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Art & Culture

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CLASS - 2

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 involving complex rituals sponsored now by the emerging political classes as a part of their legitimacy seeking measures.

The Priestly classes mainly brahmins started receiving large amount of donations mainly in form of cattle wealth and female slaves. These elaborate rituals also lead 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. Rajasuya 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 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 Upnishadas 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 traditions but also the beginning of reformist 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 Vedanata marks the begining of the Indian philosophical tradition?

The Philosophy of Vedanata as reconstructed on the basis of the Upanishades is known for the following postulates.

- ① It accepts the existence 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 Vedanata 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 by using his power of creation called Maya. Everything emanates / originate from Him and would ultimately merge into Him.

- ② In the Vedanta 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 thereby 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.

Shankaracharya (8th-9th Century)

The philosophy of Vedanta came to be revived by reinterpreted by a famous philosopher of the 9th century namely Shankaracharya (born at Kaladi, Kerala). The revived version of the Vedanta philosophy came to be known as the philosophy of Advaitvada (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 incorporated in his. It is for this own scheme of think reason Shankaracharya 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) Rameshwaram - South - Tamilnadu.

He was a great traveller who visited in almost all parts of the country and participated in debate and discussions (Shastreas) 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 ~~wit~~ ^{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~~ 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 ~~short~~^{ch} of Archaological 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~~ and this acceptance is seen as an expression of some ~~short~~ of

Compromising attitude of Jainism towards popular belief and practices. (Pragmatic Approach).

However these Gods have been placed below Thirthankaras. The Thirthankaras 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 Thirthankara of Jainism was **Rishabhdeva**. 24th and the last Thirthankara was Vardhaman Mahavir 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 possible for this reason that in Jainism we find so much emphasis on the principle of ^{ie} 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 trans-migration of the soul from one life to another thus like Vedanta 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 (Product of action) around the soul. Thus Jainism also accepts the theory of Karma as a part of its explanation for the cycles of birth and death.

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

6. Even in Jainism the life is sorrowful and 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) Brahma charya (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 Salekhana / Santhara which is starvation till death.