

## Theology :

Theology is a system of doctrines developed on the basis of a definite historic religion. Theology is an articulated system of religious beliefs. Theology is not to criticize the religious experience, out which it grew, but rather to deal faithfully with that.

The word 'Theology' comes from 'Theos' and 'logos'. 'Theos' means 'God' and 'logos' means 'Theory'.

Therefore, ~~The~~ etymologically Theology is the study or theory of God.

Theology ~~is~~ seems to developed from the Vaidic period to modern period. In Vaidic Period, people believed in many deities. The people in the early Vaidic period worshipped the natural forces like the Sun, earth, sky, wind, rain <sup>etc.</sup> as God ~~and~~ and Goddesses like Indra, Agni, Surya, Varuna, Vayu etc. In that period Gods were divided into three categories — ① Terrestrial, which are Agni, Soma, Brihaspati, Prithvi. ② Aerial Gods which are Rudra, Vayu, Indra, Maruts, Prajanya. ③ Celestial Gods which are Varuna, Surya, Mitra, Vishnu, Pusha et.



There are three stages of theology which are - Polytheism, Monotheism and Monism. ~~In Vedic polytheism natural occurrences are attributed~~

When the early Vedic Aryans who were primitive, settled down and began to wonder at the charming and the tempting and to fear the terrible and the destructive aspects of nature, they personified them in an anthropomorphic fashion and called them gods and goddess and began to worship them. This was the stage of naturalistic and anthropomorphic polytheism. In Vedic polytheism natural occurrences are attributed to supernatural causes. Polytheism yielded place to monotheism and the latter to monism. **Max Muller** introduces **Henotheism** as a transitional stage from polytheism to monotheism. Henotheism means 'belief in one only God'. The Vedic Aryans regarded any god they were praising as the most supreme and the only god. According to MacDonnell henotheism is an appearance rather than a reality, an appearance produced by the indefiniteness due to undeveloped anthropomorphism. But whether we call it henotheism or mere exaggeration of the powers of the deity in question, it is obvious that this stage can neither be properly called polytheistic nor monotheistic but one which had a tendency towards both of them.

Now let us see the stages of development of thought from polytheism to monotheism in the early parts of the Vedas. When polytheism leads to monotheism, the most powerful god among the hierarchy of gods is enthroned as the ruler of this universe. In monotheism, Varuna at one time and **Indra** at another time were treated as the supreme. The supreme can only be one. We cannot have two supreme and unlimited beings. Everywhere the question was asked whether a god was himself the creation of another. A creator god is no god at all. With the growing insight into the workings of the world and nature of godhead the many gods tended to melt into one. The perception of unity realized in the idea of Rta waked in support of monotheism. Trust in natural law means faith in one God. Rg Veda declares that reality is one and that sages call it by many names such as **Agni, Yama**, etc.

Experiments on the concept of God continued and now monotheism gives way to



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monism because the seers were not satisfied with an anthropomorphic or personalistic conception of the Godhead. This tendency towards the **One** culminates in monism. In monotheism many Gods were reduced to one God, but in monism the whole of existence is reduced to one fundamental reality, which the wise regard him as many. There are mantras in the Vedas which allude to monism eg: '**sat (reality) is one**'. To Israel the same revelation came: "The Lord, thy God, is one". Plutarch says: "There is one sun and one sky over all nations and one Deity under many names."