

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. Which region is associated with the composition of Vedic hymns?

- (a) Gangetic plains
- (b) Sapta Sindhava
- (c) Deccan plateau
- (d) Coastal regions

Q2. The term "rishi" refers to:

- (a) A king or ruler
- (b) A male seer or sage
- (c) A deity
- (d) A warrior

Q3. What does "aham brahmāsmi" mean?

- (a) I am the king
- (b) I am brahman (divine)
- (c) I am enlightened
- (d) I am supreme

Q4. Where did Buddha give his first sermon?

- (a) Lumbini
- (b) Bodh Gaya
- (c) Sarnath
- (d) Kushinagar

Q5. The story of Rohineya teaches us about:

- (a) Wealth and power
- (b) Second chances and transformation
- (c) War and victory
- (d) Trade and commerce

Q6. Which cave complex contains Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain caves?

- (a) Ajanta
- (b) Ellora
- (c) Elephanta
- (d) Badami

Q7. The Chārvāka school believed that:

- (a) Spirituality is supreme
- (b) Only the material world exists
- (c) Meditation leads to liberation
- (d) Rituals are essential

Q8. Yajña in Vedic culture refers to:

- (a) Meditation
- (b) Ritual or sacrifice
- (c) Debate
- (d) Education

Q9. The Toda tribe considers sacred:

- (a) Rivers only
- (b) Mountains and peaks
- (c) Animals only
- (d) Trees only

Q10. The concept of interconnectedness of all beings is emphasized in:

- (a) Only Buddhism
- (b) Only Jainism
- (c) Only Vedanta
- (d) All of the above

SECTION B - Short Answer Questions (2 marks each)

Q11. How were the Vedas transmitted through generations? Why is this significant?

Q12. Explain the concept of karma as introduced in the Upanishads.

Q13. What is the significance of rock-cut caves in Buddhist and Jain history?

Q14. How do tribal communities demonstrate the concept of a supreme being? Give examples.

SECTION C - Short Answer Questions (3 marks each)

Q15. How does the story of the monkey-king in the Jātaka tales illustrate Buddhist values? What lessons can leaders today learn from it?

Q16. Why do scholars prefer the term "schools of thought" over "religions" for Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism? Explain with reasoning.

Q17. Explain how ahimsa in Buddhism and Jainism extends beyond physical non-violence. How can this be practiced in daily life?

SECTION D - Long Answer Question (5 marks)

Q18. The chapter uses the metaphor of an ancient tree to describe Indian culture. Elaborate on this metaphor. Identify the "roots," the "trunk," and the "branches." How does this metaphor help us understand Indian cultural

diversity?

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

Q19. Read the following passage and answer the questions:

"Early Vedic society was organised in different janas or 'clans'. The Rig Veda alone lists over 30 such janas — for instance, the Bharatas, the Purus, the Kurus, the Yadus, the Turvaśhas etc. Each clan was associated with a particular region of the northwest part of the Subcontinent. Many professions are mentioned in the Vedic texts, such as agriculturist, weaver, potter, builder, carpenter, healer, dancer, barber, priest, etc."

- (a) What were janas in Vedic society? (1 mark)
- (b) How many janas are mentioned in the Rig Veda? (1 mark)
- (c) List any four professions mentioned in Vedic texts. (1 mark)
- (d) What does this diversity of professions tell us about Vedic society? (1 mark)

Q20. Read the following Buddha quote and answer the questions:

"Not by water is one made pure, though many people may bathe here [in sacred rivers]. But one is pure in whom truth and dharma reside. Conquering oneself is greater than conquering a thousand men on the battlefield a thousand times."

- (a) According to Buddha, what makes one truly pure? (1 mark)
- (b) What is greater than conquering others in battle? (1 mark)
- (c) What does "conquering oneself" mean? (1 mark)
- (d) How is this teaching relevant today? (1 mark)

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SECTION A - Answers to MCQs

Ans 1. (b) Sapta Sindhava

The Vedic hymns were composed in the Sapta Sindhava region (the land of seven rivers), which is discussed in Chapter 5 of the textbook.

Ans 2. (b) A male seer or sage

Rishi refers to a male seer or sage who composed Vedic hymns. The female equivalent is rishika.

Ans 3. (b) I am brahman (divine)

"Aham brahmāsmi" is a famous Upanishadic mantra meaning "I am brahman" - expressing that the individual self is ultimately one with the divine essence.

Ans 4. (c) Sarnath

After attaining enlightenment at Bodh Gaya, Buddha gave his first sermon at Sarnath near Varanasi.

Ans 5. (b) Second chances and transformation

The Jain story of Rohineya illustrates that everyone should have a second chance and that transformation through right thinking is possible.

Ans 6. (b) Ellora

Ellora caves in Maharashtra contain Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain caves, carved between the 6th and 10th centuries CE.

Ans 7. (b) Only the material world exists

The Chārvāka school believed that only the material world exists and therefore there can be no life after death. This school disappeared over time.

Ans 8. (b) Ritual or sacrifice

Yajña (often read as 'yagya') refers to rituals directed towards various deities for individual or collective benefit and wellbeing.

Ans 9. (b) Mountains and peaks

For the Toda tribals of the Nilgiris, over thirty peaks of the mountain range are residences of gods and goddesses and are considered so sacred that they avoid pointing to them.

Ans 10. (d) All of the above

The concept of interconnectedness and interdependence of all beings is emphasized in Buddhism, Jainism, and Vedanta - it's part of the common "trunk" shared by these traditions.

SECTION B - Answers to Short Answer Questions

Ans 11.

Transmission: The Vedas were transmitted orally through rigorous training and memorization. For anything between 100 and 200 generations, these texts were committed to memory and passed on orally with hardly any alterations, without being written down.

Significance:

- This meticulous oral transmission over thousands of years is why UNESCO recognized Vedic chanting in 2008 as "a masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity"
- It demonstrates the extraordinary dedication of generations of teachers and students
- It shows the importance placed on preserving knowledge accurately
- It represents one of the most successful examples of oral tradition in human history

Ans 12.

Karma, introduced in the Upanishads, refers to our actions and their results. The concept teaches that:

- Every action has consequences that affect our present and future lives
- Our current circumstances are influenced by past actions
- Good actions lead to positive results, while negative actions lead to suffering
- Karma is closely linked with the concept of rebirth - our actions in one life affect subsequent births

This concept emphasizes personal responsibility for one's actions and their outcomes, encouraging ethical behavior.

Ans 13.

Significance of Rock-cut Caves:

- **Monastic Life:** Monks lived ascetic lives in these caves, sleeping on stone beds and dedicating themselves to spiritual practice
- **Archaeological Evidence:** Many caves have preserved inscriptions with the names of monks who lived there, providing historical records
- **Centers of Learning:** Caves served as monasteries where teachings were preserved and transmitted
- **Architectural Achievement:** They demonstrate advanced skills in rock-cutting and design
- **Cultural Integration:** Sites like Ellora show peaceful coexistence of different traditions (Hindu, Buddhist, Jain)

These caves are tangible evidence of the spread of Buddhism and Jainism across India.

Ans 14.

Despite worshipping multiple deities associated with natural elements, many tribal groups have a concept of a higher divinity or supreme being:

Examples:

1. **Donyipolo (Arunachal Pradesh):** Several tribes worship Donyipolo, a combined form of the Sun and Moon, who later rose to the status of a supreme god
2. **Khandoba (Central India):** This god attained the higher status of a supreme deity in parts of central India
3. **Singbonga (Eastern India):** The Munda and Santhal tribals worship Singbonga as a supreme deity who created the whole world

This shows that tribal belief systems, like Hindu philosophy, recognize both the multiplicity of divine manifestations and the unity of a supreme being.

SECTION C - Answers to Short Answer Questions

Ans 15.

The Story: The monkey-king saved his troop by using his own body as a bridge across the stream. When soldiers attacked the monkeys, he caught hold of a tree on the other bank and let the monkeys cross over his body to safety. He was severely bruised in the process and eventually died. The human king who watched this was greatly moved by the monkey-king's selfless sacrifice.

Buddhist Values Illustrated:

1. **Selfless Compassion:** The monkey-king put others' welfare above his own life

2. **Non-attachment:** He was willing to give up his body and life
3. **Responsibility:** As a leader, he felt responsible for protecting his subjects
4. **Sacrifice:** True greatness comes from serving others, not ruling over them

Lessons for Today's Leaders:

1. **Servant Leadership:** Leaders should serve their people, not just command them
2. **Personal Sacrifice:** True leaders put the welfare of their community above personal comfort or safety
3. **Responsibility:** Leadership means taking responsibility for others' wellbeing
4. **Leading by Example:** The monkey-king didn't ask others to do what he wouldn't do himself
5. **Inspiring Transformation:** His sacrifice inspired the human king to reflect on his own role as a ruler

In modern context, this applies to political leaders, business executives, and community leaders who should prioritize the welfare of those they serve over personal gain.

Ans 16.

Why "Schools of Thought" is Preferred:

Scholars prefer the term "schools of thought" or "belief systems" over "religions" for Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism because these traditions are multifaceted and cannot be limited to just religious aspects.

Multiple Dimensions: These traditions include:

1. **Philosophical aspect:** Deep inquiries into the nature of reality, consciousness, and existence
2. **Spiritual aspect:** Practices for inner transformation and enlightenment
3. **Religious aspect:** Rituals, prayers, and worship
4. **Ethical aspect:** Moral guidelines and values for living
5. **Social aspect:** Organization of communities and social practices
6. **Cultural aspect:** Arts, literature, and traditions

Examples:

- Buddhism can be practiced as a philosophy without belief in gods
- Yoga is a school of thought that has spread globally beyond religious contexts
- Jainism includes sophisticated philosophical debates about the nature of truth (anekāntavāda)
- Vedanta is both a philosophical system and a spiritual path

Conclusion: The word "religion" is too limiting in the context of Indian civilization because these traditions encompass entire worldviews, ways of life, and systems of thought that go far beyond what Western concepts of religion typically include. They are comprehensive approaches to understanding and living life.

Ans 17.

Ahimsa Beyond Physical Non-violence:

In Buddhism and Jainism, ahimsa means much more than refraining from physical violence. It extends to:

1. Mental/Psychological Non-violence:

- Refraining from violent or harmful thoughts
- Not harboring hatred, anger, or ill will toward anyone
- Avoiding negative thoughts even toward oneself (negative self-talk)

2. Verbal Non-violence:

- Not using hurtful words or speech
- Avoiding gossip, slander, or harsh language
- Speaking truth in a kind and constructive manner

3. Emotional Non-violence:

- Not manipulating or emotionally harming others
- Treating all beings with compassion and respect

Daily Life Practice:

1. **Self-Observation:** Notice when negative thoughts arise about others or ourselves, and consciously transform them into positive ones
2. **Mindful Speech:** Think before speaking - will these words hurt or help? Choose words that are truthful yet kind
3. **Compassionate Actions:**
 - Help others without expecting anything in return
 - Be kind to animals and nature
 - Stand up against injustice peacefully
4. **Diet Choices:** Many practitioners choose vegetarian diets to avoid harming animals
5. **Conflict Resolution:** Resolve disagreements through dialogue and understanding, not aggression
6. **Environmental Care:** Practice non-violence toward nature by reducing waste, conserving resources
7. **Social Media:** Avoid cyberbullying, trolling, or spreading hatred online

Modern Relevance: In today's world of increasing conflicts, cyberbullying, and environmental destruction, practicing comprehensive ahimsa can create a more peaceful and sustainable society.

SECTION D - Answer to Long Answer Question

Ans 18.

The chapter beautifully uses the metaphor of an ancient tree to explain Indian culture. Let me elaborate on each component:

THE ROOTS (Cultural Origins):

The roots represent the deep, ancient foundations of Indian culture:

- **Indus-Sarasvati Civilization:** Archaeological evidence suggests some cultural roots go back to this ancient civilization
- **Vedic Tradition:** The Vedas and their oral transmission
- **Tribal and Folk Traditions:** Indigenous beliefs and practices that predate written texts
- **Regional Diversity:** Different janas, clans, and communities across the subcontinent

These roots are deep, strong, and provide nourishment to the entire tree. They are often invisible but essential.

THE TRUNK (Shared Values):

The trunk represents the common core values and concepts that unite different traditions:

1. **Dharma:** Righteous living and duty
2. **Karma:** Actions and their consequences
3. **Rebirth:** The cycle of birth and death
4. **Liberation:** Freedom from suffering and ignorance
5. **Ahimsa:** Non-violence in thought, word, and deed
6. **Interconnectedness:** All beings are connected and interdependent
7. **Truth (Satya):** Truth as the highest value
8. **Reverence for Knowledge:** Knowledge as the greatest wealth

The trunk is strong and provides structure - these shared values allow different branches to coexist harmoniously.

THE BRANCHES (Different Manifestations):

The branches represent different schools of thought and cultural expressions:

1. **Vedanta and other Vedic schools**
2. **Buddhism**
3. **Jainism**
4. **Yoga**

5. **Tribal belief systems**
6. **Regional traditions and practices**
7. **Various art forms:** Literature, music, dance, architecture
8. **Scientific and medical traditions:** Mathematics, astronomy, Ayurveda
9. **Governance systems and political thought**
10. **Martial arts traditions**

Each branch is different in appearance and direction, yet all emerge from and are sustained by the same trunk.

THE BANYAN TREE QUALITY:

The metaphor becomes even more powerful when we consider the banyan tree specifically:

- The banyan encourages its branches to "throw fresh roots of their own" - representing how each tradition develops its own sub-traditions while remaining connected to the main trunk
- It can extend to a vast area - representing India's cultural influence spreading across Asia
- It shelters diverse flora and fauna - representing how Indian culture accommodates and nurtures diversity
- It can last for many centuries - representing the enduring nature of Indian civilization

HOW THIS METAPHOR HELPS UNDERSTAND CULTURAL DIVERSITY:

1. Unity and Diversity Coexist:

- Just as branches can look different while sharing one trunk, Indian traditions can have different practices while sharing core values
- Example: Buddhism, Jainism, and Hinduism have different rituals but share concepts of karma, ahimsa, and liberation

2. Organic Growth:

- Trees grow naturally, not artificially - showing that Indian culture evolved organically
- New branches emerged from existing ones - new schools of thought built upon earlier traditions

3. Mutual Support:

- All branches are supported by the same trunk and root system
- Branches don't compete; they coexist
- Example: Tribal deities becoming part of mainstream worship, and vice versa

4. Strength Through Diversity:

- A tree with many branches is stronger and more resilient
- Cultural diversity makes civilization robust and adaptable
- Different traditions enriched each other through constant interaction

5. Interconnectedness:

- You can't remove one branch without affecting the whole tree
- All parts of Indian culture are interconnected
- André Bêteille's observation: Tribal and Hindu traditions have influenced each other throughout history

6. Room for New Growth:

- Trees can always grow new branches
- Indian culture has continuously evolved while maintaining its core
- New schools of thought (like Sikhism later) could emerge and be accommodated

CONCLUSION:

This tree metaphor brilliantly captures the essence of Indian civilization - it shows how unity and diversity are not contradictory but complementary. The Vedic statement "ekam sat viprā bahudhā vadanti" (The Existent is one, but sages give it many names) perfectly expresses this metaphor. Whether you focus on the roots, the trunk, or any branch, you're still dealing with the same tree. Similarly, whether you study Vedanta, Buddhism, Jainism, or tribal traditions, you're exploring different aspects of the same rich cultural heritage.

The metaphor also explains why India could accommodate such diverse belief systems peacefully - they all emerged from common roots and were nourished by shared values, even as they developed their unique characteristics. This is what makes Indian culture truly unique in world history.

SECTION E - Answers to Case Study Based Questions

Ans 19.

(a) What were janas in Vedic society?

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.

(b) How many janas are mentioned in the Rig Veda?

The Rig Veda alone lists over 30 janas, including the Bharatas, Purus, Kurus, Yadus, and Turvaśhas.

(c) List any four professions mentioned in Vedic texts.

Any four of the following: agriculturist, weaver, potter, builder, carpenter, healer, dancer, barber, priest.

(d) What does this diversity of professions tell us about Vedic society?

The diversity of professions tells us that:

- Vedic society was economically diverse and well-developed
- There was division of labor with specialized skills
- Society had both practical professions (agriculture, pottery) and service professions (healing, priesthood)
- Arts and culture were valued (dancers)
- It was a complex, organized society with various economic activities

Ans 20.

(a) According to Buddha, what makes one truly pure?

According to Buddha, one is truly pure when truth and dharma reside in them. Purity comes from within - from righteous living and truthfulness - not from external rituals like bathing in sacred rivers.

(b) What is greater than conquering others in battle?

Conquering oneself is greater than conquering a thousand men on the battlefield a thousand times. Self-conquest is the highest victory.

(c) What does "conquering oneself" mean?

Conquering oneself means:

- Overcoming one's negative qualities like anger, greed, hatred, and ignorance
- Developing self-discipline and self-control
- Mastering one's thoughts, words, and actions
- Achieving inner peace and enlightenment
- Living according to truth and dharma despite temptations or difficulties

(d) How is this teaching relevant today?

This teaching is highly relevant in modern times:

- **Mental Health:** Many problems today stem from lack of self-control and inner discipline
- **Social Media:** People often engage in online conflicts; conquering one's urge to argue or insult others is important
- **Consumerism:** Modern society encourages endless consumption; self-control helps us live sustainably
- **Stress Management:** Conquering negative emotions helps manage stress and anxiety
- **Leadership:** True leaders must first master themselves before leading others
- **Conflicts:** Many conflicts could be resolved if people conquered their ego and anger
- **Addiction:** Whether to technology, substances, or habits, self-conquest is essential for freedom

In a world focused on external achievements, Buddha's teaching reminds us that the greatest victory is internal transformation.

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