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Art & Culture

CLASS - 2

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The Later Vedic age. Prajapati came to replace Indra as a main deity of the Aryans an important milestone in the intellectual history of the nation reflecting acknowledgment of Supreme power behind all the natural power.

In the Later Vedic age we also noticed increasing popularity of sacrifices which became elaborate socio-cultural affairs ~~encompassing~~^{involving} complex rituals sponsored now by the emerging political classes as a part of their ^alegitimacy seeking measures.

The priestly classes mainly Brahmins started receiving large amount of donations mainly in form of cattle wealth and female ~~slaves~~^{slaves}. These elaborate rituals also laid to the sacrifices of animals on a large scale.

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Some of the public sacrifices which came to be performed in the Later vedic age were

1. Rajsuya sacrifice
2. Vajpeya Sacrifices - Health & well being of the king
3. Ashvamedha Sacrifice - for Domination.

The rituals have been first mentioned in the Yajurveda. and in due course of time we find appearance of ritualistic texts called "Brahmanas".

Towards the end of the vedic age we notice growing discontent against the priestly domination. Ritualistic complexities emerging social distinguish and ~~rigidities~~ ^{rigidities} associated with them along with the domination of the emerging ruling classes.

This voices of discontent can first be noticed in the Aranyakas (forest book) attributed to Rishis and Munis (Ascetics and hermits).

these new thinkers starting pondering over the problems of existence and their views came to differ from the views of the priestly classes.

They were not only against emerging social hierarchy but also against complex ritual and princely domination and in the Aranyakas sacrifices have been compared with broken boats.

The initial protest noticed in Aranyakas with time became more louder and in the text called Upanishadas which are in form of questions and answers. We find a well developed of philosophical system which has been constructed as the philosophy of Vedanta marking the beginning of the Indian of philosophical tradition. The emergence of the philosophy of Vedanta reflects not only the romantic reformist traditions but also the beginning of tendencies.

- Q. Highlight the salient features of Indian Reformism.
- Q. To what extent the philosophy of Vedanta was reformist in its approach.

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Q. Do you think that The philosophy of Vedanta marks the beginning of the Indian philosophical tradition?

The Philosophy of Vedanta as reconstructed on the basis of the U^apishadas is known for the following postulates.

① It accepts the existence^e of a creator called "Brahman" who is accepted as a universal soul (Vishvatma) thus the philosophy is theistic (Astik) in its orientation. The Brahman is also accepted as the only reality making the philosophy of Vedanta monistic in its orientation.

The Brahman is accepted as Nirguna (Attributeless) who can be defined only in the negative term.

The Brahman has created the universe^e by using his power of creation called Maya. Everything emanates / originates from Him and would ultimately merge into Him.

- ② In the vedantee philosophy the creation is accepted as unreal and so, is akin to / similar to an illusion.
- ③ The soul is identical with the Brahman, that means there is no difference between the Brahman and the soul.
- ④ In vedanta the worldly existence, the life is considered as sorrowful and the main reason behind the worldly sorrows and suffering is development of attachment (Moha) with the world which is unreal. The attachment with the world is product of ignorance.
- ⑤ The attachment with the world is also responsible for the indefinite cycles of birth and death (Samsara) as a result of the transmigration of the soul from the one life to another.
- ⑥ Since the nature of life is sorrowful in Vedanta the ultimate objective of the life is to stop the transmigration from one life to another and their by causing an end to the indefinite cycle of birth and death.

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⑦ This has been regarded as Salvation or Moksha in the vedic philosophy.

⑧ further attainment the goal of Moksha : Vedanta prescribed the path of knowledge that is also called "Jnana Marga" which is essential for the removal of ignorance of attachment with the world.

Shankracharya (8th-9th Century)

At the philosophy of Vedanta came to be revived by reinterpreted by a famous philosopher of the 9th century namely Shankracharya (born at Kaladi, Kerala). The revived version of the vedantic philosophy came to be known as the philosophy of Advaita (Non-dualism).

(Please explain on the basis of the principle of Vedanta)

He is also known for launching an ideological battle against the heterodox sects particularly against Buddhism. and so he is also accepted one of the factors behind the decline of Buddhism but at the same time he is also known for being influenced by some ideological and institutional aspect of Buddhism which is he incorporated in his ^{own scheme of thinking}. It is for this reason Shankracharya is also called a Copto-

Buddhist.

He is also known for establishing four Mathas. in the four corners of the country which are mentioned below.

- (i) Puri - East - Odisha
- (ii) Dwarka - West - Gujarat
- (iii) Badrinath - North - U.K
- (iv) Rameshvaram - South - Tamilnadu.

He was a great traveller who visited in almost all parts of the country and participated in debate and discussions (Shastarthas) with the known scholars of his time including the famous

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Mandin Misra. He is also known as writing
commentary, Tikals in Sanskrit language on the
Vedas and ^aUpanishads.

Around sixth century BC mainly in the gangetic
plains of the north we find emergence of a new
economy and a new society. The new economy
was associated with the expansion of agriculture
in the relatively fertile plains of the East,
increasing use of Iron facilitating both
intensive and extensive ^aexpansion of agriculture
and ~~with~~ ^{wheat &} paddy cultivation that the increased
surplus of production lead to the diversification
of economic activities facilitating the rise
of new social classes. (traders, money lenders,
peasants) new urban settlements and the new
urges and aspirations. ~~at~~ ^{richer} economically ~~richer~~
Vaishyas now started striving for more
social respect and recognition, agriculture
expansion needed preservation or protection
of cattle wealth and the increasing economic
differences in the society required some

Philosophical justification for both failure and success. The protection of wealth became an important concern and providing relief to the disadvantage also became an important imperative on the part of the contemporary a thinker and philosopher. The new process and principle associated with their activities also needed some ~~sketch~~ of ~~Anthro~~^{ch}logical adjustment. It is in this context of the rise of new aspirations and new urges that we can appreciate and understand Heterodox sects. As a result of increasing conflict between the new urges and the old ideological oppositions.

Jainism

1. In Jainism there is no concept of creator God and so Jainism is counted among the Atheist (Nastik) philosophical tradition of the subcontinent and is regarded as a Godless religion. But it accepts Gods and this acceptance is seen as an expression of some ~~sketch~~ of

compromising attitude of Jainism towards popular beliefs and practices. (Pragmatic Approach).

However these Gods have been placed below Tirthankaras. The Tirthankaras are accepted as the highest entity in Jainism. who are appreciated as great teachers possessing the ultimate knowledge called **Kaivalya** in Jainism. They are also accepted as the exalted souls who have conquered their senses (Indriyas) and thereby have also conquered worldly sufferings and misery.

First Tirthankara of Jainism was **Rishabhdeva**. 24th and the last Tirthankara was Vardhman Mahaveer who is also regarded as the founder of Jainism in the popular perception.

In Jainism the creation is accepted as a real and eternal entity, whose existence does not require any kind of divine intervention. The world or the universe is guided by some eternal laws of the nature which can not be changed.

Question - Do you think that the Jainism provided a new direction to the Indian Philosophical tradition

The universe is passing through indefinite cycles of rise and decline known as Utsarpini and Avasarpini.

Thus Jainism accepts the cyclic theory of time

3. In Jainism the soul is also accepted as real and eternal entity which is found even in non-living beings.

4. It is possibly for this reason that in Jainism we find so much emphasis on the principle of non-violence. The real and eternal nature of the soul has been explained mainly on the basis of acknowledgement of indefinite cycles of birth and death. caused by the transmigration of the soul from one life to another thus like Vedanata Jainism too accepts ↓ Sansara.
the theory of

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5. The transmigration of the soul is caused by the loss of the pure nature of the soul as a result of the accumulation of the Karmaphalas (Produce of action) around the soul. Thus Jainism also accepts the theory of karma as a part of its explanation for the ^{indefinite} cycles of birth and death.

This accumulation takes place in form of a Pudgal (matter).

6. Even in Jainism the life is sorrowful and death is not welcome so the cycle of birth and death is not welcome as it tends to perpetuate the worldly suffering and the miseries. The objective of life is to attain Nirvana. i.e., freedom from the cycles of birth and death.

→ for the attainment of Nirvana restoration of the pure nature of the soul is required which can be done by preventing the accumulation

of the Karmaphalas and by destroying previously accumulated layers of the Karmaphalas.

Q. for the prevention of the accumulation of Karmaphalas Jainism prescribed five great vows (Panch Maha Vartas) which are mentioned below.

- (a) Ahimsa (Non violence)
- (b) Satya (Truth)
- (c) Asteya (Non-stealing)
- (d) Aparigraha (non-accumulation of wealth).
- (e) Brahmacharya (Continence).

further destruction of the previously accumulated layers of the Karmaphalas Jainism prescribed the path of Tapa ie; self torture and self mortifications.

Tapa is also known as Kaya-Klesha. One rigorous form of Tapa is Saekhana / Santhara which is starvation till death.