

ANSWER WRITING FOCUS GROUP 2022

TEST #2 - SOLUTIONS

Q.1) Trace the origin and evolution of Bhakti movement in south India and how it impacted regional literature?

Answer:

Bhakti movement -- devotional worship to God + intense love + condemnation of rituals, ceremonies and superstitions.

Aim -- to bring religious reforms to all strata of society by adopting the method of devotion to achieve salvation.

Origin -- 6-8th century AD; **Alvar** and **Naynaar** saints who popularized worship of Vaishnavism and Shavism respectively.

Evolution -- divination of Krishna and Rama emerged around the beginning of the Christian era + Stories about Krishna were added to the Puranas, thus transforming direct communion and concept of personal God.

Phase 1: 12 Alvar & 63 Nayanaar saints = 75 apostles of Bhakti movement.

Phase 2: Shankaracharya, born in Kerala, started a Hindu revivalist movement giving a new orientation to Hinduism and consolidation of the idea of Bhakti.

Phase 3: Virashaiva (Lingyaat) Movement under **Basavanna** emerged in the 12th Century AD in Karnataka during the reign of Kalachuri dynasty.

Phase 4: In the 12th century, **Ramanuja**, born near modern Chennai, preached Vishishtadvaita. In the 13th century, **Madhavacharya** from the Kannada region propagated Dvaita or dualism of Jivatma and Paramatma.

Impact on regional literature:

1. Tamil region the hymns of the Alvars and the Nayannars soon gained the status of divine scripture. Nayannars wrote '**Tevaram**', which is also called the Dravida Veda and Alvars composed hymns in the praise of Vishnu and his avatars, which are compiled in the '**Nalayira Divya Prabandham**'.
2. Lingyaat composed new form of literature in Kannad called **Vachanas**.
3. During Vijayanagar kingdom, the Mahabharata and other Sanskrit texts were translated into vernacular.
4. Exchange of Bhakti idea between North and south led to Intermixing of Tamil and Sanskrit, this gave birth to a hybrid language called **Manipravalam** which later evolved into **Malyalam**.

Q.2) Discuss the role played by Sanskrit in enriching ancient Indian literature and enumerate reasons for its decline.

Answer:

About Sanskrit -- Indo Aryan language dated back to around 3500 years. It is considered as mother of all languages as many contemporary languages like Hindi, Maithili, Marathi, oriya etc. traces its roots from it.

Role in ancient Indian literature:

1. Vedas, Upanishads, Aranyanyakas, Brahmanas, Puranas, Brahmasutras etc were compiled in Sanskrit.

2. Natyashastra by Bharatmuni a book on Indian music and dance,
3. Various books on Sanskrit Grammar like Asthadhyayi by Panini, Mahabhasya by Patanjali, Amarkosha by Amarsimha helped in standardization and consolidation of the language.
4. There were many texts written in Sanskrit during the time of Guptas which depicted its literary peak e.g. plays, epics and poems of Kalidasa and like Abhijanshakuntalam and Meghdootam.
5. Some of the major Buddhist and Jain literature were compiled in Sanskrit e.g. lalitvistara, one the most sacred text of Mahayana Buddhism, Tattvartha Sutra of Jainism
6. Various biographies like Buddhacharita by Ashwaghosha, Harshacharitra by Banbhatt were written in Sanskrit.

Reasons for the decline of Sanskrit:

1. Its use was confined to higher varnas like Brahmins while Prakrit remained language of the masses.
2. Comparative complexity of Sanskrit W.R.T other simpler ones like Pali and Prakrit.
3. Rise of Anti-Vedic religions like Buddhism and Jainism which emphasised on Pali and Prakrit instead of elitist Sanskrit.
4. Loss of Patronage in later stages like Satvahanas patronized Prakrit and Palas promoted Pali.
5. Invasion of foreigners led to the establishment of their rule e.g. advent of Delhi dynasty who replaced Sanskrit with Persian as official language.
6. In present context reason for further decline can be attributed to multiple factors like, lack of employment opportunities, lack of Market and State support, Globalization and westernization etc.

Q.3) Indian architectural style reached its zenith during the rule of Vijayanagara empire. Examine.

Answer:

Vijayanagara architecture (1336–1565CE) was a notable building style with great innovations in religious and secular architecture during this period, and many diverse temple building traditions and styles in South India came together in the Vijayanagar style of architecture.

Dravida style of temple architecture was further matured during this phase which witnessed use of more carvings, bigger size of Gopurams, monolithic rock cut architecture, synthesis of Indian and Islamic architectural styles etc.

Salient features of religious architecture:

[1] Provida style: use of elaborate carved pillars in temples [2] ornate pillared Kalyanamandapa (marriage halls) [3] monumental temple gateways called Rayagopurams with exquisite carving [4] temple ponds called Pushkarni in the form of step wells [5] use of mythical horse like creature called Yali on Pillars [6] replacement of soft stone with hard stone [7] new structure known as **Amman Shrine** appeared. Here spouse of chief deity was kept [8] paintings on walls and ceilings and largest monolithic **Nandi** in India. For e.g. Virbhadr temple- Lepakshi [9] use of Musical pillars.

Ex of vijayanagar temples are. Hazra, Vitthal, Veerupaksha, Veerbhadra and Venkateshwara temples.

Salient features of secular architecture:

[1] elaborate provision of rain water harvesting with intricate channels of canals [2] Massive and multiple fortifications were built around the capital city which segregated agricultural fields, markets, royal centre, etc. [3] use of concentric walls of forts [4] intermixing of Indo-Islamic features like domes and arches. [5] well-guarded city gates. Ex. Lotus Mahal, Elephant stable, Mahanavami Dibba.

Q.4) Discuss how decadence in religious values of Hinduism and impetus provided by various dynasties helped in the genesis and flourishing of Buddhism and Jainism. Also examine why these religions failed to take deeper roots in Indian Subcontinent.

Rising ritualism in Brahmanism:

1. During later Vedic period, **Vedic religion became very centralized and ritualistic.**
2. Thus, in **order to find true meaning of life and search of God, practice of renouncing Worldly affairs and opt for life of Monk/Sadhu.**
3. This practice of renouncing world to seek truth is called sraman.
4. **Sramana was Non-Vedic movement** parallel to Vedic Hinduism in ancient India.
5. The Shramana tradition gave rise to **Jainism, Buddhism, Yoga, Ajivikas, Ajnanas, and Carvakas.** and was responsible for concepts such as **nirvāṇa, samsara, and mokṣa.**
6. Śramaṇa means "seeker, **one who performs acts of austerity, ascetic**".

Patronage to Buddhism and Jainism:

Traders:

1. Traders generally opted Jainism because it was based on Non-violence.
2. Vaishyas despite their wealth, were treated below Brahmins and Kshatriyas in Brahmanical Hinduism.
3. In order to find due respect in the society, they chose alternate religion.
4. Traders opting for Jainism and Buddhism helped these religious practices to spread to different parts of the country.

Patronage by the Kings:

Rulers like Mauryas, Kushana, Satvahana, Palas etc. patronized Buddhism.

Jainism was patronized by Ishvaku, Pandyas, Haryanka, Ganga, Solanki, Rastrakutas etc.

Failure to take deeper roots in South Asian Subcontinent:

Revival of Brahmanical Hinduism during Gupta rule + Advaita Philosophy of Shankaracharya + With Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhist sect, Hinduism philosophy crept into Buddhist core ideas. This led to blurring of boundaries between Hinduism and Buddhism + Bhakti movement in South India by Alvar and Naynar saints + Loss of patronage to Buddhist Sanghas + Corruption and lack of discipline in Sangha + Invasion of Hunas and Islam in India destroyed Buddhist monasteries , killed monks, burnt religious text books + Very rigid and strict rule of Jainism+ Factionalism in these religion created too many sects.

Q.5) What were distinctive features of Vedic Civilization which separate it from Indus valley Civilization?

Answer:

1. **Ethnic lineage:** Harappans are said to have been the original inhabitants of India while the **Aryans** are believed to have come to **India from central Asia.**
2. **Occupation:**
 - The main occupation of the IVC people was **trade and commerce.**
 - The Vedic civilization on the other hand was essentially rural character, with **agriculture and Pastoral** as the main occupation of the people.
3. **Period:**
 - Iron was not known to the Indus valley people while the Aryans used it.

- The Indus valley **made use of only copper and probably bronze as well**. That is why their culture belonged to what is called **Chalcolithic age** (when man used both copper and stone implements) while the **Iron age** started with the Vedic period.
- 4. **Type of settlement:** IVC was **Urban settlement** while Vedic civilization was **Rural settlement**.
- 5. **Faith:** The Indus Valley people were icon-worshippers, whereas the people of Vedic civilization were nature worshippers.
- 6. **Use of Horses:** Vedic people domesticated Horses but Horses were not known/Domesticated by IVC.
- 7. **Animals:** Nandin-bull (humped bull) was probably a sacred animal to the Indus valley people while cow occupied a sacred place among the Aryans.

Q.6) Cave paintings are mix blend of both secular as well as religious artistic expression. Explain.

Answer:

Cave paintings in India span across the prehistoric era to the modern times and distributed across length and breadth of the subcontinent. These paintings mostly depict gods and goddesses, mythological stories and characters from epics, nature, flora and fauna, social life and religions, thus depicting religious as well as secular attributes.

1. **Bhimbetka caves:** located in MP, these oldest paintings are found to be 10,000 years old (Mesolithic age), These paintings are classified largely in two groups, one as depiction of hunters and food gatherers, while the other one as fighters, riding on horses and elephants carrying metal weapons.
2. **Lakhudiyar caves:** created with fingers in black, red and white. These paintings are mostly drawings of people, animals and weapons used by the humans of that time.
3. **Ajanta caves:** dedicated to Buddhism and Theme of paintings mostly revolve around Lord Buddha depicting the past lives and rebirths of the Buddha. Famous among them are Padampani and Mara vijay painting.
4. **Ellora caves:** These caves have attributes from various religions, i.e., Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The paintings on these caves depict Lord Vishnu and Goddess Lakshmi. The other section portrays Lord Shiva and his followers and the procession of Apasaras and Shaivas.
5. **Sittanavasal cave:** Located in Pudukottai district of Tamil Nadu, this cave depicts Jainism. There are decorative and beautiful paintings of the sanctum and a lotus tank, men, flowers, birds, animals, fishes and a dancing girl, the king and the queen all over the pillar and ceilings.
6. **Badami caves:** One of the best preserved structures of ancient India is the Badami or Vatapi. The earliest relics of the Hindu paintings are Badami mural paintings.

Apart from this there are various other cave paintings in places of historic importance like Adamgarh Hills, Jogimara caves, Armamalai caves which depict the rich secular and religious attributes of the time.

Q.7) Advent of Islam in India brought distinctive architectural elements whose intermixing with native art form gave birth to a hybrid style known as Indo-Islamic architecture. Examine.

Answer:

The Indo-Islamic architecture is the assimilation of Indian and Islamic style of architecture which is also referred to as Indo-Saracenic style due to Saracenic civilization's architectural assimilation in Indian style. This resulted due to invasion of Muslim rulers in India from that region which incorporated saracenic architectural technique in Indian buildings.

Decorative elements:

While the Hindus were allowed to portray God in their art and were allowed to conceive manifestations of the divine in any form, the Muslims were forbidden by their religion to replicate living forms on any surface. Thus, they had their respective methods of adding aesthetics to their buildings.

Indigenous decorative elements

Murals, Carvings on the wall

Islamic decorative elements

Arabesque, Calligraphy, Pietra dura and Jali

Distinctive architectural features:

In contrast to indigenous trabeate style, Islamic building used Arcuate style. Elements like Minaras, Domes, Char bagh, Tombs and sarais were added to the architecture.

Similarities in the architecture:

1. Indo-Islamic architecture had similarities with Indian style as they had more local influence than other styles for example toranas (gateways) from local temple traditions, carvings of bell and chain motifs, lintels in mehrabs, and carved panels depicting trees.
2. Drawing inspiration from Nagara style of temple architecture having multiple shikhara, the style of having multiple domes was incorporated.

The reasons for such similarities were:

1. Material used in the earlier architecture was remnants of the broken architecture employed for construction e.g. the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque in Qutub Complex was made out of remnants of Jain temples.
2. The labours employed for construction were local masons who were trained for Indian techniques which led to Indian assimilation.