Q.6: What is saddarshana?

Q.7: Name the system of Indian philosophy which deals with Karma Kanda.

Q.8: Name the system of Indian philosophy which deals with Jñāna Kānda.

B) Short Questions (Answer in about 100-150 words)

Q.1: Is Indian philosophy pessimistic? Briefly explain.

Q.2: Briefly explain the nature of Indian philosophy.

Q.3: Write a brief note on the scope of Indian philosophy.

C) Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q.1: Explain the nature of Indian philosophy.

Q.2: Discuss the scope of Indian philosophy.

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that is inseparable from Indian philosophy is its stress on self-culture, that an individual has to improve in a manner that will give them ultimate peace.

- Major philosophical treatises like Upanishads and Gita give an orientation to it that is developed by other philosophical schools, irrespective of their Vedic affiliation. That is even the so-called heterodox schools, Buddhism and Jainism, seriously believe in the law of karma/action. As you sow, so you reap. Four aims worthy of emulation have been put before the individual. These are dharma (religion/morality), artha (material possessions), kama (pleasure) and moksha (liberation). And all these are to be cultivated at the appropriate stage of an individual's life. Therefore, this world is not ignored at all. Again, the charge of pessimism is because its reference to misery. But this reference, more pointedly in Buddhism and Samkhya, is only as a point of departure.
- The word *'veda'* means wisdom. Therefore, what we know as the Vedas are the collection of experiences. wisdom and aspirations of the very early Indian thinkers. They are called *rshis*, wise persons.
- Indian materialism (Charvaka/Lokayata) is a staunch critic of the Vedic way of thinking. It is against the Vedas. It is therefore called nastika or heterodox school of philosophy. In this context, orthodoxy or heterodoxy (astika-nastika) does not mean belief in God or otherwise; it only means following the Vedas or not.
- If at all, the basic distinguishing mark of Indian philosophy is its practical aspect. It is a guide to meaningful living. It refuses to be purely theoretical. It is not entirely speculative. It has a robust pragmatism attached to it.



1.6 FURTHER READING

1. Chatterjee, S. C. & Dutta, D. M. (1968). *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*. University of Calcutta.

Spiritualism is a human phenomenon and is available elsewhere in abundance. Therefore there is no point in making reference to spiritualism as either weakness or strength of any philosophy. Also, contrary to popular perception, Indian philosophy is a living entity. Philosophers like Radhakrishnan, K.C.Bhattacharyya, Aurobindo, Vivekānanda, Rabindranath, B.N.Seal, J.N. Mohanty, have interpreted and enriched the basic findings of Indian philosophy and raised its standard to an appreciable height. Indian philosophy is in the process of continuous self-discovery and innovation.

There is a specific point for the serious students. That is the expression "Indian Philosophy" itself. When Indians doing/reading philosophy made in India, designate it as 'Indian', they alienate themselves from the process of philosophy so designated. It should have been thought of as 'Philosophy' and not 'Indian Philosophy'. For this leaves scope for imagining that what they are doing is 'Indian' while philosophy is something else, that is philosophy made elsewhere (= west). While there are specific occasions for referring to philosophy as Indian philosophy, most of the time the expression is superfluous and detrimental to the creativeness of philosophy in India. We can go and do philosophy and call it philosophy. We can name it realism, idealism, monism, pluralism, hedonism, humanism, as the context demands. But there is no philosophical expediency to call it 'Indian' except under certain circumstances.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Write the meaning of 'Vedānta'

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Q 4: Mention the names of three Upanishads.

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Q 5: Write the meaning of the term 'philosophy'.

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pessimism, if at all, is only initial and a passing phase. Indian philosophy is optimistic in outlook.

There is a tradition of classifying Indian philosophy into Orthodox and Heterodox schools. This is determined by the allegiance or otherwise of the schools concerned to the Vedas. The word 'veda' means wisdom. Therefore, what we know as the Vedas are the collection of experiences. wisdom and aspirations of the very early Indian thinkers. They are called rshis, wise persons. Technically the Vedas have no authors. Truth is purportedly revealed to certain seers and they have received the wisdom and passed that on for the posterity. Upanishads are only the final portions of the Vedas. Well, these Vedas form a huge reference point for deciding if a particular school is following the mainstream trend in philosophy or otherwise. For instance, Indian materialism (Cārvāka/Lokayata) is a staunch critic of the Vedic way of thinking. It is against the Vedas. It is therefore called nastika or heterodox school of philosophy. In this context, orthodoxy or heterodoxy (astika-nastika) does not mean belief in God or otherwise; it only means following the Vedas or not. For instance, Mahayana Buddhism believes in God - and yet it is a heterodox school for its antivedic stand.

Of these heterodox schools there are three in all. They are: Cārvāka (also called Lokāyata, Materialism), Bauddha (Buddhism) and Jaina (Jainism). Cārvāka is the Indian version of materialism, hedonism and common sense realism. It traces its philosophy to the teaching of a saint called Brihaspati. Buddhism is based on the teaching of Gautama the Buddha and Jainism on the teaching of Mahāvira. While these three schools are heterodox, there are six major schools that are orthodox. These, again, are astika/orthodox not because of the question of belief in God, but because of their ultimate allegiance to the Vedas. While Samkhya does not believe in God, the Mimāmsā concept of God is obscure. But both these schools are astika/orthodox. These six systems are together called saddarshan, six philosophies. These are - Nyāya (of Gotama), Vaiseśhika (of Kanāda), Samkhya (of Kapila), Yoga (of Patanjali), Mimāmsā (of Jaimini) and Vedānta (of Badarayana). These six systems also come in the group of two because of their basic teaching. Hence, Nyaya-Vaiseshika, Samkhya-Yoga and

there is enormous scope for debate in it. It is neither dormant nor dead. It is alive, dynamic and growing.

It has all the elements of a mature philosophy - no matter where it was born or brought up.

The term for philosophy in India is 'darshan'. It means seeing or vision. It is equivalent to understanding, realization or wisdom. Sometimes darshan is emphasized with an extra word 'samyak'. When added to darshan, jt makes 'samyagdarshan', or to be grammatically correct, samyagdarshanam. It will translate as - comprehensive or total understanding, total vision, and complete realization. It is not a partial or relative understanding. It is the final realization that does not have a beyond. It is absolute intuition or insight. Also, philosophy is accepted in India as the special knowledge that saves. (mokshe dhih jnanam). It is that knowledge that gives liberation. In contrast, science or vijnan is that gives us material prosperity.

While dealing with the nature of Indian philosophy one is automatically drawn to the view that it is basically spiritualistic. Excepting for an odd but powerful outlook called Lokayata or Charvaka (to which we come later), all the systems of Indian philosophy believe in certain things that are corollaries of spiritualism; for instance - law of karma and continuity of life. Ethics of altruism and pragmatism too are linked to spiritualism. Another important point to note is that Indian philosophy is a life-centred philosophy. Mere theoretical wrangling is not encouraged in it. Even Cārvāka means business. It has its elaborate hedonistic teaching. Pursuit of pleasure is prescribed here.

Darshan that is Indian philosophy is rigorously practical. It is life-centric. In a way it is existential without resorting to absurdity. A feature that is inseparable from Indian philosophy is its stress on self-culture, that an individual has to improve in a manner that will give them ultimate peace.

When we say like this, we do not want to claim superiority for Indian philosophy in comparison with philosophies elsewhere. It is describing a fact. It is only telling what is the case - it is not to claim that it is good or bad,

1.3 NATURE OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

In fact 'philosophy' is a general name given to a wide range of intellectual activities marked off by a hidden unity of pattern and structure. This structure gives them the brand name. Poetry and novel are different in name and content but are united by the essential concern in them - artistic creativity. They conform to the idea of literature. Similarly epistemology, metaphysics or ethics are different in name and content, but they are united by their essential concern for explaining some experiences. They are philosophies. This leads us also to have a rough idea of philosophy as 'an interpretation of experiences'. There can be a dispute over it, but for the time being we can accept it and go ahead. In fact all intellectual activities are interpretation of experience. In science we explain some experiences like those of atoms, molecules, cells, stones, trees etc. In commerce we explain production, distribution, profit and loss etc. In philosophy we explain experiences and concepts like knowledge, truth, goodness, beauty, holiness, happiness, self, person etc.

Philosophy is part of the culture of a nation. What people of a particular culture have deeply thought about certain basic experiences of humanity constitutes their philosophy. What we call Indian Philosophy is the philosophy generated in India. We have similarly Greek Philosophy, German Philosophy, British Philosophy, etc.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What are the varieties in philosophy?

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Q 2: Mention three philosophies of other countries.

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