

Vedanta

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What is Vedanta?

VEDANTA (literally “the completion of the Vedas”) is one of the orthodox systems of Indian philosophy, a religious-philosophical doctrine, which arose on the basis of the Upanishads. Vedanta and still occupies an important place in the philosophy of Hinduism. For the first time, the main points of Vedanta were expounded by Badarayana in his Vedanta-sutras. Later, Vedanta developed along the lines of publishing comments on this work and on the Upanishads. There are two directions in Vedanta. The first one is advaita (absolute non-dualism), which was founded by Shankara (8th century). According to advaita, there is no other reality in the world, except for a single supreme spiritual entity - Brahman, which is indefinable, unconditioned



Emergence

According to most scholars, this happened in the post-Buddhist era. Researchers propose different dates for the compilation of the Vedanta Sutras, mainly from the second century BC. e. II century BC. e. [2] Some scientists suggest earlier (V century BC), and later (V century) dates. [2] According to a number of Russian researchers, the Vedanta Sutras did not arise until the 3rd – 4th centuries AD e. [3] [4] While the Vedic ritualistic religious process of the Karma-Kanda continued to be practiced by the Brahmans, [5] more Jnana-oriented (knowledge) trends began to appear. These new philosophical and mystical trends in the Vedic religion were focused on meditation, self-discipline, and spiritual self-awareness, rather than ritual practices.



Upanishads

The basis of Vedanta is the philosophy of the Upanishads, in which the Absolute Truth is called Brahman. Sage Vyasa was one of the main advocates of this philosophy and the author of the Vedanta-sutras based on the Upanishads. The concept of Brahman as the Supreme Spirit or as the ever-existing, immanent and transcendental Absolute Truth, which is the divine basis of all existence, is the central theme in most Vedanta schools. The concepts of the personal God or Ishwara also play an important role, and the various Vedantic schools mostly differ on how they define the relationship between God and Brahman. The philosophy of the Upanishads is often expressed in mysterious language, which allowed a wide variety of its interpretations.



The second direction of Vedanta is vishishta advaita (distinctive non-dualism), the founder of which is Ramanuja (11th-12th centuries). According to the teachings of Ramanuja, there are three realities: matter, soul and god. They are in mutual subordination: the individual soul subjugates the material body, God dominates both of them. Without God, both soul and matter can exist only as pure concepts, and not as reality. The goal of the individual is to be free from material existence, which is achieved through spiritual activity, knowledge and love of God. The latter is considered particularly important. Advaita was somewhat more associated with the cult of the god Shiva, and Visishta advaita with the cult of the god Vishnu.



Thank you for attention!

