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THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACCORDING TO THE UPANISADS

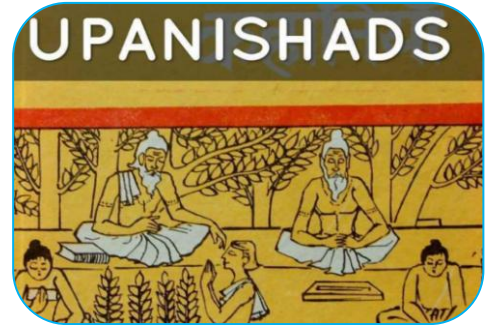
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ABSTRACT:

The Upanisads are one of the most sacred texts in Hinduism. They are a compilation of philosophical and spiritual discussions between the teacher and the student. It is the first of the four Vedas. It is said that the Upanisads are a source of knowledge and wisdom. The Upanisads were created by the sage Yajnavalkya, who is also the teacher. The Upanisads were written in Sanskrit and they were often referred to as the Vedas. The Upanisads are sometimes referred to as the Vedanta. They are also known as the Vedic texts. The Upanisads cover a wide variety of topics, and they discuss metaphysics, the nature of knowledge, liberation and salvation, Advaita Vedanta, and the nature of the self.



KEYWORDS: *Upanisads, Metaphysics, Spiritual, Advaita, Vedanta, Philosophical.*

THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Upanishads are the most ancient religious texts in the world. These texts are the foundations of many Indian religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Despite their age, they are still relevant today. They are the source of many concepts and ideas that inform our spiritual lives. The Upanishads are among the most important texts in India. The Upanishads have a lot to say about the state of the nation. They talk about the importance of the nation and how it should be developed. The Upanishads also talk about how the nation should be developed by taking the best from all religions and beliefs. The Upanishads touch on a great many other topics, from the different states of consciousness through death and rebirth processes to the cultivation of the virtues and attitudes needed for moksha. This is as one would expect from a heterogeneous collection of material culled from various sources at different times. Later philosophical systems and particularly the schools of Vedānta attempt to systematize them into more unified philosophies, but the Upanishads themselves are best regarded as spiritual texts, which, like the Bible in the Jewish and Christian traditions, serve as a wellspring for later developments. Even though in terms of composition they are remote in time, in terms of resonance and inspiration, they will always remain contemporary to spiritual seekers.

INTRODUCTION

The main theme of the Upanishads is the problem of philosophy. It is the search for what is true.

The word Upanishads comes from upa ni sad, "sitting down near". Its means sitting down near the teacher to receive it. It gradually came to mean what we receive from the teacher, a sort of secret doctrine or rashasyam. Sometimes it is meant what enables us to destroy errors, and approach truth. Shankara, in his introduction to the Taittiriya Upanisads, says: knowledge of Brahman is called Upanisads because in the situation of those who devote themselves to it, the bonds of conception, birth, decay, etc. become unloosed, or because it destroys them altogether, or because it leads the pupil very near to Brahman, or because there in the highest God is seated.¹ "The Upanisads form the concluding part of the Veda and are therefore called the Veda-anta Or the end of the Veda, a denomination which suggests that they contain the essence of the Vedic teaching. This is the foundation on which most of the later Philosophies and religions of India rest. "There is no important form Hindu thought, heterodox Buddhism included, which is not rooted in the Upanishads. " ²Later systems of philosophy display an almost pathetic anxiety to accommodate their doctrine to the views of the Upanishads, even if they can't father them all on them. Every revival of idealism in India has traced its ancestry to the teaching of the Upanishads. Their poetry and lofty idealism haven't as yet lost their power to move the minds and sway the heart of men. They contain the earliest records of Indian speculation. The aim of the Upanishads is not so much to reach philosophical truth as to bring peace and freedom to the anxious human spirit. Tentative solutions of metaphysical questions are put forth in the form of dialogues and disputation, though the Upanishads are essentially the outpouring or poetic deliverance of philosophically tempered minds in the face of the facts of life. They express the restlessness and striving of the human mind to grasp the true nature of reality. Not being systematic philosophy, or the production of a single author, or even of the same age they contain much that is inconsistent and unscientific; but if that were all we can't justify the study of the Upanishads. They set forth fundamental conditions which are sound and satisfactory, and these constitute the means by which their own innocent errors, which through exclusive emphasis have been exaggerated into fallacious philosophies, can be corrected. Notwithstanding the variety of authorship and the period of time covered by composition of these half-poetical and half-philosophical treatises, there is a unity of purpose, clear and distinct as we descend the stream of time. They reveal to us the wealth of the reflective religious mind of the times. In the domain of intuitive philosophy their achievement is a considerable one. Nothing that went before them for compass and power, for suggestiveness and satisfaction, can stand comparison with them. Their philosophy and religion have satisfied some of the greatest thinkers and intensely that "there is little that is spiritual in all this, " Or that, " this empirical intellectual conception, void of spirituality, is the highest form that the Indian mind is capable of. "

Professor J. S. Mackenzie, with truer insight says that "The earliest attempts at a constructive theory of the cosmos, and certainly one of the most interesting and remarkable, is that which is set forth in the Upanishads. "³

It is not easy to decide what the Upanishads teach. Modern students of the Upanishads read them in the light of this or that preconceived theory. Men are so little accustomed to trust their own judgment that they take refuge in authority and tradition. Though these are safe enough guides for conduct and life, truth requires insight and judgment as well. A large mass of opinion inclines today to the view of Sankara, who in his commentaries on the Upanishads the Bhagavadgeeta and the Veda-anta sutras, has elaborated a highly subtle system of non-dualistic metaphysics. Another is equally passionate that Sankara has not said the last word on the subject, and that a philosophy of love and devotion is the logical outcome of the teaching of Upanishads. Other observers, starting with particular beliefs, force their views into the Upanishads and strain their language so as to make it consistent with their own special doctrine. When disputes arise, all schools turn to the Upanishads. Thanks to the obscurity as well as the richness, the mystic haze as well as the suggestive quality of the Upanishads, the interpreters have been able to use them in the interest of their own religion and philosophy. It has had no set theory of philosophy or dogmatic scheme of theology to propound. They hint at the truth in life, but not as yet in science or philosophy. So numerous are their suggestions of truth, so various are their guesses at God, that almost anybody may seek in them what we want and find what we seek, and every school of dogmatic may congratulate itself on finding its own doctrine in the saying of the Upanishads.

In the history of thought it has often happened that a philosophy has been victimised by traditional interpretation that became established at an early date, and has thereafter presented critics and commentators from placing it in its proper perspective.

The system of the Upanishads has not escaped this fate. The Western interpreters have followed this commentator. Gough follow sankara's interpretation. The Philosophy of Upanishads he write:"The greatest expositor of the philosophy of the Upanishads is samkara Or snkaracarya.

The teaching of sankara himself is the natural and the legitimate interpretation of the philosophy of the Upanishads. "4Max Miller say" We must remember that the Orthodox view of the Vedanta is not what we should call evolution, but illusion. Evolution of the Brahman or parinama is heterodox, illusion or vivarta is Orthodox vedanta... To put it metaphorically, the world according to the Orthodox vedantin does not proceeds from Brahman as a tree from a germ, but as a mirage from the rays of the sun".5 Deussen accepts the same view. We shall try to ascertain the meaning which the author of the Upanishads intended, and not what later commentators attributed to them. The latter give us an approximately close idea of how the Upanishads were interpreted in later time, but not necessarily a true insight into the philosophic synthesis which the ancient seekers had. The problem may be , do the thoughts of the Upanishads hang together? Could all of them be traced to certain commonly acknowledged principles about the general make-up of the world? We aren't so bold as to answer this question in the affirmative. These writings contain too many hidden ideas, possible meaning, rich a mine of fancies and conjectures, that we can easily understand how different systems can draw their inspiration from the same source. Out of these ideas a coherent and consistent doctrine might be developed. It is the correct one, on account of the obscurity of many passages. Yet with the higher ideals of philosophic exposition in view, we sh consider the Upanishads ideas of the universe and man's place in it.

CONCLUSION

It is true that any one of the Upanishads provides an audience with an opportunity to engage in their own spiritual quest to comprehend the Ultimate Truth, but when taken together with the Vedas, they provide an opportunity for spiritual engagement they are thought to elevate one above the distractions of the mind and daily life toward higher levels of consciousness. The more one engages with the texts, it is claimed, the closer one comes to Divine knowledge. This is encouraged by the paradox of the inherently rational, intellectual, nature of the discourses contrasted with repeated emphasis on rejecting rational, intellectual attempts at apprehending truth. Divine Truth could only finally be experienced through one's own spiritual work.

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2. Bloomfield : The Religion of the veda, p. 51
3. E.R.E., vol. Vii., p. 597;see also Hume, The Thirteen Principal Upanisads, p. 2.
4. P.viii
5. S.B.E., vol. XV., p. xxvii.
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