

ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF NATHA SAMPRADAYA IN INDIA



By

Mr. Chandrakanth Bhat
Assistant Professor
Dept. of History
Poornaprajna College
Udupi, Karnataka

People during Rigvedic Period

Nature was the foundation of religious belief.

Worshipper of Nature(Sun, Rain, Thunder etc.)

Simple method of worship

Used to pray in the open yard.



LATER VEDIC PERIOD



Idol



Yajna

- Worshipping of images began.
- Performing yajnas or yagas like Ashwamedha, Rajasuya, Vajapeya etc.
- God, Soul, Salvation, creator of world, caste system, Karma theory were the lofty ideals.

India during later Vedic period

- A large number of sects and subsects originated
- Buddhism and Jainism were the most popular sects.



Lord Buddha



Jina Mahaveera

Triumph of Buddhism

- Buddhism believed in ahimsa and karma theory.
- Buddha denounced:
 - 1)bloody sacrifice
 - 2)chanting mantras
 - 3)performing yajnas
 - 4) Use of Sanskrit language

Mahayana Period (1st B.C. – 7th A.D.)

- existed freedom of thinking and compassion.
- touched every common man.
- spread in and outside India.



Mahayana period-Buddhist statues



Mahayana Caves at Ajanta

DECLINE OF MAHAYANA

- Visit of Hiuen-Tsang, a Chinese pilgrim to Puthalika hills of Malyakuta
- Avalokiteshwara of puthalika hill.
 - Pashupatha, Thirthankara & Maheshwara.
- Blending of Mahayana and Shivism.



Avalokiteshwara

Pashupati



DECLINE OF MAHAYANA CONTD.

(VAJRAYANA)

- Worshipped innumerable gods.
- Practiced Panchamakara – eating fish, meat, drinking somarasa, use of mudra
- Taradevi was given importance than Buddha
- Forgot true sacrifice and aesthetics of life



Tara Devi temple at Shimla and Tara Devi

SHIVA BACKGROUND

- Shata and Kula were the divisions.
- Kapalika – Shiva sect.
- Called as Kayavadis and Indriyavadis.
- Practised vamachara, forgot asthetic life.



Vamachara types - 1 and 2

CAUSE FOR THE ORIGIN OF NATHA SAMPRADAYA -

(10th century A.D)

- Similarity of opinion between Vajrayana, Kapalika and Mahayana.
- Blend of Shiva and Buddhist sects.
- In Srishaila, saints of different sects lived together.



Srisailam

MATSYENDRANATHA

- Matsyendranatha - Founder of Natha Sampradaya
- Tried to lift the society from pathetic situation.
- Goraknath – Deciple of Matsyendranatha



GORAKHNATHA

- Considered as the real founder of Natha Sampradaya.
- He brought revolutionary change in his teacher's life
- Gorakhnath exploited the weak condition of many popular sects for his endeavour.
- He was a great thinker organizer and foresighted leader, travelled throughout India and abroad.



PHILOSOPHY OF NATHA SAMPRADAYA

- Yoga is the most valuable heritage of Natha Sampradaya.
- Established a strong foundation for Guru Parampara.
- Opposed caste system and inequality.
- Never favoured tantras, Mantras and all sorts Vamachara.
- Followed middle path between orthodox Hinduism and heterodox Buddhism.



THANK YOU