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MODULE 1

SOCIETY STATE AND POLITY IN INDIA

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<h1 style="text-align:center">MODULE 1</h1>

<h2 style="text-align:center">SOCIETY STATE AND POLITY IN INDIA</h2>

The concept of Indian society

There are thousands of communities living in India including all major religions of the world. They speak different languages and dialects; they have their own food habits, professions, industries, handicrafts, traditions and cultural aspects. On the same line Jawaharlal Nehru too had said that Indian society being multilingual and multicultural nation had a bundle of contradictions held together by strong but invisible threads. In fact, India is a nation in which we find unity in diversity; people from different caste and creed, religion and region, beliefs and assumptions live together happily. Indians have developed common traits, thoughts and feelings. In spite of repeated foreign invasions, and the enormous growth in population, Indians have professed remarkable personality.

Indian Society also comprises its art, languages and culture on one side and its social, economic and political life on the other hand. Hinduism is a vast sea of rituals, customs, beliefs and thoughts of profound nature and it also has certain superstitions.

If one peeps into longest and broadest Indian mythology, one will find that there were religious thoughts prevalent among Hindus amidst foreign invasions. People were driven to eternal values, ideals and principles of Lord Rama. There were many religious movements headed by different- saints during the period, right from twelfth century onwards, people had the benefit of witnessing revival of Hinduism and at the same time Muslims, Sikhs and Sufis also appeared on the scene with host of other religious saints. Their solitary purpose was to awaken the people with the message of love, harmony, non-violence, brotherhood and amity among all people and states. These saints were not only religious in outlook but they had a social message too. They were secular in outlook and carried the torch of universal love and brotherhood.

Traditional Indian society is also considered as of the largest Hindu society as it consists of many religions, regions, languages, castes, villages, families, dialects and cultures.
The life of Indian Society, its art, language, its social, economical and political life, encompasses religious and spiritual beliefs of people in totality. Art, culture and literature are nothing but society. Literature is a mirror to the society because it reflects the changing spectrum of society.

The era of globalization and democracy of the twenty-first century are adding new features to Indian society. Westernization also brought the change about in Indian society and cultures as a consequence of over One Hundred Fifty years of British rule. It was a social change that covered changes in new technology, social institutions, social ideologies and social values. In this way some castes began to accept a westernized life-style, western values of equality and individualism. During the same period there was another way of social change available to the avama communities and that was to adopt Christianity.

The social changes in modern India can be observed as, ‒Modern India is changing very rapidly and society today presents some fascinating as well as contradictory trends. One of the most important changes in India is economic change. Already during the colonial period the new means of transportation and communication and the development of cities had brought in a degree of economic and social change. People began to migrate to the cities in search of work and modem education. The barriers of caste began to break down gradually and started becoming more flexible. Children were no longer compelled to follow the occupation

of their parents; they could aspire for different and better work. Such change was, indeed, revolutionary in the context of Indian society.‖

Sources of Study of Political Ideas in Ancient India

The important sources, in chronological order, are the great epics, the Mahabharata, and the Ramayana. The great body of literature generally called smriti, giving instruction in the sacred law, is very important in this connection.

The earliest and most important textbook specifically devoted to statecraft is the Arthashastra, which is attributed to Kautilya or Chanakya, the famous minister of Chandragupta Maurya. The Arthashastra gives very detailed instructions on various issues like the management of the state, the organisation of the national economy and the conduct of war and it is the most precious sourcebook for many aspects of ancient Indian life.

From the Gupta period and the Middle Ages a number of political texts survive, the most important of which are the Nitisara (Essence of Politics) of Kamandaka which was written during the Gupta period, the Nitivakyamrta (Nectar of Aphorisms of Politics) of Somadeva Suri, a Jaina writer of tenth century, and the Nitisara (Treatise on Politics) attributed to the ancient sage Shukra, but evidently of later medieval origin. Besides these sources, there is a tremendous amount of Brahmin, Jaina and Buddhist literature which deals on occasions with the politics of the time.

State in Ancient India

State has been the key concept in political science since the period of grand thinkers like Plato and Aristotle. To look into the origin and evolution of the state has been one of the greatest issues in Political Science. In ancient India also thinkers like Bhisma, Narada, Brihaspati, Kautilya, Kamandaka have looked at the problem. On the basis of the writings of these thinkers we can detect four important theories regarding the origin of the state in ancient India, namely—

1) Evolutionary Theory
2) Force Theory
3) Mystical Theory
4) Contract Theory

1) Theory of Evolutionary Origin

Evolution is a process of change through time. It is the process by which modern organisms have descended from ancient organisms. It is the unifying principle for all the biological sciences. It provides an explanation for the differences in structure, function and behavior among life forms. It included the change in characteristics of populations through generations. Thus existing life forms have evolved from earlier life forms.

This is the oldest theory of the origin of the state in India and has been mentioned in the Atharva Veda. According to this theory the state is the result of evolutionary progress and it didn't originate at a fixed time. The tenth hymn of the eighth chapter of the Atharva Veda gives a picture of the evolutionary origin of the state. On the basis of Atharva Veda several stages of the evolution of the state can be traced.

The hymns of the Atharva Veda state that the earliest phase of human life was the stage of vairajya or stateless state. It was a state of complete anarchy. But subsequently, with the emergence of agriculture, stable life became possible. To fulfil the needs of agricultural society the family emerged and the head of the

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family became the first wielder of authority. Further, the need of co-operation in the different realms of society led to the emergence of sabha and samiti. Sabha was the organisation of elderly people and samiti was the general assembly of common people. With the emergence of sabha and samiti organised political life began which finally culminated in the emergence of the state.

The dominant ideal that moved the king in ancient India was the attainment of dharma, artha and kama. If the artha is taken in the sense of enjoyment of property, the kama in the sense of enjoyment of family life and dharma in the sense of maintenance of the legal system, it would be clear that in the trivarga ideal also, principles of property, family and caste dominated.

2) Force Theory

It is also known as **"The State was born of Force"**. This theory states that when one person or one small group claims control over an area they forced all citizens living within it to submit to this group rule. When established all the basic elements of a state exist: Population, Territory, Sovereignty and Government.

Though ancient Indian political thinkers did not propound force theory in a systematic way, force was considered to be an important factor in the evolution of the state in India. Earliest Aryan clans fought among themselves for pet animals (specially for the cow), pastureland, settlements and sources of drinking water. Only a strong and able warrior could lead the clan in such wars. So he was given special status and the members of clan started obeying him. This tendency continued in the days of peace also and subsequently the leader became king.

Citing examples from the Vedas (Rig Veda and Sama Veda) and the Brahmanas (Aitareya, Shatapatha) John Spellman also opines that the king in ancient India was primarily a military leader. But it should be clearly mentioned that none of the political commentators give a systematic and well knitted explanation of the role of force in the emergence of the state in ancient India.

3) Theory of Mystical Origin

It is also known as The Divine Right Theory. Medieval belief that God gives power to the king; therefore his actions are sanctioned by God. The theory of the Divine Right of Kings aimed at instilling obedience by explaining why all social ranks were religiously and morally obliged to obey their government. The belief that God created the state and that God had given those of royal birth ‒divine power‖ to rule. The people were bound to obey their ruler as they would God. To disobey the ‒divine right of kings‖ was considered both treason and a moral sin. The divine right theory holds that God created the state, making it sovereign. The government is made up of those chosen by God to rule a certain territory. The population must obey their ruler.

This was the most popular theory of origin of the state in ancient India. Kingship was given divine sanction and the king was considered not to be the representative of God but himself a God who contained the powers of important Gods like Indra, Varuna and Agni.

Even before the days of Buddha, the king was exalted far above ordinary mortals, through the magical powers of the great royal sacrifices.

The king was evidently the fellow of the God. Kings referred to their divine status in their titles and panegyrics, and they were regularly addressed by their courtiers as deva, or God. The Chola kings and some others were even worshipped as God in the temples.

It was the mystical theory of kingship which carried most weight with succeeding generations. The author of

the Arthashastra had no illusions about the king's human nature, and seems to have had little time for mysticism, but he recognised that legends about the origin of kingship had propaganda value. In the Arthashastra he states that the people should be told that, the king fulfils the functions of the God Indra (the king of Gods) and Yama (the God of death) upon earth, all who slight him will be punished not only by the secular arm, but also by heaven. Ashoka and other Mauryan kings took the title ‒Beloved of the Gods‖ (devanampiya), and, though they seem not to have claimed wholly divine status, they were no doubt looked upon as superior semi-divine beings.

4) Contract Theory

Before society we were in the State of Nature. An individual dictated what he/she could/could not do. There was ‒Survival of the Fittest‖. When we came into contact with other people we entered a Society. When we created State and government we entered a Social Contract.

Contract theory is the most extensively discussed theory of the origin of the state in ancient India. A social contract is an act by which individuals agree to form a government. According to the Social Contract theory, governments are established by the people who combine to achieve some goal.

In Western political tradition three philosophers Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau who are jointly known as contractualists formulated the social contract theory regarding the origin of the state. All of them claimed that the state is not a natural institution but is created by a contract which suggests that the political authority is the result of mutual consent among individuals. But the three contractualist philosophers differ in their description of contract and various issues related to it. Contractualist philosophers start their description with the depiction of human nature. Based on this human nature they make a description of the state of nature which is a stage prior to the creation of the state.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)

Hobbes published his book, the Leviathan, in 1651. In this book he gave a striking exposition of the theory of Social Contract. He argues in favor of absolute monarchy. His object was to defend the absolute power of the monarch and he used the doctrine of the Social Contract to support it.

He believed that life in the state of nature is ‒solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short‖. He believed that humans are inherently bad because everyone is self-interested. *Man not at all social, indeed "nothing but grief in the company of his fellows"- all being almost equally selfish, self- seeking, egoistic, brutal and aggressive.*

According to Hobbes human nature is basically selfish. Self interest is the mainspring of human actions. Individuals are creatures of desire, seeking pleasure and avoiding pain. Therefore, Hobbes contended that human life was nothing but a perpetual and relentless desire and pursuit of power. Due to this selfish human nature the state of nature is a state of continuous conflict based on the principle of ‒might is right‖. In the state of nature every individual is free to do everything which means no one is free to do anything in actual practice. There was complete absence of order and peace in such a state. In Hobbes's classic phrase, life was ‒solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short‖.

Hobbes further formulates that individuals have a general tendency of self-preservation. But in the state of nature survival or self-preservation is threatened. Therefore, individuals enter into a contract through which they surrender their right to do everything to the *Leviathan* or the state. Individuals agreed to surrender their natural rights into the hands of common superior and to obey his commands. They only retain with them the

right to self-preservation (or right to life). The specific feature of this Hobbessian contract is that the *Leviathan* is not a party to the contract but he is the product of the contract. This means that state power has no limitation except the limitation to protect the individual's right to self- preservation.

John Locke (1632-1704)

Locke argues in favor of representational democracy. He is an English Political philosopher, advocates of limited Monarchy in England. The theory of John Locke is found in his Two Treaties on Civil Government published in 1690 defended the ultimate right of the people to depose the monarch from his authority if he ever deprived them of their ‒liberties and properties.‖ He wrote Two Treatises on Government. The **first** treatise is concerned almost exclusively with refuting the argument of Robert Filmer's Patriarcha, that political authority was derived from religious authority, also known by the description of the Divine Right of Kings. The **second** treatise contains Locke's own constructive view of the aims and justification for civil government.

Locke explained human nature in terms of essential social virtues. Human beings are by nature peace loving and rational. Man was not aggressive, neither selfish and nor self- seeking. Men were equal and free to act they thought fit, but within the bounds of the law of nature. Therefore, in the state of nature peace and goodwill prevailed. In the state of nature life of the individual was governed by ‗natural law' which suggested that ‒don't do to others what you don't want others to do to you‖. In the state of nature individuals possessed three ‗natural rights'. Men were having three natural rights:

1. Right to life,
2. Right to liberty,
3. Right to property.

Locke believed that people entered into society to protect their ‒life, liberty, and property‖. The government's main job is to protect the citizen's property. If the government is not providing the protection of the property, people have the right to revolt.

But eventually individuals experienced some inconveniences in the state of nature. Firstly, there was no clear definition of natural law. Secondly, there was no sufficient authority to enforce them and thirdly, there was no common arbiter having authority to decide disputes in agreement with the law of nature.

Due to these inconveniences individuals entered into a contract to establish the state. By this contract each individual surrendered his or her right of interpreting and enforcing the law of nature. They did not surrender their other natural rights. By a second act, the majority having the whole power of the community in them, decided to set up a government to carry out the provisions of the first contract.

The social contract was no more than a transfer of certain rights and powers so that man's remaining rights would be protected and preserved. Sovereignty belonged to the community and government was only a trustee. The community and the people had an inalienable right to dismiss the government if it proved false to the trust reposed in it.

Difference between Lockean and Hobbessian Contract

Lockean contract is different from Hobbessian contract in many ways. In Hobbessian contract, individuals surrender all rights except the right to self-preservation whereas in Lockean contract individuals retain their

s. They only surrender their right to interpret and enforce natural law. Similarly, in Lockean contract this right was given to the community as a whole and not to a particular body like *Leviathan* as it was in the Hobbessian contract.

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1632-1704)

Rousseau argues in favor of direct democracy. He is the great French writer of the 18th century, elaborated his theory in his famous work ─The Social Contract‖ published in 1762. His most famous works are Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men (AKA The Second Discourse) & The Social Contract.

Rousseau depicted the individual as noble savage in the state of nature. He coined the term ─Nobel Savage‖ who led a life of primitive simplicity and idyllic happiness.

According to Rousseau human nature is basically good, sympathetic and simple. The state of nature was a state of perfect equality and liberty— a stage of idyllic happiness. He believed that man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains. He also believed that humans are born inherently good. He was independent, contented, self- sufficient, healthy, and fearless and without need of his fellows or desire to harm them. It was a type of ─golden age‖.

All men are made by nature to be equals, therefore no one has a natural right to govern others, and therefore the only justified authority is the authority that is generated out of agreements or covenants. Rousseau advocates the strictest form of Direct Democracy.

But the growth of population and consequent economic development created tension in the state of nature. The growing economic advancement gave rise to the system of property. The notion of property made individuals think in terms of mine and thine. This marked the dawn of reason. Human nature which was previously simple now became increasingly complex. Hostility and conflict appeared in the state of nature. The need of self-preservation impelled individuals to form a civil society by contract. Individuals with many possessions saw that it would be in their best interest to create a government to protect their possessions. By contract, each individual put his person and all his powers in common under the supreme direction of the ─General Will‘.

Comparison of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau

A general overview of the three contractualist philosophers suggests that they reached different conclusions on the basis of their social contract theories. Hobbes became a supporter of absolutism. Locke justified constitutional government whereas Rousseau supported popular sovereignty and direct democracy. Locke emphasised on the natural rights of the individuals. Individuals are born with certain rights which are inalienable from the individual. If the government is unable to protect these rights, individuals have the right to revolt against the government. On the other hand Hobbes accepts only one right of the individual that is the right to self-preservation. Individuals do not have anything called natural rights. Rousseau also does not accept natural rights of the individual. According to Rousseau the General Will is always right. Therefore, the individual must abide by the commands of the General Will.

Effects of the social contract

Hobbes: People will live in peace but without rights except for the right to self- defense

Locke: The three natural rights which exist in the State of Nature will be easier to enforce by the government. Those who have given express consent will be bound by the contract; those who have given tacit consent can opt out and leave.

Rousseau: Life will be fair for all if we employ the general will and set aside our personal interests.

Stages of State Formation in Ancient India

Six main stages in the history of ancient Indian polity can be identified.

The **earliest stage** was that of tribal military democracy in which tribal assemblies, which had some place for women were mainly pre-occupied with war. The age of *Rig Veda* was primarily a period of assemblies.

The **second stage** saw the break-up of the tribal polity under the stress of constant conflicts between the *rajanyakshatriya* and the ordinary businessman called the *vis*. The chiefs were helped by the priesthood called the brahmins. This stage saw the beginning of taxes and classes or varnas which came to be firmly established in the third stage.

The **third stage** was marked by the formation of the full-fledged state. There arose large territorial monarchies of Kosala and Magadha and tribal oligarchies in North-Western India and at the foot of the Himalayas. For the first time we hear of large standing armies and organised machinery for the collection of land revenue.

The **fourth or the Maurya phase** saw bureaucratic centralisation based on the expanding economic activities of the state. The state with the help of its bureaucracy controlled various aspects of the life of its subjects.

The **fifth stage** was marked by the process of decentralised administration in which towns, feudatories and military elements came to the forefront in both the Deccan and North India. This was partly neutralised by the emphasis on the divinity of the king.

The **last stage**, identical with the Gupta period, may be called the period of proto-feudal polity. Land grants now played an important part in the formation of the political structure and those made by the Gupta feudatories conferred fiscal and administrative privileges on priestly beneficiaries.

Kingship

The king was the most important figure in the *body politic*. In the *Saptanga* theory of the state, developed by Kautilya, the king has been described as the head or the most important organ of the state.

The king performed multi-dimensional functions. The king's functions involved the protection not only of his kingdom against external aggression, but also of life, property and traditional custom against internal foes. He protected the purity of class and caste by ensuring that those who challenged the system were excommunicated. He protected the family system by punishing adultery and ensuring the fair inheritance of family property. He protected widows and orphans by making them his wards. He protected the rich against the poor by suppressing robbery, and he protected the poor against the rich by punishing extortion and oppression. Religion was protected by liberal grants to learned brahmins and temples and frequently to heterodox sects also. He also adjusted disputes between different parties. He paid fullest attention to local and religious law and be able to enforce it upon the community.

The ideal set before the king was one of energetic beneficence. Ashoka was not the only king of India to proclaim that all men were his children, or to take pride in his ceaseless activity for the welfare of his subjects.

The *Arthashastra,* despite its advocacy of every dishonest expedient for the acquisition and maintenance of power, puts forward the kingly duty in simple and forceful language, setting an ideal which few ancient civilisations can boast of.

In all sources the king is told that he must be prompt in the administration of justice and always accessible to his people. The swarms of guards, ushers, and other officials who surrounded the king's person must often have demanded bribes, and otherwise have obstructed the access of the subject to his sovereign. But the best of Indian kings at all times have made the public audience, or *darbar,* an important instrument of government.

The ideal before the king in ancient India was that of being a *chakravarti* meaning a king who ruled over the united vast territory of the Indian subcontinent extending from Kashmir to Kanyakumari.

The position, powers and privileges of the king have varied from age to age. When in the prehistoric period, the king was only the senior-most member in the council of peers, when he often owed his position to an election, either real or formal, when there was a popular council *(samiti)* to actively supervise his administration, his position was often insecure and powers were limited. After 500 B.C.E. the office of king was elevated to new heights. During this period the king became the effective head of the executive administration and there was no popular assembly like samiti to check him. He controlled both the treasury and the military forces, though commander-in-chief and treasurer were under him.

Ministers were selected by the king and held office at his pleasure. The king presided over the council of ministers and its decisions had to receive royal assent.

Councils of Ministers Administration

Ministers or council of advisors have been regarded by ancient Indian political thinkers as a very vital organ of the body politic. The *Mahabharata* observes at one place that the king is as vitally dependent upon ministers as animals are upon clouds, brahmins on the Vedas and women upon their husbands.

Manusmriti points out that even a simple thing appears as difficult if one is to do it single handed; why then attempt to run the complex machinery of the administration without the assistance of ministers.

The size of this *mantriparishad* or council of ministers varied, and the authorities suggested figures ranging from seven to thirty-seven. It seems that the body was divided into two parts *mantrina* and *mantriparishad.* *Mantriparishad* was the large body resembling a modern council of ministers. It consisted of all the ministers. *Mantrina* was a smaller body or a core organisation within the *mantriparishad* largely resembling the modern cabinet. It included the few most important ministers like the *purohita* (priest), *senapati* (supreme commander of army) and *yuvaraja* (the crown prince).

The council's purpose was primarily to advise the king, and not to govern, but it was no mere rubber stamping body. For all authorities stress that councillors should speak freely and openly and that the king should give full consideration to their advice. In fact, the council often exerted great powers. It might transact business in the king's absence, and it might take minor decisions without consulting him. The council of ministers was not merely a recording body, for very often it used to suggest amendments to king's orders or even recommended their total reversal.

Administration

With the advent of the Mauryas on the political stage of India, bureaucracy developed as a well organised, hierarchical, cadre-based administrative system. If we rely on the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya the establishment of a large and complex bureaucracy was a remarkable feature of the Mauryan government.

The *Arthashastra* of Kautilya mentions 18 *tirthas* who are probably called *mahamatras* or high functionaries. Although the term *mahamatra* is used only on a few occasions in the *Arthashastra,* its real

counterpart being *amatya* it is familiar enough in Ashokan inscriptions. In addition to the 18 *trithas,* Kautilya provides in some detail accounts of 27 superintendents *(adhyaksas)* concerned mostly with economic functions and some military duties though social functions are not ignored.

The Mauryas developed a well organised bureaucracy. With the help of this centralised bureaucratic structure not only did the government regulate the economic life of the country, but it also took an important part in it. All mines including pearl beds, fisheries and salt pans, were owned by the state, and were either worked directly with the labour of criminals or serfs, or let out to entrepreneurs, from whom the king claimed a percentage of their output as royalty. There was no question of laissez-faire in ancient India.

Political Ideals in Ancient India

Political ideals like liberty, justice, fraternity and nationalism are a product of the modern age. If viewed strictly from the lens of the contemporary period, we can't find any systematic expression of these ideals, in ancient India. But seen from a different perspective, ancient Indians did have these ideals in a rudimentary form.

Showing the importance of freedom the *Vedas* state that independence is necessary for mankind and those who are not independent are worse than dead. In *varnashrma* institution too, an independent living has been kept in mind. A man lived independently during *Grihasthaashrama* and when he was likely to be dependent on the offspring coming of age, there is the provision of the older people resorting to *Vanprastha* and then to *Sanyasa,* again living freely in the solitude of hills and dales rather than living as dependent on their children. For disposal of justice the Mauryan state had a system of judiciary. *Dharmasthiya* was the civil court and *kantakashodhana* was organised to deal with a large number of economic crimes. The *Ramayana* extols this country as a *karmabhumi,* the land of pious acts. This shows the belongingness of people to land and their fellow beings. The early seeds of nationalism can be traced in this instance. Similarly, the ideal of ancient Indian thinkers was *vasudhaivakutumbakam* (treating the whole world like a family). This was the concept of universal brotherhood or fraternity.

From the days of Plato and Aristotle, European thought has turned its attention to such questions as the origin of the state, the ideal form of government, and the basis of law and the politics has long been looked on as a branch of philosophy. From the above discussion, it is clear that ancient India also thought about such questions, but she had no schools of political philosophy in the Western sense.

The Seven Limbs of the State or The Saptanga Theory

Saptanga theory of state was given by Kautilya in Arthashastra. Kautilya has first time defined the state in Arthashastra.

The word ‒Saptang‖ indicates seven limbs, constituents or elements. Together, they constitute the State as an organism, ‒like a chariot composed of seven parts fitted and subservient to one another‖.

Seven Angas, Prakritis, or elements were enumerated and elucidated by Kautilya for describing ‒the nature of the State‖ in its totality. The seven limbs of a state are Swami (The King), Amatya (The Council of Ministers), Janapada (The People and The Territory), Durga (Fortification), Kosa (Treasure), Danda (Coercive authority) and Mitra (The Allies).

According to Kautilya, an area cannot be a state unless there are not people and rulers to control that state. A state consists of different cities, people, military, treasury and tax-system. Kautilya used the word 'Raja' which according to Spellman, corresponds to the English word ' State'. The state is defined for the first time in the Arthashastra of Kautilya as consisting of seven elements a definition which becomes an axion in the later sources.

According to Kautilya the state and kingship were based on popular good will. The king was their lader as well as head of the state and government. In the Vedas, the state was considered to be a source of peace, law and order, security and justice. In Kautilya eyes, the state and king are indispensable: the later is such an essential part of society.

1) Swami (The King)

Kautilya assign to the king the highest place in the body politic. King or swami was the consummation of all other elements in state and he represented the legal and moral authority, constitutionally king was the chief executive head and commander-in-chief of the army. The king was the very life of the state. According to the Arthashastra, the king was the defender of the Dharma.

According to Kautilya, the king and his king are the primary elements of the state. The king or swami was the head of the state and occupies an exalted position his polity. For Kautilya, the king is the main pillar of state, and the master of the techniques of state craft. The king must be a scholar of high merit.

In the state the kings are responsible for maintain peace and order to encourage, moral, religious and material progress and provide a sense of security to his subjects. In Kautilya Arthashastra, king was the head of the state. King were vested executive, legislative, Judicial and financial powers. An ideal king is one who has the highest qualities of leadership, intellect, energy and personal attributes. The qualities of leadership are: birth in a noble family, good fortune, powers, association with elders, being righteous, truthful, resolute, enthusiastic and disciplined, not breaking his promise, showing gratitude, having lofty aims, dilatory, being stronger than neighbouring kind and having ministers of high quality.

Kautilya preferred a king who is a native of the territory, who follows the teachings of the Arthashastra, who is free from disease and is strong and of noble birth. The king was the head of the state and in him were vested executive, legislative, judicial and financial powers. Kautilya has given extensive power to the king by those powers are meant for the welfare of them subject. According to Kautilya the happiness of the king lies in the happiness and welfare of the people. It is not the interest of self that is dear to the king but the interest of the people that is dear to him.

The king was to regard himself as an agent of people and the foremost duty of a king is protection of the people. Kautilya says if the king is energetic, his subjects will be equally energetic. Hence the king or swami should himself always be energetic.

The king or swami has been accorded the pride of place, as the prime mover of the ship of the state. As the king occupies the central position in the theory of Arthashastra, most of the activities of state are controlled by him.

2) Amatya (The Councils of Ministers)

Amatya constitutes the second elements of the state. But Kautiya refers to Amatya in different sense. In its narrow sense, the term Amatya or Mantrin is used for the minister of the high grade. Amatya generally means the council of ministers. In the Arthashastra the amatya constitute a regular cadre of the service from which all high officers such as chief priest, ministers, collectors, officers, envoys and the Superintendents of various departments are to be recruited.

Kautilya says kingship is possible only with assistance. Therefore, there was the need of minister's connection. In Arthashastra three words Mantri, Amatya and sachivause for the ministers by amatya is rather a general word for higher bureaucracy.

The highest category of the amatya is the mantrins. The king deliberates over the policy of state with three or four ministers. The council of ministers is largely responsible for shaping the policy of the government. The king and ministers constituted the central government, which exercised the sovereign powers. The Arthashastra reminds the king that he can succeed only if he assisted by competent councillors. One wheel

alone does not move the carage. The king and ministers are the two essential and most important wheels of the state. The King cannot rule the king dom alone.

According to Kautilya a single wheel cannot move. There should be ministers to be help him. But ministers should be men of wisdom, intergrity bravely and loyality. The integrity of the ministers can be tested in four ways viz. loyality.

The council of minister actually managed the whole state administration. Every chief executive had to depend on his council of ministers for good administration. The size of the council of ministers shouldbe neither too big nor too small. The ministerial appointment should purely depend on qualifications.

Kautilya says in council of ministers, Foremost in importance in administration were the mantris (Prime Minister) the purohita, the senapati and the Yuvraj. Mantris formed the topmost part of the administrative pyramid and were appointed by the king. The ministers were chosen on the basis of high merit, the qualities most prized being proven loyalty and noble birth. But the king occupied the centre position in the administration.

According to Kautilya the number of ministers should not be fixed, but the number depends on requirement. Kautilya mentions that one of the strong points of kingship is the strength of the council of parisad.

3) Janpad (The People and The Territory)

Janpad forms the third elements of the state. This unique element of Saptanga is the symbol of State, which stands for a ―territorial society‖. Here, ‗Jana' denotes people and ‗Pada' is a symbol of territory where these inhabitants permanently reside. The implication of Janpad defined in the Arthashastra implies both territory and population of because without the territory and the population a state cannot exist. The territory should contain fertile lands, mines, timber, pasture grounds, forests and water ways etc. The Janpad should be prosperous and its lands fertile. The people should include men with good character and loyality, intelligent, wise masters and slaves. Kautilya envisaged ethnic different among the people. In the beginning only people of common ethnic origin inhabited the land but with conquest and migration more than one ethnic people were included in the Janpad. Kautilya advised the king to induce people from other countries to migrate and settle in new village on old sites or new sites or cause people from thickly populated areas of his own kingdom to settle down in such village with a view to securing that each village should consist of not less than one hundred and not more than five hundred families and contain a sufficient number of sudra cultivators. The king was to protect agriculture and industry was also the responsibility of the king.

Kautilya prescribes the following requisites of a prosperous Janapada in terms of territory: (i) accommodate and support people; (ii) defend the state against enemies; (iii) find occupation of people; (iv) have manageable neighbours; (v) provide pastures; (vi) have arable land, mines, forest and (vii) provide good internal communication, i.e. rivers, roads, and outlet to sea.

4) Durga (Fortification)

For every state it is necessary to have safety and protection system. Therefore, Kautilya considered the forts as one of the main components of a state. He considers forts as powerful as people and land. Internal and external securities both are important for state. Without external security, no state can be stable. We can protect the state from external attacks by forts and fortification. The security of the treasury and army depends of fortification.

Fortification should be done for the purpose of security from the attacks. Kautilya advocates that there should be forts at all the four corners of the state so the security from all the sides can be ensured. Fort

should be solid and there should be proper arrangement for ration and ammunition for the army. Kautilya has classified forts in four types. Firstly the Audak fort, where there should be trenches always filled with water. Secondly Parvat Fort which should surrounded with high mountains and rocks. Thirdly Dhanvan fort which should surrounded with deserts and there should be no oasis nearby. It is almost impossible to reach such forts. Fourthly Van Fort, which are built in dense forest. It is very difficult to reach there. Such forts are very important from the point of safety. Also they are very important for the security of the state and its people. Audak and Pavat forts are most important when the state is going attack an enemy country. In case the need arises, the kind could hide them in such fort to protect them from outside attack. The security of the treasury and the army depends on these forts. And battle can also be controlled from these forts effectively. The maintenance of army and the welcome ceremony of the foreign delegates are also done in these forts. They are also used to keep off the forest tribe and wild animals.

5) Kosha (The Treasury)

Kosha or Treasury is an extremely important resource. It is the backbone of any business. A strong and well managed treasury is the heart of any organization. Kosha or Treasury constitutes the fifth elements of Kautilya's state. Kosha or Treasury is necessary for the protection and maintenance of the state in general and army in particular. The treasury should be filled with gems, gold, jewels etc and should have the capacity to sustain the calamities for long time. Kautilya says that all undertakings depend upon Kosha, Treasury was the backbone of the state finances were well looked after. Income of the state was derived from taxes like export taxes, sales tax, village tax, etc. In his Arthashastra Kautilya has given utmost importance to public finance. Without treasury even a family cannot run. He has described three aspects of finance at the time of war and peace. The need of money is different in both the cases. Therefore public finance has been divided in two parts-public finance during peace and public finance during war. But the basic principle for both finances was same. It is the duty of a king to keep the treasury full and prosperous. The king should reward the well behaved subjects and should punish the thieves. The king should collect taxes and fill the treasury. According to Kautilya, the treasury should be collected and maintained honestly and religiously. The treasure should be such full that it may be helpful in the time of difficulty for a long time.

6) Danda (The Army or The Force)

Without a sound defence system there cannot be the existence of state. And for the defence of the state there should be a strong army. Therefore, it is very necessary that he constitute a strong army and use it for the internal and external threats.

Kautilya has described the army as sixth aspect of the state. He has used _force' word for army. _Force' means army and army is very compulsory for the defence of the state. Army is used to control anti-social elements in the society and disloyal people. Army is also useful in defending the state from outside attacks. Accepting the army as the most important part of a state, Kautilya, in order to constitute the army, has described the six components of the army, First, is the clan army in which the son of soldiers becomes a soldier. Second, is the hired soldiers (hired troops). Third, is the army constituted by the corporations. Fourth, is the army formed with help of friendly countries. Fifth, is the army formed with POW (Prisoner of War) i.e. soldiers of enemy country caught during war. The sixth type of army can be formed with tribal people.

According to Kautilya, the state army should be given the best training and they should be provided with the best weapons. Soldiers should be fully satisfies especially when they are fighting in the field. For this purpose the king should try his best effort to meet soldier's needs. Army played an important role in the state. A good soldier should be loyal, adventurous, courageous, brave, well versed in military science, etc.

According to Kautilya, it consists of hereditary and hired soldiers comprising infantry, chariots, elephants and cavalry. Kautiya says the Kshatriyas constitute the main part of the army. But unlike Manu, Kautilya allows even the lower castes to join the army if emergency arises. But according to Kautilya, the best army should be strong, obediently and happy officers in the army should have more of these qualities. Kautilya gives a good description of the organization of the army and military science.

7) Mitra (The Allies)

Having realized that ―political isolation means death‖, Kautilya proceeded to consider the Mitra or the ally as a vital factor. Kautilya's concept of Mitra (ally) is based more an ethical considerations. The real ally should be hereditary and not artificial. It should be one with whom there is no possibility of rupture and one who is ready to come to help when occasion demands it. But on the other hand, one is to be treated as an enemy who is greedy, possessed with disloyal subjects, loose character, addicted to mean pleasure, powerless and impotent. The ideal ally is one who has the following qualities, a friend of the family for a long time, constant, amenable to control, powerful in his support, sharing a common interest, able to mobilise quickly and not a man who double crosses his friends.

Kautilya realizes that every nation acts to maximize its own interests and power. Alliances are only good so long as they appear in the best interest of both parties. However as soon as the balance of power shifts allies and enemies may becomes enemies. Sine this is the natural order and to be expected. It is only responsible of the king to maintain his own kingdom's best interest at heart when dealing with foreign powers, be the king must be to destroy his enemies and protect his own people, to bring his subjects the three goals of life, material gain, spiritual goal and pleasure.

Kautilya says if one shall make an alliance with a king who is stronger than one's neighbouring enemy, inthe absence of such a king one should in agurate one self with one's neighbouring enemy, either by supplying money of army and by keeping one self aloof, for there can be no greater evil to kings than alliance with a king of considerable power, unless one is actually attacked by one's enemy.

Kautilya recognizes two kinds of allies, namely Sahaja and Kritrima. The Sahaja or natural ally is the one whose friendship is derived from the times of King's father and grandfather and who is situated close to the territory of the immediately neighbouring enemy. On the other hand, the Kritrima or the acquired ally is the one whose friendship is specially resorted to for the protection of wealth and life. Kautilya, however, preferred an ally who is traditional, permanent, disciplined, and enthusiastic and from whom the possibility of opposition or rebellion is minimum.

Society in Ancient India

Society in ancient India had several distinguishing features. It was arranged in the form of four varnas. The life of individual was divided into four stages or *ashramas*. There were rules regarding marriage, family etc. The purpose of life was to attain four goals called *purusarthas*.

Purusartha

The concept of *purusarthas* is the fundamental principle of Indian social ethics. The word *purusartha* means ―attainments‖ or ―life purposes‖. The literal meaning of Purusartha is ‗object of human pursuit'. They are 4 in number. They represent 4 fundamental goals or objectives of human life. The aim of every person is to attain the four noble ends or *purusartha*. These four *purusarthas* are:-

1) Dharma: Righteousness, Duty, Moral Values
2) Artha: Wealth, Economic Values
3) Kama: Desire
4) Moksha: Liberation, Spiritual Values

Rig Veda put forward 3 fundamental objectives of human life in the form of Kama, Artha and Dharma. They were referred as ‗trivarga' or the 3 fundamental human pursuits. During the later Vedic age Moksha added to them and as a result of that, 4 Purusarthas emerged.

Dharma

Dharma or the principle of righteousness is considered to be the supreme of the *purusarthas. Dharma* in Indian tradition is different from the Western concept of religion. The word religion has been derived from the latin root *religare* which means ―to connect‖. In this sense religion is a set of principles which connects human beings with God. Therefore, religion essentially has some notion of God or some other supernatural entity. It is a particular way of worshipping. On the other hand derived from the Sanskrit root *dhr*, which connotes to sustain, support or uphold, *dharma* has a wide range of meaning: it is the essential foundation of something or of things in general, and thus signifies ‗truth'; it is that which is established, customary, properand therefore, means ‗traditional' or ceremonial; it is one's duty, responsibility, imperative and thereby ‗moral obligation'; it is that which is right, virtuous, meritorious, and accordingly ‗ethical; and it is that which is required, precepted, or permitted through religious authority, and thus legal.

Therefore, *dharma* in ancient India was a code of conduct for members of the society. P.V. Kane also defines *dharma* in terms of privileges, duties and obligations of a person. In the words of Kane, ―the word *dharma* passed through several transitions of meaning and ultimately it's most prominent significance came to be the privileges, duties and obligations of man of the castes, as a person in a particular stage of life‖. We find various forms of *dharma* in the sense of duty in ancient India like-

1. *Samanya Dharma—* Some general rules which are universal in nature like truth, non-violence and non-stealing.
2. *Raj Dharma—* Duties of the king
3. *Stree Dharma—* Duties of woman
4. *Dampatya Dharma—* Duties of husband and wife
5. *Varna Dharma—* Duties of varnas
6. *Ashrama Dharma—* Duties in the different stages of life
7. *Apad Dharma—* Duties during the crisis period

Artha

Artha is the second *purusartha.* The term *artha* refers to worldly prosperity or wealth. It includes all the material means of life. Kautilya maintains that wealth is the basis of human requirements and that social well-being depends ultimately on material prosperity. Indian thinkers had recognised the pursuit of wealth as a legitimate human aspiration. But *artha* must be acquired by right means.

Kama

Kama means worldly pleasures or sensual pleasures. It refers to some of the innate desires and urges in human beings. In the narrow sense *kama* means sexual pleasure but in the wider sense it involves sexual, emotional and aesthetic life all together.

Kama is fulfilling one's desires. Desires may come in various forms — to be wealthy, powerful, affinity needs, for recognition, etc. The Kama Purushartha advocates that one's desires need to be fulfilled in their lifetime, albeit in a state of awareness and without harming anyone in the process. For a person to evolve spiritually and to reach the ultimate destination, the barrier of their desires needs to be crossed. This can be done either by fulfilling the desires or by sublimating or transcending them.

Moksha

It is the ultimate *purusartha*. *Moksha* means salvation or liberation from the cycle of birth and death. It is the *summum bonum* of human existence.

Moksha means liberation, the realization of the Self, and is the ultimate destination of this human birth. It is the stage of inner realization that the individual self is the same as the Supreme Self. Moksha is the experience of the cosmos within one's self. It is the experience of the flow and fusion of the Shiva and Shakti energies in one's self. The experience of union, oneness or Ekatvam with one's Higher Self is Moksha

Varnashrama System

Various texts talk of *varnashrmadharma* or the d*harma* of different classes and *dharma* in the different stages of life. In ancient India there was a common *dharma* for all members of society which must be followed by all equally. But at the same time there were different codes of conduct for different classes or varnas called *varna-dharma*. Similarly, it was desired to follow different *dharma* at the different stages or *āshrama* of life called *āshrama-dharma*.

Varnas

First reference of varna is seen in the *Rig Veda*. Varna system was the basis of social stratification during the Vedic age. The tenth chapter of *RigVeda* called *Purusasukta* mentions the organic theory of the origin of varnas according to which varnas originated from the different organs of the *Prajapati* or the creator. God created various varnas from his various organs. He created brahmins from his mouth, kshatriyas from his arms, vaishyas from his thighs and shudras from his legs. Though logically this explanation cannot be accepted but this clearly points out the varying significance of various varnas. A much significant feature of this varna system was that the top three varnas— brahmins, kshatriyas and vaishyas were described as *dvija* or twice born. Their first birth was natural birth. But they were considered to be born again at the time of the pious *yajnopavita samskara* when they were invested with the sacred thread and included into the Aryan society as its full fledged member.

Brahmins

Brahmins were at the top of varna hierarchy. They were believed to possess great spiritual powers. Thus they had a divine existence. In law, they claimed great privileges. Normally brahmins were exempt from execution, torture and corporal punishment. The main functions prescribed for brahmins were learning, teaching and priesthood.

Kshatriya

The second class was the ruling class described as kshatriya or *rajanya.* Kshatriyas represented heroism, courage and strength. They constituted the warrior class. The duty of kshatriyas was protection which had both internal and external aspects. External protection meant to protect the society from external invasion where as internal protection meant governance in peace and protection from anarchy. Kshatriyas had the right to possess arms.

Vaishyas

Vaishyas represented the trading and commercial class. Though they were entitled to the services of the priesthood and to the ceremony of *yajnopavita,* they were third in the social hierarchy. The main task of the vaishya was to keep and maintain cattle. But it seems that later on vaishyas became economically a very

important class of society. The ideal vaishya possessed the expert knowledge of jewels, metals, cloth, threads, spices, perfumes etc. In this sense vaishyas were the ancient Indian businessmen. In brahmanic literature, vaishyas are given few rights and humble status but Buddhist and Jaina literature mention many wealthy merchants living a luxurious life.

Shudras

Shudras were at the bottom of the social hierarchy. They pursued the task of serving the other three varnas. They were not twice born. They were deprived of various rights. They were in fact second class citizens, on the fringes of Aryan society.

A.L. Basham maintains that shudras were of two types— _not excluded' or *anirvasita* and _excluded' or *nirvasita*. The distinction was made on the basis of the customs of the shudra group and the profession followed by the members of the group. *Anirvasita* shudras were the part of Indian varna system where as *nirvasita* shudras were quite outside the pale of Hindu society and virtually indistinguishable from the strata of people known as untouchables.

Manu prescribes the same penance for killing a shudra by a brahmin as for killing a cat or dog.

Untouchables

A large number of people were deprived of all human rights. Having any contact with them might lead to the fall from grace by a normal Hindu. They were untouchables. Sometimes they are regarded as the excluded shudras whereas sometimes they are called the _fifth class' (*pancham* varna). Probably, they were the aboriginal tribes who were defeated by the Aryans. Most important of these groups was the *Chandala.* They were not allowed to live in the Aryan towns or villages. Their chief means of livelihood were the carrying and cremation of corpses and execution of criminals who were awarded the death penalty.

According to the law books of ancient India, *Chandalas* should be dressed in the garments of the corpses they cremated, should eat his food from broken vessels and should wear only those ornaments which were made of iron. Later on the four varnas were divided into various subcategories called caste. The caste system is governed by two important rules:-

First, endogamy or marriage within the members of same caste and **Second,** the observance of certain rules of commensality whereby food was to be received from and consumed in the presence of either members of the same caste or of a higher caste but could not be consumed together with the members of the lower caste.

Ashrama or the Stages of Life

The *ashrama* system denotes the Hindu scheme of life according to which different stages in the life of an individual are well ordered. The average life span of an individual is considered to be 100 years and it is divided into four stages each stage having a time span of 25 years. These four *ashramas* are:

1. *Brahmacharyashrama* **or the Stage of Studentship** — This is the first stage of life. It is meant for acquiring knowledge, developing discipline and moulding character. This stage starts with the ceremony called *upanayanama* or investiture with the sacred thread. Now the person became a *brahmacharina*, leading a celibate and austere life as a student at the home of his teacher

2. *Grihasthashrama* **or the Stage of Householder** — This stage starts at marriage when the student has completed his studentship and is ready to take up the duties and responsibilities of household life. In this stage the individual gets married, earns money and begets children. The individual pursues wealth (*artha)* and pleasure *(kāma)* within the limits of the moral law *(dharma).*

3. *Vanaprasthasharma* **or the Stage of Retirement from Active Life** — After discharging all the duties and obligations as a householder, the individual enters into the *Vanaprastha* stage. It consists of the third quarter of person's life. In this phase, after retiring from active life, the individual dedicates himself to a life of spiritual contemplation. He leaves his home and goes to the forest to become a hermit.

4. *Sanyasashrama* **or the Stage of Renunciation or Wandering Mystic** — This is the last stage of life. Now the individual leaves his hermitage and becomes a homeless wanderer *(sanyasin)* with all his earthly ties broken. The *sanyasin* aspires and acts to attain liberation only.

Marriage

The institution of marriage as known today emerged during the Vedic Age (1500 BC to 600BC). Marriage or *vivaha* was a very important *sanskara* in ancient India. It was considered a sacrament (sacred ritual) during ancient times. Hindu marriage is still considered a sacrament.

Marriage is the beginning—the beginning of the family—and is a life-long commitment. It also provides an opportunity to grow in selflessness as you serve your wife and children. Marriage is more than a physical union; it is also a spiritual and emotional union. This union mirrors the one between God and His Worship place.

The purpose of marriages can be varied, but one could say that the purpose of marriage today is simply to make a commitment to the person you love.

The marriage of Dushyanta and Shakuntala was an example of this marriage. As the Vedic religion evolved into classical orthodox Hinduism, the social ideas advanced by Manu gained prominence, and large sections of Indian society moved towards patriarchy and caste-based rules.

Arranged **marriages** are believed to have initially risen to prominence in the **Indian** subcontinent when the **historical** Vedic religion gradually gave way to classical Hinduism, substantially displacing other alternatives that were once more prominent.

Marriage in ancient India had three main purposes:
1) Promotion of religion by performance of household sacrifices.
2) Progency or the happy after life of father and his ancestors and continuation of family line or *kula*.
3) *Rati* or sexual pleasure.

The eight forms of marriage are:
1) *Brahma Vivaha:* This is considered to be the purest form of marriage. In this form of marriage the father of the bride offers his daughter to a man of character and learning. The daughter who is decked with ornaments and richly dressed is given as a gift to a man of good character and high learning of the same class. This was the most favoured form.
2) *Daiva Vivaha:* In the *daiva* form of marriage the father offers her daughter as a *dakshina* (sacrificial fee) to a young priest who officiates the *yajna* which is arranged by him.
3) *Arsa Vivaha:* In *arsa vivaha* father of the bride gives his daughter to the bridegroom after receiving a cow and a bull or two pairs of these animals from the bridegroom.
4) *Prajapatya Vivaha:* In this type of marriage, the father offers the girl to the bridegroom. But neither does he offer any dowry nor does he demand bride-price.
5) *Asura Vivaha:* This is a form of marriage by purchase in which the bridegroom has to give money to the father or kinsman of the bride.
6) *Gandharva Vivaha:* This was a marriage by consent of the boy and the girl. Mutual love and consent of the bride and bridegroom was the only condition required to bring about the union.

7) ***Rakshasa Vivaha:*** This was marriage by capture in which the girl was forcibly abducted from her home, crying and weeping and her kinsmen have been stained and their houses broken.

8) ***Paishacha Vivaha:*** *Paishacha* form of marriage is one in which the man seduces by force a girl who is sleeping or intoxicated or mentally disordered.

Out of these eight forms of marriage the first four have been described as *prashasta* or approved or desirable marriage whereas the rest of the four forms have been considered to be *aprashasta* or disapproved or undesirable marriages.

There were many conditions attached with marriage. One important condition was that the bride should be a virgin and the importance of this rule lies in the fact that it renders the remarriage of widows difficult. In the *Rig Veda* there is some indication that a woman might re-marry if her husband had disappeared and could not be found or heard of. *Atharva Veda* mentions that a woman married twice may be united in the next world with her second, not her first, husband. But generally it was not hailed.

Understanding Gender as a social category

Gender roles can be defined as the behaviors, values, and attitudes that a society considers appropriate for both male and female. Traditionally, men and women had completely opposing roles, men were seen as the provider for the family and women were seen as the caretakers of both the home and the family.

Gender issues include all aspects and concerns related to women's and men's lives and situation in society, to the way they interrelate, their differences in access to and use of resources, their activities, and how they react to changes, interventions and policies.

Our conception of what women and men are and what they are supposed to be is produced by the society in which we live. Thus many people say that gender is ‒socially constructed‖.

Though sex categorization is based on biological sex, it is maintained as a category through socially constructed displays of gender. Institutions also create normative conceptions of gender. In India, discriminatory attitudes towards either sex have existed for generations and affect the lives of both sexes. Although the constitution of India grants men and women equal rights, gender disparities remain. But there has been gender discrimination mostly in favor of men in many realms.

As in other ancient societies, women were under the guardianship of males: father, husband and son. When a woman married, it was regarded as her second birth, with a new name. In successful religious rituals, the wife was to be present to utilize her fertility powers.

From an early age, Indian girls are told that their proper place is in the home, fulfilling domestic duties and attending to the needs of men, whereas males learn that they are superior to women and must exercise authority over them.

The Representation of Women in Historical Traditions

The status of women in India has been subject to great many changes over the past few millennia. From a largely unknown status in ancient times through the low point of the medieval period, to the promotion of equal right by many reformers, the history of women in India has been eventful.

In ancient India women in many places occupied an equal position to men. Many Hindu religious books like the Vedas; Ramayana, etc., have mentioned the names of several women who were great scholars, poets and philosophers of the time.

According to ancient Hindu scriptures, a man without his wife cannot participate in any essential religious rites. Married men along with their wives are allowed to perform sacred rites on the occasion of various important festivals. Wives are thus befittingly called 'Ardhangini'.

Ancient India

Some scholars believe that in ancient India, the women enjoyed equal status with men in all fields of life. However, some others hold contrasting views. Works of ancient Indian grammarians, such as Patanjali and Katyana, suggest that women were educated in the early Vedic period. Rig Vedic verses suggest that the women married at a mature age and were probably free to select their husband. Scriptures such as Rig Veda and Upanishad mention several women sages and seers, notably Gargi and Maitrey.

Some kingdoms in the ancient India had traditions such as nagarvadhu ("bride of the city"). Women competed to win the coveted title of the nagarvadhu. Amarpali is the most famous example of a nagarvadhu.

According to studies, women enjoyed equal status and rights during the early Vedic period. However, later (approximately 500 B.C), the status of women began to decline with the Smritis (esp. Manusmiriti) and other religious texts curtailing women's freedom and rights.

Women in the Vedic and the post Vedic Periods:

The Indian cultural tradition begins with the Vedas. It is generally believed that the Vedic period is spread over from 300 BC to 600 B.C. The degree of freedom given to ancient women to take part in public activities indicates the nature of the status enjoyed by women during Vedic period. Women never observed ‒purdah‖. They enjoyed freedom and even they enjoyed freedom in selecting their male partner.

Traditional Woman

In ancient times, the women were considered with respect and dignity. During this period, there were women rishis, and they were held in high esteem. In royal households, women were given respect and they even rendered a significant contribution in the making of decisions and administrative functions.

In many societies, women's primary role revolved around motherhood and managing a household. While women in many different places and at different times had this in common, there were significant differences in how women performed these roles depending on kinship relations.

No doubt the Rig Vedic Women in India enjoyed high status in society and their condition was good. Even the women were provided opportunity to attain high intellectual and spiritual standard. In recent years the role and Status of women has undergone some drastic changes due to globalization and commercialism. Recognizing the achievements of women in all facets of life – science, community, government, literature, art, sports, medicine – has a huge impact on the development of self-respect and new opportunities for girls and young women.

Challenges faced by Women in India

In the medieval period, the status of women went down considerable. Women were considered to be inferior to men. Many historians have called this age as the 'dark age' the' woman's position became very miserable. Customs of purdah (a black cloth worn by women to cover their face), Sati (burning of widows), child marriage, restrictions on widow marriage, and the prevalence of joint family systems have been the factors responsible for the injustice done towards women. Women were deprived of their rights of equality with men. The Muslim influence on India caused considerably deterioration in the status of women. They were deprived of their rights of equality with men. The practice of child marriages is believed to have started from around sixth century.

Earlier women in India were facing problems like child marriage, sati pratha, parda pratha, restriction to widow remarriage, widow exploitation, devadasi system, etc. However, almost all such old practices have almost vanished. But that doesn't mean an end to the challenges women face.

Women in India have to face a lot of issues. They have to go through gender discrimination, harassment, sexual abuse, lack of education, dowry-related harassment, gender pay gap and much more.

The patriarchy dictates a woman's life unjustly. Moreover, there is also a lack of female education and the gender pay gap. Women in rural areas are still denied education for being a female. Similarly, women do not get equal pay as men for doing the same work.

In the past, the women were more accustomed to working in homes and taking care of children, etc. When in the early days, there were severe issues like the Sati system, no widow remarriage, devadasi system and more. While most of them are not prevalent now, there are new issues that women face. They may be not the same but they are still as severe as the early ones. They hinder the growth of a country and make the women feel inferior.

It can be concluded that women are treated in terms of stereotyped impressions of being the lowest class and greater evidence can be found that there are large disparities between the women and the men 's class. It can be seen that women are more likely to play casual roles as they are most likely to take seasonal and part time work so that they can work according to their needs.

Slavery

Slavery was prevalent during the Vedic age. Women slaves were used in household activities. During the Mauryan period, slaves were of 9 types as informed by Arthashastra. Ashokan inscriptions also mention existence of practice of slavery during the Mauryan age.

Megasthenes denied the existence of slavery in India because he could not differentiate between slaves and free men as slaves were treated quite well in India.

During the Gupta age, slaves were of types as informed as Narada Smriti. Most slaves were captured during wars. Some people used to become slave to earn merit (Punya) in order to get heaven after death. At times, people used to sell themselves due to economic hardship. A slave was liberated immediately if he/she saved the life of his/her master.

While a member of any varna could become slave, Brahmana slaves were rare. Buying and selling of Brahmana women were prohibited.

MODULE 2

INDIAN LITERATURE, CULTURE, TRADITION, AND PRACTICES

- Evolution of script and languages in India: Harappan Script and Brahmi Script.

- The Vedas, the Upanishads and the Puranas

- The Ramayana

- The Mahabharata

- Buddhist And Jain Literature in Pali

- Prakrit And Sanskrit

- Kautilya's Arthashastra

- Famous Sanskrit Authors, Telugu Literature, Kannada Literature, Malayalam Literature, Sangama Literature

- Northern Indian Languages & Literature

- Persian And Urdu

- Hindi Literature

MODULE 1
INDIAN LITERATURE, CULTURE, TRADITION, AND PRACTICES

EVOLUTION OF SCRIPT AND LANGUAGES IN INDIA: HARAPPAN SCRIPT AND BRAHMI SCRIPT

Difference between Language and Script

A language usually refers to the spoken language, a method of communication. A script refers to a collection of characters used to write one or more languages. A language is a method of communication. Scripts are writing systems that allow the transcription of a language, via alphabet sets.

Indus script (Harappan script)

After the pictographic and petroglyph representations of early man, the first evidence of a writing system can be seen in the Indus valley civilization. The earliest evidence of which is found on the pottery and pot shreds of Rahman Dheriand these potter's marks, engraved or painted, are strikingly similar to those appearing in the Mature Indus symbol system.

Later the writing system can be seen on the seals and sealings of Harappan period. Most inscriptions containing these symbols are extremely short (5 symbols), making it difficult to judge whether or not these symbols constituted a script used to record a language, or even symbolize a writing system.

The long inscriptions are found in Gujarat particularly Dholavira where we find slabs of stone inscribed with inscriptions which might represent name plates of the houses with 24 to 34 symbols.

The characters are largely pictorial but include many abstract signs. The inscriptions are thought to have been written mostly from right-to-left (because there are several instances of the symbols being compressed on the left side, as if the writer is running out of space at the end of the row there), but they sometimes follow a boustrophedonic (sarphalekhana) style. The number of principal signs is about 400. Since that is considered too large a number for each character to be a phonogram, the script is generally believed to instead be logo-syllabic.

There were arguments that the Indus script is nonlinguistic, which symbolise families, clans, gods, and religious concepts and are similar to totem poles. Based on the extreme brevity of the inscriptions, the existence of too many rare signs and the lack of the random-looking sign repetition that is typical of language.

But others have argued that it is a linguistic system and the debate shifted to whether it is the predecessor of Dravidian script or the Brahmi script.

Some scholars have argued that the Brahmi script has some connection with the Indus system, but others, such as Iravatham Mahadevan, have argued that the script had a relation to a Dravidian language. This debate has been further fuelled by the arguments of who were the initial and original inhabitants of India the Aryan's or the Dravidian's.

Brahmi script

Brahmi is the originator of most of the present Indian scripts, including Devanagari, Bengali, Tamil, and Malayalam etc. It developed into two broad types in Northern and Southern India, in the Northern one being more angular and the Southern one being more circular. It was deciphered in 1838 by James Prinsep. The best-known Brahmi inscriptions are the rock-cut edicts of Ashoka in north-central India, dated to 250– 232 BCE. Many scholars support that Brahmi probably derives from Aramaic influence and others support that the Brahmi language can have some Indus script influence.

The Brahmi script confirms to the syllabic writing system and was used more for writing Prakrit, the language spoken by ordinary people initially and later Sanskrit also was written in this script.

According to the epigraphers- All Indian scripts are derived from Brahmi. There are two main families of scripts:

1) **Devanagari,** which is the basis of the languages of northern and western India: Hindi, Gujarati, Bengali, Marathi, Dogri, Panjabi, etc.
2) **Dravidian,** which shows the formats of Grantha and Vatteluttu.

The evolution of various scripts of India from Brahmi Script

Kharosthi Script

It is the sister script and contemporary of Brahmi. It was written from right to left. It was used in the Gandhara culture of North-Western India and is sometimes also called the Gandhari Script. Its inscriptions have been found in the form of Buddhist Texts from present day Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Gupta Script

It is also known as the Late Brahmi script. It was used for writing Sanskrit in the Gupta period. It gave rise to the Nagari, Sarada and Siddhamatrika scripts which in turn gave rise to the most important scripts of India such as Devanagari, Bengali etc.

Nagari Script - - - - -

It was an Eastern variant of the Gupta script. It is an early form of the Devanagari script. It branched off into many other scripts such as Devanagari. It was used to write both Prakrit and Sanskrit.

It is the main script at present to write standard Hindi and Nepali. It is also used presently to write Sanskrit and is one of the most used writing systems in the world. It is composed of Deva meaning, God and Nagari meaning city, which meant that it, was both religious and urbane or sophisticated.

It is written from left to right, has a strong preference for symmetrical rounded shapes within squared outlines, and is recognisable by a horizontal line that runs along the top of full letters. In a cursory look, the Devanagari script appears different from other Indic scripts such as Bangla, Oriya or Gurmukhi, but a closer examination reveals they are very similar except for angles and structural emphasis.

Sarada Script

The Sarada or Sharada script of the Brahmic family of scripts, developed around the 8th century. It was used for writing Sanskrit and Kashmiri. Originally more widespread, its use became later restricted to Kashmir, and it is now rarely used except by the Kashmiri Pandit community for ceremonial purposes. Sarada is another name for Saraswati, the goddess of learning.

Siddhamatrika script (Kutila)

This script was prominent in eastern India in 6th century AD leading to subsequent evolution of Gaudi script. This Eastern Nagari script or Bengali-Assamese script defines the unified usage of Bengali script and Assamese script thought minor variations within. Its usage is associated with the two main languages Bengali and Assamese.

Western India

Landa script

The Laṇḍa scripts, meaning ‒without a tail‖, is a Punjabi word used to refer to scripts in North India. Landa is a script that evolved from the Sarada script during the 10th century. It was used to write Punjabi, Hindi, Sindhi, Saraiki, Balochi, Kashmiri, Pashto and various Punjabi dialects.

Gurmukhi script

Gurmukhi is an alphabetic developed from the Landa scripts and was standardized during the 16th century by Guru Angad, the second guru of Sikhism. The whole of the Guru Granth Sahib is written in this script, and it is the script most commonly used by Sikhs and Hindus for writing the Punjabi language.

Modi script

Modi is a script used to write the Marathi language, which is the primary language spoken in the stateof Maharashtra in western India. Modi was an official script used to write Marathi until the 20th century when the Balbodh style of the Devanagari script was promoted as the standard writing system for Marathi. Although Modi was primarily used to write Marathi.

Gujarati script

The Gujarati script, which like all Nagari writing system is a type of alphabet, is used to write the Gujarati and Kutchi languages. It is a variant of Devanagari script differentiated by the loss of the characteristic horizontal line running above the letters and by a small number of modifications in the remaining characters. The Gujarati script is also often used to write Sanskrit and Hindi.

South India
Grantha Script

It is one of the earliest Southern scripts to originate from Brahmi. It branched off into Tamil and Malayalam scripts, which are still used to write those languages.

It is also the predecessor of the Sinhala script used in Sri Lanka. A variant of Grantha called Pallava was taken by Indian merchants in Indonesia, where it led to the development of many South-East Asian scripts.It was used in Tamil Nadu to write the Sanskrit Granthas and hence, was named Grantha.

The Grantha script was widely-used between the sixth century and the 20th centuries by Tamil speakers in South India, particularly in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, to write Sanskrit, and is still in restricted use in traditional Vedic schools. It is a Brahmic script, having evolved from the Brahmi script in Tamil Nadu. The Malayalam script is a direct descendant of Grantha.

Vatteluttu Script

It was a script derived from the Brahmi and was used in the Southern part of India. It was used to write Tamil and Malayalam. It removed those signs from Brahmi, which were not needed for writing the Southern languages. Presently, both Tamil and Malayalam have moved on to their own Grantha derived scripts. Vatteluttu is one of the three main alphabet systems developed by Tamil people to write the Proto- Tamil language, alongside the ancient Granthi or Pallava alphabet and the Tamil script.

Kadamba Script

It is a descendant of Brahmi and marks the birth of the dedicated Kannada script. It led to the development of modern Kannada and Telugu scripts. It was used to write Sanskrit, Konkani, Kannada and Marathi. The Kadamba script was developed during the reign of the Kadamba dynasty in the 4th-6th centuries. The Kadamba script is also known as Pre-Old-Kannada script. This script later became popular in what is today the state of Goa and was used to write Sanskrit, Kannada, Konkani and Marathi.

Tamil Script

It is the script used to write the Tamil language in India and Sri Lanka. It evolved from Grantha, the Southern form of Brahmi. It is a syllabic language and not alphabetic. It is written from left to right.

Kannada script

Kannada script is widely used for writing Sanskrit texts in Karnataka. Several minor languages, such as Tulu, Konkani, Kodava, Sanketi and Beary, also use alphabets based on the Kannada script. The Kannada and Telugu scripts share high mutual intellegibility with each other, and are often considered to be regional variants of single script.

Telugu script

The Brahmi script used by Mauryan kings eventually reached the Krishna River delta and would give rise to the Bhattiprolu script found on an urn purported to contain Lord Buddha's relics. The Bhattiprolu Brahmi script evolved into the Telugu script by 5th century C.E.

Malayalam script

The Malayalam script, also known as Kairali script is a Brahmic script used commonly to write Malayalam, which is the principal language of Kerala, India. Malayalam script is also widely used for writing Sanskrit texts in Kerala.

Malayalam was first written in the Vatteluttu alphabet, an ancient script of Tamil. However, the modern Malayalam script evolved from the Grantha alphabet, which was originally used to write Sanskrit. Both Vatteluttu and Grantha evolved from the Brahmi script, but independently.

Medieval and Modern scripts

Urdu script

The Urdu alphabet is the right-to-left alphabet used for the Urdu language. It is a modification of the Persian alphabet, which is itself a derivative of the Arabic alphabet.

The standard Urdu script is a modified version of the Perso-Arabic script and has its origins in 13th century Iran. It is closely related to the development of the Nastaliq style of Perso-Arabic script.

Urdu script in its extended form is known as Shahmukhi script and is used for writing other Indo-Aryan languages of North Indian subcontinent like Punjabi and Saraiki as well.

Santali script

Santali is a language in the Munda subfamily of Austroasiatic languages, related to Ho and Mundari. Till the nineteenth century Santali remained an oral language.

A recent development has been the creation of a separate OlChiki script for Santali by Pt. Raghunath Murmu in the 1970s which is used exclusively by the Santali speaking people of the Singhbhum Jharkhand and Odisha.

Conclusion

India has a long history of writing. While India has been a literate culture for millennia, it has also greatly valued oral knowledge.

The ancient Hindu scriptures, the Vedas, the oldest of which dated to around 1500 BCE were memorized verbatim for at least a thousand years, if not more, before being committed to writing.

Only a few years ago, things did not seem to be going well for India's various alphabets, often known as the Indic or Brahmic scripts after the historical Iron Age script that is the ancestor of modern South and Southeast Asian writing systems.

Digitalization and the widespread proliferation of Roman-alphabet keyboards in India meant that Indian users would often transcribe Indian languages using ad hoc Romanizations on the internet and via text.

In short, this is a golden age for Indic language script usage, due to technology and increased literacy.

The very nature of modernity, with its mass communication, advertisements, social platforms, and the spread of information and entertainment to everyone with a smartphone, means that everyone will eventually gain and utilize basic literacy.

And most of this literacy in India will be in local languages. This will be the first time in India's recorded history that its scripts are being used so widely.

THE VEDAS

Considered as the earliest literary records of Sanskrit Literature, the **Vedas** compiled by Rishi Vyasa are believed to be the oldest holy books in Hinduism *(Sanatana Dharma)*. The Vedas are the large body of vast knowledge and text; the religious and spiritual teachings of which encompasses all aspects of life.

Definition

Veda simply means ‒Knowledge‖. It is a Sanskrit word from the root ‒Vid‖, which means finding, knowing, acquiring, or understanding. What you acquire or understand is knowledge. The term Veda as a common noun means ‒knowledge‖.

The ideas, teachings, and practices described in the Vedas formed the basis for the six major schools of Hindu philosophy – *Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Mimamsa, and Vedanta.*

The 4 Vedas

There are four Vedas: Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, and Atharva Veda, and all of them together are attributed to as ‗**Chaturveda**'. The Rig Veda serves as the principal one and all three but the Arthaveda agree with one another in form, language, and content.

Each Veda has been subclassified into four major text types – **The Samhitas**, the most ancient layer of text in the Vedas, consisting of mantras, hymns, prayers, and benedictions which has in literary terms put together or joined the other three texts; the Aranyakas which constitute the philosophy behind the ritual sacrifice, the Brahmanas which inturn has the commentary on hymns of four Vedas and the **Upasanas, the one that focuses on worship**.

The Rig Veda

Rig Veda, one of the oldest texts of the Indo-Aryan Civilization still extant, is an ancient Indian collection of Vedic hymns. Two Sanskrit words Rig and Veda constituting it translates to „**praise or shine**‟ and ‗knowledge' respectively. A collection of 1,028 hymns and 10,600 verses in all, organized into ten different Mandalas (or the books; Sanskrit), **it is the principal and oldest of the four Vedas.**

The cultural-linguistic records; mainly the variation in form of Sanskrit used (from present-day) point outthe origin of the **Rig Veda to have been around 1600 BCE, though a wider approximation of 1700– 1100 BCE** has also been given by experts. **The initial written Rig Veda dates back to 1st millennium BCE** although the extant ones today date back only to somewhere between 11th and 14th centuries.

Rig Veda has been **sub-classified into four major text types – the Samhitas** or the hymns that sing the praises of the Rig Vedic deities, some of whom are **Indra,** a heroic deity and the king of the highest heaven called Saudharmakalpa who slain his enemy Vatra, **Agni**- the sacrificial fire, **Soma,** the sacred portion or the plant which was a fundamental offering of the Vedic sacrifices and Ishwara, the supreme god-just to mention a few; the Aranyakas which constitute the philosophy behind the ritual sacrifice, the Brahmanas which in-turn has the commentary of the ancient sacred rituals and the Upasanas, the one that focuses on worship.

The Mandalas of the Rig Veda which are ten in number and were composed by poets from different priestly groups over a period of several centuries is structured based on clear principles – the Veda begins with a small book addressed to Agni, Indra, and other gods, singing the praises of the Lord.

Rigveda, in contemporary Hinduism, has been a reminder of the ancient cultural heritage and point of pride for Hindus, with some hymns still in use in major rites of passage ceremonies, but to some experts, the

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literal acceptance of most of the textual essence is long gone. Louis Renou wrote that the text is a distant object, and ‒even in the most orthodox domains, the reverence to the Vedas has come to be a simple raising of the hat‖. Musicians and dance groups celebrate the text as a mark of Hindu heritage, and these have remained popular among the Hindus for a long time. However, the contemporary Hindu beliefs are distant from the precepts in the ancient layer of Rigveda Samhitas.

The Sama Veda
The words of Rig Veda put to music, and are to be sung rather than to just be read or recited. Sama Veda, also the **Veda of Melodies and Chants**, is the third in the series of the four principle scriptures of Hinduism – Four Vedas. The Sama Veda, divided into two major parts, first to include the four melody collections, or the Saman, the songs and the latter the Arcika, or the verse books a collection (Samhita) of hymns, portions of hymns, and detached verses. A liturgical text, relating to public worship, all but 75 verses of the total 1875 is derived from the Rig Veda.

Widely referred to as the ‒**Book of Songs**‘, it is derived from two words, Saman, of Sanskrit, meaning Song and Veda, meaning Knowledge. The Sama Veda has served as the principal roots of the classical Indian music and dance tradition, and proudly the tradition boasts itself as the oldest in the world. The verses of Sama Veda, as the tradition had followed, is sung using specifically indicated melodies called Samagana by Udgatar priests at rituals dedicated to different diets.

As it is the words of Rig Veda put to music, no wonder, alike the Rigveda, the early sections of Samaveda typically begin with singing the hymns of Rig Vedic deities, Indra, a heroic deity and the king of the highest heaven called Saudharmakalpa who slain his enemy Vatra, Agni- the sacrificial fire, Soma, the sacred potion or the plant which was a fundamental offering of the Vedic sacrifices and Ishwara, the supreme god-just to mention a few; but in the latter part shifts to abstract speculations and philosophy, the nature and existence of the universe and God himself are questioned and so are the social and religious duties of a man in the society.

Such has been the influence of Sama-veda on Indian classical music and dance. The essence of classical Indian music and dance tradition is rooted in the sonic and musical dimensions of the Sama-Veda itself. The Samaveda, in addition to singing and chanting, mentions instruments and also the specific rules and regulations of playing them, so as to preserve the sanctity of those ancient instruments. If one were to summarize the significance of the Sama Veda in a single line, Sama Veda, in contemporary Hinduism, has been a reminder of the majestic ancient cultural heritage and a point of pride for Hindus; not to mention that it still finds its usage in today‘s society.

The Yajur Veda
Yajur Veda, of Sanskrit origin, is composed of Yajus and Veda; the two words translate to ‒prose mantras dedicated to religious reverence or veneration‘ and knowledge respectively. Third of the fourth canonical texts of the Hindu dharma, this liturgical collection is famous as the ‒**book of rituals**‘. Of the ancient Vedic text, it is a compilation of ritual offering formulas or the prose mantras to be chanted or muttered repeatedly by a priest while an individual performs the ascertained ritual actions before the sacrificial fire or the Yajna. It has been, since the Vedic times, the primary source of information about sacrifices and associated rituals, more importantly, it has served as a practical guidebook for the priest, or the Purohits, as referred to as in Hindu dharma who execute the acts of ceremonial religion.

The scholarly consensus points out the bulk of Yajur Veda dating to 1200 or 1000 BCE, which when analyzed is younger than Rig Veda, whose origin has been approximated around 1700 BCE, but is contemporaneous to the hymns of Sama deva and Atharva Veda.

Also, common to the other three Vedas and as the tales tell, humans did not compose the revered compositions of the Vedas, but that God taught the Vedic hymns to the sages, who then handed them down through generations by word of mouth. Also, the followers of the Hindu dharma regard the Vedas as apauruṣeya; meaning not of a man or impersonal and also, according to some traditions in Hindu dharma such as the Vedanta and Mimamsa schools of philosophy the Vedas are considered as **Svatah Pramana** *(Sanskrit, meaning ―self-evident means of knowledge‖)*. Some schools of thought even assert that the Vedas as of eternal creation, mainly in the Mimosa tradition. In the Mahabharata, the creation of Vedas is credited to Brahma, the Supreme Creator. However, the Vedic hymns themselves assert that they were skillfully created by Rishis (sages), after inspired creativity.

The Yajurveda is broadly grouped into **Krishna Yajurveda** and **Shukla Yajurveda**, also referred to as the Black Yajurveda and the latter as the White. In reference to the verses of the Krishna Yajurveda being un-arranged, unclear, and disparate or dissimilar, the collection is too often referred to as **Black Yajurveda**. In contrast, the well-arranged and imparting a particular meaning, the Shukla Yajurveda is known as the **White Yajurveda.**

The earliest and most ancient layer of Yajur Veda, Samhita includes about 1,875 verses, that are distinct yet borrowed from and built upon the foundation of verses in Rigveda. The middle layer includes the Satapatha Brahmana, one of the largest Brahmana texts in the Vedic collection and The youngest layer of Yajur Veda text includes the largest collection of primary Upanishads six in number, influential to various schools of Hindu philosophy. These include the **Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, the Isha Upanishad, the Taittiriya Upanishad**, just to name a few.

Yajurveda, in contemporary Hinduism, has been a reminder of the ancient cultural heritage and point of pride for Hindus. The text is a useful source of information about agriculture, economic, and social life during the Vedic era. The verse, translated from the Shukla Yajurveda, for example, lists the types of crops considered important in ancient India.

The Atharva Veda

The fourth and final of the revered text of the Hindu dharma, the Vedas, the Atharva Veda, in short, is depicted as **"knowledge storehouse of Atharvaṇas‖** Atharvaṇas meaning, formulas, and spells intended to counteract diseases and calamities, or ―the procedures for everyday life‖. A late addition to the Vedic scriptures, the word owes its roots to Sanskrit and the widely used epithet for the scripture is ‗**the Veda of Magic formulas**'. As it sides with popular culture and tradition of the day rather than preaching religious and spiritual teachings, it is more often viewed not in connection with the three other Vedas, but as a discrete scripture.

In popular context with being widely popular as the Veda of Magic formulas, Atharva Veda is a mixture of hymns, chants, spells, and prayers; and involves issues such as healing of illnesses, prolonging life, and as some claim also the black magic and rituals for removing maladies and anxieties.

However, many books of the Atharva Veda are dedicated to rituals without magic and to theosophy, a philosophy in itself asserting that the knowledge of God can be achieved through spiritual practice or intuition. It is a collection of 730 hymns with about 6,000 mantras, divided into 20 books, with three Upanishads embedded to it; Mundaka Upanishad, Mandukya Upanishad, and Prashna Upanishad. As the tales have it and alike other three Vedas, the believers of the Hindu dharma regard the Atharvaveda too as Apauruṣeya; meaning, not of a man or impersonal and also not belonging to a particular author. The hymns and the verses were written by the Rishis (or the Sages) and as the ardent believers of the Hindu dharma claim the revered Lord himself taught the Vedic hymns to the sages, who then handed them down through generations by word of mouth.

The Samhitas in the Atharva Veda have written accounts of **Surgical and medical speculations**, it includes mantras and verses for treating a variety of ailments. For instance, the verses in hymn 4.15 of the recently discovered Paippalada version of the Atharvaveda, it discusses how to deal with an open fracture, and how to wrap the wound with Rohini plant (Ficus Infectoria, native to India). And so have speculations been made about remedy from herbal medicines, on the nature of man, life, good and evil and even spells and prayers to gain a lover. And some hymns were even about peaceful prayers and philosophical speculations, the origin of the universe, and the existence of God himself. It is indeed a collection of all sort of speculations that quite often leaves us bewildered.

As mentioned earlier, the contents of the Atharvaveda quite contrast with the other Vedas and is often viewed as a discrete scripture rather than in connection with the three Vedas. The 19th century German Indologist and historian Albrecht Weber has best put it as, ‒The spirit of the two collections [Rigveda, Atharvaveda] is indeed widely different. In the Rigveda there breathes a lively natural feeling, a warm love for nature; while in the Atharva there prevails, on the contrary, only an anxious dread of her evil spirits and their magical powers. In the Rigveda we find the people in a state of free activity and independence; in the Atharva we see it bound in the fetters of the hierarchy and superstition.‖

The Atharva Veda still finds its relevance in today's contemporary society as it has been a pioneer in influencing modern medicine and healthcare, culture and religious celebrations, and even literary tradition in the Indian sub-continent as it contains the oldest known mention of the Indic literary genre. The fourth and final of four Vedas still is one of the most cherished books for any Vedic scholar today.

THE UPANISHADS

Now, we discuss to the concluding part of the Veda namely _the Upanishads. The Upanishads come towards the end of the Aranyakas. If the Samhita is likened to a tree, the Brahmanas are its flowers and the Aranyakas are its fruit yet not ripened, the Upanishads are the ripe fruits.

Nature of Upanishads

The Vedas are generally considered to have two portions viz., *Karma-Kanda* (portion dealing with action or rituals) and *Jnana*-Kanda (portion dealing with knowledge). The Samhita and the Brahmanas represent mainly the*Karma-Kanda* or the ritual portion, while the Upanishads chiefly represent the *Jnana-Kanda* or the knowledge portion. The Upanishads, however, are included in the *Shruti*. They are at present, the most popular and extensively read Vedic texts.

The Upanishads are often called _*Vedanta*_. Literally, *Vedanta* means the end of Veda, *Vedasya antah*, the conclusion (*Anta*) as well as the goal (*Anta*) of the Vedas. Chronologically they came at the end of the Vedic period. As Upanishads contain difficult discussions of ultimate philosophical problems, they were taught to the pupils at about the end of their course. The chief reason why the Upanishads are called the _end of the Veda' is that they represent the central aim of the Veda and contain the highest and ultimate goal of the Veda as they deal with Moksha or Supreme Bliss.

Meaning of the word „Upanishad"

The word _Upanishad' has been derived from the root Sad (to sit), to which are added two prefixes: *Upa* and *Ni*. The prefix *Upa* denotes nearness and *Ni* totality. Thus, this word means _sitting near by devotedly'. This no doubt refers to the pupil's sitting down near his teacher at the time of instruction. The word in course of time gathered round it the sense of secret teaching or secret doctrine (*Rahasya*) which was imparted at such sittings. Upanishads are frequently spoken of as *Rahasya* (secret) or *Guhya* (mystery) also.

We find in Upanishads, that due to secrecy and mystery of the teachings, a teacher refuses to impart instruction to a pupil who has not proved his worthiness to receive the instruction. Through another

definition, the word primarily signifies knowledge, yet by implication it also refers to the book that contains that knowledge.

Number of the Upanishads

There is a good deal of speculation concerning the number of Upanishads. Traditionally, the old Upanishads had their place in the Brahmanas and Aranyakas. There is only one instance of a Samhita containing Upanishad – the Vajasaneyi Samhita comprises the Ishavasya Upanishad forming the 40th Book.

In later times, the Upanishads obtained a more independent position but still they professed to belong more particularly to one or the other of the four Vedas.

It is difficult to ascertain the exact number that should be regarded as authentic Upanishads. A religious system is considered valid in India only when it is supported by *Shruti*, hence the founders of religious sects have sometimes written books and called them Upanishads in order to give their views scriptural authority. The *Allah*Upanishad, for instance was composed in the sixteenth century, at the time of Emperor Akbar.

Different estimates of their number have been given by scholars and they have been put by some scholars at as many as 200.

One hundred and eight Upanishads are enumerated in the Muktikopanishad and a popular edition contains them. However, among these Upanishads, ten Upanishads, the names of which have been mentioned in the Muktikopanishad, are considered the most important Upanishads from the point of view of Vedantic Philosophy.

Ten Principal Upanishads known as ‗Dashopanishad' are : Isha, Kena, Katha , Prashna , Munda , Mandukya, Taittiriya, Aitareya, Chandogya and Brihadaranyaka.

Besides, Shvetashvatara, Kaushitaki and Maitrayaniya Upanishads are often listed in old Upanishads.

Division of the Upanishads

According to the Muktikopanishad 108 Upanishads are divided according to four Vedas are as follows:

10 Upanishads from the Rigveda

19 Upanishads from the Shukla-Yajurveda

32 Upanishads from the Krishna-Yajurveda

16 Upanishads from the Samaveda and

31 Upanishads from the Atharvaveda.

The Principal thirteen Upanishads, related to the Vedas are:

(A) Upanishads of the Rigveda :
- (1) Aitareya Upanishad,
- (2) Kaushitaki Upanishad

(B) Upanishads of the Shukla-Yajurveda:
- (3) Brihadaranyaka Upanishad,
- (4) Isha Upanishad

(C) Upanishads of the Krishna-Yajurveda:
- (5) Taittiriya Upanishad,
- (6) Katha Upanishad,
- (7) Shvetashvatara Upanishad,
- (8) Maitrayaniya Upanishad

(D) Upanishads of the Samaveda:
- (9) Chandogya Upanishad,
- (10) Kena Upanishad

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(E) Upanishads of the Atharvaveda:
   (11) MundakaUpanishad,
   (12) MandukyaUpanishad,
   (13) Prashna Upanishad.

Thirteen known Upanishads were composed from the middle of the 5th century through the 2nd century BCE.
The first five of these—*Brihadaranyaka*, *Chandogya*, *Taittiriya*, *Aitareya*, and *Kaushitaki*—were composed in prose interspersed with verse.
The middle five—*Kena*, *Katha*, *Isa*, *Svetasvatara*, and *Mundaka*—were composed primarily in verse.
The last three—*Prasna*, *Mandukya*, and *Maitri*—were composed in prose.

Major Theme of the Upanishads

The Upanishads are religious and philosophical treatises. They constitute the last phase of the Vedic revelation -. They represent the knowledge of Brahman (*Brahma-Vidya*). What is this world? Who am I? What becomes of me after death? – Such questions are asked and answered in these Upanishads. The essential theme of the Upanshads is the nature of the world and God. Already in the hymns of the Rigveda, we notice here and there a shift of emphasis from the innumerable gods to the one Infinite as in the famous passage. _*Ekam sad vipra bahudha vadanti* _. This becomes more pronounced in the Upanishads and is verywell illustrated here. The doctrine of true knowledge and salvation are major subjects of the Upanishadic philosophy. These treatises mark the culmination of the earlier line of investigation into the nature of ultimate reality.

In the Upanishads, we get an intelligible body of verified and verifiable spiritual insights mixed with a mass of myths and legends and cosmological speculations relating to the nature and origin of universe. Besides, Brahman and His creation, are also discussed in these texts.. The principal contents of the Upanishads are philosophical speculations. The spirit of their contents is anti-ritualistic. Although the subject-matter of most of the Upanishads is almost the same, yet each Upanishad has its own unique idea or ideas and its own method of enquiry.

Importance of the Upanishads

1) The Upanishads occupy a unique place in the development of Indian philosophical thought. They contain the highest authority on which the various systems of philosophy in India rest. So Vedanta Philosophy is directly related to the Upanishads. Not only the Vedanta philosopher professes his faith in the ends and objects of the Veda, but the Sankhya, the Vaisheshika, the Nyaya and Yoga philosophers, all pretend to find in the Upanishads some warranty for their tenets.

2) The Upanishads are associated with the Vedas and make the entire range of Vedic knowledge as complete. _The Upanishads generally mention the Vedas and their study with respect. Certain verses from the Vedas, such as the *Gayatri*, form the subject of meditation here.

3) *Brahmavidya* or the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme Reality is the great kingdom of the principal Upanishads. They give importance to _Knowledge' alone. Anyone having knowledge may be Guru or Acarya. Even kings approached to them for the attainment of knowledge. The story of Satyakama Jabala, who though unable to give his father's name, was yet initiated into spiritual life, shows this fact. In the Chandogya Upanishad (4.1-3) Raikva a Brahmana not by caste but by his knowledge, instructed king Janashruti. In the same Upanishad (5.3), the king Pravahana instructed the Brahmana Gautama in the new doctrine of transmigration. This story together with the one in which king Ashvapati kaikeya instructed five Brahmanas in the doctrine of Atman (Chan. Up. 5.11)

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shows that for Upanishads knowledgeable person is the most important and not the Brahmana, Kshatriya or anyone else.

4) Each of the Vedas has many *Mahavakyas* or great sayings. But four *Mahavakyas* found in the Upanishads related to four Vedas are very important, thought-provoking and powerful. These spell out the non-duality of the *Jiva* and the Brahman-*Prajnanam Brahma- –Rigveda Aham Brahmasm – Yajurveda Tattvamasi –- Samveda Ayamatma Brahma –Aharvaveda*

5) Without understanding the Upanishads, it is impossible to get an insight into Indian history and culture. Every subsequent development of philosophy and religion in India has drawn heavily on the Upanishads.

THE RAMAYANA

The Ramayana by the sage Valmiki is one of the great epics of the Sanskrit language, and is dated to approximately 200 B.C.E. There are many version of Ramayana in Indian language beside Buddhist, Sikh, and Jain adaptation. There are also Cambodian, Indonesian, Filipino, Thai, Lao, Burmese and Malaysian version of tale.

Ramayan one of the two major Sanskrit epics of ancient India, the other being the Mahabharata. Ramayan narrates the life of Rama, Prince of legendary kingdom of kosala. Ramayana is one of the largest ancient epics in world literature. It consists of nearly 24000 verses. In Hindu tradition Ramayana is considered to be –Adi Kavya‖ which means ***first poem.***

Origin

The original Ramayana written by the Sage Valmiki comprised of seven –kandas‖ or books. Many scholars question the authorship of the certain passages from the first book (Bala Kanda) and question the authenticity of the last book (Uttara Kanda) for various reasons.

1) **Bala Kanda:** –The Book of the Youth,‖ the boyhood and adolescence of Rama.
2) **Ayodhya Kanda:** –The Book of Ayodhya,‖ the court of Dasaratha and the scenes that set the stage for the unfolding of the story, including the exchange between Dasaratha and Kaikeyi and the exile of Rama
3) **Aranya Kanda**: –The Book of the Forest ,‖ life in the forest during the fourteen year exile and the abduction of Sita by Ravana
4) **Kishkindhya Kanda:** –The Book of The Empire of Holy Mokeys,‖ Rama's residence in Kishkindhya, the quest for Sita, and the slaying of Bali
5) **Sundara Kanda:** –The Book of the Beautiful (Hanuman),‖ sundara means beautiful, and this portion of the book has passages of lyrical beauty; description of the landscapes over which Rama roams, and the arrival of Rama and his allies in Lanka
6) **Yuddha Kanda: "**The Book of War,‖ the defeat of Ravana, the recovery of Sita, the return to Ayodhya, and the coronation of Rama and
7) **Uttara Kanda:** –The Book Beyond,‖ the –later section‖, detailing Rama's life in Ayodhya, the banishment of Sita, the birth of Lava and Kusa, the reconciliation of Rama and Sita, her death or return to the earth, and Rama's ascent into heaven.

Ramayana: Lessons the epic taught us

This Hindu epic has given us number of lessons that we must not forget. These lessons help us better ourselves and emerge as refined and reformed human beings with each passing day.

1) **Truth Triumphs**

The basic teaching of Ramayana is that no matter how powerful evil is, it will always be defeated by Good. Truth always wins, no matter how vicious or poisonous lie is because even bitter truth oozes with positivity and the sweetest lie has the darkest agenda behind it. The win of good over evil is a universal fate. A person should always have a noble heart and good values. That is how Lord Rama defeated the most knowledgeable person in history Ravana.

2) **Respect elders and be duty bound towards parents**

Ram left for vanvas after his step-mother expressed her desire to see biological son Bharath as the future king of Ayodhya.

3) **Remain united with siblings even during the toughest of times**

Bharat refused to accept the throne after his father's demise and waited for Ram to return from his vanvas. Lakshman accompanied his brother Ram for the 14-year-long vanvas.

4) **Be deeply committed to your duty**

Besides being Sita's husband, Ram was also the King of Ayodhya. And the duty of the king is to keep his subjects happy. And hence, he had to abandon his wife for the sake of the masses after they questioned her chastity. As a husband, he was duty bound towards his wife. But as a King, he had to think of his subjects' wishes ahead of his personal ones.

5) **Choose the path of righteousness**

Vibhishana, younger brother of Ravana chose to not support his sibling in the war against Ram. He knew his brother had committed a sin by abducted someone—a married lady.

6) **Remain humble no matter how powerful you become**

Hanuman could have easily rescued Sita from Ravana's Ashoka Vatika. He had the power to single-handedly fight against Ravana's army. But he chose to surrender to Lord Ram's divinity and let him do the needful.

7) **Never consider anyone inferior**

Mighty prince Ram took the help of Vanar sena (monkey army) to build a bridge (Ram Setu) so that he could reach Lanka to free Sita. The little monkeys not just helped him build the setu but also took part in the war against Ravana.

8) **All that glitters is not gold**

Sita got attracted to a spotted deer that looked incredibly beautiful. She wanted Ram to get the deer for her from the jungle. Actually, it wasn't a deer, but Mareech, Ravana's accomplice in disguise of the animal.

9) **Embrace all irrespective of caste, creed or colour**

Prince Ram ate fruits that were already tasted by Shabri, a poor old woman who had nothing much to offer but pure love.

10) **Be loyal to your spouse**

Ravana tried to lure Sita after abducting her. But Sita never let him succeed in his attempts. Ram didn't remarry after Sita was forcefully abandoned by him even after conducting the ‗Agni Pariksha'.Being a King, he enjoyed the privilege of having many queens, but he chose to remain loyal to his beloved wife – Sita.

11) **Abandon the following**

Kama (lust), Krodha (anger), Moha (desire), Lobha (greed), Mada (pride), Ahankar (ego), Irshya (jealousy), Jaddata (insensitivity), Ghrina (hatred), Bhaya (fear).

Summary

The Ramayana is an all-popular epic in South and Southeast Asia. It is the story of King Rama who must save his kidnapped wife, Sita. Along the way, it teaches Hindu life lessons. The Ramayana is told and retold

orally, through literature (and comic books!), plays, movies and is reference in many other forms of popular culture today.

Story

Rama was the eldest son of the great king Dasharatha. The gods had declared that he was born for the specific purpose of defeating the demon-king Ravana. He is considered to be the seventh incarnation of the great god, Vishnu.

Rama won the hand of his wife Sita in an archery contest, in which he was the only contender able to bend a bow that had once belonged to Shiva. Sita had been born of a furrow in the earth (this is what her name means). The two were extremely happy together, and returned to live in Rama's home, in Ayodhya.

Rama's stepmother, Kaikeyi, wanted to promote her son Bharata as heir to the throne of her husband, Dasharatha; Rama was eldest, and the honor rightly was due him. Kaikeyi called in several favors her husband had promised her, and forced Dasharatha, who could not go back on his promises to his wife—-to exile Rama for fourteen years. Rama's brother Lakshman and his wife insisted on accompanying him, and they left together. Dasharatha died of grief, and Bharata attempted to persuade his brother to return. Rama, also bound not to go back on his word, refused. Bharata pledged to rule in Rama's name until his return.

Rama, Sita, and Lakshman wandered in the forest until Rama was seen by an evil spirit, who fell in love with him. Rama rejected her and she attacked with her allies, only to meet defeat at the hands of Lakshman and Rama. She appealed to her brother Ravana, the strongest and most dangerous demon on earth at that time, for help. Ravana decided to kidnap Sita, the wife of Rama.

Ravana devised a plan to abduct Sita after hearing about her incomparable beauty. He sent one of his demons disguised as a magical golden deer to entice Sita. To please her, Rama and Lakshmana went to hunt the deer down. Before they did though, they drew a protective circle around Sita and told her that she would be safe for as long as she did not step outside the circle. After Rama and Lakshmana left, Ravana appeared as a holy man begging alms. The moment Sita stepped outside the circle to give him food, Ravana grabbed her and carried her to his kingdom in Lanka.

Upon returning and finding Sita gone, Rama despaired. Accompanied by his brother, he went in search of her. On the way the two killed a demon whose liberated spirit told them to seek the help of Sugriva, the monkey-king. Rama then sought the help of a band of monkeys offer to help him find Sita. Hanuman, the general of the monkey band can fly since his father is the wind. He flew to Lanka and, finding Sita in the grove, comforted her and told her Rama would come to save her soon. Ravana's men captured Hanuman, and Ravana ordered them to wrap Hanuman's tail in cloth and to set it on fire. With his tail burning, Hanuman escaped and hopped from house-top to house-top, setting Lanka on fire. He then flew back to Rama to tell him where Sita was.

Rama, Lakshmana and the monkey army built a causeway from the tip of India to Lanka and crossed over to Lanka where a cosmic battle ensued. Rama killed several of Ravana's brothers and eventually confronted the ten-headed Ravana. He killed Ravana, freed Sita and after Sita proved here purity, they returned to Ayodhya where Bharata returned the crown to him.

Many versions of the Ramayana end thus with return of Sita and Rama to their kingdom after fourteen years of exile, and the commencement of Ram Rajya, the glorious time of the rule of Ram. Other versions, such as that by Valmiki, end with the questioning of Sita's loyalty during the time of her kidnapping, when she spent so much time in another man's home. In such versions, Sita returned to her husband only to be put to a fire test to prove her loyalty. She passed this test, only to be questioned again later. She was then banished with her two unborn twin sons. Later asked to return to the kingdom, she did so only to stand before the assembly, calling on the earth (from which she was born) to take her back again if she had remained pure. The story ends with her absorption into her mother, the earth, and her ultimate vindication.

THE MAHABHARATA

Mahabharata, (Sanskrit: ―Great Epic of the Bharata Dynasty‖) one of the two Sanskrit epic poems of ancient India (the other being the *Ramayana*). The *Mahabharata* is an important source of information on the development of Hinduism between 400 BCE and 200 CE and is regarded by Hindus as both a text about dharma (Hindu moral law) and a history (*itihasa*, literally ―that's what happened‖). Appearing in its present form about 400 CE, the *Mahabharata* consists of a mass of mythological and didactic material arranged around a central heroic narrative that tells of the struggle for sovereignty between two groups of cousins, the Kauravas (sons of Dhritarashtra, the descendant of Kuru) and the Pandavas (sons of Pandu).

It is written by Ved Vyasa. The poem is made up of almost 100,000 couplets—about seven times the length of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* combined—divided into 18 *parvan*s, or sections, plus a supplement titled *Harivamsha* (―Genealogy of the God Hari‖; i.e., of Vishnu). Although it is unlikely that any single person wrote the poem, its authorship is traditionally ascribed to the sage Vyasa, who appears in the work as the grandfather of the Kauravas and the Pandavas. The date and even the historical occurrence of the war that is the central event of the *Mahabharata* are much debated.

Along with its basic plot and accounts of numerous myths, the *Mahabharata* reveals the evolution of Hinduism and its relations with other religions during its composition. The period during which the epic took shape was one of transition from Vedic sacrifice to sectarian Hinduism, as well as a time of interaction—sometimes friendly, sometimes hostile—with Buddhism and Jainism. Different sections of the poem express varying beliefs, often in creative tension. Some sections—such as the *Narayaniya* (a part of book 13), the *Bhagavadgita* (book 6), the *Anugita* (book 14), and the *Harivamsha*—are important sources of early Vaishnava theology, in which Krishna is an avatar of the god Vishnu. Above all, the *Mahabharata* is an exposition of dharma (codes of conduct), including the proper conduct of a king, of a warrior, of an individual living in times of calamity, and of a person seeking to attain *moksha* (freedom from samsara, or rebirth). The poem repeatedly demonstrates that the conflicting codes of *dharma* are so ―subtle‖ that, in some situations, the hero cannot help but violate them in some respect, no matter what choice he makes.

The *Mahabharata* story has been retold in written and oral Sanskrit and vernacular versions throughout South and Southeast Asia. Its various incidents have been portrayed in stone, notably in sculptured reliefs at Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom in Cambodia, and in Indian miniature paintings.

Influence

In its scope, the Mahabharata is more than simply a story of kings and princes, sages and wisemen, demons and gods; its legendary author, Vyasa, said that one of its aims is elucidating the four Purusarthas (goals of life): *Kama* (pleasure), *artha* (wealth), *dharma* (duty), and *moksha* (liberation). The story culminates in *moksha,* believed by many Hindus to be the ultimate goal of human beings. Karma and dharma also play an integral role in the Mahabharata.

The Mahabharata includes large amounts of Hindu mythology, cosmological stories of the gods and goddesses, and philosophical parables aimed at students of Hindu philosophy. Among the principal works and stories that are a part of the Mahabharata are the following (often considered isolated as works in their own right):

- Bhagavadgita (Krishna instructs and teaches Arjuna – **Anusasanaparva**)
- Damayanti (or Nala and Damayanti, a love story – **Aranyakaparva**)
- Krishnavatara (the story of Krishna, the *Krishna Leela,* which is woven through many chapters of the story)
- Rama (an abbreviated version of the Ramayana – **Aranyakaparva**)
- Rishyasringa (also written as Rshyashrnga, the horned boy and rishi – **Aranyakaparva**)
- Vishnu sahasranama (the most famous hymn to Vishnu, which describes His 1000 names – **Anushasanaparva**)

Summary

The epic employs the "tale-within-a-tale" structure popular in many Indian religious and secular works. It is recited to the King Janamejaya by Vaishampayana, a disciple of Vyasa.

The core story of the work is that of a dynastic struggle for the throne of Hastinapura, the kingdom ruled by the Kuru clan. The two collateral branches of the family that participate in the struggle are the Kauravas, the elder branch of the family, and the Pandavas, the younger branch.

The struggle culminates leading to the Great Battle of Kurukshetra, and the Pandavas are ultimatelyvictorious. The Mahabharata itself ends with the death of Krishna, and the subsequent end of his dynasty,and ascent of the Pandava brothers to Heaven. It also marks the beginning of the Hindu age of Kali (Kali Yuga), the fourth and final age of mankind, where the great values and noble ideas have crumbled, and man is speedily heading toward the complete dissolution of right action, morality, and virtue. Some of the most noble and revered figures in the Mahabharata end up fighting on the side of the Kauravas, due to conflicts oftheir dharma, or duty. For example, Bhishma had vowed to always protect the king of Hastinapura, whoever he may be. Thus, he was required to fight on the side of evil knowing that his Pandavas would end up victorious only with his death.

Modern interpretations

In the late 1980s, the Mahabharata was televised and shown on India's national television (Doordarshan), directed by B. R. Chopra and his son Ravi Chopra. It became the most popular Indian TV series in history. When the Mahabharata was first broadcast in India, it shattered television records by reaching 97.8 percent viewership there. It also entered the Guinness Book of World Records as having been watched by over 96 percent of the worldwide Indian population. It was also shown in the UK by the BBC, where it achieved audience figures of 5 million, unheard of for a subtitled series being aired in the afternoon.

In the West, the most acclaimed and well-known presentation of the epic is Peter Brook's nine-hour play which premiered in Avignon in 1985 and its five-hour movie version (1989), which was shown on other TV networks, including PBS (through the "Great Performances" show) and Danmarks Radio (credited in the movie's credits).

However, there have been film versions of the Mahabharata long before these two versions, the earliest of which was shown in 1920.

A 2013 animated adaptation holds the record for India's most expensive animated film.

There is also a film version planned for release in 2020, which has the largest budget ever in the Indian film industry.

Important Life Lessons From The Mahabharata That Are Relevant Even Today
The epic tale Mahabharata is something everyone should read at least once in their life. Even if you are not into mythology and religion, this book will still hold great value in your life. There are plenty of life lessons one can learn from the Mahabharata.

1) **Being kind, humble and generous is not enough to live life.**
   The way Karna's life moved, we realised, more often than not, that the world is an evil place to survive in. And to ace it, we must understand how it really works.
2) **Bad company can ruin your life beyond imagination.**
   We all hate Shakuni mama, don't we? He literally destroyed everything that the Kauravas owned, and he influenced them to be negative. If it wasn't for him, the war wouldn't have happened at all.
3) **Unconditional support and loyal friends can take you places.**
   The Pandavas had Lord Krishna, and the Kauravas had Karna. Both of them always backed the two parties, no matter what. In fact, Duryodhan was really weak without Karna.
4) **You need to fight for what you think belongs to you.**
   The Pandavas never stopped fighting for what rightfully belonged to them. Their courage and determination is definitely something to admire and learn from.
5) **Being too emotional can be a bad idea.**
   Dhritrashtra's love for his son was blind. Throughout the epic, he remained torn between his principles and keeping his son happy. Somehow this made Duryodhan even more evil than what he already was, leading to awful consequences and the war.
6) **Learning throughout life is the best gift you can give yourself.**
   Arjun grasped whatever came his way. Not only did he learn the best of military science from Drona, but he was also interested in learning about divine weapons from Indra. He learnt about Pashupatastra from Mahadev as well. Additionally,he treated Yudhishter and Krishna as his mentors too, and continued learning whatever they had to offer.
7) **Sometimes, enemies come in the form of friends.**
   Although the Kauravas were more in number, their supporters were not really in favour of them. Bheeshma, Vidura and Drona secretly admired the Pandavas. Especially Vidura, who was the ultimate guide in everything the Kauravas did.
8) **Respect Woman**
   Draupadi had five husbands. They were strong and wealthy, but they all became helpless when she was disgraced by multiple other men. They had everything, but failed to show courage. Draupadi's anger and desire for revenge led to the war and downfall of the Kuru clan.
9) **Half knowledge can be more dangerous than no knowledge**
   Abhimanyu wouldn't have died. Although we remember him for his bravery and undying courage, he ultimately lost his life.
10) **You cannot be stopped if you are passionate about what you do.**
    Most of us know that Arjun was the greatest archer in the world. But Eklavya was even better than him. He hid himself behind the trees and grasped everything that Drona taught Arjun. His passion for archery and hunger for knowledge made him even better than Arjun at archery.
11) **A good strategy is what you need to sail your boat.**

If Pandavas didn't have Krishna and his master plan, they wouldn't have witnessed the victory they did. Always have a plan.

Story

The story begins when the blindness of Dhritarashtra, the elder of two princes, causes him to be passed over in favour of his brother Pandu as king on their father's death. A curse prevents Pandu from fathering children, however, and his wife Kunti asks the gods to father children in Pandu's name. As a result, the god Dharma fathers Yudhishtira, the Wind fathers Bhima, Indra fathers Arjuna, and the Ashvins (twins) father Nakula and Sahadeva (also twins; born to Pandu's second wife, Madri). The enmity and jealousy that develops between the cousins forces the Pandavas to leave the kingdom when their father dies. During their exile the five jointly marry Draupadi (who is born out of a sacrificial fire and whom Arjuna wins byshooting an arrow through a row of targets) and meet their cousin Krishna, who remains their friend and companion thereafter. Although the Pandavas return to the kingdom, they are again exiled to the forest, this time for 12 years, when Yudhishthira loses everything in a game of dice with Duryodhana, the eldest of the Kauravas.

The feud culminates in a series of great battles on the field of Kurukshetra (north of Delhi,in Haryana state). All the Kauravas are annihilated, and, on the victorious side, only the five Pandava brothers and Krishna survive. Krishna dies when a hunter, who mistakes him for a deer, shoots him in his one vulnerable spot—his foot—and the five brothers, along with Draupadi and a dog who joins them (Dharma, Yudhisththira's father, in disguise), set out for Indra's heaven. One by one they fall on the way, and Yudhisthira alone reaches the gate of heaven. After further tests of his faithfulness and constancy, he is finally reunited with his brothers and Draupadi, as well as with his enemies, the Kauravas, to enjoy perpetual bliss. The central plot constitutes little more than one fifth of the total work. The remainder of the poem addresses a wide range of myths and legends, including the romance of Damayanti and her husband Nala (who gambles away his kingdom just as Yudhishthira gambles away his) and the legend of Savitri, whose devotionto her dead husband persuades Yama, the god of death, to restore him to life. The poem also contains descriptions of places of pilgrimages.

THE BHAGAVAD GITA

The Bhagavad Gita is one of the greatest Religious Spiritual Book. Considered to be a doctrine of universal truth, it has long been influencing people not only of India but also overseas. As sage Ved Vyasa is known for writing Mahabharata, Gita being part of it is also ascribed to him.

In the epic Mahabharata, when cousin brothers Pandava and Kaurava are about to fight among themselves for the throne of Hastinapur, Pandava prince Arjuna feels weak in the battleground when he sees his relatives, teachers and friends in the opposition. When the supreme personality of Godhead, Lord Krishna sees him loosing strength and willingness to fight, he gives him what is known as ‒Gita Gyan‖.

Teachings of Bhagavad Gita are still applicable, even after about 5040 thousand years after it was written. These teachings are considered to be ultimate. It encompasses each and every aspect of life. One surely can lead a peaceful life if the teachings of Bhagavad Gita are followed.

Bhagavd Gita shows path to the lost, answer to the confused and wisdom to all. It is considered to be one of the greatest spritual books the world has ever known. The primary purpose of the Bhagavad- Gita is to

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illuminate for all of humanity the realization of the true nature of divinity; for the highest spiritual conception and the greatest material perfection is to attain love of God!

Some of the most popular and important teachings are listed below:

1. **We should do our work without worrying about its result:** When we work for getting fruits or the result from a particular action, we can't really be our best in it. It also gives us a lot of worries about the result. We may also feel disheartened if our task or action does not yield good outputs. Therefore, just doing our work without really thinking about its result should be our motive.

2. **Soul is immortal and our body is perishable Our soul never dies:** Our soul never dies. Even after our death, it exists. It is immortal. It just changes bodies after the death of a person. Moreover, our body is made up of _Agni' (fire), _Jal' (water) ,'Vayu' (wind), _Prithvi' (earth) and it combines with them after the death. So we should not pay a lot of attention towards our outer body, but instead should work for the inner soul, it's satisfaction.

3. **World is perishable and whoever comes to this world surely has to go one day:** This world is not immortal. One who takes birth dies one day and that is the ultimate truth of this world. Nothing exists permanently. One has to leave this world, even though he wishes not to. No magic can actually help a person to stay forever. Everyone has their set life periods. They vanish after completing them. No matter how great one is or how power one posses, all have to die one day.

4. **Whatever happened was good, whatever is happening is good and what all will happen in the future will be good:** We should not repent about our past or worry about the future as the present is going on. We should know that God has planned everything for us. He will not let anything bad happen to us. Whatever happens is for our good only. We should be optimistic and should not stress our self with these baseless worries of past and future. If things are not favourable, they surely would be. Just have faith in the supreme personality of Godhead.

5. **Progress and development are the rules of this universe:** Things may not be the same, the way they used to be. Things and circumstances change. We should neither expect people, nor surroundings, not even society to be same. They all change with time. We move ahead. Universe forgets old things and moves forwars, so do we. We should not stick on one point, this will make our existence much more problematic in this world.

6. **We did not bring anything to this world, neither are we going to take anything:** We came to this world empty handed. We have made everything over here, be it relations, money, love or respect. We cannot take anything with us when we die. Everything would be left over here. So we should not really do evil things when it comes to the question of our respect. Nor should we be really concerned about making as much money as possible. We should be satisfied with what we have as everything would be left over here in this material world, we won't be able to take anything with us.

7. **Every action and deed of ours should be dedicated to Krishna**: Whatever we do in the course of our lifetime should be dedicated to the supreme personality of Godhead. This will always result in giving us peace and satisfaction. One should consider remembering Krishna during their actions. This makes us feel that God would be there with us and our actions would turn out to be positive.

8. **One should devote himself or herself to Krishna:** The supreme personality of godhead is the ultimate support of any human being. Our fellow humans may not care for us or support as or may even leave us in our bad times but Krishna is always there for us. The person who knows this truth is never really troubled by sadness or grief.

9. **Krishna is the supreme**: Krishna is the supreme personality of Godhead. He is the original cause of all causes. He starts everything and ends everything too. He is there everywhere. He is omnipresent and omnipotent. We are just puppets whom he controls. He is divine and transcendental.

10. **Desires come and go:** Desires come and go, but you should remain a dispassionate witness, simply watching and enjoying the show. Everyone experiences, desires but one should not be moved by them. They should not bother a person. People sometimes undertake really evil actions because of their desires. So one should not come under the chains of desires.

11. **Money mind cannot meditate:** Bhagavad Gita talks a lot about meditation and it's importance. Meditation is considered extremely helpful for inner peace and _sadhna'. Moreover, a person who thinks about making money all the time cannot really engage in meditation. When a person's mind is not stable and he or she thinks only about money, then meditation would be a failed effort for such a person.

12. **Thoughts about big or small, your or mine should be kept out:** We should not think about how big or small we can really make things. All this is materialistic and engages people in tensions and greedy activities. It makes one profit oriented. Thinking about yours or mine also does the same. All the life we make and collect things for ourselves. This really doesn't make a difference when we leave this world. We all are turned into ashes after death.

THE PURANAS

Purana, (Sanskrit: ―Ancient‖) in the sacred literature of Hinduism, any of a number of popular encyclopaedic collections of myth, legend, and genealogy, varying greatly as to date and origin.
Purana is a Sanskrit word that means **"ancient"** or **"old."** It is a genre of ancient Indian literature found both in Hinduism and Jainism. Puranas are encyclopedic texts that cover various topics such as cosmogony, cosmology, folk tales, pilgrimages, temples, medicine, astronomy, grammar, mineralogy, humor, love stories, theology and philosophy as well as the genealogies of gods, goddesses, kings, heroes, sages and demigods.

It is believed that the first puranas were composed between the 3rd and 10th centuries C.E. The most famous purana by far is the **"*Bhagavata Purana,*"** which outlines the childhood and early life of Krishna, the incarnation of the Hindu god, Vishnu. There is a wealth of information about yoga contained within various puranas. The "Bhagavata Purana" instructs the reader on Bhakti yoga practice, while other texts cover other types of yoga and different branches of spiritual practice.

Traditionally, there are 18 main puranas and 18 minor puranas, which contain over 400,000 verses. Puranas typically cover five signs, or topics.
1) Cosmogony
2) Cosmology
3) Genealogy of the gods, sages and kings

4) Cosmic cycles
5) Legends during the times of various kings

Some other puranas, like the "Bhagavata Purana," add five more characteristics, expanding the list to 10:

6) Karmic links between the deities, sages, kings and living beings
7) Tales about god(s)
8) Finale or cessation
9) Spiritual liberation (*moksha*)
10) Refuge

The purpose of the puranas was to bring people closer to the gods. All of the purana texts are sectarian, dedicated to certain deities -- some to gods, some to goddesses. Puranas also served to give the common people access to and understanding of the essential teachings and complex yogic philosophies of the ancient Vedic texts.

Puranas are the most revered and pertinent texts in the Bhakti yoga tradition, where the devotional aspect of yoga is emphasized. This devotion is cultivated through the personification of the chosen deities in entertaining myths and stories.

The "Bhagavata Purana" describes Bhakti yoga and outlines all the steps of its practice. Another text, the "Linga Purana," covers the details about yama (disciplines), niyama (virtues) and pranayama (breathing techniques). Meanwhile, the "Vayu Purana" contains information about pratyahara (withdrawal of the senses), dharana (concentration) and dhyana (meditation).

Hinduism: The Puranas

Puranas were written almost entirely in narrative couplets, in much the same easy flowing style as the two great Sanskrit epic poems, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. The early Puranas were probably compiled by upper-caste authors who appropriated popular beliefs and ideas from people of various castes. Later Puranas reveal evidence of vernacular influences and the infusion of local religious traditions.

Traditionally, a Purana is said to treat five subjects, or **"five signs":** the primary creation of the universe, secondary creation after periodic annihilation, the genealogy of gods and patriarchs, the reigns of the Manus (the first humans), and the history of the solar and lunar dynasties. Creation and dissolution (*sarga*,

‒emission,‖ and *samhara*, ‒gathering in‖) occur when Prajapati, a creator figure of the Vedic age, emits the universe and opens it, but everything is always in it, just alternately revealed (manifest) or concealed (latent); *sarga* lets it out, and *samhara* pulls it back in.

All the Puranas are strongly sectarian—some devoted to Shiva, some to Vishnu, and some to a goddess. But even those officially devoted to a particular god often pay considerable attention to other gods. By far the most popular Purana is the *Bhagavata-purana*, with its elegant treatment of the childhood and early life of Krishna. There are also 18 ‒lesser‖ Puranas, or *upa-purana*s, which treat similar material, and a large number of *sthala-purana*s (‒local Puranas‖) or *mahatmya*s (‒magnifications‖), which glorify temples or sacred places and are recited in the services at those temples.

Cosmogony

Puranic cosmogony greatly expands upon the complex cosmogonies of the Brahmanas, Upanishads, and epics. According to one of many versions of the story of the origin of the universe, in the beginning thegod Narayana (identified with Vishnu) floated on the snake Ananta (‒Endless‖) on the primeval waters. From Narayana's navel grew a lotus, in which the god Brahma was born reciting the four Vedas with his

four mouths and creating the ―Egg of Brahma,‖ which contains all the worlds. Other accounts refer to other demiurges, or creators, like Manu (the primordial ancestor of humankind).

The Vedas do not seem to conceive of an end to the world, but Puranic cosmogony accounts for the periodic destruction of the world at the close of an eon, when the Fire of Time will put an end to the universe. Elsewhere the destruction is specifically attributed to the god Shiva, who dances the *tandava* dance of doomsday and destroys the world. Yet this is not an absolute end but a temporary suspension (*pralaya*), afterwhich creation begins again in the same fashion.

Cosmology

The Puranas present an elaborate mythical cosmography. The old tripartite universe persists, but it is modified. There are three levels—heaven, earth, and the netherworld—but the first and last are further subdivided into vertical layers. Earth consists of seven circular continents, the central one surrounded by the salty ocean and each of the other concentric continents by oceans of other liquids. In the centre of the centralmainland stands the cosmic mountain Meru; the southernmost portion of this mainland is Bharatavarsa, the old name for India. Above earth there are seven layers in heaven, at the summit of which is the worldof *brahman* (*brahma-loka*); there are also seven layers below earth, the location of hells inhabited by serpents and demons.

The Mahapuranas

Of the many texts designated *Puranas* the most important are the *Mahapuraṇas*. These are always said to be eighteen in number, divided into three groups of six.

1) Agni Purana (15,400 verses)
2) Bhagavata Purana (18,000 verses). One of the most celebrated and popular of the *Puranas,* telling of Vishnu's ten Avatars. Its tenth and longest canto narrates the deeds of Krishna, introducing his childhood exploits, a theme later elaborated by many Bhakti movements.
3) Bhavishya Purana (14,500 verses)
4) Brahma Purana (24,000 verses)
5) Brahmanda Purana (12,000 verses; includes Lalita Sahasranamam, a text some Hindus recite as prayer)
6) Brahma Vaivarta Purana (18,000 verses)
7) Garuda Purana (19,000 verses)
8) Kurma Purana (17,000 verses)
9) Linga Purana (11,000 verses)
10) Markandeya Purana (9,000 verses; includes Devi Mahatmyam, an important text for Shaktas)
11) Matsya Purana (14,000 verses)
12) Narada Purana (25,000 verses)
13) Padma Purana (55,000 verses)
14) Shiva Purana (24,000 verses)
15) Skanda Purana (81,100 verses), the longest Purana, it is an extraordinarily meticulous pilgrimage guide, containing geographical locations of pilgrimage centers in India, with related legends, parables, hymns and stories. Many untraced quotes are attributed to this text.
16) Vamana Purana (10,000 verses)
17) Varaha Purana (10,000 verses)
18) Vishnu Purana (23,000 verses)

The Mahapuranas are frequently classified according the three aspects of the **divine Trimurti,**

1) **Brahma Puranas:** Brahma Purana, Brahmanda Purana, Brahma Vaivarta Purana, Markandeya Purana, Bhavishya Purana,

   The Brahma Purana is one of the eighteen major Puranas genre of Hindu texts in Sanskrit language. It is listed as the first Maha-Purana in all the anthologies, and therefore also called Adi Purana. Another title for this text is **Saura Purana**, because it includes many chapters related to Surya or the Sun god. The Brahma Purana is actually just a compilation of geographical Mahatmya (travel guides) and sections on diverse topics.

   Out of 245 chapters, 18 chapters of the Brahma Purana cover the cosmology, mythology, genealogy, manvantara (cosmic time cycles) and topics that are required to make a text belong to the Puranic genre of literature. Other chapters cover Sanskara (rite of passage), summary of Dharmasastra, its theories on the geography of earth, summary of Samkhya and Yoga theories of Hindu philosophy, and other topics. While many chapters of the Brahma Purana praise temples and pilgrimage, chapters 38-40 of the text, a part of embedded Saura Purana, present arguments that are highly critical of the theistic theories and devotional worship proposals of 13th- century Madhvacharya and Dvaita Vedanta sub-school of Hindu philosophies.

   The Brahma Purana dedicates a majority of its chapter to describing the geography, temples and scenes around the Godavari River and of Odisha.

2) **Vishnu Puranas:** Vishnu Purana, Bhagavata Purana, Naradeya Purana, Garuda Purana, Padma Purana, Varaha Purana, Vamana Purana, Kurma Purana, Matsya Purana

   The **Vishnu Purana** is one of the eighteen Mahapuranas, a genre of ancient and medieval texts of Hinduism. It is an important Pancharatra text in the Vaishnavism literature corpus.

   The *Vishnu Purana* is among the shorter Purana texts, with about 7,000 verses in extant versions. It primarily centers around the Hindu god Vishnu and his avatars such as Krishna, but it praises Brahma and Shiva and asserts that they are one with Vishnu. The Purana, states Wilson, is pantheistic and the ideas in it, like other Puranas, are premised on the Vedic beliefs and ideas.

   Vishnu Purana, like all major Puranas, attributes its author to be sage Veda Vyasa.

3) **Shiva Puranas:** Shiva Purana, Linga Purana, Skanda Purana, Agni Purana, Vayu Purana

   Shiva Purana is one of the eighteen major *Puranas, a* genre of Sanskrit texts in Hinduism, and part of the Shaivism literature corpus. It primarily centers around the Hindu god Shiva and goddess Parvati, but references and reveres all gods.

   The *Shiva Purana* asserts that it once consisted of 100,000 verses set out in twelve samhitas (books). It was written by the Romaharshana, a disciple of Vyasa belonging to Suta class.

   The *Shiva Purana* contains chapters with cosmology, mythology, relationship between gods, ethics, Yoga, *Thirtha* (pilgrimage) sites, bhakti, rivers and geography, and other topics. The text is an important source of historic information on different types and theology behind Shaivism in early 1st-millennium BCE. The oldest surviving chapters of the Shiva Purana have significant Advaita Vedanta philosophy, which is mixed in with theistic elements of bhakti.

According to the *Padma Purana,* the texts may be classified in accordance with *the three gunas or qualities*; truth, passion, and ignorance:

1) **Sattva ("truth; purity"):** Vishnu Purana, Bhagavata Purana, Naradeya Purana, Garuda Purana, Padma Purana, Varaha Purana
2) **Rajas ("dimness; passion"):** Brahmanda Purana, Brahma Vaivarta Purana, Markandeya Purana, Bhavishya Purana, Vamana Purana, Brahma Purana

3) **Tamas ("darkness; ignorance"):** Matsya Purana, Kurma Purana, Linga Purana, Shiva Purana, Skanda Purana, Agni Purana

The Upapuranas

The *Upapuraṇas* are lesser or ancillary texts: these are sometimes also said to be eighteen in number, with still less agreement as to the canonical titles. Few have been critically edited. They include: Sanat-kumara, Narasimha, Brihan-naradiya, Siva-rahasya, Durvasa, Kapila, Vamana, Bhargava, Varuna, Kalika, Samba, Nandi, Surya, Parasara, Vasishtha, Devi-Bhagavata, Ganesha, Mudgala, and Hamsa.

The Ganesha and Mudgala Puranas are devoted to Ganesha. The Devi-Bhagavata Purana, which extols the goddess Durga, has become (along with the Devi Mahatmya of the Markandeya Purana) a basic text for Devi worshipers.

There are many others all over the Indian subcontinent.

Sthala Puranas

This corpus of texts tells of the origins and traditions of particular temples or shrines—the word *sthala* means "spot" in Sanskrit. There are numerous Sthala Puranas, most written in vernaculars, some with Sanskrit versions as well. Some appear in Sanskrit versions in the Mahapuranas or Upapuranas. Some Tamil Sthala Puranas have been researched by David Dean Shulman.

Kula Puranas

These Puranas deal with a caste's origin myth, stories, and legends (the word kula means "family" or "tribe" in Sanskrit). They are important sources for caste identity though usually contested by rival castes. This subgenre is usually in the vernacular and may at times remain oral. These have been little researched, though they are documented in the caste section of the British Census of India Report and the various Gazetteers.

Jain Puranas

Jain Puranas deal with Jain myths, history and legends and form a major part of early Kannada literature. The best known is the Mahapurana of Acharya Jinasena.

HISTORY OF BUDDHIST AND JAIN LITERATURE: PALI, PRAKRIT AND SANSKRIT

Introduction

The religious books of the Jains and the Buddhists refer to historical persons or incidents.

Buddhist Literature

The earliest **Buddhist** works were written in Pali, which was spoken in Magadha and South Bihar. The Buddhist works can be divided into the canonical and the non-canonical.

The **canonical literature** is best represented by the – Tripitakas, that is, three baskets - **Vinaya Pitaka, Sutta Pitaka** and **Abhidhamma Pitaka. Vinaya Pitaka** deals with rules and regulations of daily life. **Sutta Pitaka** contains dialogues and discourses on morality and deals with Dharma while **Abhidhamma Pitaka** deals with philosophy and metaphysics. It includes discourses on various subjects such as ethics, psychology, theories of knowledge and mataphysical problems.

The **non-canonical literature** is best represented by the **Jatakas.** Jatakas are the most interesting stories on the previous births of the Buddha. It was believed that before he was finally born as Gautama, the Buddha practising Dharma passed through more than 550 births, in many cases even in the form of animals. Each

birth story is called a Jataka. The Jatakas throw invaluable light on the social and economic conditions ranging from the sixth century BC to the second century BC. They also make incidental reference to political events in the age of the Buddha.

Sanskrit Buddhist literature

It refers to Buddhist texts composed either in classical Sanskrit, in a register that has been called "Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit" (BHS), or a mixture of the two. Several non-Mahayana Nikayas appear to have kept their canons in Sanskrit, most prominent among which was the Sarvastivada. The Mahayana Sutras are also in Sanskrit, with less classical registers prevalent in the gatha portions. Buddhist Tantras too are written in Sanskrit, sometimes interspersed with Apabhramsa, and often containing notable irregularities in grammar and meter (traditionally ascribed to the esoteric nature of the texts)

Before the modern derivatives of Sanskrit existed, a group of languages known as the Prakrits or Middle Indo Aryan languages evolved from India's classical language. These were the vernacular dialects of ancienttimes, and several of them became important literary vehicles in their own right. The best known of this group is Pali, which still serves as the canonical language of Buddhism in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. Other Prakrit languages such as Sauraseni, Maharastri, Magadhi and Gandhari embody various facets of the literatures of both the Brahmanical/Hindu and Buddhist traditions.

Besides texts considered "Word of the Buddha" (Buddhavacana) by the traditions that transmitted them, Buddhist authors have composed treatises and literary works in Sanskrit dealing with Buddhist philosophy, logic, etc., but also with more worldly topics such as gemology, erotics, literary aesthetics, etc
Sanskrit Buddhist literature is therefore vast and varied, despite the loss of a significant amount of texts. A large number of works survive only in Tibetan and Chinese translations

Hypotheses for original language of Buddha

Traditional accounts vary vastly in identifying the language in which the Buddha taught, as well as in respect to the history of the non-Mahayana Nikayas. While the Theravada tradition usually upholds that the Buddha taught exclusively in the language of Magadha, other accounts offer a very different perspective on the languages of the early non-Mahayana schools, and in these accounts Sanskrit plays a central role.
According to some contemporary hypotheses, the earliest Buddhist texts were orally composed and transmitted in Middle Indo-Aryan languages called Prakrits.
The term *Pali,* used today in both Buddhist and Western cultures as a designation of a language, is a relatively modern coinage, not traceable before the seventeenth century. An earlier name given to this language in Buddhist literature is Magadhi, the language of the province Magadha in Eastern India that roughly corresponds to the modern Indian state Bihar. The only Buddhist school using this language is the TheravAda in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. Theravadins erroneously consider Pali to be the language spoken by the Buddha himself.
During the nineteenth century, Western scholarship discovered that Pali is not an eastern Middle Indic language and has little relationship to Magadhi, which is known from other sources.
Even though Pali, as an artificial language, was never actually a vernacular of any part of India, it was by no means a "dead" language. Changes in the phonetic shape of Pali, most likely introduced by Buddhist grammarians at various times, can be observed, although dating them is problematic. None of these changes were far-reaching, although they seem to have continued well into the sixteenth century, if not later.
The oldest literature preserved in Pali is the canon of the Theravada Buddhists, the only Buddhist canon extant in its entirety in an Indian language. Consequently, it is linguistically the oldest form of Buddhist scriptures known.

Rise of Sanskrit in Buddhism

While some hypotheses say that Buddhism was originally written in Prakrits, Sanskrit gradually became the main language of Buddhist scriptures and scholasticism in India mirroring its rise as political and literary lingua franca of the Indian subcontinent, perhaps reflecting an increased need for elite patronage. This process, it is proposed, began with the north-western Indian Buddhists of the Kushan empire (CE 30- 375). The Sarvastivadin Piṭakas were mostly transmitted in Sanskrit and many Mahayana sutras such as the Prajnaparamita sutra were composed in different registers of Sanskrit. The Buddhist use of classical Sanskrit for literary purposes possibly began with Asvaghoṣa (c. 100 CE), author of the Buddhacarita and one of the earliest Sanskrit dramatists. Buddhist thinkers like Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Asanga, Vasubanhhu Dignaga, Sthiramati, Dharmakīrti, Bhaviveka, Candrakīrti, etc., also wrote in Sanskrit

Jainism Literature

The **Jain** texts were written in Prakrit and were finally compiled in the sixth century AD in Valabhi in Gujarat. The important works are known as Angas, Upangas, Prakirnas, Chhedab Sutras and Malasutras. Among the important Jain scholars, reference may be made to Haribhadra Suri, (eighth century AD) and Hemchandra Suri, (twelfth century AD). Jainism helped in the growth of a rich literature comprising poetry, philosophy and grammar. These works contain many passages which help us to reconstruct the political history of eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The Jain texts refer repeatedly to trade and traders.

Jain literature begins with the last of the Tirthankarasi, Mahavir, who reorganized the old Nirgrantha sect and revitalized its moral and religious zeal and activities. He preached his faith of *ahimsa* (non-violence or harmlessness) and self-purification to the people in their own language which was not Sanskrit, but Prakrit. The form of Prakrit which he is said to have used was Ardha-Magadhi, by which was meant a language that was not pure Magadhi but partook of its nature.

Twelve Angas

Mahavira_s teachings were arranged in twelve Angas (parts) by his disciples. These Angas formed the earliest literature on Jainism

1) *Acaranga* laid down rules of discipline for the monks
2) *Sutrakrtanga* contained further injunctions for the monks regarding what was suitable or unsuitable for them and how they should safeguard their vows. It also gave an exposition of the tenets and dogmas of other faiths
3) *Sthananga* listed in numerical order, categories of knowledge pertaining to the realities of nature
4) *Samavayanga* classified objects in accordance with similarities of time, place, number, and so on
5) *Vyakhya-prajnapti* or *Bkagavat* explained the realities of life and nature in the form of a catechism
6) *Jnatrdhamakatha* contained hints regarding religious preaching as well as stories and anecdotes calculated to carry moral conviction
7) *Upasakadhyayana* or *Upasaka-dasaka* was meant to serve as a religious code for householders
8) *Antakrddasaka* gave accounts of ten saints who attained salvation after immense suffering
9) *Anuttaraupapatika* contained accounts of ten saints who had gone to the highest heaven after enduring intense persecution
10) *Prsnna-vyakarana* contained accounts and episodes for the refutation of opposite views, establishment of one_s own faith, promotion of holy deeds, and prevention of evil
11) *Vipaka-Sutra* explained how virtue was rewarded and evil punished

12) **Drstivada** included the five sections namely *Parikarmani* contained tracts describing the moon, the sun, *Jambudvipa,* other islands and seas, as well as living beings and nonliving matter, *Sutra* gave an account of various tenets and philosophies numbering no less than 363, *Prathamanuyoga* recounted ancient history and narratedthe lives of great kings and saints. *Purvagata* dealt with the problems of birth, death, and continuity.

Jain literature in Sanskrit

The language of Jain literature was primarily the Prakrits which were prevalent amongst the people at one time or the other in different parts of the country. But Sanskrit was not altogether shunned. Amongst the Jains, the earliest work in Sanskrit devoted to religious writing is the *Tattvarthadhigama- Sutra* of Umasvamin which epitomizes the whole Jaina creed in about 375 *sutras* arranged in ten chapters. The work occupies a unique position in Jaina literature as it is recognized as authoritative equally by the Digambaras and the Svetambaras with a few variations in the readings, and is very widely studied by both. It has been commented upon by the most eminent authors of both the sects.

Prakrit language and literature

Broadly speaking, Indo-Aryan speech has flowed in two streams: Samskrta and Prakrta (which will be spelt hereafter as Sanskrit and Prakrit) and, at various stages, these two streams have constantly influenced each other. Prakrit, which means ‖natural‖ or ‖common‖ primarily indicates the uncultivated popular dialects which existed side by side with Sanskrit, the ‖accurately made‖, ‖polished‖ and ‖refined‖ speech.

The Prakrits, then, are the dialects of the unlettered masses, which they used for secular communication in their day-to-day life, while Sanskrit is the language of the intellectual aristocrat, the priest, pundit, or prince, who used it for religious and learned purposes. Yet the language of every-day conversation even of these people must have been nearer to the popular Prakrits than to literary Sanskrit. The former was a natural acquisition; while the latter, the principal literary form of speech, required training in grammatical and phonetic niceties.

KAUTILYA‟S ARTHAṢHAṢHTRA

The **Arthashastra** is an Indian treatise on politics, economics, military strategy, the function of the state, and social organization attributed to the philosopher and Prime Minister Kautilya (also known as Chanakya, Vishnugupta) who was instrumental in establishing the reign of the great king

Much of our knowledge about state policy under the Mauryas comes from the *Arthashastra* written by Kautilya (more popularly known as Chanakya), who was a Brahmin minister under Chandragupta Maurya.

The book, written in Sanskrit, discusses theories and principles of governing a state. The title, *Arthashastra*, which means ‖the Science of Material Gain‖ or ‖Science of Polity‖, does not leave any doubts about its ends. **Kautilya's** philosophy is based on the principles of "sam, dam, dand, bhed" (persuasion, temptation, punishment, and division) as various, different, and sequential means to achieve an end.

According to Kautilya, the ruler should use any means to attain his goal and his actions required no moral sanction. Though the kings were allowed a free rein, the citizens were subject to a rigid set of rules.

Arthashastra remains unique in all of Indian literature because of its total absence of specious reasoning, or its unabashed advocacy of real politic, and scholars continued to study it for its clear cut arguments and formal prose till the twelfth century.

Kautilya‗s Arthashashtra is an important treatise of the Mauryan times. Kautilya helped the young Chandragupta Maurya, who was a Vaishya, to ascend to the Nanda throne in 321 BC. Kautilya‗s counsel is particularly remarkable because the young Maurya‗s supporters were not as well armed as the Nandas.

Kautilya continued to help Chandragupta Maurya in his campaigns and his influence was crucial in consolidating the great Mauryan empire.

It reflects the state of society and economy at that time and provides rich material for the study of ancient Indian polity and economy.

Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam Literature

There are four languages Tamil, Telugu, and Malayalam developed their own literature. Tamil being the oldest of these languages began writing earlier and produced the Sangam literature the oldest literature in Tamil.

Telugu Literature

The Vijayanagara period was the golden age of Telugu literature. Nachana Somnatha, a court poet of Bukka I, produced a poetical work titled Uttaraharivamsam. Krishnadevaraya, the greatest of the Vijayanagara, was a poet of great merit. His work Amukta Malyada is regarded as an excellent prabandhan in Telegu literature. Eight Telugu literary luminaries, popularly known as *ashtadiggajas* adorned his court. Among them, Allasani Peddana, the author of *Manucharitram,* was the greatest. He was known as *Andhra kavitapitamaha.* The other seven poets of the group were Nandi Timmana, the author of *Parijathapaharanam,* Madayagari Mallana, Dhurjati, Ayyalaraju Ramabhadra Kavi, Pingali Surana, Ramaraja Bhushana and Tenali Ramakrishna.

Kannada Literature

Apart from Telugu, Vijayanagara rulers extended their patronage to Kannada literature. Kannada language developed fully after the tenth century AD. The earliest known literary work in Kannada is kaviraj among written by the Rashtrakuta king, Nripatunga Amoghavarsha. Pampa, known as the father of Kannada, wrote his great poetic works Adi Purana and Vikramarijiva.

In the thirteenth century new feats were achieved in Kannada literature. Harishvara wrote Harishchandra kavya and Somanatha charita whereas Bandhuvarma wrote Harivanshabhyudaya and Jiva Sambodhana.

Kannada literature flourished considerably between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries under the patronage of the Vijayanagara kings. Poets of all religious groups made important contribution to it. Kunura Vyasa wrote *Bharata* and Narahari wrote *Tarave Ramayana.*

This is the first Rama Katha in Kannada composed on the basis of Valmikis Ramayana. Lakshamisha who lived in the seventeenth century wrote *Jaimini Bharata* and earned the titled of *Kamata-Karicutavana- Chaitra* (the spring of the Karnataka mango grove).

Malayalam Literature

Malayalam is spoken in Kerala and the adjoining areas. The language of Malayalam emerged around the eleventh century AD. By fifteenth century Malayalam was recognised as an independent language. Bhasa Kautilya, a commentary on Arthashashtra and kokasandisan are two great works. Rama Panikkar and Ramanuja an Ezhuthachan are well known authors of Malayalam literature.

Though it developed much later compared to other South Indian languages, Malayalam has made a mark as a powerful medium of expression. Now a large number of journals, newspapers and magazines are published in Malayalam. When people read and write in their own language, they enjoy it more. This is because language is a part of their culture. It is so well inter woven in their social life that they can express and feel their emotions as well in their own language. This must also be the case with you and your languagealso.

Tamil or Sangama Literature

Tamil as a written language was language was known since the beginning of the Christian era.

Poets who in these assemblies were patronised by kings and chieftains produced the Sangama literature over a period of three to four centuries.

Such assemblies were called –Sangamasǁ, and the literature produced in these assemblies was called –Sangama literatureǁ.

In ancient times the association or academy of the most learned men of the Tamil land was called Sangam (or ‗Cankam'), whose chief function was promotion of literature. Later Tamil writers mention the existence of three literary academies (Sangams) at different periods. The last academy is credited with the corpus of literature now known as ‗Sangam Works'. It is, however, almost certain that some noteworthy literature existed even before the Sangam era. Dr K. K. Pillai, a renowned Tamil historian, is of the view that academies of the type of the Sangam must have flowered under an earlier designation like Avai or Kudal. Naturalism and romanticism were the salient features of the poems of the Sangam bards. Excepting *Tolkappiyam,* the earliest work on Tamil grammar and poetic techniques, no other works attributed to the first two Sangams have come down to us in their entirety. However, from the titles of writings traditionally traced to these Sangams, it is evident that they dealt with music and the art of dancing.

Tolkappiyam, the name signifying the ancient book or ‗the preserver of ancient institutions', was written by Tolkappiyanar and is the oldest extant Tamil grammar dating back to 500 B.C. It lays down rules for different kinds of poetical compositions drawn from the examples furnished by the best works then extant. *Iyal* is elucidated clearly and systematically in *Tolkappiyam.* Containing about 1,610 *suttirams* (aphorisms), it is in three parts-*ezhuttu* (orthography), *Sol* (etymology), and *porul* (literary conventions and usages)-each with nine sections. While the first two parts are interesting from both linguistic and philological points of view, the third, *poruladhikdram,* is most valuable as it gives a glimpse of the political, social, and religious life of the people during the period when the author of this treatise lived.

Other Sanskrit Literature and Famous Authors

There large body of books dealing with various sciences, law, medicine and grammar. To this class belong the law books called the Dharmasutras and smritis, together known as Dharmashastras. The Dharmasutras were compiled between 500 and 200 BC. These lay down duties for different *varnas* as well as for the kings and their officials. They prescribed the rules according to which property had to be held, sold and inherited. They also prescribe punishments for persons guilty of assault, murder and adultery. The *Manusmriti* tells us about the role of man and woman in society, their code of conduct and relationship with each other.

The works of Bhasa, Shudraka, Kalidasa and Banabhatta provided us with glimpses of the social and cultural life of northern and central India in times of the Guptas and Harsha. The Gupta period also saw the development of Sanskrit grammar based on the works of Panini and Patanjali.

The Kushana kings patronised Sanskrit scholars. Ashvaghosha wrote the *Buddhacharitra* which is the biography of the Buddha. He also wrote *Saundarananda,* which is a fine example of Sanskrit poetry. India produced great literary works on subjects like Maths, Astronomy, Astrology, Agriculture and Geography etc. **Books on medicine** were written by Charak and on surgery by Sushruta. Madhava wrote a book on **pathology.** Books written on astronomy by Varahamihira and Aryabhatta and on astrology by Lagdhacharyahad all achieved prominence. There is none that can compete with Varahamihiras Bhrihatsamhita, Aryabhatia and Vedanga Jyotisha.

The post-medieval period in northern India saw the rise of Sanskrit literature in Kashmir. Somadeva's *Katha-sarit-sagar* and Kalhan's *Rajatarangini* are of historical importance. It gives a vivid account of the Kings of Kashmir. The *Geet Govinda* of Jaidev is the finest poem of Sanskrit literature of this period, besides numerous works on different aspects of art and architecture, sculpture, iconography and related fields.

NORTHERN INDIAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

We have already seen how languages evolved in India right up to the early medieval period.
The old apabhramsha had taken new forms in some areas or was in the process of evolving into other forms.
Languages were evolving at two levels:
1) The spoken language
2) The written language

The old Brahmi script of the Ashoka days had undergone a great change. The alphabets during Ashoka's period were uneven in size but by the time of Harsha, the letters had become of the same size and were regular, presenting the picture of a cultivated hand. The studies have indicated that all the scripts of present northern Indian languages, except that of Urdu, have had their origin in old Brahmi.

If we compare the scripts of Gujarati, Hindi and Punjabi, we can easily understand this change. As for the spoken word, there are over 200 languages or dialects spoken in India at present. Some are widely used while others are limited to a particular area. Out of all these, only twenty-two have found their way into our Constitution.

A large number of people speak Hindi in its different forms that include **Braj Bhasha**, and **Avadhi** (spoken in Oudh region), **Bhojpuri, Magadhi**, and **Maithili** (spoken around Mithila), and **Rajasthani** and **Khadi Boli** (spoken around Delhi). Rajasthani is another variant or dialect of Hindi. This classification has been made on the basis of literature produced by great poets over a length of time. Thus, the language used by Surdas and Bihari has been given the name of Braj Bhasha; that used by Tulsidas in the **Ramacharitamanasa** is called **Avadhi** and the one used by Vidyapati has been termed as **Maithili.** But Hindi, as we know it today is the one called Khadi Boli. Though Khusrau has used Khadi Boli in his compositions in the thirteenth century its extensive use in literature began only in the nineteenth century. It even shows some influence of Urdu.

Persian and Urdu

- Urdu emerged as an independent language towards the end of the 4th century AD.
- Arabic and Persian were introduced in India with the coming of the Turks and the Mongols.
- Persian remained the court language for many centuries. Urdu as a language was born out of the interaction between Hindi and Persian.
- Originally it was a dialect but slowly it acquired all the features of a formal language when the authors started using Persian script.
- Urdu became more popular in the early eighteenth century. People even wrote accounts of later Mughals in Urdu.

Urdu was patronised by the Nawabs of Lucknow, who held symposiums in this language. Slowly it became quite popular as Persian was the language of the court, much of the literature produced in this period was written in Persian.

Amir Khusrau and **Amir Hasan Dehelvi** wrote superb poetry in Persian. Historians like **Minhas-us-Siraj**, **Zia Barani** and **Ibn Batuta** who came to India during those days wrote accounts of rulers, important political events and incidents in this language. In the medieval period, Persian was adopted as the court language. Several historical accounts, administrative manuals and allied literature in this language have come down to us. The mughal rulers were great patrons of leaning and literature. Babar wrote his **Tuzuk** (autobiography) in Turkish language, but his grandson Akbar got it translated into Persian. Akbar patronized many scholars. He got Mahabharata translated into Persian.

Jahangir's autobiography (**Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri**) is in Persian and is a unique piece of literature. It is said that Noorjahan was an accomplished Persian poetess. Quite a fair amount of Persian literature has been produced by the courtiers of the Mughals. **Abul Fazl"s Akbarnamah** and **Ain-e-Akbari** is a fine piece of literature. From there we get a good deal of information about Akbar and his times. **Faizi** wrote beautiful Persian poetry. Several collections of letters of the Mughal period (insha) have come down to us. Besides shedding light on Mughal history, they indicate different styles of letter writing. Another name in prose and history writing is that of **Chandra Bhan,** a writer of **Shahjahan"s days**. Similarly, we have a work named **Tabqat-i-Alamgiri**, shedding light on Aurangzeb. **Badauni** was another writer who belonged during Akbar's time. In the twentieth century, Iqbal wrote good Persian poetry. All this has now become a part of Indian heritage and culture quite popular. Pakistan has adopted Urdu as the state language.

Hindi Literature

The emergence of all these languages resulted in the decline of Sanskrit as they came to be used as the medium through which the administrative machinery functioned.

Prithviraj Raso is supposed to be the first book in Hindi language. It is an account of exploits of Prithvi Raj Chauhan. Hindi literature looked to Sanskrit classics for guidance and Bharata's Natyashastra was kept in mind by Hindi writers.

As its influence reached the north, it started affecting the prose and poetry that were being composed in Hindi. Hindi evolved during the Apabhramsha stage between the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. and the 14th C. There was a tremendous growth of regional languages like Hindi, Bengali, Assamese, Oriya, Marathi and Gujarati. It was patronised by the Rajput rulers as it glorified chivalry and poetry. The most famous figures from this period were Kabir and Tulsidas. All the above mentioned Hindi poets, except Kabir, expressed their sentiments essentially to satisfy their own devotional instincts.

During the last 150 years, many writers have contributed to the development of modern India literature, written in a number of regional languages as well as in English. One of the greatest Bengali writers, **Rabindranath Tagore** became the first Indian to win the Nobel Prize for literature (Geetanjali) in 1913.

However, it is only with the beginning of nineteenth century that-Hindi prose came into its own. **Bharatendu Harishchandra** was one of the earliest to produce dramas in Hindi which were basically translations of texts written in Sanskrit and other languages. But he set the trend. **Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi** was another author who wrote translations or made adaptations from Sanskrit. **Bankim Chandra Chatterji**

(l838-94) wrote novels originally in Bangla. They came to be translated into Hindi and became very popular. Vande Mataram, our national song, is an excerpt from his novel, Anand Math. **Swami Dayanand"s** contribution to Hindi cannot be ignored. Originally a Gujarati and a scholar of Sanskrit, he advocated Hindi as a common language for the whole of India. He started writing in Hindi and contributed articles to journals essentially engaged in religious and social reforms. **Satyartha Prakash** was his most important work in Hindi. Among other names that have enriched Hindi literature, is that of **Munshi Prem Chand**, who switched over from Urdu to Hindi. **Surya Kant Tripathi, „Nirala"**, achieves recognition because he questioned the orthodoxies in society. **Mahadevi Verma** is the first woman writer in Hindi to highlight issues related to women. **Maithili Sharan Gupt** is another important name. **Jaishankar Prasad** wrote beautiful dramas.

Hindi Language Makes Progress in Modern Period
Hindi Language
The development of modern language started at the end of the 18th century. The main writers of this period were Sadasukh Lal and Enshallah Khan. Bhartendu Harishchandra also strengthened Hindi language. Similarly, Raja Lakshman Singh translated Shakuntala into Hindi. Hindi continued to develop in adverse circumstances as the office work was done in Urdu.
Hindi Literature
Bhartendu Harish Chandra, Mahavira Prasad Dwivedi, Ramchandra Shukla and Shyam Sunder Das were the main among the prose writers of Hindi literature.
Jai Shanker Prasad, Maithalisharan Gupta, Sumitranandan Pant, SuryakantTripathi _Nirala', Mahadevi Verma, Ramdhari Singh _Dinkar' and Haribans Rai _Bacchan' made great contribution to the development of Hindi poetry.

If we look at the above writers, we find that they all wrote with a purpose. Swami Dayanand wrote in order to reform the Hindu society and rid it of false beliefs and social evils. Munshi Prem Chand tried to draw the attention of the society to the miserable existence of the poor and Mahadevi Verma recipient of Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award highlighted the conditions of women in the society. _Nirala' became the pioneer of awakening of Modern India.

MODULE 3

INDIAN RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY, AND PRACTICES

- Pre-Vedic and Vedic Religion

- Buddhism

- Jainism

- Six System Indian Philosophy

- Shankaracharya

- Various Philosophical Doctrines

- Other Heterodox Sects

- Bhakti Movement

- Sufi movement

- Socio religious reform movement of 19th century

- Modern religious practices

MODULE-3
INDIAN RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICES

India is a beautiful, lovely and a lively country to be in. This is because religion has always been a significant factor in influencing the lives of people in India from the earliest times. The relationship between religion and philosophy has been an intimate one and hence their growth and development need to be studies in an interrelated manner.

Religion
- Religion is the science of soul. Morality and ethics have their foundation on religion.
- Religion played an important part in lives of the Indians from the earliest times.
- Religion in India was never static in character but was driven by an inherent dynamic strength.
- Every system of philosophy in India is a quest for Truth, which is one and the same, always and everywhere. The modes of approach differ, logic varies, but the purpose remains the same – trying to reach that Truth.
- Indian spiritually is deeply rooted in ancient philosophical and religious traditions of the land. Philosophy arose in India as an enquiry into the mystery of life and existence.

The sages found that the true nature of the human being is not the body or the mind, which are ever changing and perishable but the spirit which is unchanging, immortal and pure consciousness. They called it the Atman.

The Atman is the true source of human's knowledge, happiness and power. The rishis further found that all individual selves are parts of infinite consciousness which they called Brahman. Brahman is the ultimate reality, the ultimate cause of the universe. Ignorance of human's true nature is the main cause of human suffering and bondage. By gaining correct knowledge of Atman and Brahman, it is possible to become free from suffering and bondage and attain a state of immortality, everlasting peace and fulfillment known as Moksha.

Religion in ancient India meant a way of life which enables a human to realize his true nature and attain Moksha.

Pre-Vedic and Vedic Religion
- From the archaeological findings in the pre and proto-historic sites it seems that these people believed in the sanctity of the creative force and venerated the male and female aspects of divinity.
- The nature of the religious beliefs and practices of the Aryans is also known from the Rig Veda. They believed in many gods like Indra, Varuna, Agni, Surya and Rudra.
- Sacrifices and rituals offering of food and drink to fire in honour of the Gods, constituted the main religious practices.
- The Sama Veda and the Yajur Veda elaborated in the Brahmanas.
- The Atharva Veda contained a great deal of animistic beliefs.
- India down the ages attempted to grapple with the fundamental problems of life and thought.
- Philosophy in India began with a quest after the highest truth-truth not as mere objective certitude, but as being closely linked with the development of personality and leading to the attainment of the highest freedom, bliss and wisdom.

The Aranyaka and Upanishad sections of the Vedic literature envisage a progressive outlook.

The Upanishads represent the early stage in the origin and development of the religions-metaphysical concepts which were used later by the religious leaders and reformers of ancient and medieval India. Some of them followed the traditional lines while others proceeded along the paths of unorthodoxy.

Unorthodox Religious Movements
- The Religious movements associated with persons like, Mahavira and the Buddha in about the middle of the first Millennium BCE fall under this category.
- There were many other creeds during this time as well. The creeds preached by some of them contained elements that were not in keeping with the Vedic tradition.
- They ignored the infallibility and supernatural origin of the Vedas. Unlike the Vedic seers who were Brahmin sages, many of these new teachers were Kshatriya.
- Both Buddhism and Jainism were atheistic creeds in the beginning.

Theistic Religions
- Creeds of theistic character evolved almost simultaneously with the non-theistic religions.
- The important deities of these religions were not primarily Vedic ones but those that came from unorthodox sources.
- Influence of pre-Vedic and post-Vedic folk elements were most conspicuous in their origin.
- The primary factor that motivated these creeds was Bhakti, the single-souled devotion of the worshipper to a personal god with some moral link.
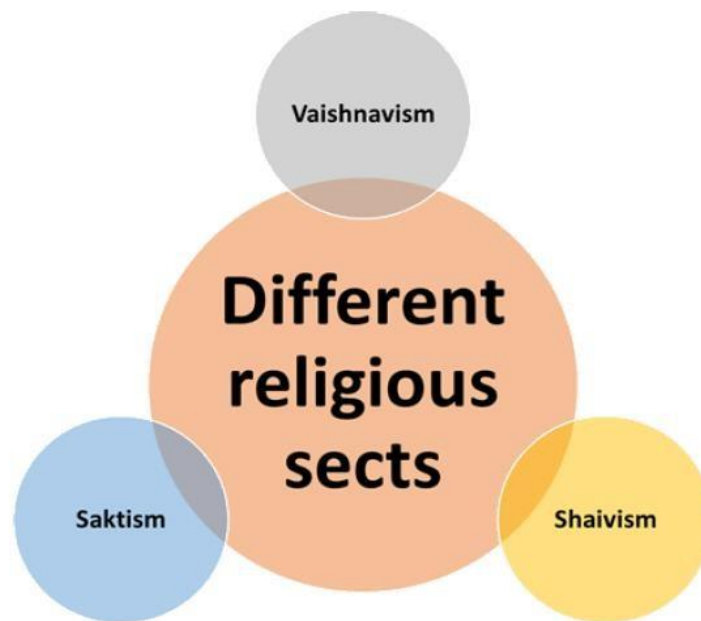
- This led to the evolution of different religious sects like Vaishnavism, Shaivism and Saktism, which came to be regarded as components of orthodox Brahminism.
- These sects in course of time came to have a significant impact on the popular forms of Buddhism and Jainism.

Religion of the Rig Vedic people was very simple in the sense that it consisted mainly of worship of numerous deities representing the various phenomena of nature through prayers.

- It was during the later Vedic period that definite ideas and philosophers about the true nature of soul or Atman and the cosmic principle or Brahman who represented the ultimate reality were developed.
- These Vedic philosophical concepts later on gave rise to six different schools of philosophies called shadadarshana.
- They fall in the category of the orthodox system as the final authority of the Vedas is recognised by all of them.

Jain Philosophy
- Like the Charvakas, the Jains too do not believe in the vedas, but they admit existence of a soul.
- The Jaina philosophy was first propounded by the *Tirthankara* Rishabha Deva.

Jain Theory of Reality: Nine Tattvas (Principles)
- The nine tattvas, or principles, are the single most important subject of Jain philosophy.
- It deals with the karma theory of Jainism, which provides the basis for the path of liberation.
- Without the proper knowledge of this subject, a person cannot progress spiritually.
- The proper understanding of this subject brings about right faith (samyak-darshana), right knowledge (samyak-jnana), and right conduct in an individual.
- The Nine Tattvas are:-
    1) **Jiva** - soul or living being (Consciousness)
    2) **Ajiva** - non-living substances
    3) **Asrava** - cause of the influx of karma
    4) **Bandha** - bondage of karma
    5) **Punya** – virtue
    6) **Papa** – sin
    7) **Samvara** - arrest of the influx of karma
    8) **Nirjara** - exhaustion of the accumulated karma
    9) **Moksha** - total liberation from karma

Buddhism Philosophy

Gautama Buddha, who founded the Buddhist philosophy, was born in 563 BCE at Lumbini, a village near Kapilavastu in the foothills of Nepal. His childhood name was Siddhartha. His mother, Mayadevi, died when he was hardly a few days old. He was married to Yashodhara, a beautiful princess, at the age of sixteen. After a year of the marriage, he has a son, whom they named Rahul. But at the age of twenty-nine, Gautama Buddha renounced family life to find a solution to the world's continuous sorrow of death, sickness, poverty, etc. He then travelled a lot to spread his message and helped people find the path of liberation or freedom.

Gautama's three main disciplines known as Upali, Ananda and Mahakashyap remembered his teachings and passed them on to his followers.

Main Characteristics of Buddha Philosophy:

- Buddha presented simple principles of life and practical ethics that people could follow easily.
- He considered the world as full of misery. Man's duty is to seek liberation from this painful world.
- He strongly criticized blind faith in the traditional scriptures like the Vedas.
- Buddha's teachings are very practical and suggest how to attain peace of mind and ultimate liberation from this material world.

Buddhism

The Four Noble Truths:

1. Human life is full of suffering and sorrow

2. Suffering and sorrow are caused by people's greedy desire for power, pleasure and possessions

3. Suffering and sorrow will end when people overcome their greed = Nirvana = enlightenment

4. People can overcome their greed and uncontrolled desires by adopting the Middle Way or Eightfold Path

SIX SYSTEMS OF ANCIENT INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Metaphysics played an extremely important role in Ancient Indian learning and social system. These metaphysics formed the philosophical foundation of life. Hence, it was given the term Darshana which literally means showing the path (of life). The Shad-Darshanas or the six systems of the Astika or the orthodox schools of Indian Philosophy consider the authority of Vedas.

Nyaya – Valid knowledge through Logical Criticism

The short form for Nyaya is N. The founder of the Nyaya system was Akshapada Gautama. It is also known as Nyaya Vidya or Tarka Sastra – 'the science of logic and reasoning'. Because Nyaya analyses the nature and source of knowledge, it validity and invalidity, it is also known as Anviksiki which means 'the science of

critical study'. For example, it is when one knows a snake as a snake or a cup as a cup. Nyaya system of philosophy considers God who creates, sustains and destroys the universe.

Nyaya asserts that obtaining valid knowledge of the external world and its relationship with the mind and self is the only way to attain liberation. If one masters the logical techniques of reasoning and dutifully applies these to daily life, he will rid himself of all suffering. The ultimate aim of Nyaya philosophy like other systems of Indian philosophy is liberation – the complete cessation of pain and suffering. Although concerned with the study of logic and epistemology Nyaya is a philosophy of life.

The common aims of all the six orthodox schools of Indian philosophy are to describe the nature of the external world and its relationship to the individual, to discuss the metaphysical aspects of the ultimate Reality, and to state the goal of life and means for attaining this goal. In this attempt, all Indian systems divide their course of study into two categories, the study of the unmanifested reality and manifest reality.

In Nyaya, both these aspects are studied under 16 major divisions called Padarthas. The sixteen divisions are:-

1) **Pramana – The Source of Knowledge**
2) **Prameya – The Object of Knowledge**
3) **Samsaya – Doubt/Confusion**

   It is a state of mind where the mind wavers between conflicting views regarding a single object, is a product of a confused state of mind that is not able to perceive with clarity.

4) **Prayojana - The Purpose/Aim**

   Without an aim or target no one can perform any action. One acts to achieve desirable objects or to get rid of undesirable ones, these objects that motivate one's activities are known as prayojana.

5) **Drstanta – Example/Familiar Instance**

   It is the use of an example to illustrate a common fact and establish an argument. This is a very important aspect of reasoning for frequently an example can be accepted by both parties to resolve a difference of opinion.

6) **Siddhanta – Establish Principle/Doctrine**

   It is a postulate that is accepted as the undisputed truth and that serves as the foundation for the entire theory of a particular system of philosophy. This accepted truth might be derived from direct experience or from reasoning and logic. For e.g. it is the doctrine of Nyaya philosophy that there is a God who is the efficient cause of the universe and who organizes / regulates the atoms.

7) **Avayava – The Elements/Constituents of Inference**

   The term literally means constituents or parts and in this context it refers to the constituents of inference. This is an important part in Nyaya philosophy because Nyaya strongly emphasizes describing the minute complexities of the pramanas, the sources or methods of receiving correct knowledge. Among these methods inference is the most important source of correct knowledge and Nyaya provides a technical method to test the validity of the inference. If an inference contains the following five constituents, then it can give correct knowledge. These are pratijna (statements), hetu (reason), udaharana (example), upanaya (universal proposition) and nigamana (conclusion).

8) **Tarka – Reasoned Argument**
9) **Nirnaya – Conclusion**
10) **Vada – Discussion to arrive at the truth**
11) **Jalpa – Wrangling to win an argument**
12) **Vitanda – Irrational Argument or baseless argument for proving someone wrong**
13) **Hetvabhasa – Specious/Erroneous Reasoning**

14) Chala – Unfair Reply/Willfully misinterpreting the words of others
15) Jati – Generality Based on a False Analogy
16) Nigrahasthana – The Grounds for Defeat.

Prameya - The Object of Knowledge

Prameya or P for short may be translated as 'that which is knowable' or 'the object of true knowledge'. The word P is derived from the Sanskrit word prama meaning 'buddhi' or cognition. That which is the object of cognition is prameya and whatever is comprehended or cognized by buddhi is categorized into twelve objects of cognition known as the Prameyas. These 12 divisions are –

1) **Atman** the Self,
2) **Sarira** the body that experiences pleasure and pain, the seat of all organic activities,
3) **Indriyas** the five senses i.e. smell, taste, sight, touch and hearing that contact external objects and transmit the experience to the mind,
4) **Artha** the objects of the senses,
5) **Buddhi** cognition,
6) **Manas** or the mind that is concerned with the perception of pleasure and pain and according to N limits cognition to time and space. The mind is compared to an atom because it is minute, everlasting, individual and all pervading.
7) **Pravrti** is activity – vocal, mental and physical,
8) **Dosa** – mental defects that include attachment (raga), hatred (dvesa), and delusion (moha),
9) **Pretyabhava** – rebirth or life after death,
10) **Phala** – the fruits or results of action experienced as pleasure and pain,
11) **Dukha** – suffering, and
12) **Apavarga** – liberation or complete cessation of all suffering without the possibility of its reappearance.

According to Nyaya philosophy, the goal of life is to understand these 12 aspects of reality as they actually are. Bondage is born of the misunderstanding of these 12 knowable objects and one obtains freedom when he attains the correct knowledge of these 12 aspects of reality.

Vaisheshika

Kannada is the founder of this school, which is associated with the Nyaya system. Vaisheshika system is considered as the realistic and objective philosophy of universe. It is popularly understood as the atomistic school of Indian Philosophy. It elaborates on seven elements of matter with the nomenclature of Saptapadartha-

1) Dravya (**substance** and also includes the Panchamahabhutas)
2) Guna (distinct **quality**)
3) Karma (**action**/activities)
4) Samanya (**generalist** traits)
5) Vishesha (**uniqueness**/specialty)
6) Samavaya (**inherence**/inter-relatedness)
7) Abhaava (**non-existence**/absence)

Vaisheshika thinkers believe that all objects of the universe are composed of five elements–earth, water, air, fire and aether. They believe that God is the guiding principle. The living beings were rewarded or punished according to the law of *karma,* based on actions of merit and demerit. Creation and destruction of universe was a cyclic process and took place in agreement with the wishes of God.

This school is called Vaisesika because it considers, uniqueness, as an aspect of reality and studies it as a separate category. Under the topic of substance, it deals with the physics and chemistry of the body and the universe. The theory of atomic structure was established by this school. Its practical teaching emphasizes dharma, the code of conduct that leads man to worldly welfare and to the highest goal of life.

Samkhya System

The propounder of this philosophy was Kapila, who wrote the *Samkhya sutra.* The Samkhya-karika of Isvarakrsna, the oldest text on this philosophy, cites the name of Kapila, Asuri and Pancasikha as previous teachers of this school. It is considered to the oldest of the philosophical systems.

Samkhya is an extremely complex school of philosophy that goes deep into the understanding of the creator and the creation. There are terms like Mahat, Purusha, Prakriti and Tri-Gunas are explored in this school.

The Samkhya philosophy holds that reality is constituted of two principles one female and the other male i.e. Prakriti, Purusha respectively. Prakriti and Purusha are completely independent and absolute. According to this system, Purusha is mere consciousness, hence it cannot be modified or changed. Prakriti on the other hand is constituted of three attributes, thought, movement and the change or transformation of these attributes brings about the change in all objects. The Samkhya philosophy tries to establish some relationship between Purusha and Prakriti for explaining the creation of the universe.

Samkhya is a dualistic philosophy that believes in the coexistent and interdependent realities, conscious Purusha and unconscious Prakrti. Purusha is ever pure, wise and free but it becomes a subject of pain and pleasure when it identifies itself with Prakrti. Prakrti is the material cause of the universe and is composed of three gunas – sattva, rajas and tamas that correspond to light, activity and inertia respectively. The state in which the gunas are in equilibrium is called Prakrti but when disturbed the state is called Vikrti. Disturbance of the equilibriumof Prakrti produces the material world, including the mind, which is supposed to be the finest form of material energy.

The Mahat is the universal cosmic spirit. Purusha is the passive element whereas Prakriti is the active element which creates Manas (Mind) and the three Gunas- Sattva (Calm and composed), Rajas (momentum, dynamism and egoistic) and Tamas (imbalanced, chaotic and destructive).

Samkhya philosophy explains the dynamics of the body and nature of mind. It is the mother of mathematics as well as Ayurveda and is indeed the very basis of Eastern philosophy.

Yoga

Yoga literally means the union of the two principal entities. The origin of yoga is found in the *Yogasutra* of Patanjali believed to have been written in the second century BC. The Yoga Sutras contain 196 aphorisms, which are divided into four sections. Yoga studies all aspects of human personality and teaches one how to control the modifications of the mind through practice of meditation and detachment and surrender to higher consciousness. Yogic techniques control the body, mind and sense organs. Thus this philosophy is also considered a means of achieving freedom or *mukti.* This freedom could be attained by practising self-control (*yama*), observation of rules (*niyama*), fixed postures *(asana),* breath control (*pranayama*), choosing an object (*pratyahara*) and fixing the mind *(dharna),* concentrating on the chosen object *(dhyana)* and complete dissolution of self, merging the mind and the object *(Samadhi).* Yoga admits the existence of God as a teacher and guide. In this system the individual self is the seeker and pure consciousness is the ultimate reality that he finds within. Practicality is the main feature of this system.

Ashtanga Yoga

While Samkhya highlights the three Gunas of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, the eight-limbs of Yoga Sutras of Patanjali highlight how to connect with the greater cosmic essence and enhance spirituality. These eight-limbs include- Yama (moral conduct), Niyama (Disciple), Asana (right posture), Pranayama (effective breathing), Pratyahara (withdrawing the senses), Dharana (to concentrate on one object), Dhyana (meditation), Samadhi (supreme bliss/ salvation).

Mimamsa

Jamini was the founder of this system that accepts the Veda as the final authority on all questions. Mimamsa philosophy is basically the analysis of interpretation, application and the use of the text of the *Samhita* and *Brahmana* portions of the Veda. According to Mimamsa philosophy Vedas are eternal and possess all knowledge, and religion means the fulfillment of duties prescribed by the Vedas.

It lays great emphasis on rituals, worship and ethical conduct and provides a systematic lifestyle and direction. Mimamsa offers guidelines for practical application of Vedantic theory. This school is foremost in the analysis of sound and mantra.

The names associated with this philosophy are Sabar Swami and Kumarila Bhatta.

Eventually this school was divided into two groups: the school founded by Prabhakara and the one founded by Kumarila Bhatta. According to the former there are five sources of valid knowledge: perception, inference, comparison, testimony and postulation. According to the latter there is only one source of knowledge – non-cognition. The essence of the system according to Jaimini is Dharma which is the dispenser of fruits of one's actions, the law of righteousness itself. This system lays stress on the ritualistic part of Vedas.

Purva Mimamsa

Sage Jaimini is associated with Purva Mimamsa who is considered to be the disciple of Sage Vyasa. This text provides details on why is it important to conduct Vedic rituals for a person to attain the last ultimate goal of life which is Moksha (usually understood as Salvation). This deals with Karma Khanda i.e action based compendium of knowledge in the Vedas.

Vedanta *or Uttara Mimamsa*

Vedanta (the end of the Vedas or knowledge) refers to the Upanishads which appeared at the end of each Veda with a direct perception of reality. It is the concluding portion of the Vedas. Shankaracharya wrote the commentaries on the Upanishads, *Brahmasutras* and the *Bhagavad Gita.*

According to Vedanta philosophy, 'Brahman is true, the world is false and self and Brahman are not different'. Shankaracharya believes that the Brahman is existent, unchanging, the highest truth and the ultimate knowledge. He also believes that there is no distinction between Brahman and the self. The knowledge of Brahman is the essence of all things and the ultimate existence. Ramanuja was another well known Advaita scholar.

Vedanta, as the name suggests, is the last of the four forms of Vedas, the other three being Brahmanas, Samhitas, and Aranyakas. Aranyakas and Vedanta form the Jnana Khada viz. a more metaphysical element fora person to explore. The beginning of Vedanta is credited to Sage Bhadrayana.

Vedanta was analyzed and interpreted by many thinkers that deserve a definite mention --**Advaita** (nondualistic) Vedanta by Shankaracharya, **Vishishta Advaita** (qualifies nondualism) by Ramanujacharya, **Dvaita** (dualistic) Vedanta by Madhavacharya, **Dvaitadvaita** (both dualistic and non dualistic) Vedanta by Nimbaraka and **Shuddha Advaita** (pure non-dualism) Vedanta by Vallabhacharya.

Vedanta is a philosophy and a religion. As a philosophy it inculcates the highest truths that have been discovered by the greatest philosophers and the most advanced thinkers of all ages and all countries Vedanta philosophy teaches that all these different religions are like so many roads, which lead to same goal.

The core message of Vedanta is that every action must be governed by the intellect – the discriminating faculty. The mind makes mistakes but the intellect tells us if the action is in our interest or not. Vedanta enables the practitioner to access the realm of spirit through the intellect. Whether one moves into spirituality through Yoga, meditation or devotion, it must ultimately crystallize into inner understanding for atitudinal changes and enlightenment.

The main teachings of Vedanta is that self-realization is the actual goal of life, that the essence of the self is the ever existent consciousness and bliss, the Self is free from all qualifications and limitations, that the self is essentially Brahman, supreme consciousness and this Brahman is the absolute, transcendent, attributeless reality but it eternally embodies itself within itself the capacity or power called maya, which is the basis of mind and matter.

Shankaracharya's discourse or his philosophical views came to be known as Advaita Vedanta. Advaita literally means non-dualism or belief in one reality. Shankaracharya expounded that ultimate reality is one, it being the Brahman.

Heterodox Sects (Sramaṇic Schools)

Several Sramaṇic movements have existed before the 6th century BCE, and these influenced both the astika and nastika traditions of Indian philosophy. The Sramaṇa movement gave rise to diverse range of heterodox beliefs, ranging from accepting or denying the concept of soul, atomism, antinomian ethics, materialism, atheism, agnosticism, fatalism to free will, idealization of extreme asceticism to that of family life, strict ahimsa (non-violence) and vegetarianism to permissibility of violence and meat-eating. Notable philosophies that arose from Sramaṇic movement were **Jainism, early Buddhism, Charvaka, Ajnana and Ajivika.**

Ajnana Philosophy

Ajnana was one of the nastika or "heterodox" schools of ancient Indian philosophy, and the ancient school of radical Indian skepticism. It was a Sramaṇa movement and a major rival of early Buddhism and Jainism. They have been recorded in Buddhist and Jain texts. They held that it was impossible to obtain knowledge of metaphysical nature or ascertain the truth value of philosophical propositions; and even if knowledge was possible, it was useless and disadvantageous for final salvation. They were sophists who specialised in refutation without propagating any positive doctrine of their own.

Jain Philosophy

Jain philosophy is the oldest Indian philosophy that separates body (matter) from the soul (consciousness) completely. Jainism was revived and re-established after Mahavira, the last and the 24th *Tirthankara*, synthesised and revived the philosophies and promulgations of the ancient Śramaṇic traditions laid down by the first Jain tirthankara Rishabhanatha millions of years ago. According to Dundas, outside of the Jain tradition, historians date the Mahavira as about contemporaneous with the Buddha in the 5th-century BC, and accordingly the historical Parshvanatha, based on the c. 250-year gap, is placed in 8th or 7th century BC.

Jainism is a Śramaṇic religion and rejected the authority of the Vedas. However, like all Indian religions, it shares the core concepts such as karma, ethical living, rebirth, samsara and moksha. Jainism places strong emphasis on asceticism, ahimsa (non-violence) and anekantavada (relativity of viewpoints) as a means of spiritual liberation, ideas that influenced other Indian traditions.

Jainism strongly upholds the individualistic nature of soul and personal responsibility for one's decisions; and that self-reliance and individual efforts alone are responsible for one's liberation. According to the Jain philosophy, the world (*Saṃsara*) is full of *hiṃsa* (violence). Therefore, one should direct all his efforts in attainment of Ratnatraya,that are Samyak Darshan, Samyak Gnana, and Samyak Chàritra which are the key requisites to attain liberation.

Buddhist Philosophy

Buddhist philosophy is a system of thought which started with the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, or "awakened one". Buddhism is founded on elements of the Śramaṇa movement, which flowered in the first half of the 1st millennium BCE, but its foundations contain novel ideas not found or accepted by other Sramana movements. Buddhism and Hinduism mutually influenced each other and shared many concepts, states Paul Williams, however it is now difficult to identify and describe these influences. Buddhism rejectedthe Vedic concepts of Brahman (ultimate reality) and Atman (soul, self) at the foundation of Hindu philosophies.

Buddhism shares many philosophical views with other Indian systems, such as belief in karma – a cause-and-effect relationship, samsara – ideas about cyclic afterlife and rebirth, dharma – ideas about ethics, duties and values, impermanence of all material things and of body, and possibility of spiritual liberation (nirvana or moksha). A major departure from Hindu and Jain philosophy is the Buddhist rejection of an eternal soul (atman) in favour of anatta (non-Self).

Ajivika Philosophy

The philosophy of Ajivika was founded by Makkhali Gosala, it was a Śramaṇa movement and a major rivalof early Buddhism and Jainism. Ajivikas were organised renunciates who formed discrete monastic communities prone to an ascetic and simple lifestyle.

Original scriptures of the Ajivika school of philosophy may once have existed, but these are currently unavailable and probably lost. Their theories are extracted from mentions of Ajivikas in the secondary sourcesof ancient Indian literature, particularly those of Jainism and Buddhism which polemically criticized the Ajivikas. The Ajivika school is known for its *Niyati* doctrine of absolute determinism (fate), the premise that there is no free will, that everything that has happened, is happening and will happen is entirely preordained anda function of cosmic principles. Ajivika considered the karma doctrine as a fallacy. Ajivikas were atheists and rejected the authority of the Vedas, but they believed that in every living being is an *atman* – a central premise of Hinduism and Jainism.

Charvaka Philosophy

Charvaka or Lokayata was a philosophy of scepticism and materialism, founded in the Mauryan period. They were extremely critical of other schools of philosophy of the time. Charvaka deemed Vedas to be tainted by the three faults of untruth, self-contradiction, and tautology. Likewise they faulted Buddhists and Jains, mocking the concept of liberation, reincarnation and accumulation of merit or demerit through karma. They believed that,the viewpoint of relinquishing pleasure to avoid pain was the reasoning of fools.

Comparison of Indian Philosophies

The Indian traditions subscribed to diverse philosophies, significantly disagreeing with each other as well as orthodox Hinduism and its six schools of Hindu philosophy. The differences ranged from a belief that every individual has a soul (self, atman) to asserting that there is no soul, from axiological merit in a frugal ascetic life to that of a hedonistic life, from a belief in rebirth to asserting that there is no rebirth.

Political Philosophy

The Arthashastra, attributed to the Mauryan minister Chanakya, is one of the early Indian texts devoted to political philosophy. It is dated to 4th century BCE and discusses ideas of statecraft and economic policy.

The political philosophy most closely associated with modern India is the one of ahimsa (non-violence) and Satyagraha, popularised by Mahatma Gandhi during the Indian struggle for independence. In turn it influenced the later independence and civil rights movements, especially those led by Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandela. Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's Progressive Utilization Theory is also a major socio-economic and political philosophy.

Religion and Philosophy in Medieval India:
The Sufi Movement and Importance of Sufi Movement

Nearly every month a programme is going on in any auditorium in the city where songs of the Sufi saints and Bhakti saints are sung. The songs and the teachings of the Sufi and the Bhakti saints are relevant even today. The Sufi and Bhakti saints played an important role in bringing the Muslims and Hindus together.

The Sufi Movement
Background-Rise of Islam

Islam was founded by Prophet Muhammad. Islam saw the rise of many religious and spiritual movements within it. These movements were centered mainly around the interpretation of the Quran.

There were two major sects that arose within Islam- the Sunnis and Shias.

Our country has both the sects, but in many other countries like Iran, Iraq, Pakistan etc. The greatest challenge to orthodox Sunnism came from the rationalist philosophy or Mutazilas, who professed strict monotheism.

The Sufis

Contrary to the ulena were the Sufis. The Sufis were mystics. They were pious men who were shocked at the degeneration in political and religious life.

The Sufi philosophy also differed from the ulena. The Sufis laid emphasis upon free thought and liberal ideas. They were against formal worship, rigidity and fanaticism in religion. The Sufis turned to meditation in order to achieve religious satisfaction. Like the Bhakti saints, the Sufis too interpreted religious as 'love of god' and service of humanity.

Sufism in India

The advent of Sufism in India is said to be in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. One of the early Sufis of eminence, who settled in India, was AI-Hujwari who died in 1089, popularly known as Data Ganj Baksh.

The Sufis came to India vis Afghanistan on their own free will. Their emphasis upon a pure life, devotional love and service to humanity made them popular and earned them a place of honour in Indian society.

The Chishti Silsilah

The Chishti Silsilah was founded in a village called Khawaja Chishti. In India, the Chishti Silsilah was founded by Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti who came to India around 1192.

He made Ajmer the main centre for his teaching. He believed that serving mankind was the best form of devotion and therefore he worked amongst the downtrodden. He died in Ajmer in 1236.

The Suhrawardi Silsilah

This Silsilah was founded by Sheikh Shahabuddin Suhrawardi. It was established in India by Sheikh Bahauddin Zakariya.

He set up a leading khanqah in Multan, which was visited by rulers, high government officials and rich merchants.

The Suhrawardi Silsilah was firmly established in Punjab and Sind. Besides these two Silsilah there were others such as the Firdawsi Silsilah, Shattari Silsilah, Qadiri Silsilah, Naqshbandi Silsilah.
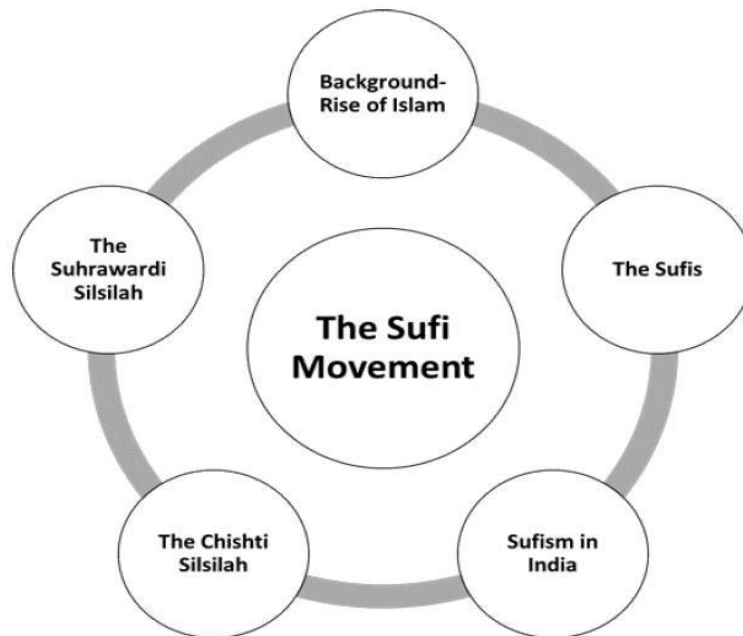
The Importance of the Sufi Movement

The Sufi movement made a valuable contribution to Indian society. Like the Bhakti saints who were engaged in breaking down the barriers within Hinduism, the Sufis too infused a new liberal outlook within Islam.

The interaction between early Bhakti and Sufi ideas laid the foundation for more liberal movements of the fifteenth century.

The Sufi movement encouraged equality and brotherhood. In fact, The Islamic emphasis upon equality was respected far more by the Sufis than by the Ulena. The doctrines of the Sufis were attacked by the orthodoxy.

The Importance of the Bhakti and Sufi Movements and Philosophy in Medieval India

The development of Bhakti movement took place in Tamil Nadu between the seventh and twelfth centuries. It was reflected in the emotional poems of the Nayanars and Alvars. These saints looked upon religion not as a cold formal worship but as a loving bond based upon love between the worshipped and worshipper.

In course of time, the ideas of the south moved up to the North but it was a very slow process. Sanskrit, which was still the vehicle of thought, was given a new form.

Thus we find that the Bhagavata Purana of ninth century was not written in the old Puranic form. It centered around Krishna's childhood and youth, this work uses Krishna's exploits to explain deep philosophy in simple terms. This work became a turning point in the history of the Vaishnavite movement which was an important component of the Bhakti movement.

During this period, another movement based upon devotion towards a sakar form of God had also developed this movement, called the Vaishnavite movement.

The Importance of the Bhakti and Sufi Movements

- Bhakti movement was a socio-religious movement that opposed religious bigotry and social rigidities.
- It emphasised good character and pure thinking. At a time when society had become
- stagnant, the Bhakti saints infused new life and strength.
- The importance of the Bhakti and Sufi saints lies in the new atmosphere created by them, which continued to affect the social, religious and political life of India even in later centuries.
- The popular verses and songs of the Bhakti saints also served as forerunners of a musical renaissance.
- New musical compositions were written for the purpose of group singing at kirtans. Even today Mira's bhajans and Tulsidas's chaupais are recited at a prayer meeting.

Philosophy in Medieval India

- The major religious movements were brought about by the mystics. They contributed to the religious ideas and beliefs.
- Bhakti saints like Vallabh Acharya, Ramanuja, Nimbaraka brought about new philosophical thinking which had its origin in Shankaracharya's Advaita philosophy.
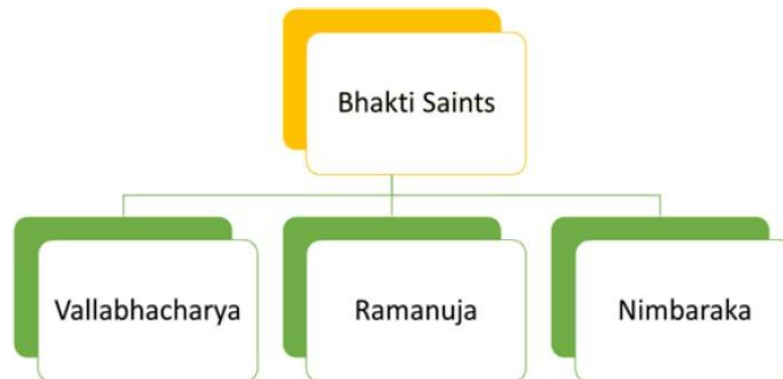
Socio-Religious reform Movements of 19th Century

The Indian society in the first half of the 19th century was caste ridden, decadent and rigid. It followed certain practices which are not in keeping with humanitarian feelings or values but were still being followed in the name of religion.

Common Characteristics of Religious and Social Reform Movements

From the late 19th century a number of European and Indian scholars started the study of ancient India's history, philosophy, science, religious and literature.

This growing knowledge of India's past glory provided to the Indian people a sense of pride in their civilization. It also helped the reformers in their work of religious and social reform for their struggle against all type of inhuman practices, superstitions etc. Since they had become associated with religious beliefs, therefore most of the movements of social reform were of a religious character. They worked for abolition of castes and untouchability, purdah system, sati, child marriage, social inequalities and illiteracy.

Brahmo Samaj and Raja Rammohan Roy

Men and women enjoy certain rights and freedom today. Among the great reformers of this period, Raja Rammohan Roy deserves special mention.

He presented a fine combination of East and the West. A man of great literary talent and well versed in Indian culture, he also made special effort to study Christianity and Islam so that he could deal with them with understanding.

His main pre-occupation was how to rid the Hindu religion of image worship, sacrificial rites and other meaningless rituals. His greatest achievement in the field of religious reform was a setting up in 1828 of the Brahmo Samaj. The Brahmo Samaj was an important organization of religious reforms. It forbade idol worship and discarded meaningless rites and rituals.

Raja Rammohan Roy's greatest achievement was the abolition of **Sati** in 1929. He realized that the practice of Sati was due to the extremely low position of Hindu women. Therefore he started working as a stout champion of women's rights.

He was also deeply opposed to the **caste system** that prevailed in Indian society. A humanist and democrat to the core, he wrote and talked against the caste system.

The Brahmo Samaj stood for the principles of individual freedom, national unity, solidarity and collaboration and the democratisation of all social institutions and relations.It thus became the first organised vehicle for the expression of national awaking and inaugurated a new era for the people of India.

Religious Reform Movements in Modern India

The **Prarthana Samaj** was established in Bombay by Dr. Atma Ram Pandurang in 1876 with the objective of rational worship and social reform.

Two great members of this Samaj were **Shri R.C. Bhandarkar** and **Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade.** They devoted themselves to the work of social reform such as inter-caste dinning, inter-caste marriage, widow remarriage and improvement of the lot of women and depressed classes.

Mahadev Govind Ranade devoted his entire life to Prarthana Samaj. He was the founder of the **Widow Remarriage Association** and the **Deccan Education Society**. He established the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha as well to Ranade, Religious reform was inseparable from social reform. He also believed that if religious ideas were rigid there would be no success in social, economic and political spheres.

Ranade's great message to the persons who were involves in social service was **"Strength of numbers we cannot command, but we can command earnestness of conviction, singleness of devotion, readiness for self-sacrifice, in all honest workers in the cause."**

Derozio and Young Bengal Movement

Henry Lui Vivian Derozio joined the Hindu College of Calcutta as a teacher. He had come from Scotland to sell watched in Calcutta, but later made the spread of modern education in Bengal as his life's mission.

Derozio promoted radical ideas through his teaching and by organizing as association for debate and discussions on literature, philosophy, history and science. He inspired his followers and students to question all authority. Derozio and his famous followers, known as the Derzians and Young Bengal, were fiery patriots.

The Young Bengal Movement continued even after Derozio's dismissal and his sudden death. Though deprived of leadership, the embers of this group continued preaching radical views through of teaching and journalism.

Spread of the Reform Movements in Western and Southern India

After Bengal, the most important region where the movement for reforms spread was western India.

Bal Shastri Jambekar was one of the first reformers in Bombay. He attacked Brahmanical orthodoxy and tried to reform popular Hinduism.

In 1849, the Parmahansa Mandali was founded in Poona, Satara and other towns of Maharashtra. Its followers had faith in one God and they opposed caste system. At its meetings, members took food cooked by low-caste people. They favoured education of women and supported widow remarriage.

Mahadev Ranade believed that without social reforms it was not possible to achieve any progress in the political and economic fields. He was a great advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Two other great reformers in Western India were Gopal Deshmukh Lokahitwari and Joti Rao Govind Rao Phule popularly known as Jotiba.

Jotiba Phule was also a pioneer of the widow remarriage movement in Maharashtra.

An important movement particularly significant for the emancipation of the so-called backward and oppressed sections of Indian society was started by Shree Narayan Guru in Kerala.

In 1903 he founded the Shree Narayan Dharma Paripalana Yogam to carry on the work of social reform.

He considered differences based on caste and religion as meaningless and advocated what he called „**One Caste, one Religion and on God for all.**"

Religious Reform Movements in Modern India

Attend a meeting of the Arya Samaj any day. They are also performing yajana and reading the scriptures. This was the basic contribution of Mool Shanker an important representative of the religious reform movement in India from Gujarat. He later came to be known as Dayanand Saraswathi. He founded the Arya Samaj in 1875. The most influential movement of religious and social reform in northern India was started by Dayanand Saraswathi. He held that the Vedas contained all the knowledge imparted to man by God and essentials of modern science could also be traced in them. He was opposed to idolatry, ritual and priesthood, particularly to the prevalent caste practices and popular Hinduism as preached by the Brahmins. He favoured the study of western science. With all this doctrine, he went about all over the country and in 1875 founded the Arya Samaj in Bombay. Satyarth Prakash was his most important book. The use of Hindi in his writings and preaching made his ideas accessible to the common people of northern India.

Arya Samajis opposed child marriages and encouraged remarriage of widows. It made rapid progress in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat. Arya Samaj tried to inoculate the spirit of self-respect and self-reliance among the people of India. This promoted Nationalism.

The Ramakrishna Mission and Swami Vivekananda

Gadadhar Chattopadhyay was a poor Brahmin priest who later came to be known as Ramakrishna Parmahansa. His education did not proceed beyond the elementary stage and he had no formal education in philosophy and shastras. He dedicated his life to God. He believed that there were many roads to God and the service of man was the service of God, because man was the embodiment of God.

Narendra Nath Datta later known as Swami Vivekananda was the most devoted pupil of Ramakrishna Parmahansa who carried the message of his Guru Ramakrishna all over the world, especially in America and Europe.

Vivekananda was indeed, a patriot from the core of his heart. He had tremendous faith in the evolution of Indian culture and an intense zeal to revive all that was good and great in her culture so as to serve her in all possible ways for her onward march. In 1893 he participated in the All World Religious Conference at Chicago in the United States of America. He argued that Vedanta was the religion of all and not of the Hindus alone. He argued his countrymen to work for their own salvation. For this purpose bands of workers devoted to this cause were trained through the Ramakrishna Mission. Thus, Vivekananda emphasized social good or social services.

MODULE 4

INDIAN LITERATURE, CULTURE, TRADITION, AND PRACTICES

- Astronomy in India

- Chemistry in India

- Mathematics in India

- Physics in India, Agriculture in India

- Medicine in India

- Metallurgy in India

- Geography

- Biology

- Harappan Technologies

- Water Management in India

- Textile Technology in India

- Writing Technology in India

  Pyrotechnics in India Trade in Ancient India

- India"s Dominance up to Pre-colonial Times

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MODULE 4
SCIENCE, MANAGEMENT AND INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM

Indian Culture: Science and Technology in India:

Experimentation and Observation

Indians have a desire to know the unknown, accompanied with experimentation and observation. Development of science in ancient India occured where religion and science worked in close proximity.

Astronomy in Ancient India was studied in a text called Jyotishvedanga which established systematic categories. Though the basic problem of astronomy were taken up by Aryabhatta whose text Aryabhatta contains 121 verses containing separate sections on astronomical definitions, position of planets, movement of sun and moon, calculation of the eclipses. He gave astronomy a scientific outlook deviating from the Vedic astronomy. Astrology and horoscope were studied in Ancient India.

Mehendra Suri developed an astronomical instrument. „Yantraja‟ during Firoz Shah Reign. Kamalakar studied Islamic astronomical ideas as he was head of Islamic Knowledge. Five Astronomical observatories were setup in Delhi, Ujjain, Varanasi, Mathura and Jaipur by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh-II of Jaipur.

In Ancient India **Mathematics** was called Ganita which includes Arithmetic, Geometry, Algebra, and Astronomy. Arithmetic was called as pattin ganita (calculations on board) and anka ganita (calculations with numbers). Geometry and Algebra were called as Rekha Ganita and Bija Ganita, respectively.

Various work on Mathematics were produced during this time like Ganitakaumudi And Bijaganitavatamsaby Narayana Pandit; Lilavati Karamdipika and Lilavati Vyakhya by Gangadhara; Tantrasamgraha by Nilakantha Somasutvan. Tajik was compiled by Nilakantha Jyotirvida who introduced Persian technical terms. Mathematics was made as a subject by Akbar.

Mathematics can be easily seen in the town planning of Harappa Civilization. Mathematics developed as separate stream of study in third century AD. Indian mathematics is supposed to be originated from sulvasutras. The concept of Acute, Obtuse and Right Angle was introduced by APASTAMBA in second century BC which helped in construction of Fire Altars where kings used to offer sacrifices. Zero was discovered in India in the second century itself in the book "Brahmagupta‟s Brahmasputa Siddhanta‟ and hence BRAHMAGUPTA was considered the man who discovered ZERO.

Medicines were mentioned firstly in Atharva Veda for diseases like Fever, Cough, diarrhoea, sores and others. The diseases were said to be caused due to demon entering the body therefore magical charms were remedies for the same. It was 600 BC the period of rational science where Taxila and Taranasi were the centres of medicine and learning. Charaksamhita by Charak and Sushrutsamhita by Sushruta were important texts in the field. Sushruta was pioneer the field of Surgery and considered it as "the highest division of the healing arts and least liable to fallacy". He mentions method of operations, bone setting, cataract and 121 surgical instruments.

Metallurgy was also present in India as it could be seen in the glazed potteries and bronze or copper artefacts that were found in excavations of Indus Valley Civilization. The Vedic people were aware of fermenting grains and fruits, tanning leather and the process of dyeing. The Iron Pillar of Qutub Minar is also an example of high quality of alloying and a two-metre-high bronze image of Buddha at Sultanganj.

Geography was studied to understand the relation between the constant interaction of man and nature. Ancient Indians were not familiar with the voyages and navigation, but trade exist in that time as there were remains of dockyard in Lothal (aside in Gujarat).

In the field of **Biology** Mrga-paksi-sastra was compiled by Hamsadeva; Jahangir‟s Tuzuk-I jahangiri recorded his observation and experiments on breeding and hybridisation.

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In the area of **Chemistry** Paper was produced in Kashmir, Sialkot, Patna and Mysore. The application of Chemistry was also used in making Gunpowder, explosive composition and (Attar) perfumes.

Scientific and technological developments in medieval India were along two lines: one with already existing courses and other which came up as an influence of Islamic and European influence.

Medieval period witnessed the entry of Muslims in India. The educational pattern of Arab was adopted, and classical Indian methods received a setback. Maktabs and Madarsas came into existence and received royal patronage. Madarsa were opened at numerous places including Sambal and Agra where they were headed by two brothers Sheikh Abdullah and Sheikh Azizullah. Learned men from Arabia, Persia and Central Asia were invited to educate in Madarasas.

Subjects like Arithmetic, Mensuration, Geometry, Astronomy, Accountancy, Public Administration and Agriculture were added in the primary school courses.

Large workshops called Karkhanas were opened for manufacturing equipments for royal household and governmental departments. These Karkhanas provided Technical and Vocational training to people who turned out to be Artisans and Craftspersons who later opened their own independent Karkhanas.

Indian Culture: Science and Technology in India: The Medieval Period
- There was not much change in agricultural practices, only some changes like introduction of new crops and trees. The Western Ghats yielded black pepper and Kashmir maintained saffron while ginger and cinnamon in Tamil Nadu; Cardamom, Sandalwood and coconut from Kerala were Popular.
- During the 16th and 17th century Tobacco, Chillies, potato, guava, custard apple, cashew and pineapple were also introduced.
- Mango Grafting system were introduced by Jesuits of Goa.
- For irrigation, Wells, Tanks, Canals, and Rahat were used.
- Land measurement and land classification system was introduced which was beneficial to the rulers as well as the tillers.
- Science and technology in modern India have the role in National Development. In 1971, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) was setup and at State levels; State Council of Science and Technology have been established. Government also promotes research and schemes to encourage scientific temper in the country.

Indian Culture: Scientists of Ancient India:
The Field of Mathematics, Science, Ayurveda and Yoga

There was contribution of Ancient Indians in the field of Mathematics and Science, including Medical Science, Ayurveda, Yoga, Astronomy and Astrology. Scientific knowledge was evolved in Ancient India.

During Ancient India, there was immense contribution to the knowledge in Mathematics and various branches of Science. Due to lack of documentation and dissemination in the western world Ancient Indians mathematics did not get the credits for the mathematical theories that they deserve.

Badayun was first to discover several mathematical concepts like the value of pi used in area and circumference of a circle. Today"s Pythagoras theorem was founded several years before the age of Pythagoras in Baudhayan"s sulva sutra.

Aryabhatta was an astronomer, astrologer, physicist, and a pioneer of Mathematics. He wrote summary of Mathematics of his time Aryabhattiya at the age of 23 having four sections describing method of denoting big decimal numbers by alphabets, different questions such as theory, geometry, trigonometry, and

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beejganita (algebra); and two sections on astronomy. He showed that zero was a symbol and a concept not a numeral only which enables to find out the exact distance between earth and the moon. He also contributed to field of science as the last two sections of Aryabhattiya were on Astronomy.

In Ancient India, the science of astronomy was called Khagol Shastra. The need of astronomy to have accurate calendars, climate and rainfall patterns for sowing crops, dates of seasons and festivals was of great importance in trade.

Aryabhatta stated that Earth is round and rotates on its own axis. He also stated that the moon and planets sheild by reflected sunlight and gave scientific explanation for solar and lunar eclipse.

Brahmagupta; In 7th century he used place value in multiplication and introduced negative numbers and operations on zero into Mathematics. He wrote Brahm sputa siddantika.

Bhaskaracharya a leading light of 12th century. He was famous for his book Siddanta Shiromani. It was divided into four sections: Lilavati (arithmetic), Beejaganit (Algebra), Goladhyaya (sphere) and Grahaganit (mathematics of planets). He introduced Chakrawat method or cyclic method to solve algebraic equations.

Mahavir Acharya was a Jain guru and wrote Ganit Sara Sangraha in 850 A.D which was first textbook on arithmetic. LCM (Least Common Multiple) was also described by him.
Kanad was a 6th century scientist. His original name was AULUKYA. He got the name Kanad because of his interest in minute particles called KANA. He held that material universe is made up of Kanas /atom which is not visible through eyes and are indivisible in his atomic theory.

Varahmihira lived during Gupta period. He claims that termites and plants could be indicators of underground water. He gave list of six animals and thirty plants. He also gave famous Earthquake Cloud Theory in Brhat Samhita (32nd chapter). He also contributed in Jyotish or Astrology which was given high place in Ancient India and even today. He was the member of Vikram Aditya"s court and was given the title VARAHA by Vikramaditya.

Nagarjuna was 10th century Scientist who transformed base elements into gold. He gave the treatise Rasaratnakara which discusses methods for extraction of metals like Gold, Silver, Tin and copper.

In Ancient India, Medical Science were highly developed as it has the indigenous system of medicine called Ayurveda Which literally means the science of good health and longevity of life.

Ayurveda with the help of herbal medicine aims at removing the cause of diverse by striking at the roots. It is the oldest medical system.

Athreya Samhita oldest medical book of the world. Charak is called the father of Ayurvedic medicine and Susruta is called the father of Surgery.

Susruta, Charak, Madhava, Vagbhatta and Jeevak were noted Ayurvedic practitioner of that time. Susruta is called the father of Surgery. He studied human body with the help of dead body. In Susruta Samhita over 1100 diseases were mentioned with 760 plants are described to provide remedy. It also mentions the process

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of preserving the dead body for the purpose of study. He was greatest contribution in the field of Rhinoplasty (Plastic Surgery) and Ophthalmic Surgery (Removal of Cataracts).

In Ancient India the science of yoga was developed to get healthy at the physical and mental level without medicine. It has its roots in Vedas. Yoga is Physical (Hathyoga) and Mental (Rajayoga).

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MODULE 5

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND PERFORMING ART

- Astronomy in India

- Indian Architect, Engineering and Architecture in Ancient India

- Sculptures, Seals, Coins

- Pottery, Puppetry

- Dance, Music, Theatre, drama, Painting,

- Martial Arts Traditions, Fairs and Festivals

- Current developments in Arts and Cultural

- Indian's Cultural Contribution to the World

- Indian Cinema

MODULE 5
CULTURAL HERITAGE AND PERFORMING ART

Indian Culture: Education in India: Art, Architecture, Religion and Science
Culture has different aspects such as art, architecture, religion, science but it's most important aspect is Education. Education is a learning experience and a lifelong process. This system changes along with changes in culture.

In Ancient India learning was imparted by teachers called Gurus to the pupils who came to live with them in their houses called Gurukul (a domestic school).The relationship of learning between the teacher and student was called as Guru-Shishya Parampara which began with a religious ceremony *Upanayana.* Education was imparted orally which included memorization of texts like Vedas and Dharmashastras. Later subjects like Grammar, Logic and metaphysics were also added. During this time self education was regarded as the proper method of attaining the highest knowledge.

During Mauryan and the post Mauryan period the growth of urban centers and trade, the Mercantile community came to an important position and started to play an active part in providing Education. They fostered the knowledge of mining, metallurgy, carpentry, weaving and dyeing. There were new formulations in building and architecture with the emergence of city life. Medical knowledge began to be systemized as AYURVEDA.

In the Gupta period, the Jain and Buddhist systems of education assumed different dimensions. Buddhist monasteries admitted students for ten years. Their learning began with oral method and afterwards shifted to reading of literary texts. Monastries also had libraries. Monasteries were maintained by kings and rich Mercantile class. The subjects taught included Vedanta, philosophy, study of the puranas, epics, grammar, logic etc.
Sanskrit was the court language and medium of instruction. Gradually Jainism and Buddhism lost their royal patronage and their monastries started declining.

In Ancient India, the aim of education was for one's inner growth and self fulfilment, techniques, rules and methods, increase creative capacity.
Sanskrit enjoyed a position of privilege as it was the medium of Brahmanical education and the language for upper castes and Hindu rulers. Prakrit developed as a language of masses with the rise of Buddhism and Pali was one of the earliest variants of it. The Dravidian languages Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam were used in the southern India.

During Medieval period with the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, Islamic system of education was introduced. The institutions of school education were known as Makhtabs and that of higher learning were known as Madrasas . The famous Madarasas were Muizzi, Nasiri and the Firuzi. This system of education was traditional in spirit and theological in content. The curriculum was divided into two categories: Traditions, law and history, literature came under the traditional sciences (MANQULAT) while Logic, philosophy, medicine, mathematics, astronomy came under the rational sciences (MAQULAT). This period saw the rise of URDU as a language. Akbar patronised many scholars such as Abul Fazal, Raja Todar Mal, Birbal and Rahim. They were among the nine gems of his court who helped in spreading culture and education.

In Eighteenth Century, the British were involved in trade and conquest in India. The beginning of oriental scholarship was made by Warren Hastings in 1781 when he started the Calcutta Madarsa. Eleven years later, in 1792, Jonathan Duncan, a Resident of Varanasi started a sanskrit college to educate native Hindus to assist the Europeans. Christian missionaries were making efforts to introduce western education by opening elementary schools and providing education to the more humble sections of the Society including the Untouchables.

The first half of the nineteenth century can be called as a period of educational experiments. The East India Company's Charter Act of 1813 enabled the company to set aside one lakh rupees for education. William Bentick adopted English as the official language of the government and Lord Harding employed Indians who had received English education. The objectives of educational policy were given in Woods Despatch of 1854 which suggested that Universities should be set up in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta. In 1857 Universities of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta were established.

In 1901, Lord Curzon convened the conference of Directors of Public Instructions which began era of educational reforms. In 1904, the Indian Universities Act was passed to take measures for qualitative improvement in higher education.

Literacy and education were more widespread in towns than in villages.

Britishers needed people to work in administrative offices so they encouraged the teaching of English Language. Christian Missionaries opened schools where English was taught. Use of English unknowingly helped Indians as it was one language that cut across the entire country and become a common link for people and also helped to get freedom.

In Post Independent India adequate measures were taken to spread education, economic inequality, regional imbalance and social justice. In 1966, the Report of the Education Commission known as Kothari Commission referred to education as the only instrument of peaceful social change. The subject of education was incorporated in concurrent list by the constitutional amendment act of 1976.

Elementary education is the crucial stage of education including first eight years of schooling. Article 45 of the constitution provides for the state to introduce compulsory and free education for children up to the age of fourteen. In 2001, *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyana* was introduced by central government for universalization of elementary education.

Higher Education becomes when students completes their senior secondary education It is important that courses in higher education offers programmes of study and courses closely related to life, aimed at the development of personality, reasoning and learning capabilities of students.

The National Education Policy of 1968 aimed at promoting national progress, a sense of common citizenship and culture, and strengthens national integration. It also laid stress on a radical reconstruction of the education system, technology, cultivation of moral values and a closer relation between education and the life of the people.

Open and Distance Learning system is meant for those learners who discontinue their education in formal system due to financial, Geographical, academic, or medical reasons. They can learn without any boundary of place and time as per their convenience.

Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) is a centrally sponsored scheme for universalisation of access to and improvement of quality education at secondary stage. Its goal is to make secondary education Available, Accessible and Affordable.

Indian Architecture: Architecture-Origins and Indian Perspective and Harappan Period

At times it becomes very important to be reminded that we are that civilization which has spanned at least 4500 years and which has left its impact on nearly everything in our lives and society.

- Going through the cities of Delhi, Agra, Jaipur, Mumbai and Calcutta etc. we find many beautiful buildings.
- Some are monuments, palaces, temples, churches, mosques and memorials.
- The earliest and most remarkable evidence of Indian architecture is found in the cities of the Harappan Civilization which boast of a unique town planning.
- In the post Harappan period architectural styles have been classifies as Hindu, Buddhist and Jain, the medieval period saw the synthesis of Persian and indigenous styles of architecture.

Architecture- Origins and Indian Perspective

- Architecture is not a modern phenomenon. It began as soon as the early cave man began to build his own shelter to live in.
- Man first began to create and fix his own shelter when he stepped out from the natural habitat of dense jungle covers.
- With the artistic faculties of man awakened in the search for larger and better-sheltered spaces, he began to build, with inherent aesthetic sense, shelters that seem pleasing to the eye.
- Thus emerged architecture which is a combination of needs, imagination, capacities of the builders and capabilities of the workers.
- Architecture accommodated the local and regional cultural traditions and social requirements, economic prosperity, religious practice of different times.
- Indian Architecture evolved in various ages in different parts and regions of the country.
- Apart from this architecture was generally affected by many great and important historic developments.
- Naturally, the emergence and decay of great empires and dynasties in the sub-continent, each in their way influenced the growth and shaped the evolution of Indian architecture.

Harappan Period

- The excavations at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro and several other sites of the Indus Valley Civilisation revealed the existence of a very modern urban civilisation with expert town planning andengineering skills.
- The very advanced drainage system along with well planned roads and houses show that a sophisticated and highly evolves culture existed in India before the coming of the Aryans.
- The sites of the Indus Valley Civilization were excavates under the Archaeological Survey of India established by the British.
- The Harappan people had constructed mainly three types of buildings

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- o Dwelling houses
- o Pillared halls
- o Public baths
- The most important features of Harappan architecture are their superior town planning skills and cities that have been built on a clear geometric pattern or grid layout.
- The decline and final destruction of the Indus Valley Civilization, sometime around the second millennium BC remains a mystery to this day.
- The Harappans had the knowledge and skill of sculpting and craft. The world's first bronze sculpture of a dancing girl has been found in Mohenjo-Daro.

Indian Architecture: Early Historic Period: Cave Architecture, Rock-Cut Temples and Free-Standing Temples
An important phase of Indian architecture began with the Mauryan Period. The material prosperity of the Mauryans and a new religious consciousness led to achievements in all fields.

Early Historic Period
- Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador of Selucas Nikator who visited the Mauryan court described Chandragupta Maurya's palace as an excellent architectural achievement.
- In the Mauryan Period especially under Ashoka architecture saw a great advancement.
- Mauryan art and architecture depicted the influence of Persians and Greeks. During the reign of Ashoka many monolithic stone pillars were erected on which teachings of 'Dhamma' were inscribed.
- The lion capital of the Sarnath pillar has been accepted as the emblem of the Indian Republic.
- The stupas of Sanchi and Sarnath are symbols of the achievement of Mauryan architecture.
- The Amaravati school developed under the patronage of the Satavahanas of the Andhra region.
- The Gupta Period marks the beginning of the construction of free-standing Hindu temples.

Cave Architecture
- The development of cave architecture is another unique feature and marks an important phase in the history of Indian architecture.
- More than thousand caves have been excavated between second century BC and tenth century AD.
- Famous among these were Ajanta and Ellora caves of Maharashtra, and Udaigiri cave of Orissa.
- These caves hold Buddhist viharas, chaityas as well as mandapas and pillared temples of Hindu gods and goddesses.

Rock-Cut Temples
- Temples were hewn out of huge rocks. The earliest rock-cut temples were excavated in western Deccan in the early years of the Christian era.
- The chaitya at Karle with fine high halls and polished decorative wall is a remarkable example of rock-cut architecture.
- The Kailash temple at Ellora built by the Rashtrakuta and the ratha temples of Mahabalipuram built by the Pallavas are other examples of rock-cut temples.
- Most probably the stability and permanence of rocks attracted the patrons of art and builders who decorated these temples with beautiful sculptures.

Free-Standing Temples

- The temple building activities that began during the Gupta rule continued to flourish in later periods.
- In southern India the Pallavas, Cholas, Pandyas, Hoyshalas and later the rulers of the Vijayanagar kingdom were great builders of temples.
- The Pallava rulers built the shore temple at Mahabalipuram. Pallavas also built other structural temples like Kailash Nath temple and Vaikuntha Perumal temples at Kanchipuram.
- The Cholas built many temples most famous being the Brihadeshwara temple at Tanjore.
- The Cholas developed a typical style of temple architecture of south India called the Dravida style, complete with vimana or shikhara, high walls and the gateway topped by gopuram.
- The Sun temple at Konark was built in thirteenth century by the eastern Ganga rules Narsimha Deva I.
- The temple complex at Khajuraho was built by Chandella rulers between the tenth and eleventh centuries in the Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh. Most important among them is the Kandariya Mahadev temple.
- Somnath temple at Gujarat, Vishwanath temple at Banaras, Govinda temple at Mathura, Kamakhya temple at Guwahati, Shankaracharya temple at Kashmir and the Kali temple at Kalighat of Kolkata are some other important temples which bear testimony to temple building activity of the Indian sub-continent.

Indian Architecture: Delhi Sultanate, Regional Kingdoms and Monuments Built by Akbar at Fatehpur Sikri

With the arrival of Turks during the thirteenth century came a new technique of architecture, the architectural styles of Persia, Arabia and Central Asia.

Delhi Sultanate

The engineering features of these buildings were the domes, arches and minarets. The palaces, mosques and tombs built by the rulers had these features which were blended with the features of the indigenous architecture and a new synthesis in architecture was achieved.

This happened because the Turkish rulers of Delhi utilized the service of the local Indian craftsmen who were very skilful and had already constructed beautiful buildings.

The earliest building of this period is **Quwwatul Islam Mosque** at Delhi and **the Qutub Minar.**

The architecture of this period also shows how indigenous styles were adopted and utilized by the builders.

Regional Kingdoms

With the establishment of regional kingdoms in Bengal, Gujarat and the Deccan, beautiful buildings having their own style were constructed.

In Mandu the Jama Masjid, Hindola Mahal and Jahaz Mahal were built.

Mughals

The advent of the Mughals brought a new era in architecture. The synthesis of style which began earlier reached its zenith during this time.

The architecture of Mughal Style started during Akbar's rule. The first building of this rule was Humayun's Tomb at Delhi. In this magnificent building red stone was used.

The **Red Fort** and **Jama Masjid** of Delhi and above all the **Taj Mahal** are some of the buildings built by Shahjahan.

The Taj Mahal, the tomb of Shahjahan wife, is built in marble and reflects all the architectural features that were developed during the Mughal Period.

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Monuments Built by Akbar at Fatehpur Sikri

The Mughal architecture began in the region of Akbar. He erected many important buildings the crowing achievements of his reign was the building of his new capital city of Fatehpur Sikri, 40km from Agra. Fatehpur Sikri is a romance of stones. The Arch of the **Buland Darwaja** is the most imposing gateway in the world.

The **tomb of Saint Salim Chisti** is exquisite in its beauty. **Jodha Bai Palace** is a fine example of ancient Indian architecture.

The **Panch Mahal** is a pyramidal structure in five storeys. It was build the pattern of a Buddhist Vihara.

The **Shalimar Gardens** in Kashmir and Lahore were developed cultural and architectural growth of India.

Indian Architecture: Monuments and Buildings, Towns and Cities in India

The colonial influence can be seen in office buildings. Europeans who started coming from sixteenth century AD constructed many churches and other buildings.

- Portuguese built many churches at Goa, the most famous of these are Basilica Bom Jesus and the church of Saint Frances.
- The British also built administrative and residential buildings which reflect their imperial glory.
- Some Greek and Roman influence can be observed in the colonnades or pillared buildings.
- Parliament House and Connaught Place in Delhi are good examples. The architect Lutyens, designed Rashtrapati Bhavan, formerly the Viceroy's residence.
- The Victoria Memorial in Calcutta, the former capital of British India, is a huge edifice in marble. It now houses a museum full of colonial artefacts.
- The British also left behind impressive railway terminals like the Victoria Terminus in Mumbai.
- In the past few decades, there have been many talented Indian architects, some trained in premier schools of architecture like the School of planning and Architecture (SPA) in Delhi.
- In domestic architecture in the last decade, housing Cooperative Societies have mushroomed in all metropolitan cities combining utility with a high level of planning and aesthetic sense.

Towns and Cities in India

- It is evident that when we think or talk of architecture, we have to think of the related idea of town planning or urban development.
- Starting from the Harappan civilization, (also known as Indus- Saraswathi Civilization by some historians), India has had a very history of town planning, which can be traced back to 2350 B.C.
- The most well known two cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro had an elaborate drainage system, roads which cut each other at right angles, a citadelwhich was built on a high ground and in the lower parts lived the rest of the population.
- Kalibangam in Rajasthan and Surkotda in kutch had similar city structure. From 600 B.C. onwards, we as Dravidian civilization.
- These were Rajgir, Varanasi, Ayodhya, Hastinapur, Ujjain, Sravasthi, Kapilvastu and Kausambhi besides many others.
- New residential areas like Civil Lines and Cantonments came up in towns. The area where civilian administrative Officers lived was called Civil Lines, while cantonments were areas meant for the British Army Officers.