

Later Vedic Period

Later Vedic Period is the period followed by the Rig Vedic Age, where the social system was strict. The Varna system gained rapid popularity in this period.

- The birth of a girl was seen as a terrible omen, and women were not allowed to study or attend school.
- In addition, women were not even allowed to speak in public during the Later Vedic Period. The people were divided into various castes, such as Brahmans, Vaishyas, Kshatriyas, Shudras, etc.
- Another interesting fact about this later Vedic age is the kings didn't have a standing army. For wars, the tribal units were activated.

Later Vedic Period and Civilisation

As we have mentioned above, during the Later Vedic Period, the Aryans moved toward the east. The Aryans expanded to the eastern Gangetic plains, which is known as Satapatha Brahmana.

- During the Later Vedic Period, one of the most important developments was the growth of large kingdoms.
- Panchalas had a famous king named Pravahana Jaivali, and he was a patron of learning.
- Kosala, Kasi and Videha came into prominence when Kurus and Panchalas fell.
- The Later Vedic Period civilization includes the 3 divisions of India, Aryavarta, Dakshinapatha and Madhyadesa.

Later Vedic Period and Polity

During the later Vedic age, many big kingdoms arose, and tribes merged to form Rashtra.

- The small kingdoms merged to form Mahajanapadas. With this, the scale of wars also increased rapidly.
- With the expansion of kingdoms, the royal power grew in tandem. To encourage their status, the king undertook sacrifices and ceremonies. Some of the ceremonies were Rajasuya, Asvamedha and Vajpeya.
- During the Later Vedic Period, the king was equated with the Gods, and the term 'Divine Kingship' was introduced.
- The Vaishyas were forced to pay taxes to the king. The Vaishyas' children become Vaishyas, and the Shudra's children become Vaishyas automatically.
- The Varna System was divided into two classes- the ruling class and the class responsible for paying taxes and manual labour.

Economy of Later Vedic Period

During Later Vedic Period, agriculture was the major occupation. Apart from that, metalwork, pottery and carpentry were also there.

- Iron was used widely during this Later Vedic age

- Knowledge of manure during this period added significant benefit in agriculture during this period.
- With the growth of agricultural production, trade also progressed in the Later Vedic Period.
- industrial work became widened, and with it, metalwork, woodwork, and leatherwork also advanced.
- Coins like Nishka and Karshapana were used in India as a result of increased trade. However, their use was limited to small transactions. Apart from these, gold and silver coins were also used.

Later Vedic Period Social Life

During the Later Vedic Period, Brahmins, Vaisyas, Kshatriyas, and Sudras which are known as four divisions of society, was completely established.

- Brahmins and Kshatriyas got many benefits, but the Vaisya and Shudra classes didn't.
- During this period, Brahmins were superior to Kshatriya. However, Kshatriyas often claimed superiority over the Brahmins,
- During the Later Vedic Period, caste-based on employment emerged. There were no opportunities for the women.
- The women's right to attend assemblies was revoked, and child marriages grew rapidly.
- In the family, the authority was given to the father, and women were considered as the lower rank.

Religion of Later Vedic Period

During the Later Vedic Period, early gods such as Indra and Agni lost their significance. In this period, Vishnu, Rudra, and Prajapati rose to prominence.

- Prihood became a profession, and sacrifices were the cornerstone of this period. The public sacrifices involved the king, and the private sacrifices were performed at home.
- These sacrifices were responsible for the emergence of Jainism and Buddhism as well.
- The Brahmin claimed a monopoly of priestly expertise and knowledge. They were offered gold, cows, horses etc.
- However, at the end of the Later Vedic Period, a strong reaction emerged against the domination of priests, cults and rituals.

Administration in the Later Vedic Period

During the Later Vedic Period, the structure of Samiti and Sabha was changed, and their importance was reduced. Rich and nobles used to dominate, and there was no place for women there.

- **Ministry:** Here, some new ministers were appointed with the early ministers. The ministry included Mahishi, Sangrahit, Purohit, Bhagdut, Suta and Gramin.
- **Military System:** During the Later Vedic Period, battles were frequently happening. That's why the king was forced to systemise his military system. Due to this, a solid military structure emerged.
- **Divine Kingship:** Kings were compared to the Gods, and there was less role of ministry. King was not obligated to obey the ministry's advice.

