



5. How does the banyan tree stand out as different from other trees? What details of the tree does the poet highlight in the poem?  
Answer: In Bhagvad Geeta, Krishna said, "Of all the trees I am Banyan Tree". Banyan is considered to be the most pious tree in Hindu mythology. It is believed that Buddha renounced under the banyan tree in Bodh Gaya. There are many more such stories that this tree encompasses in its age old aerial roots that fall to the ground mysteriously. The poet is impressed by its huge figure as he says, "the great tree revealed its rings of two hundred years". The physical description of the banyan carves an image of an enigma. The tree's aerial roots dangling from above to reach out to the ground. They are the proof of all the years and decades the tree has lived. It is a tough tree and it takes more than usual effort to bring it down. And when it happens, all watched it fall in terror and fascination, the slaughter of the age old banyan tree. It feels as if a raw mythology was revealed to the poet and his folk.

6. What does the reference to raw mythology imply?  
Answer: The Banyan tree is a mythological one, and when his grandmother calls it along with the other trees to be sacred. A religious sentiment is brought out in not just the poet but the reader as well. When the tree is slaughtered on the orders of the poet's father, a mystery is revealed. First the scraggy aerial roots were brought down unleashing age old trunk that had a circumference of fifty feet. It was a tree that had witnessed ages and held all the knowledge knotted inside. When it was brought down it felt as if all the mythology was revealed to the poet. The darkness and the concealed, the enlightenment it has secreted away since so long. The reasons and the answers to all the logics all was beheld by the tree and now was slaughtered.

7. 'Whose roots lay deeper than our lives' – what aspect of human behaviour does this line reflect?  
Answer: A banyan tree's life cycle is a unique one, it grows as an epiphyte. It may live for more than 200 years or even 400-450 years. In contrast an average human life is of 70-80 years. It is clearly visible that one banyan alone may survive generations of humans. Banyan has strangled roots knotted in its trunk that grow for centuries. It transcends human life and rolls and grows with the knowledge that it witnesses all the while. The poet has subtly juxtaposed a human life to that of a banyan. For all its mythical hugeness that makes it an enigma a human is thrown into utter bewilderment and surprise for all the knowledge that it secrets away inside its vast trunk, which grows with its aerial roots that grow to reach the ground. They resemble the lives that it has lived again and again witnessing all the human lives that descended and perished with time standing tall and erect.

8. Comment on the contemporary concern that the poem echoes.  
Answer: Poet is concerned about the pace with which the traditions are changing and are affected by modern notions. The value attached to the trees in earlier times is not of concern to people living in modern society. The old cultural values are breaking free giving way to western science and studies. The religious values that were inculcated in a child from her/his childhood are paid no heed. Life is busy and is consuming not just our time and space but

our lifestyle. The moral values our tradition was raised on are now treated as bygones. The poet wonders at the change our society is undergoing and has written the poem on it.

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