

NCERT SOLUTIONS

CLASS - 12th



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Class : 12th

Subject : History

Chapter : 4

Chapter Name : Thinkers, Beliefs and Buildings

Q1 Were the ideas of the Upanishadic thinkers different from those of the fatalists and materialists? Give reasons for your answer.

Answer. Upanishads believes in the idea of the possibility of life after death and rebirth. The main idea was that of the theory of Karma.

Fatalists were those who believed everything is predetermined.

Materialists believed that, "A human is made up of the four elements. When he dies the earthy in him returns to the earth, the fluid to water, the heat to fire, the windy to air, and his senses pass into space".

Basically all of them represent almost the same idea.

Page : 111 , Block Name : Short Answer

Q2 Summarise the Central teachings of Jainism.

Answer. The Central teachings of Jainism are :

- The entire world is animated : even stones, rocks and water have life.
- Non-injury to living beings, especially to humans, animals, plants and insects.
- According to the teachings, the cycle of birth and rebirth is shaped through Karma.
- Asceticism and penance are required to free oneself from the cycle of Karma. This can be achieved only by renouncing the world ; therefore, monastic existence is a necessary condition of salvation.

→ Jaina monks and nuns took five vows : to abstain from killing, stealing and lying ; to observe celibacy ; and to abstain from possessing property.

Page : 111 , Block Name : Short Answer

Q3 Discuss the role of the begums of Bhopal in preserving the stupa at Sanchi.

Answer. The begums of Bhopal played a very vital role in preservation of the ancient site, the stupa at Sanchi by providing money. Shahjehan Begum's successor Sultan Jehan funded the museum that was built there. She also funded the construction of the guesthouse where John Marshall lived and wrote the volumes. She also funded for the publication of those volumes. It is due to her that the preservation was possible which resulted in a greater understanding of early Buddhism and also today it stands testimony to the successful restoration and preservation of a key archaeological site by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Page : 111 , Block Name : Short Answer

Q4 Read the short inscription and answer :

In the year 33 of the maharaja Huvishka (a Kushana ruler), the first month of the hot season on the eighth day, a Bodhisatta was set up at Madhuvanaka by the bhikkhuni Dhanavati, the sister's daughter of the bhikkhuni Buddhimita, who knows the Tipitaka, the female pupil of the bhikkhu Bala, who knows the Tipitaka, together with her father and mother.

- (a) How did Dhanavati date her inscription?
- (b) Why do you think she installed an image of Bodhisatta?
- (c) Who were the relatives she mentioned?
- (d) What Buddhist text did she know?
- (e) From where did she learn this text?

Answer.

- a) She dated her inscription as first month of hot season and on the eighth day in the 33rd year of maharaja Huvishka.

- b) She installed an image of Bodhisatta because Bodhisattvas were perceived as deeply compassionate beings who accumulated merit through their efforts and thus abandoned the world. The worship of images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas became an important part of the tradition.
- c) The relatives mentioned are her parents, she also mentioned her mother's sister named bhikkhuni Buddhamita and bhikkhu Bala.
- d) She knew Tipitaka.
- e) She learnt this text from bhikkhuni Buddhamita.

Page : 111 , Block Name : Short Answer

Q5 Why do you think women and men joined the Sangha?

Answer. Sangha was an organisation where monks lived, who also became teachers of Dhamma. Initially, only men were allowed to join the sanghas but later women were also allowed to join. Women and men joined the sanghas to renounce all worldly possessions and pleasures. Once they become a part of the sangha they had to part from their earlier social identity and become Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis. They lived a very simple life and possessed only the essential things for their survival.

Page : 111 , Block Name : Short Answer

Q6 To what extent does the knowledge of Buddhist literature help in understanding the sculpture at Sanchi?

Answer. The knowledge of Buddhist literature greatly helps in understanding the sculpture at Sanchi. The Buddhist texts mention that there were 64 sects or schools of thought. Teachers travelled from place to place, in order to spread the teachings.

The sculptures contains stories in the form of pictures which are studied by historians in order to understand the meaning by comparing it with textual evidence. Art historians had to become familiar with hagiographies of the Buddha so that they can understand Buddhist sculpture. According to hagiographies, "the Buddha attained enlightenment while he was meditating under a tree." The Buddha was not represented in the form of a human - instead, the Historians showed his presence through symbols. The empty seat indicated the meditation of the Buddha, and the stupa represented the mahaparinibbana. Other symbol that was frequently used was the wheel. This stood for the first sermon of the Buddha, delivered at Sarnath. The sculptures at

Sanchi were perhaps not directly inspired by Buddhist ideas. These include beautiful women swinging from the edge of the gateway, holding onto a tree. Animals were often used as symbols of human attributes. Elephants, for example, were depicted to signify strength and wisdom. Hence, we can conclude that Buddhist literature throws a great deal of light in understanding the sculpture at Sanchi.

Page : 112 , Block Name : Long Answer

Q7 Figs 4.32 and 4.33 are two scenes from Sanchi. Describe what you see in each of them, focusing on the architecture, plants and animals, and the activities. Identify which one shows a rural scene and which an urban scene, giving reasons for your answer.

Answer. In fig. 4.32 we can see there are thatched roofs and cottages, there are many animals, trees and plants. This probably shows a rural scene. A man is seen holding a bow and an arrow which suggests that he is a hunter and must be going on a hunt.

Whereas, fig 4.33 represents a palace kind of scene where there are many slaves at the service of one person, this is suggested by the figures holding umbrella for a person and it probably shows an urban scene. It may be representing a kind of story of a king or a royal palace.

Page : 112 , Block Name : Long Answer

Q8 Discuss the development in sculpture and architecture associated with the rise of Vaishnavism and Shaivism.

Answer. Vaishnavism was a form of Hinduism within which Vishnu was worshipped as the principal deity and Shaivism was a form within which Shiva was regarded as the chief God.

With the rise of Vaishnavism and Shaivism there was a development in the sculpture and architecture. In case of Vaishnavism, cults developed around the various avatars or incarnations of the deity. Ten avatars were recognised within the tradition. These were forms that the deity was believed to have assumed in order to save the world whenever it was threatened by disorder and destruction because of the dominance of the evil forces. It is likely that different avatars were popular in different parts of the country. Some of these forms were represented in sculptures, as were other deities. Shiva, for instance, was symbolised by the linga, although he was occasionally represented in human form too.

The time when the stupas were at sites such as Sanchi were acquiring their present form, the first temple to house images of gods and goddesses were also being built. The early temple was a small square room, called garbhagriha, with a single doorway for the worshipper to enter and offer worship to the image. Gradually, a tall structure, known as the shikhara, was built over the Central shrine. Temple walls were often decorated with sculpture. This tradition evolved various stages in carving out an entire temple later.

Page : 112 , Block Name : Long Answer

Q9 Discuss how and why stupas were built.

Answer. Stupas were the mounds that were regarded as sacred. This was because the relics of the Buddha such as his bodily remains or objects used by him were buried there.

The tradition of erecting stupas may have been pre-buddhist, but they came in association with Buddhism. Since they contained relics regarded as sacred, the entire stupa came to be venerated as an emblem for both Buddha and Buddhism. According to Ashokavadana, a Buddhist text, Ashoka distributed different portions of the Buddha's relics to every important town and ordered the construction of stupas over them.

Inscriptions that were found on the railings and pillars of stupas recorded the donations made for building and decorating them. Some donations were made by kings such as the Satavahanas ; others were made by guilds, such as that of the ivory workers who financed part of one of the gateways at Sanchi. Hundreds of donations were made by women and men. There were also contributions from Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis towards the building of these monuments.

Page : 112 , Block Name : Long Answer

Q10 On an outline world map, mark the areas to which Buddhism spread. Trace the land and sea routes from the subcontinents to these areas.



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