

- (a) Democracy
- (b) Rebirth and karma
- (c) Trade and commerce
- (d) Agriculture

SECTION B - Short Answer Questions (2 marks each)

Q11. What were the janas in early Vedic society? Name any two.

Q12. What does "sarve bhavantu sukhinah" mean? Why is this prayer significant?

Q13. Briefly explain the story of Śhvetaketu and the banyan seed.

Q14. What is the significance of the Sangha in Buddhism?

SECTION C - Short Answer Questions (3 marks each)

Q15. Describe the debate between Gārgī and Yājñavalkya. What does this tell us about Vedic society?

Q16. What are the three core principles of Jainism? Explain each briefly.

Q17. How do tribal communities view nature? Provide specific examples from the chapter.

SECTION D - Long Answer Question (5 marks)

Q18. Discuss the concept of unity in diversity as reflected in India's cultural roots. How did different schools of thought contribute to this? Support your answer with examples from Vedic, Buddhist, Jain, and tribal traditions.

SECTION E - Case Study Based Questions (4 marks each)

Q19. Read the following passage and answer the questions:

"There has been a constant interaction between folk and tribal traditions, and the leading schools of thought. Deities, concepts, legends and rituals have been freely exchanged in both directions. For instance, according to tradition, Jagannath, worshipped at Puri (Odisha), was originally a tribal deity; this is also the case with various forms of the mother-goddess worshipped across India."

- (a) What has been exchanged between tribal and other traditions? (1 mark)
- (b) Give an example of a tribal deity adopted in mainstream worship. (1 mark)
- (c) Why has this interaction been so natural? (1 mark)
- (d) What has been the result of this interaction? (1 mark)

Q20. Read the following passage and answer the questions:

"At the age of 29, Siddhārtha asked to be driven through the city in a chariot, and for the first time in his life came across an old man, a sick man, and a dead body. He also saw an ascetic, who appeared to be happy and at peace. Following this experience, Siddhārtha decided to give up his palace life, leaving behind his wife and son."

- (a) What were the four sights that Buddha encountered? (1 mark)
- (b) Why did these sights affect him so deeply? (1 mark)
- (c) What decision did he make after this experience? (1 mark)
- (d) What does this teach us about seeking truth? (1 mark)

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SECTION A - Answers to MCQs**Ans 1.** (c) Four

There are four Vedas: Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, and Atharva Veda. These are the most ancient texts of India.

Ans 2. (b) Truth and order

Ṛitam means truth and order in human life and in the cosmos. The early rishis and rishikas, along with various deities, sustained ṛitam.

Ans 3. (c) Pipal tree

Buddha meditated under a pipal tree at Bodh Gaya (in present-day Bihar) where he attained enlightenment.

Ans 4. (a) Sangha

The Sangha is the community of bhikṣhus (monks) and bhikṣhuṇīs (nuns) who dedicated themselves to practicing and spreading Buddha's teachings.

Ans 5. (b) 30 years

Mahāvīra left his home at the age of 30 to go in search of spiritual knowledge.

Ans 6. (c) 12 years

Mahāvīra practiced an ascetic discipline for 12 years before achieving infinite knowledge or supreme wisdom.

Ans 7. (c) Buddha

Buddha is not a Vedic deity. Indra, Agni, and Varuṇa are examples of Vedic deities. Buddha was a historical figure who founded Buddhism.

Ans 8. (b) A divine essence

In Vedantic philosophy, brahman refers to a divine essence that pervades everything - human life, nature, and the universe. It is not to be confused with the god Brahmā.

Ans 9. (c) 705

According to the 2011 census, India had 705 tribes spread over most states with a population of about 104 million people.

Ans 10. (b) Rebirth and karma

The Upanishads built upon Vedic concepts and introduced new ones including rebirth (taking birth again and again) and karma (our actions or their results).

SECTION B - Answers to Short Answer Questions**Ans 11.**

Janas were clans or larger groups of people in early Vedic society. Each jana was associated with a particular region of the northwest part of the Subcontinent. The Rig Veda lists over 30 such janas.

Examples:

- Bharatas
- Purus

- Kurus
- Yadus
- Turvaśhas

(Any two are acceptable)

Ans 12.

"Sarve bhavantu sukhinah" means "May all creatures be happy." This prayer also wishes all to be free from disease and sorrow.

Significance: This prayer is significant because it reflects the concept taught in the Upanishads that everything in this world is connected and interdependent. Since the ātman (divine essence) resides in every being and is ultimately one with brahman, the welfare of all beings is interconnected. This prayer expresses universal compassion and the understanding that true happiness comes when all beings are happy.

Ans 13.

Rishi Uddālaka sent his son Śhvetaketu to a gurukula to learn the Vedas. When Śhvetaketu returned after 12 years, his father realized he had become proud of his learning. Uddālaka tested him with questions about brahman, which Śhvetaketu could not answer.

Uddālaka then explained using the example of a banyan seed: when you open it, it seems empty, but it already contains the future banyan tree. Similarly, brahman, though invisible, is everywhere. He concluded by saying "You are That, Śhvetaketu" - meaning that Śhvetaketu himself is part of that divine essence.

Ans 14.

The Sangha was a community founded by Buddha consisting of bhikṣhus (monks) and bhikṣhuṇīs (nuns) who dedicated themselves to practicing and spreading his teachings.

Significance:

- It provided an organized structure for Buddhist practice and teaching
- Monks and nuns traveled across lands to spread Buddhist teachings
- They created new monasteries and sometimes lived ascetic lives in rock-cut caves
- The Sangha played a crucial role in preserving and transmitting Buddhist teachings across generations and regions

SECTION C - Answers to Short Answer Questions

Ans 15.

The Debate: King Janaka announced a prize for the winner of a philosophical debate. Yājñavalkya, a renowned rishi, came to the court and defeated many scholars. Then Gārgī, a rishika (female sage), asked him a series of questions on the nature of the world and finally on the nature of brahman. Yājñavalkya initially asked her to stop, but later resumed answering when she persisted. He explained how brahman makes the world, seasons, rivers, and everything else possible.

What This Tells Us About Vedic Society:

1. **Gender Equality in Learning:** Women like Gārgī could participate in the highest levels of philosophical discourse. The Upanishads tell us the importance of asking questions, whether from men, women, or children.
2. **Intellectual Freedom:** There was an atmosphere of open debate and inquiry where challenging questions were encouraged.
3. **Value of Knowledge:** Philosophical debates were held in royal courts, showing that knowledge and wisdom were highly valued.
4. **Persistence in Seeking Truth:** Gārgī's persistence in asking questions, even when initially stopped, shows that genuine inquiry was respected.

Ans 16.

The three core principles of Jainism are:

- 1. Ahimsa (Non-violence):** This means refraining from harming any living being, not just physically but also in thought and word. Mahāvīra taught: "All breathing, existing, living, sentient creatures should not be slain, nor treated with violence, nor abused, nor tormented, nor driven away." This extends beyond humans to all creatures.
- 2. Anekāntavāda (Multiple Perspectives):** This means "not just one" aspect or perspective. It teaches that truth has many aspects and cannot be fully described by any single statement. This principle promotes tolerance and understanding of different viewpoints, recognizing that reality is complex and can be viewed from multiple angles.
- 3. Aparigraha (Non-possession):** This means limiting oneself to what is truly necessary in life and avoiding excessive accumulation of material possessions. It advises detachment from material wealth and encourages a simple lifestyle focused on spiritual development rather than material accumulation.

These principles are shared to a large extent with Buddhism and Vedantic schools of thought, showing the interconnection between different Indian spiritual traditions.

Ans 17.

Tribal communities have a deep reverence for nature, viewing it as sacred and imbued with consciousness. Their worldview shares similarities with Hindu belief systems in this regard.

Specific Examples from the Chapter:

- 1. Sacred Mountains - Toda Tribe:** For the Toda tribals of the Nilgiris in Tamil Nadu, over thirty peaks of the mountain range are considered residences of gods and goddesses. These peaks are so sacred that the Todas avoid pointing to them with a finger, showing their deep respect for these natural features.
- 2. Natural Elements as Divine:** Tribal groups generally worship many deities associated with natural elements such as mountains, rivers, trees, plants, animals, and even some stones. They believe there is consciousness behind all these elements.
- 3. Supreme Deities from Nature:** Several tribes of Arunachal Pradesh worship Donyipolo, a combined form of the Sun and Moon who later rose to the status of a supreme god. This shows how natural elements can represent higher divinity.
- 4. Interconnectedness:** Tribal belief systems emphasize that all creatures, from humans to invisible organisms, support each other and cannot live without one another - reflecting the interdependence found in nature.

This view of nature as sacred explains why tribal traditions have naturally interacted with and enriched Hindu traditions, as both share the concept that elements of nature are conscious and divine.

SECTION D - Answer to Long Answer Question

Ans 18.

Unity in diversity is a fundamental characteristic of Indian culture, reflected beautifully in the metaphor of an ancient tree with many roots nourishing a common trunk, from which emerge many branches. These branches represent different manifestations of Indian culture, yet they remain united by the common trunk.

1. VEDIC TRADITION - Unity Within Diversity:

- The Vedic statement "ekam sat viprā bahudhā vadanti" (The Existent is one, but sages give it many names) embodies this concept perfectly
- Multiple deities (Indra, Agni, Varuṇa, Sarasvatī, etc.) were seen as manifestations of one supreme reality
- The final mantras of the Rig Veda call for unity: "Come together, speak together; common be your mind... may your thoughts be united, so all may agree!"
- Different schools of thought (Vedanta, Yoga, etc.) emerged from the same Vedic root but developed unique practices

2. BUDDHISM - Universal Compassion:

- Buddha emphasized that enlightenment is achievable through different paths
- The Sangha welcomed people from all backgrounds - monks and nuns dedicated to the same goal
- Spread across diverse cultures in Asia, adapting to local customs while maintaining core principles
- Teaching: "Not by water is one made pure... but one is pure in whom truth and dharma reside" - showing that purity comes from within, not from external rituals

3. JAINISM - Multiple Perspectives:

- The principle of Anekāntavāda (not just one aspect) directly promotes understanding diversity
- Teaches that truth has many aspects and cannot be fully described by any single statement
- This principle encourages tolerance and acceptance of different viewpoints
- Recognizes that different people may have different paths to enlightenment

4. TRIBAL TRADITIONS - Natural Integration:

- 705 different tribes with unique languages, customs, and practices, yet sharing common values
- Example: Jagannath at Puri was originally a tribal deity, now worshipped widely
- Mother-goddess worship across India has tribal origins
- Tribes have their own versions of the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa, showing cultural exchange
- Different supreme deities (Donyipolo, Singbonga, Khandoba) in different regions, all representing the same concept of higher divinity

5. SHARED "TRUNK" - Common Values: Despite differences, all these traditions share:

- Concept of dharma (righteous living)
- Concept of karma (actions and consequences)
- Search for liberation from suffering and ignorance
- Reverence for nature and its elements
- Emphasis on ahimsa (non-violence)
- Belief in interconnectedness of all beings

CONCLUSION: As sociologist André Beteille noted, there has been mutual influence between tribal religions and Hinduism throughout history. This constant interaction and exchange of deities, concepts, and practices among Vedic, Buddhist, Jain, folk, and tribal traditions has created a rich tapestry of unity in diversity. People were free to choose what suited them from various belief systems, creating a culture that celebrates both diversity and underlying unity. This is what makes India unique - it is like a banyan tree that encourages its branches to throw fresh roots while remaining united at the trunk.

SECTION E - Answers to Case Study Based Questions

Ans 19.

(a) What has been exchanged between tribal and other traditions?

Deities, concepts, legends, and rituals have been freely exchanged in both directions between folk and tribal traditions and the leading schools of thought.

(b) Give an example of a tribal deity adopted in mainstream worship.

Jagannath, worshipped at Puri in Odisha, was originally a tribal deity. Various forms of the mother-goddess worshipped across India also have tribal origins.

(c) Why has this interaction been so natural?

This interaction has been natural because folk, tribal, and Hindu belief systems have many similar concepts. All three regard elements of nature such as mountains, rivers, trees, plants, animals, and some stones as sacred, believing there is consciousness behind all of them. They also share the concept of a higher divinity despite worshipping multiple deities.

(d) What has been the result of this interaction?

The result of this long interaction has been mutual enrichment. As André Beteille stated, tribal religions and

Hinduism have influenced each other throughout history and before. This has enriched Indian culture, creating a diverse yet unified cultural heritage.

Ans 20.

(a) What were the four sights that Buddha encountered?

The four sights were: (1) an old man, (2) a sick man, (3) a dead body, and (4) an ascetic who appeared to be happy and at peace.

(b) Why did these sights affect him so deeply?

These sights affected Siddhārtha deeply because he had lived a protected life in the palace and had never encountered old age, sickness, or death before. For the first time at age 29, he realized that suffering exists in human life. The contrast between the suffering of the first three sights and the peace of the ascetic made him wonder about the root cause of suffering and the path to freedom from it.

(c) What decision did he make after this experience?

Following this experience, Siddhārtha decided to give up his palace life, leaving behind his wife and son. He began traveling on foot as an ascetic, meeting other ascetics and scholars, and searching for the root cause of suffering in human life.

(d) What does this teach us about seeking truth?

This teaches us that:

- True seeking requires courage and sacrifice - Siddhārtha left his comfortable life
- Direct experience and observation are important - he went out to see reality himself
- One must be willing to question and search deeply, even if it means leaving behind comfort and security
- The path to truth requires dedication and persistence

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