

India is a land of ancient culture. Ancient Indian scripture “Vishnu puran” states -

“ ऊत्तरं यत्समुद्रस्य हिमाद्रेश्चैव दक्षिणम्,
वर्षं तद् भारत नाम भारती यत्र संस्थिः । ”

It means India extends from the Himalaya in North to the Indian ocean in the South. It is said that new descendants are called Indians. In the beginning of any auspicious ceremony, Bharatvarsha, Bharatkhand, Jambudvip and Arayavarta etc. words are used while taking resolution. Our country is gifted with the natural boundaries Himalaya in the North and sea in the East, West and South. From all over the world different countries mesmerized by the Indian prosperity and came to trade, settled and mingled with Indian culture. Due to mutual exchange many changes have been seen in our culture. In this way, our heritage is transferred from generation to generation and it is continuously progressing.

India : Location and Area

We have already studied in std.-IX about the present area and location of India. It was very vast in ancient time and now areawise it stands on the 7th rank and populationwise on the second.

Rich and varied Heritage

Our motherland has bestowed rich and varied heritage to us so as to the world. Indian culture has been trade oriented and peace loving. ‘Sat’, ‘Chit’ and ‘Anand’ are realized from Indian culture. Beside this Indian culture prospered with the mutual exchange of different - cultures of other countries which came to India and settled here. They have accepted the values of non-violence and peace which have been adopted and admired by the world. People, right from the beginning of Indus-valley civilization till today, have made our country rich and wealthy with their intellectuality, ability, talent and skill. Innumerable scholars, thinkers, artists, artisans, sages, saints, scientists and historians have contributed to the growth and development of our culture. Culture is a sum of habits, values, customs, traditions and conduct of life style of human.

Meaning of Culture

Culture means a way of life. It is made of changes that occur in public life, social rules and regulations of different societies. It can be said that culture is a total of habits, values, customs, traditions and ideals leading humans to the highest level.

Cultural Heritage of India :

Heritage means a valuable gift from our forefathers to us. Indian history is thousands of years old. We say in school pledge “I Love my country and I am proud of its rich and varied heritage”. In this context, heritage is a precious gift from our motherland to the whole world, about mysteries of human life. We divide our heritage into two divisions :

(1) Natural heritage of India (2) Cultural heritage of India

(1) Natural Heritage of India : The result of close relationship between nature, environment and human-life is natural heritage. Natural heritage of India is unique and varied. It includes, features like mountains, forests, deserts, rivers, streams, seas, trees, plants, creepers, flowers, leaves, insects and varied landscapes, wide range of minerals, vegetation, plants and animals. We are the children of Nature, so it has made a beautiful arrangement for our food, water, fresh air and dwelling to cater our all needs. We treat nature with respect and faith. The examples of our close relation with nature are stories of 'Panch Tantra' and 'Jataka Tales' of Buddhist religion. Our classical and folk music and several ragas are based on 'Prahar' (Period of a day). Similarly, Ayurveda, Unani and Nature Cure are also totally based on nature.

(1) Landscapes : Beautiful landscapes are generally formed due to different shapes of land. For example, the Himalaya is a landscape. It has endowed Indians abundantly with useful vegetation and minerals. Strange birds - animals and mountain peaks covered with snow, brimming rivers are the gift of Himalaya. Forests of Terai and its pilgrimage places for e.g. Amarnath, Badrinath, Kedarnath and summit like Nandadevi are in Himalayas. Since ancient time Himalaya has a greater importance for India.

(2) Rivers : Rivers have been providing natural ways since ancient times. Indian culture has flourished on the river bank of the Indus and the Ravi. The rivers like the Ganga, the Yamuna, the Saraswati, the Indus, the Narmada, the Godavary and the Krishna etc. have profoundly influenced the people of India. Rivers are the source for drinking water, domestic use, irrigation, electricity and water ways. Beside this, man was dependent on river to develop industries of clay utensils, plastering and building of houses. River water has made human life beautiful and prosperous. Landscape scenes at dawn and dusk are very fascinating on the side of river, these are source of inspiration for artists and have enriched the lives of the people by developing the aesthetic sense.

(3) Vegetation : People of India are environment lover since ancient time, its proof is their love and affection towards flowers and shrubs and plants. Humans, animals, birds etc. are dependent on trees for their food. Banyan and Pipal tree and basil are worshipped in India. Cereals, pulses, oil-seeds plants, green fields, prosperous herbs packed forests and medicinal plants have ultra enriched our life from ancient time. Harde, Ambala, Bahenda, Aloe-vera, Ardusi, Neem etc. medicines and flowers like Rose, Lotus, Mogara,(Jasmine) Damaro (Sweet Basil), Sunflowers, Champa (Plumeria), Jui (Polianthes Tuberose), Jasminum etc. have made human life very beautiful, fragrant, healthy and prosperous. Thus, social and religious life of India is greatly influenced by the vegetation.

(4) Wild life : India is a nature lover since ancient time. It is a country with animal lover culture. Tiger, lion, elephant, rhino, foxes, bear, deer, sambar, rabbit, python, snake, mongoose, lizard, porcupine like many such organisms are found and seen. Asian lions in the world are found only in the Gir forest of Gujarat. Our religious belief has given a status of God-Goddesses's vehicle to some of the wild animals - tiger, peacock, alligators, eagles etc. Our national currency is highly valued by having the

figure of four lions, horse, elephant and bull. Further more, to protect the wild life reserves are created and even laws for the protection of their life have been enacted.

(2) Cultural Heritage of India : India has gifted to the world a diverse and rich heritage. Cultural heritage is a man-made heritage. Whatever is received or created by human with his tact, wisdom, art and skill is called cultural heritage. Starting from Aryans, Kshatrap, Kushan, Huns, Persians, Turks, Arabs, Mughal, Britishers, French etc. castes and tribes have came to India. Indian culture from the exchange between all this has become rich.

The people of India from the pre-historic period have contributed to the people of the world. The art of architecture and sculpture are 5000 years old. The remains of Indus Valley Civilization is an evidence of this. On seeing the remains of the figures of Gods and Goddesses, humans, animals and several toys as well as sculpture of a bearded man and the statue of a dancer, one feels self-esteem and pride in our cultural heritage.

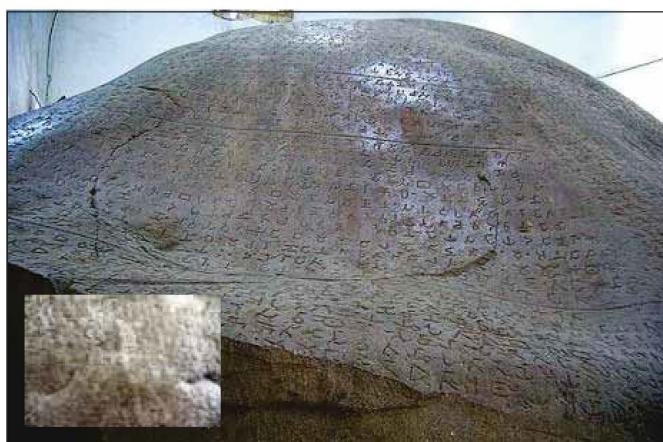
Further when we look at the figure of bullock or lion on an inverted Lotus of Mauryan Era, the statue of Gautam Buddha in a meditative form or the Kalkhand statues of Jain tirthankars, the caves of Ellora of Rashtrakuta dynasty etc. By seeing this heritage we feel, proud, glad and also respect for our cultural heritage.

Our cultural heritage accommodates palaces, buildings, sculptures, stupas, viharas, chaityas, temples, mosques, tombs, forts and gates. Even historical places of our freedom movement like Sabarmati Ashram, Dandi, Bardoli, Vardha, Shantiniketan (Kolkata), Delhi etc. can also be considered as a part of our cultural heritage. Besides, language, script, discovery of zero, mathematics, calendar, astronomy, iron, literature, religion, yuddhashashtra, chariot, political science, zoology, botany, vastushastra, religion, republic, judiciary, legislation, environment protection etc. are the important discoveries of India.

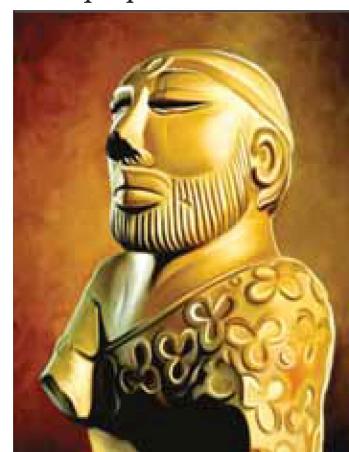
Cultural Heritage of Gujarat :

The places having cultural, legendary and archaeological importance are Lothal (Dholka taluka), Rangpur (Limbdi taluka in Surendranagar district), Dholaveera (Kuchchh district), Rozadi or Shrinathgadh

(Rajkot district) etc. The places of pilgrimage are victory tower of Vadnagar, stone inscription of king Ashoka at Junagadh, Sun-temple of Modhera, gate of Champaner, Rudra Mahalaya of Siddhpur, Mansar lake of Viramgam, Jama Masjid of Ahmedabad, Jhoolta Minara (Shaking towers), Sidi Saiyed ni Jali (grill), temples of Hathisinh, Sahastralinga lake of Patan, Rajmahal of Vadodara, tomb of Mohabat



1.2 Stone Inscription of Ashoka



1.1 Bearded man's Sculpture

Khan, Parsi Agiyari of Navsari are worth seeing places. Places having religious importance are Dwarkadhish temple of Dwarka, Shardapeeth of Jagadguru Shankaracharya, Somnath temple one of the 12 Jyotirlinga, Ambaji in North Gujarat (Banaskantha district), Bahucharaji (Mahesana district), Ranchodrai temple - Dakor (Kheda district) and Shamlaji (Aravalli district) etc.

Well known religious, social and tourism oriented places in Gujarat are Polo Forest, Vijaynagar (Sabarkantha district) Kite festival, Kankaria carnival (Ahmedabad), Tana-Riri festival (Vadnagar), Northern dance festival (Modhera), Rannotsava in Kachchh etc.

Tourist Places of Jain and Buddhist : Jain and Buddhist religion prevailed in India. Consequently, Jain and Buddhist caves are seen at various places in Gujarat - Vadnagar, Taranga, Khambhaliya, Shamlaji, Koteswar, Talaja, Dhank, Jhagadiya etc.

Fairs of Gujarat

Varied culture of Gujarat is seen in many places. Hence, fairs having traditional, religious and social importance are held. Some important fairs among them are given below :

Sr.	Name of fair	Place of fair	Tithi/time of fair
1	Modhera fair	Modhera (Mehsana)	Third week of January Shravan sud Amavasya
2	Bahucharaji fair	Bahucharaji (Mahesana)	Chaitra sud Poonam
3	Shamlaji-Thakorji fair	Shamlaji (Aravalli)	Kartik Sud 11 to Poonam
4	Bhadaravi Poonam fair	Ambaji (Banaskantha)	Bhadarvi Sud Poonam
5	Bhavnath fair	Girnar (Junagarh)	Magh vad 9 to 12
6	Tarnetar fair	Tarnetar (Surendranagar)	Bhadrapad 4 to 6
7	Bhadiyat fair	Bhadiyat (Ahmedabad)	Rajab Month Date 9, 10, 11
8	Naklang fair	Koliak (Bhavnagar)	Bhadarva vad Amavasya
9	Madhavpur fair	Madhavpur (Porbandar)	Chaitra sud 9 to 13
10	Vautha fair	Dholka (Ahmedabad)	Kartak sud Poonam
11	Miradatar fair	Unava (Mahesana)	Rajab Month 16 to 22
12	Dang Darbar fair	Ahwa (Dang)	Falgun Sud Poonam
13	Gol Gadheda fair	Garbada (Dahod)	5 to 7 days after Holi
14	Kartik Poornima fair	Somnath (Gir)	Kartik sud Poonam
15	Bhanguriya fair	Kwant (Chhota Udaipur)	Holi to Rang Panchami

India : Land and People

Primitive men came into existence in Eastern South Africa. Mesmerised by varied and prosperous heritage many foreign tribes came to India. Consequently, the remains of all tribes are found here.

The Dravidians were considered to be the most ancient people of India. But the modern researcher of linguistic and anthropology have proved that even before the Dravidian, six more tribes came and settled in India. Lets explore more about them.

(1) Negritoit (Habsi people) : Some historians believe that negrate or Negrose are the most ancient inhabitants of India. They came from Africa via Baluchistan to India. They were black having height of 4 to 5 feet and curly hair.

(2) Australoid (Nishad people) : People of this tribe came from South East Asia. Their physical features were : black skin with broad head, flat nose, short in height etc. The ‘Aryan’ who came later on to India call them ‘Nishad’. The origins of the tribes like ‘Kol’ and ‘Munda’, Khasi, tribes of Assam, the tribes of Nicobar and Myanmar have similarities to the Australoids. Their contribution in the development of Indian culture and civilisation is immense. They made clay utensils, wore cotton cloth and knew many other skills. They had great religious beliefs too.

(3) The Dravidians : Dravidians were considered to be the creator of Shindhu Velly Civilization of Mohen-Jo-Daro and the direct descendants of stone age culture. The tribes which came from North survived with their language and cultural features, later on they were only called as Dravidians. Dravidians gave the concept of mother as a ‘Goddess’ and father as a ‘God’. So the thought of Parvati and Shiva as mother and father developed. Moreover, the tradition of worshipping Nature is the gift of the Dravidians. The tradition of worshipping with ‘Dhup’ (incense stick), ‘Deep’ (lamp) and ‘Aarti’ are considered to be the gifts of the Dravidians. Besides, nature and animal worshipping etc. are their great features. Original deities of Dravidians have been accepted by Aryans and were re-established by them as a God of culture with pace of time. Under the tremendous influence of north, Aryan culture was deeply, internalised by the Dravidians. Hence, intercaste marriages took place. Dravidians had matriarchal system of family. Dravidians progressed a lot in different crafts and arts like building of boat and raft, weaving, spinning, dyeing etc. Due to the dominance of the Aryans, they shifted to South India and settled there. As a result, today we can see the people speaking Dravidian-family languages like Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam etc.

(4) Other Tribes : Apart from above, Mongoloid, Alpine, Dinarik and Armenoid tribe were also there in India.

Mongoloid : They came to India from North China via Tibet and settled down at North Assam, Sikkim, Bhutan, West Bengal etc. They gradually Indianized themselves. Mongoloid people possessed the physical characteristics like yellow complexion, flat face, chubby cheeks, almond shaped eyes etc. Mongoloids were of yellow complexion and they were known as “Kirat”.

Alpine, Dinarik and Armenoid : These people migrated from Central Asia. All these three tribes have similarities. The origin(genes) of these tribes are found in a large number in Gujarat, Saurashtra, Maharashtra, Bengal and Odisha (Formerly known as Orissa).

(5) The Aryans : The Nordic - Aryans were the creators of Aryan civilization in India. Hindus were called Aryans in the ancient time and the area where they were densely populated was called ‘Aryavrata’. As seven rivers were flowing over there, that region was named as ‘Sapta Sindhu’. In ancient time the first Aryan population was concentrated in the North - West. The area of ‘Aryavrata’ was extended upto Mithila (Bihar) in the East; in South it spread upto Vindhya range during post vedic period. They were more advanced people than any other contemporary tribes. This vast land was recognised with various names as Bharatbhumi, Bharatkhand and Bharatvarsha etc. after the name of the king Arya Bharat or Bharat-kul tribe.

Aryans were nature lovers. They loved, and worshipped the trees, the rivers, the mountains, the Sun, the wind and the rain. They had composed hymns (Richas) for praying to various natural elements.

In due course of time some religious ceremonies like recitation of vedas, performing yagya and other activities became prevalent in India.

There was a fine amalgamation of those tribes with their specific style of living and harmonious culture was formed, which gave India a glorious and prosperous heritage. These foreigner and Indian tribes amalgamated in such a way over a long period of time that they lost their individual identity through intercaste marriages. Out siders and local people were greatly influenced by languages, script, names and religious beliefs etc. played a vital role in Indianizing these foreigners. Since ancient times, a composite culture has been created in India.

They all then became Indians. In short in ancient India the amalgamation of various cultures enriched Indian culture by making it variegated and prosperous.

Preservation and Conservation of Heritage

Each aspect of Indian heritage made India eye catching, picturesque and attractive. Heritage brought glory to the nation. India attained a leading position in the world by keeping its rich heritage protected and preserved. Thus, it is the primary and pious duty of every citizen of India to see that nobody harms the ancient memorials and also to preserve places having historical importance and values. In our constitution, the fundamental duties of Indian citizens are mentioned in Article 51 (A). In that (6), (7) and (9) describe the following duties for preservation of our cultural heritage. They are given below :

- To understand the importance of our harmonious culture, prosperity and to preserve it.
- Maintain the forests, tanks, rivers, ponds and the wild animals and birds along with maintaining the natural environment and to show compassion for all the living creatures.
- The protection of public property and giving up violence are also included in it.

Thus, nature has created beautiful landscapes. We should maintain the purity, sanctity and beauty