

UNIT - 1

INTRODUCTION TO CULTURE

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Essence of Indian Traditional Knowledge (EITK)

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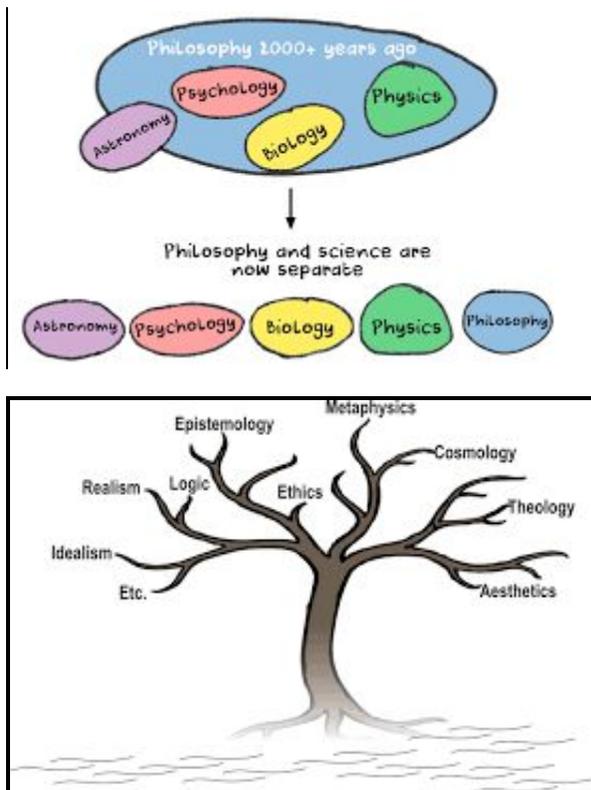
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Chapter I: Introduction to Indian Philosophy

Q- What is Philosophy?

Philosophy is the study of general and fundamental questions about existence, knowledge, values, reason, mind, and language. Such questions are often posed as problems to be studied or resolved. The term was probably coined by Pythagoras.



Q- What is the real meaning of philosophy?

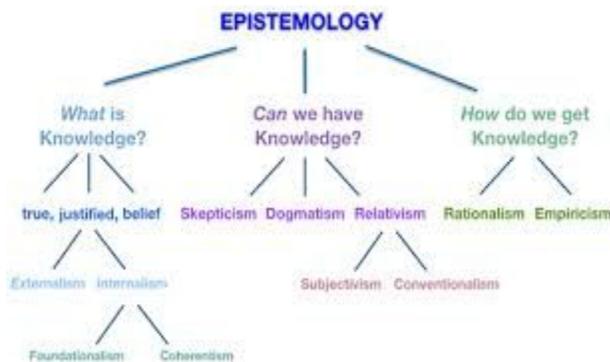
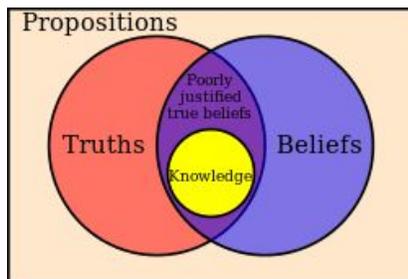
The noun **philosophy** means the study of proper behavior, and the search for wisdom. The original **meaning** of the word **philosophy** comes from the Greek roots philo- meaning "love" and -sophos, or "wisdom." In other words, they want to know the **meaning** of life.

Q- Who is the father of philosophy?

Socrates (469/470-399 BCE) was a Greek philosopher and is considered the father of western philosophy.

Q- What is Epistemology?

The theory of knowledge, especially with regard to its methods, validity, and scope, and the distinction between justified belief and opinion is known as epistemology



Q- What is Metaphysics?

Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that examines the fundamental nature of reality, including the relationship between mind and matter, between substance and attribute, and between potentiality and actuality.

Q- What is Logic?

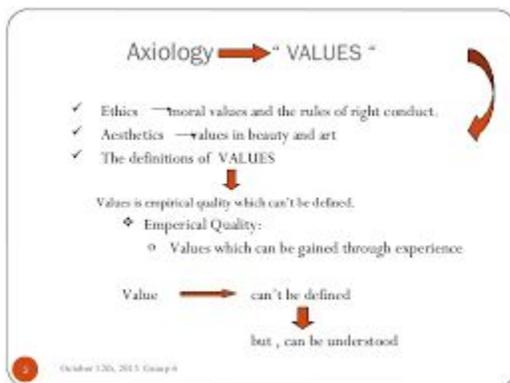
Logic is the systematic study of the form of valid inference, and the most general laws of truth. A valid inference is one where there is a specific relation of logical support between the assumptions of the inference and its conclusion.

Q- What is Aesthetics?

Aesthetics, or esthetics: is a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of art, beauty and taste and with the creation or appreciation of beauty: a particular theory or conception of beauty or art: a particular taste for or approach to what is pleasing to the senses and especially sight.

Q- What is Axiology

Axiology is the philosophical study of value. It is either the collective term for ethics and aesthetics, philosophical fields that depend crucially on notions of worth, or the foundation for these fields, and thus similar to value theory and meta-ethics.



Q- Give a detailed description of Indian Philosophy?

Indian Philosophy (or, in Sanskrit, Darshanas), refers to any of several traditions of philosophical thought that originated in the Indian subcontinent, including Hindu philosophy, Buddhist philosophy, and Jain philosophy (see below for brief introductions to these schools). It is considered by Indian thinkers to be a practical discipline, and its goal should always be to improve human life.

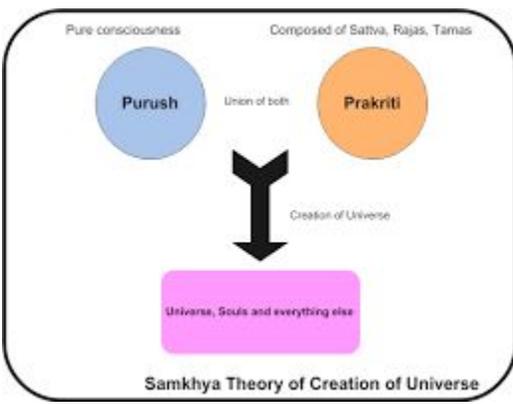
General Division of Indian Philosophy

ĀSTIKA SCHOOLS	NĀSTIKA SCHOOLS
The Orthodox schools (Those accepting Vedic authority)	The Heterodox schools (Those rejecting Vedic authority)
1. Nyāya & 2. Vaiśeṣika	1. Charvāka or Lokāyata (The Materialists)
3. Sāṅkhya & 4. Yoga	2. Jainism śvetāmbara — digambara
5. Mīmāṃsā & 6. Vedānta	3. Buddhism
	Hīnayāna Sauterāntika Vāibhāṣika
	Mahāyāna Mādhyamika Yogachāra Vajrayāna

Orthodox

The main **Hindu** orthodox (**astika**) schools of Indian philosophy are those codified during the medieval period of **Brahmanic-Sanskritic scholasticism**, and they take the ancient **Vedas** (the oldest sacred texts of Hinduism) as their source and scriptural authority:

Samkhya: Samkhya is the oldest of the orthodox philosophical systems, and it postulates that everything in reality stems from purusha (self or soul or mind) and prakriti (matter, creative agency, energy). It is a **dualist** philosophy, although between the self and matter rather than between mind and body as in the Western **dualist** tradition, and liberation occurs with the realization that the soul and the dispositions of matter (steadiness, activity and dullness) are different



Yoga: The Yoga school, as expounded by Patanjali in his 2nd Century B.C. *Yoga Sutras*, accepts the Samkhya psychology and metaphysics, but is more theistic, with the addition of a divine entity to Samkhya's twenty-five elements of reality. The relatively brief *Yoga Sutras* are divided into eight ashtanga (limbs), reminiscent of Buddhism's Noble Eightfold Path, the goal being to quiet one's mind and achieve kaivalya (solitariness or detachment).



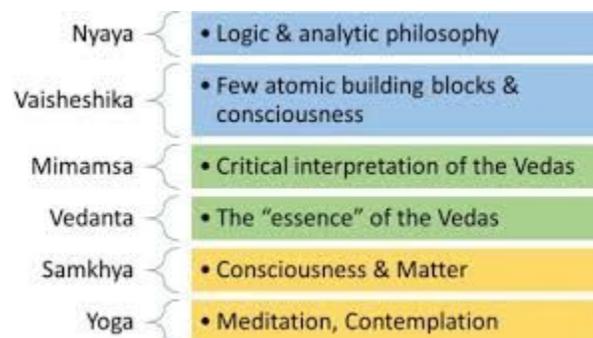
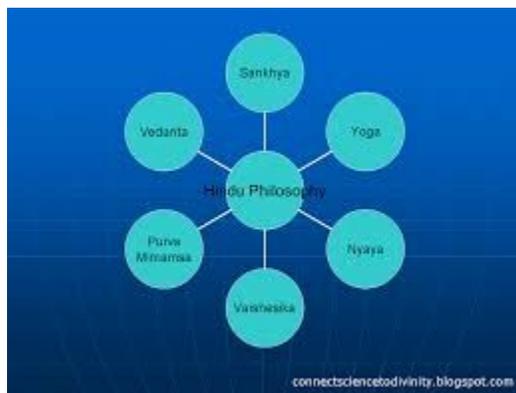
Nyaya: The Nyaya School is based on the *Nyaya Sutras*, written by Aksapada Gautama in the 2nd Century B.C. Its methodology is based on a system of logic that has subsequently been adopted by the majority of the Indian schools, in much the same way as [Aristotelian](#) logic has influenced Western philosophy. Its followers believe that obtaining valid knowledge (the four sources of which are perception, inference, comparison and testimony) is the only way to gain release from suffering. Nyaya developed several criteria by which the knowledge thus obtained was to be considered valid or invalid.

Vaisheshika: The Vaisheshika school was founded by Kanada in the 6th Century B.C., and it is atomist and pluralist in nature. The basis of the school's philosophy is that all objects in the physical universe are reducible to a finite number of atoms, and Brahman is regarded as the fundamental force that causes consciousness in these atoms. The Vaisheshika and Nyaya

schools eventually merged because of their closely related metaphysical theories (although Vaisheshika only accepted perception and inference as sources of valid knowledge).

Purva-Mimams: The main objective of the Purva Mimamsa school is to interpret and establish the authority of the *Vedas*. It requires unquestionable faith in the *Vedas* and the regular performance of the Vedic fire-sacrifices to sustain all the activity of the universe. Although in general the Mimamsa accept the logical and philosophical teachings of the other schools, they insist that salvation can only be attained by acting in accordance with the prescriptions of the *Vedas*. The school later shifted its views and began to teach the doctrines of Brahmanand freedom, allowing for the release or escape of the soul from its constraints through enlightened activity.

Vedanta: The Vedanta, or Uttara Mimamsa, school concentrates on the philosophical teachings of the *Upanishads* (mystic or spiritual contemplations within the *Vedas*), rather than the Brahmanas (instructions for ritual and sacrifice). The Vedanta focus on meditation, self-discipline and spiritual connectivity, more than traditional ritualism. Due to the rather cryptic and poetic nature of the Vedanta sutras, the school separated into six sub-schools, each interpreting the texts in its own way and producing its own series of sub-commentaries: Advaita (the best-known, which holds that the soul and Brahman are one and the same), Visishtadvaita (which teaches that the Supreme Being has a definite form, name - Vishnu - and attributes), Dvaita (which espouses a belief in three separate realities: Vishnu, and eternal soul and matter), Dvaitadvaita (which holds that Brahman exists independently, while soul and matter are dependent), Shuddhadvaita (which believes that Krishna is the absolute form of Brahman) and Acintya Bheda Abheda (which combines monism and dualism by stating that the soul is both distinct and non-distinct from Krishna, or God).



Heterodox (Non Hindu)

The main heterodox (nastika) schools, which do not accept the authority of the *Vedas*, include:

Carvaka:

Also known as Lokayata, Carvaka is a materialistic, skeptical and atheistic school of thought. Its founder was Carvaka, author of the *Barhaspatya Sutras* in the final centuries B.C., although the original texts have been lost and our understanding of them is based largely on criticism of the ideas by other schools. As early as the 5th Century, Saddaniti and Buddhaghosa connected the Lokayatas with the Vitandas (or Sophists), and the term Carvaka was first recorded in the 7th Century by the philosopher Purandara, and in the 8th Century by Kamalasila and Haribhadra. As a vital philosophical school, Carvaka appears to have died out some time in the 15th Century.

Buddhist Philosophy

Buddhism is a non-theistic system of beliefs based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, an Indian prince later known as the Buddha, in the 5th Century B.C. The question of God is largely irrelevant in Buddhism, and it is mainly founded on the rejection of certain orthodox Hindu philosophical concepts (although it does share some philosophical views with Hinduism, such as belief in karma). Buddhism advocates a Noble Eightfold Path to end suffering, and its philosophical principles are known as the Four Noble Truths (the Nature of Suffering, the Origin of Suffering, the Cessation of Suffering, and the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering). Buddhist philosophy deals extensively with problems in metaphysics, phenomenology, ethics and epistemology.

Jainism

The central tenets of Jain philosophy were established by Mahavira in the 6th Century B.C., although Jainism as a religion is much older. A basic principle is *anekantavada*, the idea that reality is perceived differently from different points of view, and that no single point of view is completely true (similar to the Western philosophical doctrine of **Subjectivism**). According to Jainism, only Kevalis, those who have infinite knowledge, can know the true answer, and that all others would only know a part of the answer. It stresses spiritual independence and the equality of all life, with particular emphasis on non-violence, and posits self-control as vital for attaining the realization of the soul's true nature. Jain belief emphasizes the immediate consequences of one's behavior.

Indian Political Philosophy

The *Arthashastra*, attributed to the Mauryan minister Chanakya in the 4th Century B.C., is one of the earliest Indian texts devoted to political philosophy, and it discusses ideas of statecraft and economic policy. During the Indian struggle for independence in the early 20th

Century, Mahatma Gandhi popularized the philosophies of ahimsa (non-violence) and satyagraha (non-violent resistance), which were influenced by the teachings of the Hindu *Bhagavad Gita*, as well as Jesus, Tolstoy, Thoreau and Ruskin.

Q- What is Culture?

Culture is a word for the 'way of life' of groups of people, meaning the way they do things. Excellence of taste in the fine arts and humanities, also known as high culture. An integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior. The outlook, attitudes, values, morals goals, and customs shared by a society.

Q- What is the difference between custom and tradition?

The main difference between custom and tradition lies in the length of time associated with them. A custom is a commonly accepted manner of behaving or doing something in a particular society, place or time. A tradition is the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation.

Q- What is the difference between tradition and heritage?

As nouns the **difference between heritage and tradition** is that **heritage** is an inheritance; property that may be inherited while **tradition** is a part of culture that is passed from person to person or generation to generation, possibly differing in detail from family to family, such as the way to celebrate holidays.

Q- Why is culture important?

Culture is important to us because it defines our evolutionary identity. Culture helps us understand our ancestral values and gives us the very meaning of life. It also makes us unique from other parts of the world.

Q- What are the two types of Culture?

There are two types of cultures: **material culture** and **nonmaterial culture**. Material culture consists of actual objects or physical things like buildings, pieces of art, and clothing. While the other refers to the culture transferred through laws, beliefs, tradition, legends etc.

Q- Give a brief account of Culture and its characteristics?

The word culture is one of those terms that we use quite often, but what is it exactly? If you were to ask a group of anthropologists whose job it is to study culture, you may get a different definition from each of them. However, even though definitions of culture may differ, many of

them do emphasize similar things. For the purposes of this lesson, we'll define **culture** as the complex whole of a society. So this can include everything that gives a society its identity, which would include such things as language, beliefs, values, customs, laws, cuisine, etc.

What is particularly fascinating about cultures is that each culture, no matter where it is located, shares at least five basic characteristics. This means the Mayan culture, which is now extinct, shared at least five basic characteristics with present-day American culture. The five basic characteristics that all cultures share are that they are learned, shared, based on symbols, integrated, and dynamic.

Learned and Shared

When we are born we don't automatically know all the values, words, beliefs, customs, etc. that our culture has adopted. We do not inherit culture. Culture is **learned**. While much of what we learn about a culture can be learned through school, family, peers, and the media, there are often many things about a culture that are learned subconsciously. For example, we may learn when particular holidays occur in school, like Christmas is always on December 25th. However, the norms and what it means to be 'in the Christmas spirit' is something we don't have a conversation about or read in a book. It comes from many years of observing others and just being around people who celebrate Christmas.



Acculturation: cultural modification of an individual, group, or people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture, the acculturation of immigrants to American life also is a merging of cultures as a result of prolonged contact. There are four hypothesized acculturation strategies: (a) assimilation, (b) separation, (c) integration, and (d) marginalization



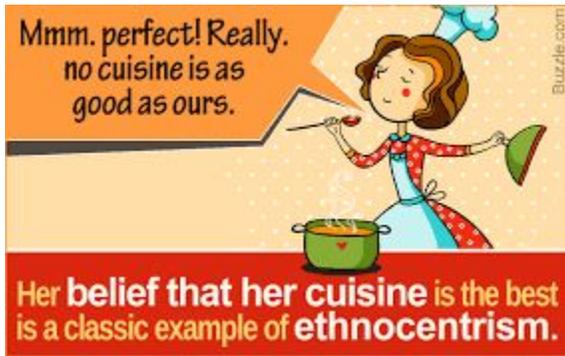
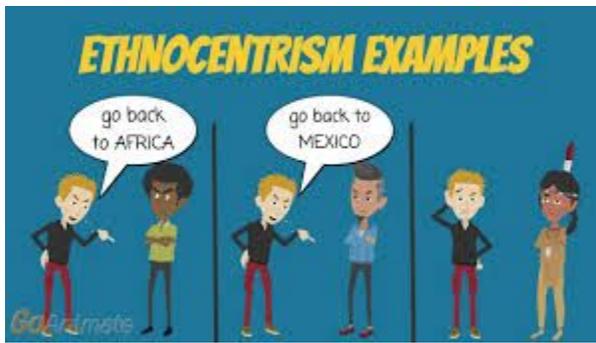
Assimilation is a two-way process, and the majority culture is changed as well as the minority culture. Acculturation occurs when the minority culture changes but is still able to retain unique cultural markers of language, food and customs. Acculturation is also a two way process as both cultures are changed.



Marginalization pertaining to acculturation is defined as the rejection of one's culture of origin and the dominant host culture. ... Failed attempts at integration causes high stress, such as in the form of marginalization.

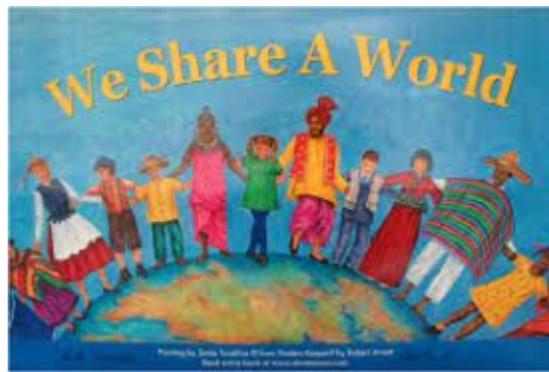
Separation: It is when individuals become alienated toward the host culture and separate themselves from the main society. They mainly prefer to socialize with persons from their own culture. **Marginalization** is when individuals become alienated toward both their own and the host cultures.

Ethnocentrism: Ethnocentrism is the act of judging another culture based on preconceptions that are found in the values and standards of one's own culture – especially regarding language, behavior, customs, and religion. These aspects or categories are distinctions that define each ethnicity's unique cultural identity.



Cosmopolitan: Cosmopolitanism is the ideology that all human beings belong to a single community, based on a shared morality. A person who adheres to the idea of cosmopolitanism in any of its forms is called a **cosmopolitan** or cosmopolite.

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