

Q.1) There is a glimpse of contemporary social and cultural life in India's cave architecture and paintings. Elucidate.

Approach

Candidates can start the answer with highlighting about India's cave architecture and painting since the Bhimbetka cave paintings and how it presented the socio-cultural life set up of that time. Further elucidate on same thing with different examples in the main part of the answer.

Introduction

The cave architecture in India is believed to have begun during the ancient time. The relics, motifs, murals-paintings and sculptures enlighten us with a lot of information of their contemporary times giving us an impression of various traditions, customs and lifestyles followed by the inhabitants.

Body

Bhimbetka cave:

- It is very interesting to note that the division of labour can be reflected in the paintings of Bhimbetka. Scenes from day-to-day life like hunting, dancing and even some sex scenes are portrayed in these paintings.
- The walls of these shelters are also adorned with religious symbols that were popular with these prehistoric artists.

Ajanta Caves:

- Famous fresco paintings of Ajanta are dying princess, flying apsara, and preaching Buddha.
- It encompasses both Theravada (Hinayana) and Mahayana Buddhist traditions. It helps us to understand how Buddhism was pursued in those times.

Badami Caves:

- The caves are known for the Nagara and Dravidian styles of architecture and exquisite carvings, sculptures and beautiful murals.

Ellora Caves:

- Showcases a spirit of co-existence and religious tolerance through the outstanding architectural activities carried out by the followers of three prominent religions: Buddhism, Brahmanism, and Jainism.

Udaygiri caves:

- Ancient monumental relief sculpture of Vishnu in his incarnation as the man-boar Varaha, rescuing the earth symbolically represented by Bhudevi clinging to the boar's tusk as described in Hindu mythology.

Saptaparni Cave:

- The Buddha never wrote down his teachings. After the Saptaparni Caves meeting, Ananda created an oral tradition of Buddha's teaching from his memory, prefacing it with "Thus have I heard on one occasion".

Lomas Rishi Caves:

- The Ajivikas sect that competed with Jainism and eventually died out. As per inscriptions it shows they pondered in caves, rejecting both the Vedas' authority and Buddhist beliefs.

Nagarjuni Caves:

- It testifies Ashoka's grandson and successor, Dasaratha (reigned in 232 – 224 BC) – has devoted these caves to Ajivika thus these structures might be some 50 years younger than caves at Barabar.

Mandapeshwar Caves:

- It was built as a Brahmanical cave during the late Gupta dynasty later transformed into a Christian cave, however. Sculptures of Natrāja, Sada Shiva, and Ardhanarishwara can be seen among the site's ruins.

Conclusion

The paintings on caves and rock-cut structures survive for many centuries. These cave paintings got their inspiration from nature and local traditions of times. These paintings mostly depicted gods and goddesses, mythological stories and characters, epics, nature, flora and fauna, humans, and religions of that times.

Q.2) What are the main characteristics of dance forms from east India? Explain with the help of suitable examples.

Approach -

A simple straightforward question where candidates need to write about characteristics of dance forms of east India, in second part of answer give some suitable examples of these dance forms.

Introduction -

In India, the art of dancing has a long and illustrious history that dates back thousands of years. We can find the evidence of dancing in virtually all major historical sources, including excavations and inscriptions, chronicles, genealogy of kings and artists, literary sources, sculpture and painting from various historical periods, and more.

Body -

Main characteristics of dance forms of eastern India,

- A soft dance backed by soothing lyrics and is similar to Bharatanatyam in terms of the mudras and expressions.

- Termed as 'mobile sculpture' it incorporates two major postures - Tribhanga (the body is deflected at the neck, torso and the knees) and Chowk (a position imitating a square). Example **Odissi- odissa** .
- It is done by groups of ten to twelve dancers, with one or two gayens (lead singers).
- The troops recite popular folklore and mythical stories, with comedic sketches known as kap.
- The dance is commonly linked with Shiva's Gajan festival. Example **Alkap-jharkhand and west bengol**.
- It depicts the anguish of women whose partners are gone from home.
- This dance form, on the other hand, is only performed by guys who also play feminine characters Example -**Biraha -bihar**.
- The dancers are armed with wooden spears and shields and perform in army formations to demonstrate their talents and agility.
- Paika is a martial folk dance popular in Odisha's southern regions.
- Paika is a long spear type.
- It has a martial art feel to it. Paika is a word that means "war." Example **Paika -Odissa**.
- This dance genre is unique in its depiction of a married couple's sensitive love and dispute. Example-**Jat jatin -Bihar**.
- It's a type of mask dance that tells mythological stories via ferocious martial moves.
- Saraikela Chhau in Jharkhand, Mayurbhanj Chhau in Odisha, and Purulia Chhau in West Bengal are the three main genres of Chhau dance. Example **Chhau dance odissa** .
- Janani Jhumar, which is done by women, and Mardana Jhumar, which is performed by males, are the two varieties.
- Many fairs and festivals use it as a main attraction
- Jhumar is a popular harvest dance performed by Jharkhand and Odisha's indigenous people. Example **Jhumar -jharkhand odissa** .
- It's a one-of-a-kind combination of dance, drama, and music. While it mostly tells Shiva myths and legends, the overall message is social harmony and brotherhood. Example **Danda jatra -Odissa** .

Conclusion -

The cultural riches of India are well-known. An important component of Indian culture is the performance of traditional dances. The majority of classical dance styles had their genesis in temples. Its primary focus was worship. Therefore, Dance played a vital role in the religious and social lives of the Indian people.

Q.3) Stringed and percussion instruments form an integral component of India's musical tradition. illustrate.

Approach -

In this question candidates need to write about how stringed and percussion instruments form integral component of India's musical tradition.

Introduction -

Instruments integral component to Hindustani classical music are the sitar, sarod, tambura, sahnai, sarangi, and tabla; while instruments integral to Carnatic classical music includes the vina, mrdangam, kanjira, and violin they can be classified into stringed and percussion instruments.

Body -

Natya Shastra, compiled by Bharat Muni, divides musical instruments into four main categories on the basis of how sound is produced.

- Tata Vadya / Chordophones- Stringed instruments.
- Sushira Vadya / Aerophones- Wind instruments.
- Avanaddha Vadya / Membranophones- Percussion instruments.
- Ghana Vadya / Idiophones- Solid instruments.

TATA VADYA-STRINGED INSTRUMENT -

- Veena was the generic term for stringed instruments referred to in texts. Another class is of the dulcimer type, where a number of strings are stretched on a box of wood, Example sata-tantri veena-the hundred stringed veena.
- There are several Gharanas for playing Sitar, including Jaipur, Varanasi, and Etawah (Imaad Khani).
- The Veena, one of the most ancient and revered instruments of Goddess Saraswati, is also included in this category of musical instruments.
- Sarangi is valued as the only string instrument that comes closest to the human voice.
- Being the only instrument that can produce almost all the nuances of vocal music in any style dhrupad, khayal, thumri and tappa, the Sarangi enjoyed importance as the only stringed accompaniment suitable for classical vocal music.
- Like many stringed instruments used in classical Indian music, the modern sitar has sympathetic strings that sound only when one of the primary strings is struck on the same note.

AVANADDHA VADYA – PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS-

Tabla-

- Tabla pair is used as accompaniment to vocal and instrumental Hindustani music and with many dance forms of northern India.
- Complicated talas of the Hindustani music are played with great virtuosity on the tabla.
- Prominent musicians playing the tabla today are-Ustad Alla Rakha Khan and his son Zakir Hussain, Shafat Ahmed and Samata Prasad
- But, in fact, the barrel-shaped drum has been played in Punjab since the time of the fifth Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Arjan Dev (1563-1606). Without the

accompaniment of the pakhawaj, no Gurbani kirtan would ever have sounded quite the same.

Dholak

- This folk instrument is found in various parts of Uttar Pradesh. Dholak can be played in three ways- on the player's lap, while standing, or pressed down with one knee while sitting on the floor.

Damroo

- It is a local instrument, found in Ladakh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Bihar and other parts of North India. It is used by the Lamas in ritualistic dance in Ladakh. Moreover, it is used by 'Kudukuduppai Andi' of Tamil Nadu and by mendicants, snake charmers, gypsies and jugglers in North India.

Mridangam

- This traditional instrument is found in various parts of South India. It is a popular bifacial drum of Carnatic music and is used as an accompaniment in South Indian Classical music.

NAGARA

- This indigenous instrument is found in many parts of India including Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Bihar. Majorly used by 'Ho' tribes of Madhya Pradesh. Also used in the 'Seraikella' Chhau dance of Bihar and as an accompaniment with 'Shehnai' on festive occasions.

Conclusion

Music is an integral part of ceremonies and the performing arts, such as dance and theatre. Each village has its unique musical style and song heritage. Hence stringed and percussion instruments become integral part Indian musical tradition.