

## Upendra Singh : Mindset Makers for UPSC

### Vedic Culture

- Parameters:
- (a) Origin and Geography
  - (b) Political System
  - (c) Social Arrangement
  - (d) Economics
  - (e) Remarks

# @ : [1500 BCE - 1000 BCE (Rigvedic) Period] ; 'Aryan'  
[1000 BCE - 600 BCE (Later-Vedic)] ; after  
Harappan Civilization.

- Main classification of this age is based on different Vedas and their components.

• Rivers are the most important factor to discuss about this period. Indus river found at many places in vedas and other literature (scripts).

- Saraswati River (Devitama / Naditama / Matetama) (most sacred river)

- Land of seven-rivers (Sapta-Sindhu) states.

Sarasawati, Vipasha, Parushni, Vitasta, Sindhu, Shutudri, Asakini

- River Yamuna - 3 times, Ganga (1-time) mentioned in Rigveda.

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- Ganga-Yamuna Doab (Brahmarshi Desh)

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Important Notice: (Rigvedic Rivers) : (Have a glance) <sup>xx</sup>

<u>Ancient Name</u>	<u>Modern Name</u>
Asakini	Chenab
Vipasa	Beas
Parushni	Ravi
Vitasta	Jhelum
Kubha	Kabul
Krumu	Kurram
Gomati	Gomal
Suvasta	Swat
Sadaneera	Gandak
Shutudri	Sutlej
Drishdvati	Ghaggar

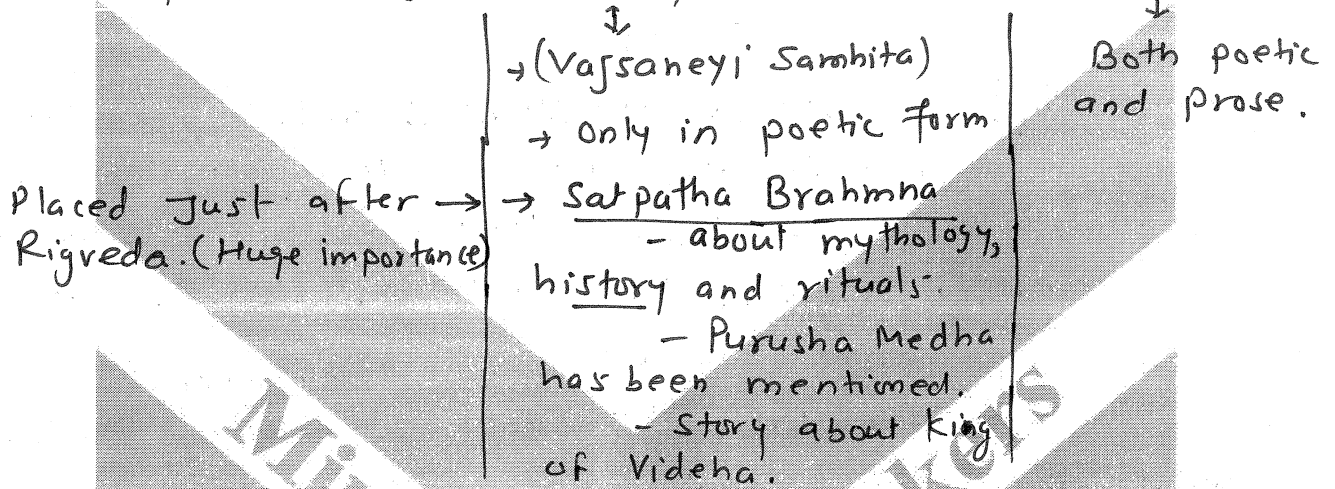
Before using Vedas as resource to study our further parameters, let's have some information about Vedas.

- # 1. Rigveda : Most ancient, ten mandals [first and tenth Mandals were added later on]
- Gayatri Mantri (Third Mandal) by Vishwamit dedicated to Lord Sun (Surya)
  - Mantras in the Ninth Mandal are dedicated to Soma.
  - Three varnas (Brahma, Kshatra, Visha). earlier. Then the word Shudra added in for the first time in Purush shukta of tenth Mand.
- Hota : The priests of Rigveda.

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- #2. Yajurveda : (Wisdom of sacrificial formulas)
- Contains prose and verse formulas
  - Performing rituals

Two parts Samhitas → Shukla Yajurveda, Krishna Yajurveda



- #3. Samveda : (Chanting in Ceremonies), Music
- Shortest among all four vedas.
  - closely connected with Rigveda.
  - Udgataya : The priests

- #4. Atharvaveda : (Superstitions)
- Comprises of various contents such as disease prevention, coordination, loyalty, marriage, love poetry).
  - Here great achievements happened in science, astronomy, religion and philosophy.
  - Ayurveda (Science of Life) in Atharvaveda.

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→ Only Brahmana associated with Atharvaveda is Gopath

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Note: More details about Upanishads, Aranyak etc we can deal with the chapter Literature in our topic History).

For the time being:

Upanishads: is not a religious Scripture but represents a philosophy for all times and for all. The philosophy of upanishads does not oppose any school of thought, religion. The word salvation or Moksha was first time discussed in upanishads. (The core of our self is not the body or the mind but the Atman (soul).)

→ Kathopnishad: The story of conversation between 'Yama', Lord of death and 'Nachiketa'.

→ Mundakopanishad: • 'Satyamev Jayate' (Truth alone triumphs) taken from it.

Chhandogya Upanishad:  
→ Jabalopnishad: Satyakama Jabala appeared in it.

→ Brihadaranyak: 'Tamso Ma Jyotirgamaya' is in this

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### #(b) : Political System :

→ Paternal society (tribal) , five tribal communities are in Rigveda ( Anu, Druh, Puru, Turbas, Yuddha). King but not hereditary.

→ Gram → Vish → Jana → Rashtra

( Jana is mentioned 275 times in Rigveda)

→ King ( Janasya Gopta).

→ Sabha , Samiti , Vidatha , Gana (councils)

↓  
(Senior intellectuals)

↓  
(Central political council)

↓  
(Common assembly, oldest in Aryans)

Note! Women could also participate in Sabha, Vidatha.

→ Military units : Shardha, Vrata, Gana . (Senani)

- Dashraghya battle : (Sudas and Ten other kings) (at river Parushani) • Sudas were winner.

→ Posts : • Senani , Purohit , Gramni ,

Other posts : • Soot , Rathakar , Karmar (Also called Ratniees)

Note! • Spash ( Spy)  
Ministers / Councils of ministers are not mentioned in Rigveda.

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- #(c) : Social System :
- Paternal, Combined Family System,
  - Child marriage (absent)
  - Niyog tradition (Remarriage)
  - Women were at good position  
(Political and property rights were not harsh against them)

### • Education:

- Gender Equality was there.
- Women could perform rituals.
- Scholars (Women) :-  
Lopamudra (married to Agastya)  
Ghoshha, Shikta, Apala, Vishwara
- Gurukul system

- Cow was sacred

### #(d) Economics:

(4th Mandal)

- Animal husbandry
- Agricultural land called as 'Urbara'
  - Cow was their valuable animal.
  - Long land was not private, it was under group title.
  - Carpenters, weavers etc.
  - Trade & commerce (under 'Pani')  
(Barter trade mainly)
  - Nishka (Gold), Copper (Ayas)
  - Shatman (Silver)
  - 'Bekant' (Money lenders)

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### Later Vedic Age : ( Madhya Desh : centre )

- Samaveda, Yajurveda, Atharvaveda
- Agriculture in progressive state.
- Geographical expansion ( upto Ganga-Yamuna Doab)
- Aryans were known to Koshal, Videha and Anga. Magadha and Anga were out of Aryan's zone. In Atharvaveda (people of Magadha were called 'Vratya' ) .

### Political System :

- 'Rashtra' word originated in this age .  
(Panchala was a tribal community in the starting but later on, it became a state).
- Monarchy was common but some places were under republic form .
- Sabha, Samiti, Vidatha, Gana . (Four bodies)
- Ashwamedha performed at occasions.  
Vaspeya " "
- Bali (Donation) was voluntary in Rigvedic age but in later vedic, it became compulsory.

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### Social System :

- Complete classification (Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra)
  - Rituals were increased and so Brahmins dominated.
  - Completely hereditary.
- Although many bad practices were started in later vedic age but still there were some good women scholars like Gandharva, Grabeeti, Maitreyee.

→ Women's rights were suppressed and they were allowed to be part of 'Saba'

### Economics :

- Agriculture (main practice) (Rice, wheats, ...)
- handicrafts
- 'Shreshthi' (head in traders)
- Money lenders (bad practices) loan (called 'Kuseed')
- silver (shatman) mentioned in Atharvaveda.

### Religion :

• Hard rituals started in this age.

- Charvaka (Charvaka), • Samkhya (Kapil), • Yoga (Patanjali)
- Nyaya (Gautam), • Mimamsa (Jaimini & Badrasan)
- Vaisheshik (Kanad/ulook)



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Que. 1. [1994] Which of the following customs emerged during the post-Vedic period :

- (a) Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha
- (b) Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra
- (c) Brahmacharya, Grhasthaashramas, Vanaprastha, Sanyasa
- (d) Indra, Surya, Rudra, Maruta

level 1: All keywords in options are needed to be remembered.

level 2: Analysis of options and question indicates that if we remember themes (main), we can eliminate options. For example - Shudra added in post-Vedic. It means rest three were present already in Rigvedic/Vedic period. Indra was most worshipped God in Rigvedic period so (d) is wrong. Four Ashramas were originated in Jablopnishada. So option (c) is correct. (a) may also be correct. (But on minute observations about Dharma, we can eliminate option (a). Answer : (c).

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Que. (2) [1996] In the context of ancient Indian society which one of the following terms does not belong to the category of other three?

- (a) Kula      (b) Vansha      (c) Kosa      (d) Gotra

level 1 & 2: Easily eliminated, option (c) is correct.

Que. (3) [1997] The famous dialogue between Nachiketa and Yama is mentioned in the:

- (a) Brihadaranyaka Upanishad  
(b) Chhandogya Upanishad  
(c) Kathopnishad  
(d) Kenopinishad

level 1: We need to remember features of all Upanishad

level 2: There are 7-8 Upanishads (mainly), for which only one keyword is associated with famous story | person | message. We need to remember those keywords only. This dialogue is mentioned in Kathopnishad so option (c) is correct.

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Que.(4)

[1999]

The term Aryan denotes :

- (a) An ethnic group
- (b) A nomadic people
- (c) A speech group
- (d) A superior race.

level 1 & 2:

Common man understanding level information option (d) is correct.

Que.(5)

[1996]

The river mentioned most in early vedic literature is :

- (a) Sindhu
- (b) Shyudri
- (c) Sarasvati
- (d) Ganga

level 1:

We need to remember all rivers ?  
Ganga obviously would be so ?

level 2:

It is very special point and mentioned in almost every book. Sindhu was most mentioned river. Sarasvati was most sacred river. Ganga and Yamuna were just mentioned 3 and 2 times respectively.

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Que. (6)  
[1993]

During the Rigvedic period word 'Nishka' was used for a jewellery but in later period it was used for the meaning of:

- (a) Arms                      (b) Farming equipment  
(c) Script                    (d) Coin

level 1: We have studied Nishka — Gold.

level 2: Apply common sense and extend it to Nishka — Gold — coin. So option (d) is correct. Just a basic keyword (Nishka-Gold) is enough to answer. (Not further details needed).

Que. (7)  
[1995]

Who among the following was a Brahnavadini who composed some hymns of Vedas?

- (a) Lopamudra              (b) Gargi  
(c) Leelavati                (d) Savitri

level 1: We need to remember all names? Prepare in Right Way

level 2: No, Lopamudra (very famous) we can study about it in any study resource. So option (a) will be correct for us in the exam hall. later on, we'll come to know about ~~the~~ other

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Que. (8) . From where the word 'Satyameva Jayate'  
[2004] taken ?

- (a) Manusmriti
- (b) Bhagawadgita
- (c) Rig Veda
- (d) Munda Kopanishad

level & level 2: Very famous. It's taken from Mundako-  
panishad. (d) is correct.

Que. (9)

[2011]

The 'Dharma' and 'Rita' depict a central idea of ancient Vedic Civilization of India. In this context, consider the following statements:

1. 'Dharma' was a conception of obligations and the discharge of one's duties to oneself and to others.
2. 'Rita' was the fundamental moral law governing the functioning of the universe and all it contained.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 2 Both
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2.

Analysis:  
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On general understanding and common sense we can get both are correct. If we do deep analysis, we may get confused.

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Que. (10)  
[2012]

The religion of early Vedic Aryans was primarily of

- (a) Bhakti
- (b) Image worship and yagnas
- (c) Worship of nature and yagnas
- (d) Worship of nature and bhakti

level 1: We need to remember all such minute details?

level 2: No, we can guess by basic level common sense about Rigvedic period and its specialities - nature & yagnas. So option (c) is correct

Que. (11)

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Que. (11)  
[2017]

With reference to the difference between the culture of Rigvedic Aryans and Indus Valley people, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Rigvedic Aryans used the coat of mail and helmet in warfare whereas the people of Indus Valley Civilization did not leave any evidence of using them.
2. Rigvedic Aryans knew gold, silver, copper whereas Indus Valley people knew only copper and iron.
3. Rigvedic Aryans had domesticated the horse whereas there is no evidence of Indus Valley people having been aware of this animal.

Select the correct answer using code given below:

- (a) 1 only  
(b) 2 and 3 only  
(c) 1 and 3 only  
(d) 1, 2 and 3.

level 1: Blank guess?

level 2: No, it's very easy question. These statements are based on main features of both civilizations. (2) is wrong because Indus were

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not aware of iron. Even iron is used in later vedic.

③ is wrong because horse's skeleton found in Indus valley

① is correct (based on common sense and our visualization

attached to Aryan's image and the urban nature of

Harappan Civilization)



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