

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 of the following best describes the relationship between different Vedic deities?
- (a) They were competing gods
 - (b) They were manifestations of one reality
 - (c) They were from different religions
 - (d) They were independent powers
- Q2.** What was unique about the transmission of Vedic knowledge?
- (a) It was written on palm leaves
 - (b) It was transmitted orally for thousands of years
 - (c) It was carved on stones
 - (d) It was kept secret
- Q3.** The concept "tat tvam asi" teaches that:
- (a) You are separate from the divine
 - (b) You are That (divine essence)
 - (c) You are the teacher
 - (d) You are the student
- Q4.** What motivated Buddha to leave his palace?
- (a) Desire for adventure
 - (b) Conflict with his father
 - (c) Witnessing human suffering
 - (d) Desire for wealth
- Q5.** What distinguishes Jainism's view of truth?
- (a) There is only one truth
 - (b) Truth has many aspects (anekāntavāda)
 - (c) Truth is unknowable
 - (d) Truth is only for the wise

Q6. The presence of both rishis and rishikas in Vedic texts indicates:

- (a) Gender segregation
- (b) Gender equality in learning
- (c) Male dominance
- (d) Female dominance

Q7. What is the primary message of the opening quote from Subhāshita about knowledge?

- (a) Knowledge can be stolen
- (b) Knowledge is the greatest wealth
- (c) Knowledge is a burden
- (d) Knowledge decreases with use

Q8. Why did the Chārvāka school disappear over time?

- (a) It was banned
- (b) It did not gain much popularity
- (c) It had no followers
- (d) It was too complex

Q9. The banyan tree is considered sacred in:

- (a) Only Hinduism
- (b) Only Buddhism
- (c) Only Jainism
- (d) Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism

Q10. What is the significance of Ellora caves having Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain sections?

- (a) Religious conflict
- (b) Peaceful coexistence of different traditions
- (c) Random construction
- (d) Government mandate

SECTION B - Short Answer Questions (2 marks each)

Q11. Why does the chapter use "schools of thought" instead of "religions"? What does this tell us about the nature of Indian traditions?

Q12. How does the Upanishadic story of Shvetaketu teach that outward knowledge is not enough? What deeper lesson does it convey?

Q13. What does Buddha's quote about "conquering oneself" reveal about his understanding of true victory?

Q14. How does the tribal practice of avoiding pointing at sacred mountains reflect a deeper environmental ethic?

SECTION C - Short Answer Questions (3 marks each)

Q15. Analyze how the Vedic call for unity ("Come together, speak together...") is relevant in today's diverse and often divided societies.

Q16. How did the emphasis on questioning in Upanishadic stories (like Nachiketa and Gārgī) contribute to India's intellectual traditions? Why is questioning important?

Q17. Compare the methods of spiritual seeking in Buddhism (Middle Path) and Jainism (Asceticism). What do these different approaches tell us about diversity in spiritual practices?

SECTION D - Long Answer Question (5 marks)

Q18. Critically examine the statement: "Although the Vedic, Buddhist and Jain schools had important differences, they also shared some common concepts." Discuss both the differences and similarities, and explain why this pattern of "unity in diversity" emerged in India.

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

Q19. Read the following passage and answer the questions:

"In both Buddhism and Jainism, ahimsa means much more than refraining from physical violence against a person or an animal. It also means refraining from violence in thought, such as having ill feelings towards anyone. If we observe ourselves carefully, we may notice such negative thoughts and learn to turn them into positive ones. Sometimes such negative thoughts are even directed at ourselves!"

- (a) How does this definition of ahimsa go beyond common understanding? (1 mark)
- (b) What practice does the text suggest for dealing with negative thoughts? (1 mark)
- (c) Why is self-directed negative thinking also considered a form of violence? (1 mark)
- (d) How can you apply this teaching in your own life? Give one concrete example. (1 mark)

Q20. Read the following quote and answer the questions:

"The thousands of castes and tribes on the Indian subcontinent have influenced each other in their religious beliefs and practices since the beginning of history and before. That the tribal religions have been influenced by Hinduism is widely accepted, but it is equally true that Hinduism, not only in its formative phase but throughout its evolution, has been influenced by tribal religions." - André Bêteille

- (a) What does Bêteille say about the direction of cultural influence? (1 mark)
- (b) Why is it important to recognize that influence went both ways? (1 mark)
- (c) Give one example from the chapter of tribal influence on mainstream practices. (1 mark)
- (d) What does this mutual influence tell us about Indian culture? (1 mark)

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SECTION A - Answers to MCQs

Ans 1. (b) They were manifestations of one reality

The early rishis and rishikas saw all gods and goddesses as one, not separate beings. The famous hymn states: "The Existent is one, but sages give it many names."

Ans 2. (b) It was transmitted orally for thousands of years

The Vedic hymns were recited orally, not written. For 100-200 generations, these texts were committed to memory and passed on orally with hardly any alterations through rigorous training.

Ans 3. (b) You are That (divine essence)

"Tat tvam asi" means "You are That" - teaching that the individual self is ultimately one with the divine essence (brahman).

Ans 4. (c) Witnessing human suffering

At age 29, when Siddhārtha encountered an old man, a sick man, and a dead body for the first time, he realized the existence of suffering and decided to search for its root cause.

Ans 5. (b) Truth has many aspects (anekāntavāda)

Anekāntavāda, meaning "not just one" aspect or perspective, teaches that truth has many aspects and cannot be fully described by any single statement.

Ans 6. (b) Gender equality in learning

The presence of both rishis (male seers) and rishikas (female seers) who composed Vedic hymns indicates that women had equal access to the highest levels of learning and spiritual knowledge.

Ans 7. (b) Knowledge is the greatest wealth

The Subhāṣita states that knowledge cannot be stolen, confiscated, is not a burden, and grows with use - making it "the greatest wealth of all, the wealth of true knowledge."

Ans 8. (b) It did not gain much popularity

The Chārvāka school, which believed only the material world exists, does not seem to have gained much popularity and disappeared with time.

Ans 9. (d) Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism

As mentioned in the chapter, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism all regard the banyan tree as sacred, making it an apt symbol for Indian civilization.

Ans 10. (b) Peaceful coexistence of different traditions

Ellora caves containing Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain sections (created between 6th-10th centuries) demonstrates the peaceful coexistence and mutual respect among different belief systems.

SECTION B - Answers to Short Answer Questions

Ans 11.

The chapter uses "schools of thought" or "belief systems" instead of "religions" because Indian traditions are multifaceted and cannot be limited to just religious aspects. They encompass:

- Philosophical aspects (inquiries into reality)

- Spiritual aspects (inner transformation)
- Religious aspects (rituals and worship)
- Ethical aspects (moral guidelines)
- Social aspects (community organization)

What this tells us: Indian traditions are comprehensive worldviews and ways of life that integrate multiple dimensions of human existence. They are not compartmentalized "religions" but holistic approaches to understanding and living life. This reflects the Indian approach of seeing life as interconnected rather than divided into separate religious, philosophical, and practical spheres.

Ans 12.

When Shvetaketu returned from the gurukula after 12 years of Vedic study, he had become proud of his learning. However, he couldn't answer his father Uddālaka's questions about the nature of brahman. This shows that:

Outward knowledge is not enough because:

- Mere bookish learning or memorization doesn't constitute true wisdom
- One can know texts without understanding their deeper meaning
- Pride in learning actually blocks true understanding

Deeper lesson: True knowledge requires humility, direct realization, and understanding of the invisible essence (brahman) that pervades everything - like the invisible seed within a banyan fruit that contains the entire tree. The story teaches that intellectual knowledge must be complemented by experiential understanding and that the most important truths are often subtle and require careful contemplation to grasp.

Ans 13.

Buddha's statement "Conquering oneself is greater than conquering a thousand men on the battlefield a thousand times" reveals his revolutionary understanding of victory:

True Victory is Internal:

- External conquests are temporary and create more suffering
- Self-mastery is permanent and leads to lasting peace
- The real enemy is within - our ignorance, attachment, anger, and ego

Deeper Understanding: Buddha recognized that human suffering comes from within (avidyā and attachment), not from external circumstances. Therefore, the greatest battle is the one we fight with ourselves - our negative tendencies, automatic reactions, and destructive patterns. This teaching shifts the focus from dominating others to mastering oneself, from external power to inner strength, and from temporary victories to permanent transformation.

Ans 14.

The Toda tribe's practice of avoiding pointing at sacred mountain peaks reflects a profound environmental ethic:

Immediate Meaning:

- It shows deep respect and reverence for nature
- Mountains are seen as living, conscious entities worthy of respect
- Even simple gestures (pointing) must be mindful

Deeper Environmental Ethic:

- **Nature as Sacred:** Natural features are not mere resources but divine presences
- **Restraint and Humility:** Humans should approach nature with humility, not dominance
- **Interconnected Consciousness:** Recognizing consciousness in nature prevents exploitation
- **Sustainable Living:** When nature is sacred, you naturally protect and conserve it

This contrasts sharply with modern views of nature as mere resource to be exploited, suggesting that environmental protection requires a fundamental shift in how we view and relate to the natural world.

Ans 15.

The Vedic call for unity - "Come together, speak together; common be your mind, may your thoughts agree... United be your purpose, united your heart... may your thoughts be united, so all may agree!" - carries profound relevance for today's world:

Modern Relevance:

1. **Political Polarization:** Today's societies are deeply divided along political lines. The Vedic call reminds us that despite different viewpoints, we must "come together, speak together" - emphasizing dialogue over division.
2. **Religious and Cultural Conflicts:** The world sees conflicts based on religion, ethnicity, and culture. The idea of "common be your mind" suggests finding common ground while respecting diversity.
3. **Social Media Echo Chambers:** Modern technology often creates bubbles where people only hear opinions they agree with. The call to "speak together" emphasizes the importance of genuine dialogue across differences.
4. **Global Challenges:** Issues like climate change, pandemics, and economic crises require united action. "United be your purpose" reminds us that collective challenges need collective solutions.
5. **Community Building:** In an age of increasing isolation and individualism, this call emphasizes the importance of community, shared purpose, and collective wellbeing.

Practical Application Today:

- Encouraging dialogue between opposing groups
- Building consensus on common goals despite differences
- Creating spaces where diverse voices can be heard
- Focusing on shared human values rather than divisive identities

The key insight is that unity doesn't mean uniformity - people can have different thoughts while agreeing on common purposes and maintaining united hearts. This is exactly what modern democracies and diverse societies need: respectful dialogue, common purpose, and unity of heart despite diversity of thought.

Ans 16.

The emphasis on questioning in Upanishadic stories profoundly shaped India's intellectual traditions:

Evidence from Stories:

1. **Nachiketa:** A young boy persistently questioned Yama (god of death) about what happens after death, despite Yama's attempts to avoid answering
2. **Gārgī:** A woman sage asked challenging questions to the renowned Yājñavalkya in a public debate
3. **Śhvetaketu:** Was tested by his father with questions that revealed the limits of his bookish knowledge

Contribution to India's Intellectual Traditions:

1. **Culture of Inquiry:** Created an atmosphere where questioning was encouraged, not suppressed. The Upanishads explicitly state the importance of questions "whether these questions come from men, women or children."
2. **Gender Equality in Learning:** Women like Gārgī participating in highest philosophical debates showed that intellectual pursuit was open to all
3. **Challenging Authority:** Even gods (like Yama) had to answer to sincere seekers, establishing that authority must justify itself through reason
4. **Philosophical Depth:** Persistent questioning led to deeper philosophical inquiries into the nature of reality, consciousness, and existence
5. **Multiple Schools of Thought:** The freedom to question allowed diverse schools of thought to emerge and coexist

Why Questioning is Important:

1. **Prevents Dogmatism:** Blind acceptance of ideas without questioning leads to rigid, unchanging belief systems
2. **Leads to Truth:** Nachiketa's persistence revealed profound truths about the ātman that might otherwise remain hidden
3. **Develops Critical Thinking:** Questioning trains the mind to analyze, evaluate, and think independently
4. **Reveals Limitations:** Śhvetaketu's story shows that questioning reveals the difference between surface knowledge and deep understanding
5. **Progress and Innovation:** All advancement in science, philosophy, and society comes from people who questioned existing ideas
6. **Empowerment:** The ability to question gives individuals agency and prevents exploitation by those in power

Modern Relevance: In today's world of information overload and misinformation, the ability to question - respectfully but persistently - is more important than ever. These ancient stories teach us that true knowledge comes not from accepting everything we're told, but from sincere inquiry, critical thinking, and the courage to ask difficult questions even of authority figures.

Ans 17.

Buddhism and Jainism emerged around the same time but advocated different methods of spiritual seeking:

BUDDHISM - The Middle Path:

- Buddha initially practiced severe asceticism but found it ineffective
- He then advocated the "Middle Path" - avoiding extremes of both luxury and severe asceticism
- Emphasis on balanced living, meditation, and inner discipline
- Recognized that extreme self-denial can be as much of a hindrance as extreme indulgence
- Focus on mental transformation through understanding and practice

JAINISM - Ascetic Discipline:

- Mahāvira practiced severe ascetic discipline for 12 years before enlightenment
- Emphasis on rigorous self-discipline and control over bodily needs
- Practice of aparigraha (non-possession) taken to greater extremes
- Monks and nuns often practice severe austerities
- Belief that strict control over physical desires helps conquer attachments

COMPARISON: | Aspect | Buddhism | Jainism | |-----|-----|-----| | Approach | Balanced, moderate | Rigorous, austere | | Physical discipline | Important but not extreme | Central and often extreme | | Path to liberation | Middle way between extremes | Strict asceticism | | Accessibility | More accessible to lay people | Demanding, especially for monks | **What This Diversity Tells Us:**

1. **Multiple Valid Paths:** Both traditions led followers to enlightenment, showing that there isn't just one correct spiritual method. This reflects the principle of anekāntavāda - truth has many aspects.
2. **Individual Differences:** Different temperaments and personalities may be suited to different paths. Some may thrive with rigorous discipline, others with balanced moderation.
3. **Experimentation and Choice:** Buddha himself experimented with extreme asceticism before finding the middle path, showing that spiritual seeking involves personal discovery.
4. **Tolerance and Coexistence:** Despite different methods, both schools coexisted peacefully and even shared many core values (ahimsa, karma, liberation).
5. **Shared Goal, Different Methods:** Both aimed at the same goal - liberation from suffering and ignorance - but offered different methodologies.
6. **Freedom to Choose:** The diversity shows that Indian culture valued spiritual freedom - people were free to choose the path that suited them best.

Modern Lesson: Just as these two traditions offered different but valid spiritual methods, today we should recognize that people have different learning styles, different approaches to problems, and different paths to fulfillment. Diversity in methods doesn't mean contradiction; it means richness and adaptability. The key is not to claim one method is universally superior, but to recognize that different approaches may work for different people while leading to similar goals.

Ans 18.

This statement captures the essence of India's cultural heritage - unity in diversity. Let me examine both aspects:

IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES: 1. Authority and Origin:

- **Vedic Schools:** Accepted the authority of the Vedas and Upanishads; emerged from Vedic tradition
- **Buddhism & Jainism:** Did not accept Vedic authority; developed independent systems

2. Concept of God/Divine:

- **Vedic:** Multiple deities seen as manifestations of one brahman; emphasis on cosmic order (ṛitam)
- **Buddhism:** More focused on individual enlightenment; less emphasis on gods; Buddha himself is teacher, not god
- **Jainism:** No creator god; emphasis on individual souls (jivas) and their liberation

3. Rituals:

- **Vedic:** Complex rituals (yajña) directed to deities became central
- **Buddhism:** Moved away from complex rituals; Buddha said purity comes from truth and dharma, not from bathing in rivers
- **Jainism:** Also rejected complex Vedic rituals; emphasis on personal practice

4. Path to Liberation:

- **Vedic (Yoga):** Methods to realize brahman in consciousness; union of ātman and brahman
- **Buddhism:** Middle Path; removing ignorance (avidyā) and attachment through understanding
- **Jainism:** Rigorous ascetic discipline; conquering ignorance and attachments through strict control

5. Key Concepts:

- **Vedic:** Brahman, ātman, "aham brahmāsmi", "tat tvam asi"
- **Buddhism:** Four Noble Truths, Eightfold Path, impermanence
- **Jainism:** Anekāntavāda, aparigraha, infinite knowledge (kevala jñāna)

6. Organizational Structure:

- **Vedic:** Various schools without single monastic organization
- **Buddhism:** Organized Sangha of monks and nuns
- **Jainism:** Organized monastic communities with strict rules

SHARED COMMON CONCEPTS (The "Trunk"): 1. Dharma:

- All three emphasize righteous living and duty
- Buddha: "One is pure in whom truth and dharma reside"
- Dharma as cosmic law and ethical living

2. Karma:

- Actions have consequences
- Present circumstances influenced by past actions
- Personal responsibility for one's destiny

3. Rebirth:

- Cycle of birth, death, and rebirth
- Introduced in Upanishads, accepted by Buddhism and Jainism
- Actions in one life affect subsequent births

4. Liberation/Enlightenment:

- All seek freedom from cycle of suffering and rebirth

- Different names: moksha, nirvana, kaivalya
- Ultimate goal of human existence

5. Ahimsa (Non-violence):

- Not just physical but mental and verbal non-violence
- Compassion toward all living beings
- Central to Buddhist and Jain ethics; present in Vedic thought

6. Interconnectedness:

- All beings are connected and interdependent
- Vedic: through shared divine essence (brahman)
- Buddhist/Jain: through karma and shared existence
- Prayer "sarve bhavantu sukhinah" - may all creatures be happy

7. Inner Transformation:

- All emphasize internal development over external achievements
- True change comes from within
- Self-mastery is the highest goal

8. Questioning and Inquiry:

- All encouraged sincere questioning and seeking
- Stories like Nachiketa, Gārgī show importance of asking questions
- Truth must be discovered, not just accepted

WHY THIS PATTERN EMERGED IN INDIA: 1. Geographical and Cultural Factors:

- **Diverse Landscape:** India's varied geography (mountains, plains, forests, coasts) led to diverse communities with different experiences and perspectives
- **Multiple Janas:** Over 30 clans mentioned in Rig Veda, each with regional association
- **Interaction Zones:** Trade routes and urban centers allowed exchange of ideas

2. Intellectual Freedom:

- **No Central Authority:** Unlike some civilizations, India didn't have a single religious authority that could suppress alternative views
- **Debate Culture:** Philosophical debates (like at King Janaka's court) were encouraged
- **Royal Patronage:** Kings often supported multiple schools of thought

3. Philosophical Foundations:

- **Anekāntavāda Principle:** Recognition that truth has many aspects
- **Vedic Unity Concept:** "Ekam sat viprā bahudhā vadanti" - one reality, many names
- **Acceptance of Multiple Paths:** Recognition that different people may need different approaches

4. Practical Wisdom:

- **What Works:** Focus on results (liberation, enlightenment) rather than dogma
- **Experimentation:** Buddha himself experimented before finding the Middle Path
- **Pragmatic Approach:** If different methods achieve the goal, all are valid

5. Social Structure:

- **Diverse Professions:** Vedic texts mention many occupations (agriculturist, healer, dancer, etc.)
- **Assemblies:** Sabha and samiti allowed collective decision-making
- **Choice:** People were free to choose their spiritual path

6. Historical Evolution:

- **Build on Existing:** New schools built upon rather than completely rejecting earlier traditions
- **Synthesis:** Even when rejecting Vedic authority, Buddhism and Jainism absorbed concepts like karma and

rebirth

- **Mutual Enrichment:** Constant interaction between traditions led to exchange of ideas

7. Tribal and Folk Influence:

- **Continuous Exchange:** Tribal, folk, and textual traditions influenced each other
- **Jagannath Example:** Tribal deity becoming mainstream god
- **Shared Values:** All held nature sacred, believed in consciousness in all things

8. Spiritual Maturity:

- **Non-dogmatic Approach:** Focus on experience over doctrine
- **Tolerance:** Ellora caves showing Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions coexisting
- **Synthesis Over Conflict:** Preference for integration rather than elimination

CONCLUSION: The pattern of "unity in diversity" emerged in India because of a unique combination of factors:

1. **Intellectual openness** that allowed questioning and debate
2. **Philosophical foundations** that recognized multiple paths to truth
3. **Practical wisdom** that valued results over rigid adherence to one method
4. **Social structures** that permitted diversity
5. **Historical evolution** that built upon rather than destroyed previous traditions

The result was a civilization that could hold seemingly contradictory ideas in creative tension - different schools of thought (branches) emerging from shared values (trunk) and common origins (roots). This is captured in the tree metaphor: the banyan tree encourages its branches to throw fresh roots while remaining united at the trunk.

This Indian approach offers a model for the modern world: How can we maintain diversity while building on shared values? How can we have different beliefs while working toward common goals? The answer from India's cultural roots is clear: acknowledge differences, identify common ground, encourage dialogue, and recognize that unity doesn't require uniformity.

In today's polarized world, this ancient wisdom is more relevant than ever - we need the trunk of shared human values (compassion, truth, justice) while allowing the branches of diverse traditions, cultures, and beliefs to flourish.

SECTION E - Answers to Case Study Based Questions

Ans 19.

(a) How does this definition of ahimsa go beyond common understanding?

Common understanding of ahimsa is limited to refraining from physical violence. This definition extends it to include mental and verbal non-violence - refraining from violent thoughts, ill feelings, and negative thinking toward anyone, including oneself. It recognizes that violence begins in the mind before manifesting physically.

(b) What practice does the text suggest for dealing with negative thoughts?

The text suggests the practice of self-observation: "If we observe ourselves carefully, we may notice such negative thoughts and learn to turn them into positive ones." This means becoming aware of our negative thoughts and consciously transforming them into positive thoughts.

(c) Why is self-directed negative thinking also considered a form of violence?

Self-directed negative thinking is considered violence because:

- It harms our own mental and emotional wellbeing
- It's a form of self-abuse that causes suffering
- The ātman (divine essence) resides within us too, so harming ourselves is also violence
- Negative self-talk can be as damaging as physical harm
- It goes against the principle of compassion for all beings, which includes ourselves

(d) How can you apply this teaching in your own life? Give one concrete example.

(This answer will vary by student; here's a model answer:)

Example Application: When I make a mistake in an exam or sports, instead of thinking "I'm so stupid" or "I always fail," I can practice ahimsa toward myself by thinking "I made a mistake this time, but I can learn from it and do better next time." This transforms a violent self-attacking thought into a constructive, compassionate one.

Other possible applications:

- When someone annoys you, instead of thinking angry thoughts about them, try to understand their perspective
- On social media, resist the urge to leave mean comments or share hateful posts
- When arguing with parents or friends, speak kindly even when disagreeing
- Notice when you're being self-critical and replace those thoughts with self-compassion
- When frustrated with someone's slow progress, think encouraging thoughts instead of impatient ones

Ans 20.

(a) What does Bêteille say about the direction of cultural influence?

Bêteille states that cultural influence went in both directions - not just from Hinduism to tribal religions (which is widely accepted), but equally from tribal religions to Hinduism. He emphasizes that Hinduism has been influenced by tribal religions "not only in its formative phase but throughout its evolution."

(b) Why is it important to recognize that influence went both ways?

Recognizing bidirectional influence is important because:

- **Challenges Hierarchy:** It prevents seeing tribal traditions as "inferior" or "primitive" and mainstream traditions as "superior"
- **Gives Credit:** It acknowledges tribal communities' contributions to Indian culture and spirituality
- **Promotes Equality:** It shows that all traditions have valuable insights to offer
- **Accurate History:** It presents a more complete and truthful picture of how Indian culture evolved
- **Mutual Respect:** It fosters appreciation for diversity rather than cultural dominance
- **Counters Colonial Views:** It challenges 19th-century anthropological views that described tribes as "primitive" or "inferior"

(c) Give one example from the chapter of tribal influence on mainstream practices.

Examples from the chapter:

- **Jagannath at Puri:** This widely worshipped deity was originally a tribal deity
- **Mother-Goddess worship:** Various forms of the mother-goddess worshipped across India have tribal origins
- **Sacred mountains:** Many peaks considered sacred in Hinduism were first revered by tribal communities like the Todas

(Any one is acceptable)

(d) What does this mutual influence tell us about Indian culture?

This mutual influence reveals several important characteristics of Indian culture:

1. **Openness and Receptivity:** Indian culture was willing to adopt and integrate practices and beliefs from various sources, including tribal communities
2. **Fluid Boundaries:** There were no rigid boundaries between "high" and "low" cultures; ideas and practices flowed freely
3. **Organic Evolution:** Culture evolved naturally through interaction rather than through imposition or conquest
4. **Mutual Enrichment:** The result of this exchange was enrichment of all traditions involved
5. **Unity in Diversity:** Different traditions maintained their identities while sharing and borrowing from each other
6. **Shared Foundation:** The natural interaction was possible because all traditions shared similar concepts - reverence for nature, belief in consciousness in all elements, concept of higher divinity
7. **Non-hierarchical:** Unlike some cultures where dominant groups impose their beliefs on others, Indian

culture allowed for genuine exchange

8. **Inclusivity:** Rather than excluding or suppressing tribal traditions, mainstream culture incorporated and honored them
9. **Living Tradition:** Indian culture is not static but constantly evolving through ongoing interactions and exchanges

As B eteille concludes, this mutual influence has been happening "since the beginning of history and before," making it a fundamental characteristic of Indian civilization. This explains why India could develop such rich cultural diversity while maintaining underlying unity - different streams constantly flowed into each other, enriching the whole while maintaining their individual characters.

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