



Give the reasons for their emergence – Proliferation of Sacrifices, Discriminatory institutions, Ambiguous scriptures, Need of New Thoughts, The charisma of Buddha and Mahaveera and the usage of common tongue for teachings etc.

Conclusion:

Conclude with the importance of heterodox.

Introduction:

The sixth century B.C. is considered a wonderful century in history. Great thinkers like Buddha, Mahavira, Heraclitus, Zoroaster, Confucius and Lao Tse lived and preached their ideas in this century. In India, the republican institutions were strong in the 6th century B.C. This enabled rise of heterodox sects against the orthodox religion dominated by rites and rituals.

Body

Rise of heterodox and monotheist belief system:

- **Religious factor:** The primary cause for the rise of Jainism and Buddhism was the religious unrest in India in the 6th century B.C.
 - The complex rituals and sacrifices advocated in the Later Vedic period were not acceptable to the common people.
 - The sacrificial ceremonies were also found to be too expensive. The superstitious beliefs and mantras confused the people.
 - The teachings of Upanishads, an alternative to the system of sacrifices, were highly philosophical in nature and therefore not easily understood by all.
 - Therefore, what was needed in the larger interests of the people was a **simple, short and intelligible way to salvation for all people.**
 - Such religious teaching should also be in a language known to them. This need was fulfilled by the teachings of Buddha and Mahavira.
- **Socio-Economic factor:** Other than the religious factor, social and economic factors also contributed to the rise of these two religions.
 - The rigid caste system prevalent in India generated tensions in the society. Higher classes enjoyed certain privileges which were denied to the lower classes.
 - Also, the Kshatriyas had resented the domination of the priestly class. It should also to be noted that both Buddha and Mahavira belonged to Kshatriya origin.
 - The growth of trade led to the improvement in the economic conditions of the Vaisyas.
 - As a result, they wanted to enhance their social status but the orthodox Varna system did not allow this.
 - Therefore, they began to extend support to Buddhism and Jainism. It was this merchant class that extended the chief support to these new religions.
- **Jainism and Buddhism:** The language of Buddha and Mahavira were Pali and Prakrit, understood by common man.
 - They provided equal treatment to men and women, who could be part of the Sangha.
 - Buddha was a rationalist who tried to explain things in the light of reason and not on the basis of blind faith.
 - Though he did not make a direct attack on the caste system, he was against any social distinctions and threw open his order to all. Therefore, Buddhism was more a social than religious revolution.
 - It taught the code of practical ethics and laid down the principle of social equality.

Conclusion