

UPSC MCQ

03

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- Consider the following statements regarding Gandhara school of art.
- **Statement I: The Gandhara school of art often depicted the Bodhisattva Vajrapani with the physical attributes of the Greek hero Heracles.**
- **Statement II: The Kushana rulers who patronized Gandhara art promoted a syncretic culture that blended Hellenistic, Persian, and Indian religious motifs.**
- Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?
- (a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II is the correct explanation for Statement I
- (b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but Statement II is not the correct explanation for Statement I
- (c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is incorrect
- (d) Statement I is incorrect but Statement II is correct

- Ans a
- Statement I is Correct: In Gandhara art, Vajrapani (the protector of the Buddha) is frequently depicted holding a thunderbolt (vajra) that looks like a club, with the muscular physique and lion-skin of Heracles. This is a classic example of iconographic borrowing.
- Statement II is Correct and Explains I: The Kushanas (specifically Kanishka) ruled a vast empire bridging East and West. Their coins and art reflected a deliberate policy of syncretism (e.g., Iranian gods like Mithra and Mithras, Greek gods like Helios, and the Buddha). This political and cultural environment caused the artistic hybridization seen in figures like Heracles-Vajrapani.

- Which one of the following architectural features is the most distinctive hallmark of the Jaunpur School (Sharqi Style) of architecture?
- (a) The 'Bulbous Dome' with a narrow neck surrounded by a lotus-petal base.
- (b) A massive rectangular pylon or 'Propylon' with sloping sides masking the dome.
- (c) The integration of 'Pietra Dura' inlay work on the main prayer hall facade.
- (d) The use of slender, detached minarets at the four corners of the courtyard.

- Ans B
- The Jaunpur School, flourishing under the Sharqi dynasty, is noted for its "forceful" and "bold" character.
- The Propylon (Option b) is its most defining feature. This was a massive, monumental screen or gateway placed in front of the main dome of the prayer hall. These propylons often reached heights of over 20 meters, effectively hiding the dome from the courtyard and providing the building with an imposing verticality.

- Option a is incorrect because the bulbous dome was a characteristic of the Deccani and Mughal styles, whereas Jaunpur favored low-proportioned domes often derived from Tughlaq influence. The Propylon gave Jaunpur architecture a unique identity, often described as the "Shiraz of India" due to its cultural and architectural vibrancy.
- Option c is incorrect as Pietra Dura was a later Mughal innovation associated with Shah Jahan.
- Option d is incorrect because Jaunpur mosques, like the Atala Masjid, notably omitted independent minarets, a departure from the imperial styles of Delhi.

Q3

- **Consider the following statements regarding the Edicts of Ashoka:**
- 1. The Major Rock Edicts primarily focus on the ethical principles of Dhamma and do not mention the Buddha or specific Buddhist teachings.
- 2. The Minor Rock Edicts are generally more religious in content and provide early evidence of Ashoka's personal conversion to Buddhism.
- 3. The Pillar Edicts were inscribed toward the end of Ashoka's reign and emphasize administrative measures and the protection of his subjects.
- Which of the above statements are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 1 and 3 only (c) 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

- Ans D
- The Major Rock Edicts are largely moral–ethical proclamations stressing Dhamma—values such as nonviolence, tolerance, respect for elders, and humane governance—without explicit doctrinal references to the Buddha, the Four Noble Truths, or other core Buddhist teachings, making statement 1 correct.
- The Minor Rock Edicts, by contrast, are more personal and confessional in tone; they explicitly mention Ashoka as a upāsaka (lay follower) and reflect his growing commitment to Buddhism, thus providing early epigraphic evidence of his religious transformation, validating statement 2.

Q4

- Consider the following statements regarding the Dhrupad and Khayal styles of Hindustani music:
- 1. Dhrupad is one of the oldest and most austere forms, traditionally accompanied by the Pakhawaj drum.
- 2. Khayal is a more lyrical and free-form style that has largely replaced Dhrupad in modern concert practice.
- 3. While Dhrupad focuses on spiritual and heroic themes, Khayal is often more romantic and emotional in its content.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only (c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

- Ans D
- Statement 1 is correct; Dhrupad is a monumental and ancient style that emphasizes purity and the slow elaboration of notes, traditionally using the Pakhawaj (a barrel-shaped drum) for rhythmic accompaniment.
- Statement 2 is correct; Khayal (literally 'imagination') is a more flexible and ornate style that emerged later, allowing for more extensive ornamentation and vocal gymnastics. It is the dominant style in contemporary Hindustani concerts and is typically accompanied by the Tabla.

- Statement 3 is correct; the thematic content of Dhrupad is often devotional or in praise of kings, maintaining a serious and contemplative mood.
- Khayal allows for a wider range of emotional expression, including themes of human love and longing.
- The historical transition from the rigid structure of Dhrupad to the expressive freedom of Khayal reflects the evolution of aesthetic priorities in North Indian music, a process heavily influenced by the cultural shifts in the Mughal courts.

- **Consider the following statements regarding the mural paintings of Ajanta:**
- 1. The pigments were applied using the tempera technique on a dry surface rather than the true fresco method.
- 2. The themes of the murals are derived exclusively from the Jataka stories and the life of Buddha.
- 3. Each female figure depicted in the murals is characterized by a unique and distinct hairstyle.
- How many of the above statements are correct?
- (a) Only one (b) Only two (c) All three (d) None

- Ans B
- Statement 1 is correct because the Ajanta murals were executed using the tempera style (fresco-secco), where a ground of clay, cow dung, and rice husk was coated with lime and painted on after it had dried. This differs from the fresco-buono technique where paint is applied to wet plaster.
- Statement 2 is incorrect. While Buddhist themes like the Jataka tales and the life of Gautama Buddha predominate, the murals also include complex decorative patterns of flora and fauna, celestial beings like Kinnaras, and even Brahmanical figures like Indra.

- Statement 3 is correct; a remarkable feature of Ajanta's artistry is the attention to social fabric and fashion, where every female figure possesses a distinct hairstyle, reflecting the diverse period styles and accessories of the contemporary society. This attention to detail demonstrates the highly evolved aesthetic and social consciousness of the Vakataka-era artists.

- **Consider the following statements regarding 'Torana'.**
- 1. Torana is a free-standing ornamental or arched gateway.
- 2. Toranas are associated with Buddhist stupas like the Great Stupa in Sanchi, as well as with Jain and Hindu structures.
- 3. Jagannath Temple, Puri, is an example of Kalinga architecture having torana.
- Which of the above statements are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 1 and 3 only (c) 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

- Ans D
- Torana, is a free-standing ornamental or arched gateway for ceremonial purposes seen in the Hindu, Buddhist and Jain architecture of the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia and parts of East Asia.
- Torana is a sacred or honorific gateway in Buddhist and Hindu architecture. Its typical form is a projecting cross-piece resting on two uprights or posts. It is made of wood or stone, and the cross-piece is generally of three bars placed one on the top of the other; both crosspiece and posts are usually sculpted.
- Toranas are associated with Buddhist stupas like the Great Stupa in Sanchi, as well as with Jain and Hindu structures, and also with several secular structures.

- Consider the following statements regarding North Indian Temple Style.
- 1. In North India it is common for an entire temple to be built on a stone platform with steps leading up to it.
- 2. It does usually have elaborate boundary walls or gateways.
- 3. The garbhagriha is always located directly under the tallest tower.
- How many of the above statements is/are incorrect?
- (a) Only one (b) Only two (c) All three (d) None

- Ans a
- The style of temple architecture that became popular in northern India is known as nagara.
- In North India it is common for an entire temple to be built on a stone platform with steps leading up to it.
- Further, unlike in South India it does not usually have elaborate boundary walls or gateways.
- While the earliest temples had just one tower, or shikhara, later temples had several.
- The garbhagriha is always located directly under the tallest tower.

Q8

- **Consider the following statements:**
- 1. They developed Vesara style of architecture.
- 2. Their structural temples exist at Aihole, Badami and Pattadakal.
- 3. Their administration was highly centralized.
- The above statements most accurately refer to?
- (a) Cholas (b) Chalukyas (c) Cheras (d) Pandyas

- Ans B
- Administration: The Chalukya administration was highly centralized unlike that of the Pallavas and the Cholas. Village autonomy was absent under the Chalukyas.
- Architecture: The Chalukyas were great patrons of art. They developed the vesara style in the building of structural temples. However, the vesara style reached its culmination only under the Rashtrakutas and the Hoysalas.

Q9

- Consider the following statements regarding the paintings found at Ajanta Caves?
- 1. The themes of the paintings are the events from the life of the Buddha,
- 2. Figures in these caves are painted with over-stylisation, with less importance to naturalism.
- 3. The other important paintings are the famous Padmapani and Vajrapani.
- many of the above statements is/are incorrect?
- (a) Only one (b) Only two (c) All three (d) None

- Ans A
- The themes of the paintings are the events from the life of the Buddha, the Jatakas and the Avadanas. Some paintings such as Simhala Avadana, Mahajanaka Jataka and Vidharpundita Jataka cover the entire wall of the cave.

Q10

- Which of the following are the features of the Chalcolithic period?
- 1. Painted pottery was practiced during this period.
- 2. People started using iron, but did not know of copper and bronze metals.
- 3. A new technology for smelting metal ore was developed.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 1 and 3 only (c) 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

- Ans B
- The Chalcolithic period, also known as the Copper-Stone Age, marks a transitional phase between the Neolithic and the Iron Age. During this time, humans began using copper along with stone tools, but iron was not yet known or widely used. Hence, statement 2 is incorrect because iron technology belongs to a later period (Iron Age), not the Chalcolithic phase.
- Painted pottery is a prominent feature of Chalcolithic cultures across regions such as Malwa, Jorwe, and Ahar in India. These cultures produced distinctive ceramics with geometric and naturalistic designs, reflecting both aesthetic development and cultural identity, making statement 1 correct.

Q11

- Which of the following cities was designated as the capital of the newly created province of "Eastern Bengal and Assam"?
- (a) Calcutta (b) Rajshahi (c) Chittagong (d) Dacca

- Ans D
- Following the partition in 1905, Bengal was divided into two provinces: Western Bengal (including Bihar and Orissa) and Eastern Bengal and Assam. Dacca was chosen as the capital of Eastern Bengal and Assam, while Calcutta remained the capital of Western Bengal.
- The new eastern province was designed to have a Muslim majority, which Lord Curzon hoped would foster a loyalist community to counter the influence of the Hindu-led nationalist movement.
- This administrative restructuring aimed to create a demographic divide that would neutralize the "nerve-center of Indian nationalism".

Q12

- Consider the following statements regarding the official justification for the Partition of Bengal:
- 1. Bengal was considered too large for a single administration, with a population larger than that of the United Kingdom at the time.
- 2. The partition was intended to provide the neglected regions of Eastern Bengal with their own provincial government and budget.
- 3. Lord Curzon privately believed that the partition would help consolidate the "educated classes" into a single loyalist bloc in West Bengal.
- How many of the above statements are correct?
- (a) Only one (b) Only two (c) All three (d) None

- Ans B
- Statement 1 is correct; Bengal's population of 78 million was larger than that of many European nations combined, and the British argued that one Lieutenant-Governor could not possibly manage such a vast area.
- Statement 2 is correct; the official narrative emphasized that Eastern Bengal had been neglected in terms of infrastructure and education because the administration was centered in Calcutta.
- By creating a new province with Dacca as the capital, the British claimed they were ensuring the "development" of the Muslim-majority areas

Q13

- With reference to the British government's response to the Civil Disobedience Movement (1930–1931), consider the following statements:
- 1. The government promulgated a series of emergency ordinances to silence the nationalist press and ban public gatherings.
- 2. The Indian National Congress and its regional working committees were declared illegal organizations.
- 3. The brutal lathi-charge at the Dharasana Salt Works was witnessed and reported to the world by the American journalist Webb Miller.
- 4. The government accepted the demand for an immediate public inquiry into police excesses as part of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact.
- How many of the above statements are correct?
- (a) Only one (b) Only two (c) Only three (d) All four

- Ans C
- The British response to the Civil Disobedience Movement was characterized by intense legal and physical repression.
- Statement 1 is correct; the Viceroy issued several emergency ordinances to curb the Satyagraha, which included powers to censor news and dismantle the movement's communication networks.
- Statement 2 is correct; as the defiance intensified, the government declared the Indian National Congress an illegal body to cripple its organizational capacity.

- During the Civil Disobedience Movement, the "Anti-Chowkidara Tax" campaign became a powerful form of resistance. With reference to this, consider the following:
- 1. Chowkidars were village guards paid through a specific tax levied on the villagers, but they were perceived as agents of the British police.
- 2. In Bengal, the movement against the Chowkidara tax was often combined with an agitation against the Union Boards.
- Which of the above statements are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only (c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

- Ans C
- Chowkidars were village watchmen whose salaries were paid not by the colonial state directly, but through a chowkidara tax levied on villagers.
- Although projected as protectors of rural order, they were widely seen as extensions of the colonial surveillance and policing apparatus.
- They assisted the British police in intelligence gathering, reporting nationalist activities, and enforcing colonial authority at the village level.
- As a result, refusal to pay the chowkidara tax became a symbolic and practical act of defiance against everyday colonial control rather than merely a fiscal protest.

Q15

- **With reference to the Indian Independence Act 1947, consider the following statements:**
- 1. The Act abolished the office of the Secretary of State for India, transferring its functions to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations.
- 2. It provided that the British Crown would continue to retain its suzerainty over the Indian princely states for a transitional period of five years.
- 3. The Act allowed for the continued use of the Government of India Act 1935 as the governing framework for the new dominions until their own constitutions were framed.
- 4. It formally stripped the British monarch of the title "Emperor of India."
- How many of the above statements are correct?
- (a) Only one (b) Only two (c) Only three (d) All four

- Ans C
- The Indian Independence Act of 1947 was the legal culmination of the British withdrawal.
- Statement 1 is correct; the office of the Secretary of State for India was abolished, reflecting the transition from a colony to independent dominions within the Commonwealth.
- Statement 2 is incorrect; the Act explicitly declared the lapse of British suzerainty (Paramountcy) over the princely states with effect from August 15, 1947, meaning the states were legally free to join either dominion or remain independent, though they were encouraged to accede.

Q16

- With reference to the Anglo-French rivalry, consider the following statements:
- 1. The First Carnatic War was an extension of the War of Austrian Succession in Europe.
- 2. The Battle of Wandiwash (1760) was the decisive battle of the Second Carnatic War.
- 3. The Treaty of Paris (1763) allowed the French to retain their factories in India but forbade them from fortifying them.
- How many of the above statements are correct?
- (a) Only one (b) Only two (c) All three (d) None

- Ans B
- Statement 1 is correct: The First Carnatic War (1746–48) was triggered by the War of Austrian Succession in Europe.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: The Battle of Wandiwash (1760) was the decisive battle of the Third Carnatic War, not the Second. In this battle, General Eyre Coote defeated the French forces under Count de Lally.
- Statement 3 is correct: The Treaty of Paris (1763), which ended the Seven Years' War (and the Third Carnatic War), returned Pondicherry and Chandernagore to the French but as mere trading posts.
- They were banned from maintaining armies or fortifications, effectively ending French political power in India.

- Who among the following was not a party to the coalition that fought against the English in the Battle of Buxar?
- (a) Mir Kasim
- (b) Mir Jafar
- (c) Shuja-ud-daulah
- (d) Shah Alam II

- Ans b

- Consider the following statements about Harappan cities :
- 1. Roads were not always absolutely straight and did not always cross one another at right angles.
- 2. A striking feature is the uniformity in the average size of the bricks for houses and for city walls.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

- Ans c

- Examine the Characteristic Indo-Islamic architectural feature and the dynasty that is associated with it:
- (1) True dome emerged with recessed arches under the squinch with the Khiljis.
- (2) The four centered arch reinforced with a supporting beam i.e. arch-beam combination emerged with the Tughlaqs.
- (3) The Dome developed a bulbous form, with stifled neck and soon double dome became very common under Shah Jahan and Jehangir
- (4) A new device of inlay decoration with semi-precious stones embedded in marble in graceful foliage developed under Jehangir.
- Select the code for correct statements:
- (a) 1, 2 and 3 (b) 1, 2, 3 and 4 (c) 1 and 2 (d) 3 and 4

- Ans b

- Consider the following pairs:
- 1. Parsva—Nirgrandha
- 2. Gosala Maskariputra—Ajivika
- 3. Ajita Kesakambalin—Buddhist
- Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?
- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

- Ans b

- Which of the following statements about the Indian press is/are not true?
- A. The Bengal Gazette, a weekly paper, was started by James Augustus Hicky, an Englishman, in 1780.
- B. Hicky, a pioneer in the history of journalism in India, had very cordial relations with Warren Hastings, the then Governor- General.
- C. The Kolkata Journal was started by J. S. Buckingham in 1818.
- D. The Bengalee and the Amrit Bazar Patrika were the first vernacular papers in India.
- Choose the correct answer from the codes given below:
- (a) B and C (b) B and D (c) A and C (d) C and D.

- Ans b

- Which of the following is not one of the sources from which evidence of Indo-Roman trade during the Sangam Age is derived?
- (a) Sangam literature
- (b) The Roman coins of silver and gold found on the South Indian coast
- (c) Discovery of a Roman hoard at Arikamedu, near Pondicherry
- (d) The accounts of Chinese and Roman travellers

- Ans d

- List-I List-II
- A. Bhagat Jawahar Mal 1. Wahabi Movement
- B. Vilayat Au 2. Kuka Movement
- C. Sayaid Fadi 3. Mopalah Revolt
- D. Khoodi Mallah 4. Pabna Riots Codes:
- A B C D
- (a) 2 1 4 3
- (b) 1 2 3 4
- (c) 2 1 3 4
- (d) 1 2 4 3

- Ans a

- With reference to the period of extremist nationalist movement in India with its spirit of Swadeshi, which one of the following statements is correct?
- (a) Liakat Hussain led the Muslim peasants of Barisal in their agitations
- (b) In 1989, the scheme of national education was formulated by Satish Chandra Mukherjee
- (c) The Bengal National College was founded in 1906 with Aurobindo as the Principal
- (d) Tagore preached the cult of Atmasakti, the main plank of which was social and economic regeneration of the villages

- Ans a

- With reference to the cultural history of India, the term 'Panchayatan' refers to
- (a) an assembly of village elders
- (b) a religious sect
- (c) a style of temple construction
- (d) an administrative functionary

- Ans c