

# ANCIENT CULTURE AND THEIR IDEAS ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF LIFE

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## Abstract

India has always been diverse in terms of culture; this is so because of many invasions and different rulers having influence over the Indian-subcontinent. After each invasion or change in power, new kingdoms brought in their respective cultures which added itself to the Indian culture. We can say each and every religion, kingdom and person has some or the other in making India's culture as diverse as it is today.

India has different languages, religions, dance, music, food, architecture and rituals in nearly every region of the country. Rice cultivation was brought to India from South East Asia through the north-eastern country of India. Now rice cultivation is a major part of Indian agriculture.

Sanskrit and Pali were the originally spoken languages in India; later other languages such as Hindi, Urdu, and English came to use after foreign invasions or the development of the manuscript; for example, the Devanagari script.

## I. INTRODUCTION



India had Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism as the religions which had originally been developed from scratch in India around 500 to 400 BCE. These Indian-Origin religions are all based on the simple concepts of Dharma and Karma. Dharma refers to your ideologies and Karma refers to the work you put in the years to come after the Muslim invasions of India and the rise of the Delhi sultanate Islam also prospered in India Christianity was also made an important part of the religions in India after the arrival of the British and their colonization of India Other religions such as Sikhism, Zoroastrianism and Judaism also spread in the country. Indian philosophy had an early origin. There were six schools for Hindu philosophical preaching. Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Mimamsa and Vedanta were the six main schools of Hindu philosophy Apart from these 6 schools, there were Ajivika for Jains and Carvaka for the Buddhists the formal working of these schools started from 1000-500 BCE. Many of these schools survived till the 20th century by providing knowledge to people but unfortunately, some of the schools have already become extinct with time the highest levels of competition between the schools were observed from 800 CE to 200 CE. Indian culture is very rich in terms of scriptures. It has one of the oldest scriptures in the world known as 'Vedas'. The Vedas are the earliest known scripture in Hinduism and it was written in Sanskrit. The Vedas had 4 main divisions Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Atharva Veda and Sama Veda. Apart from the Vedas, there were the Upanishads and Puranas which had very genuine information about human life and the religion it the religious book of Bhagwat Gita was also written here. Legendary epics such as The Ramayana (500 BCE – 200 BCE) and The Mahabharata (about the Kurukshetra war which is believed to have taken place in 3000 BC) were also written in India.

## *Vision and concept*

India can be called a country which is still connected to its root traditions. It was observed in ancient times that divisions in the society were made based on caste and somehow it is still prevailing in limited amounts On the brighter side, Indian cultural values are still intact as children still respect their parents and treat them next to

god. Indians always join their hands and bend down to say 'Namaste' in order to respect a guest or a person as a greeting. We can say that Indian culture and tradition actually go hand in hand with Indian cultural values.

## Discussion

**The following is a brief explanation of each theory:**

### 1. Social Contract Theory:

The social contract theory, one of the common theories of the origin of state, believes that state is a result of a contract between the king and his subjects or representatives. The king, thus appointed, was expected to save the state and the subjects from external aggression and establish order and security within the state. However, the earliest Vedic works never stated that state was the result of a contract. But, they clarified that king was elected to wage a successful war against the demons.

### 2. Divine Origin Theory:

This theory of origin of kingship as well as the state was not widely acclaimed in the ancient Indian polity. The king, according to this theory, was a subordinate to law, which was made by the society and not him. The community as a whole was given greater importance than the king. The king was not allowed to act indiscriminately and was expected to act as a father to his subjects, and treat them with affection and kindness.

However, certain ancient scriptures like Manusamhita explain that the origin of state is from the divine. One such expert from Manusamhita is that 'the Lord created the king for the protection of his whole creation even an infant king must not be despised that he is only a mortal, because he is a great deity in human form.

### 3. Organic Theory:

This theory holds the view that state is like an organism and that each organ has a specific function to perform. The theory believes that the healthy functioning of the whole organism depends upon the healthy conditions of each part of the body or organism and its efficient functioning.

The seven parts of the body, that is, state are the king or the sovereign, the minister, the territory and population, the fortified city or the capital, the treasury, the army, the friends and the allies. Among all the seven elements or parts, it is the king who is most important.

## Religious Culture

Indian-origin religions Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism, are all based on the concepts of dharma and karma. Ahimsa, the philosophy of nonviolence, is an important aspect of native Indian faiths whose most well known proponent was Mahatma Gandhi, who used civil disobedience to unite India during the Indian independence movement – this philosophy further inspired Martin Luther King Jr. during the American civil rights movement. Foreign-origin religion, including Abraham, such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, are also present in India, as well as Zoroastrianism and Bahá'í Faith both escaping persecution by Islam have also found shelter in India over the centuries.

India has 28 states and 8 union territories with different culture and it is the second most populated country in the world. The Indian culture, often labeled as an amalgamation of several various cultures, spans across the Indian subcontinent and has been influenced and shaped by a history that is several thousand years old. Throughout the history of India, Indian culture has been heavily influenced by Dharma religions Influence from East/Southeast Asian cultures onto ancient India and early Hinduism, specifically Austro-Asiatic groups, such as early Mon and Mon Khmer, but also Tibetic and other Tibeto-Burmese groups, had noteworthy impact on local Indian peoples and cultures. Several scholars, such as Professor Przulski, Jules Bloch, and Lévi, among others, concluded that there is a significant cultural, linguistic, and political Mon-Khmer influence

on early India, which can also be observed by Austroasiatic loanwords within Indo-Aryan languages and rice cultivation, which was introduced by East/Southeast Asian rice-agriculturalists using a route from Southeast Asia through Northeast India into the Indian subcontinent. India is the birthplace of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and other religions.

India is one of the most religiously and ethnically diverse nations in the world, with some of the most deeply religious societies and cultures. Religion plays a central and definitive role in the life of many of its people.

## Philosophy

The main schools of Indian philosophy were formalized chiefly between 1000 BCE to the early centuries of the Common Era. According to philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the earliest of these, which date back to the composition of the Upanishads in the later Vedic period (1000–500 BCE), constitute "the earliest philosophical compositions of the world." Competition and integration between the various schools were intense during their formative years, especially between 800 BCE and 200 CE. Some schools like Jainism, Buddhism, Śaiva, and Advaita Vedanta survived, but others, like Samkhya and Ājīvika, did not; they were either assimilated or became extinct. Subsequent centuries produced commentaries and reformulations continuing up to as late as the 20th century. Authors who gave contemporary meaning to traditional philosophies include Shrimad Rajchandra, Swami Vivekananda, Ram Mohan Roy, and Swami Dayananda Saraswati.

## Family structure and marriage

For generations, India has had a prevailing tradition of the joint family system. It is when extended members of a family – parents, children, the children's spouses, and their offspring, etc. – live together. Usually, the oldest male member is the head of the joint Indian family system. He mostly makes all important decisions and rules, and other family members are likely to abide by them. With the current economy, lifestyle, and cost of living in most of the metro cities are high, the population is leaving behind the joint family model and adapting to the nuclear family model.

## Festivals

Homes, buildings and temples are decorated with festive lights, diya, for Diwali, the festival of lights. Color drenched Gopis during the Holi celebrations in Krishna Temple; Mathura The Navaratri festival is an occasion of classical and folk dance performances at Hindu temples. Pictured is the Ambaji Temple of Gujarat. The Bihu festival is an Assamese tradition; it coincides with Vaisakhi in north India, which is observed by Sikhs and Hindus. Procession of the famous "Lalbaug cha Raja" Ganesha idol during the Ganesh Chaturthi festival in Mumbai, Maharashtra Vallankali snakeboat races are a part of Onam festival tradition. Dahi Handi, a Krishna Janmashtami festive tradition, in progress near Adi Shankaracharya Road, Mumbai, India Durga Puja is a multi-day festival in Eastern India that features elaborate temple and stage decorations, scripture recitation, performance arts, revelry, and processions.

Gommateshwara statue during the Grand Consecration Mahamastakabhisheka in August 2018 at Shravanabelagola, Karnataka. Mahamastakabhisheka is held every 12 years and it is considered Jainism's one of the most auspicious festival or celebration. Rangoli artwork is usually made during Diwali or Tihar, Onam, Pongal and other Hindu festivals in the Indian subcontinent. India, being a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious society, celebrates holidays and festivals of various religions. The three national holidays in India, the Independence Day, the Republic Day and the Gandhi Jayanti, are celebrated with zeal and enthusiasm across India. In addition, many Indian states and regions have local festivals depending on prevalent religious and linguistic demographics. Popular religious festivals include the Hindu festivals of Navratri, Janmashtami, Diwali,

Maha Shivratri, Ganesh Chaturthi, Durga Puja, Holi, Rath Yatra, Ugadi, Vasant Panchami, Rakshabandhan, and Dussehra. Several harvest festivals such as Makar Sankranti, Sohrai, Pusnâ, Hornbill, Chapchar Kut, Pongal, Onam and Raja sankranti swinging festival are also fairly popular.

### Animals

The varied and rich wildlife of India has a profound impact on the region's popular culture. Common name for wilderness in India is Jungle which was adopted by Britons living in India to the English language. The word has been also made famous in *The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling. Gujarat, a western state of India, has the Animal Preservation Act, enacted in October 2011, which prohibits the killing of cows along with buying, selling and transport of beef. In contrast, Assam and Andhra Pradesh allow butchering of cattle with a fit-for-slaughter certificate. In the states of West Bengal and Kerala, consumption of beef is not deemed an offence. Contrary to stereotypes, a sizeable number of Hindus eat beef, and many argue that their scriptures, such as Vedic and Upanishad texts do not prohibit its consumption.

### Clothing

Traditional clothing in India greatly varies across different parts of the country and is influenced by local culture, geography, climate, and rural/urban settings. Popular styles of dress include draped garments such as sari and mekhela sador for women and dhoti or lungi or panche (in Kannada) for men. Stitched clothes are also popular such as churidar or salwar-kameez for women, with dupatta (long scarf) thrown over shoulder completing the outfit. The salwar is often loose fitting, while churidar is a tighter cut. The dastar, a headgear worn by Sikhs is common in Punjab.

Indian women perfect their sense of charm and fashion with makeup and ornaments. Bindi, mehendi, earrings, bangles and other jewelry are common. On special occasions, such as marriage ceremonies and festivals, women may wear cheerful colors with various ornaments made with gold, silver or other regional stones and gems. Bindi is often an essential part of a Hindu woman's make up. Worn on their forehead, some consider the bindi as an auspicious mark. Traditionally, the red bindi was worn only by married Hindu women, and colored bindi was worn by single women, but now all colors and glitter have become a part of women's fashion. Some women wear sindoor – a traditional red or orange-red powder in the parting of their hair. Sindoor is the traditional mark of a married woman for Hindus.

Achkan sherwani and churidar worn by Arvind Singh Mewar and his kin during a Hindu wedding in Rajasthan, India. An Assamese girl wearing mekhela sador, 2010 and bindi on the centre of her forehead. Indian actress Pakkhi Hegde wearing a string-sleeve choli and sari. Indian actress Shriya Saran in woman's kameez with dupatta draped over the neck and decorative bindi on the centre of her forehead. Indian actress Priyanka Chopra wearing a lehenga and ghagra choli, exposing the midriff and navel, which has long been a fashion with Indian women in popular culture.

### Dance

Let drama and dance be the fifth Vedic scripture. Combined with an epic story, tending to virtue, wealth, joy and spiritual freedom, it must contain the significance of every scripture, and forward every art. *First chapter of Nāṭyaśāstra, sometime between 200 BCE – 200 CE*. India has had a long romance with the art of dance. The Hindu Sanskrit texts *Natya Shastra* (Science of Dance) and *Abhinaya Darpana* (Mirror of Gesture) are estimated to be from 200 BCE to early centuries of the 1st millennium CE.

The Indian art of dance as taught in these ancient books, according to Ragini Devi, is the expression of inner beauty and the divine in man. It is a deliberate art, nothing is left to chance, each gesture seeks to communicate the ideas, each facial expression the emotions.

### Drama

Kathakali one of the classical theatre forms from Kerala, India. Rasa lila theatrical performance in Manipuri dance style. Bhavai Artist, Gujarat. A street play in Dharavi slums in Mumbai. Yakshagana An Ancient dance

drama of Tulunadu. Koodiyattam performer Kapila Venu still from play 'Nati Binodoni', Bengali Jatra Theatre. Jatra is a popular folk-theatre form of Bengali and Odia Theatre.

Indian drama and theatre has a long history alongside its music and dance. Kalidasa's plays like Shakuntala and Meghadoota are some of the older dramas, following those of Bhasa. Kutiyattam of Kerala, is the only surviving specimen of the ancient Sanskrit theatre, thought to have originated around the beginning of the Common Era, and is officially recognized by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

## Music

Indian musical instruments and Vadya Musical instrument types used in the Indian Classical Music. Clockwise from upper left: A Saraswati Veena, Sarangi, Bansuri flute, Tabla drums.

Music is an integral part of India's culture. Natyasastra, a 2000-year-old Sanskrit text, describes five systems of taxonomy to classify musical instruments. One of these ancient Indian systems classifies musical instruments into four groups according to four primary sources of vibration: strings, membranes, cymbals, and air. According to Reis Flora, this is similar to the Western theory of organology. Archeologists have also reported the discovery of a 3000-year-old, 20-key, carefully shaped polished basalt lithopone in the highlands of Odisha.

## Painting

The Jataka tales from Ajanta Caves A Kangra Style Painting of Radha, the companion of the Hindu god Krishna Hindu iconography shown in Pattachitra Raja Ravi Varma's Shakuntala (1870).

Emperor Jahangir weighs Prince Khurram by Manohar Das, 1610–15, from Jahangir's own copy of the Tuzk-e-Jahangiri. The names of the main figures are noted on their clothes, and the artist shown at bottom.

The Statue of Unity is the world's tallest statue, with a height of 182 metres (597 feet), located in the state of Gujarat. It depicts Indian statesman and independence activist Vallabhbhai Patel (1875–1950), who was the first deputy prime minister and home minister of independent India.

It was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, on 31 October 2018.

The first sculptures in India date back to the Indus Valley civilization, where stone and bronze figures have been discovered. Later, as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism developed further, India produced some extremely intricate bronzes as well as temple carvings. Some huge shrines, such as the one at Ellora were not constructed by using blocks but carved out of solid rock.

## Sports

Field hockey was considered to be the national game of India, but this has been recently denied by the Government of India, clarifying on a Right to Information Act (RTI) filed that India has not declared any sport as the national game. At a time when it was especially popular, the India men's national field hockey team won the 1975 Men's Hockey World Cup, and 8 gold, 1 silver, and 2 bronze medals at the Olympic Games. However, field hockey in India no longer has the following that it once did.

Cricket is considered the most popular sport in India. The India national cricket team won the 1983 Cricket World Cup, the 2011 Cricket World Cup, the 2007 ICC World Twenty20, the 2013 ICC Champions Trophy and shared the 2002 ICC Champions Trophy with Sri Lanka. Domestic competitions include the Ranji Trophy, the Duleep Trophy, the Deodhar Trophy, the Irani Trophy and the Challenger Series. In addition, BCCI conducts the Indian Premier League, a Twenty20 competition.

Chess is commonly believed to have originated in northwestern India during the Gupta empire, where its early form in the 6th century was known as chaturanga. Other games which originated in India and continue to remain popular in wide parts of northern India include Kabaddi, Gilli-danda, and Kho kho.

## Conclusion and future work

India undoubtedly has a great history and the **Indian cultural values** along with the **Indian culture and tradition** make India's past very rich. If we can utilize the good points in the country's history we can again become the great country we once were.

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