

So much about the past. But what about the present and how about the future? The position of philosophy amongst the Muslim peoples today is no worse than it is in the rest of the world. What type of philosophical thought the future has in store for them we shall try to forecast in our concluding remarks.

BOOK ONE

PRE-ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT

Part I

Chapter I

PRE-ISLAMIC INDIAN THOUGHT

Maurice Bloomfield says paradoxically in *The Religion of the Rig-Veda* that "Indian religion begins before its arrival in India."¹ By this he means to imply that Indian religion is a continuation of the primitive faith of the Indo-European race to which the Aryans that came to India belonged. "The Sanskrit word *deva* (to shine) for God is similar to the Latin word *deus*; *yaj* a Sanskrit word for worship is common to more than one Indo-European language; while the *Vedic* god Mitra has his counterpart in the Iranian god Mithra." From a comparative study of the beliefs and practices of the Teutonic, Hellenic, Celtic, Slavonic, Italian, Armenian, and Persian peoples which all sprang from the Indo-European race, it has been established beyond the slightest doubt that the basis of their religion was an animistic belief in a very large number of petty gods, each of which had a special function. They were worshipped with sacrifice, accompanied with potent formulas and prayers. Magic was highly regarded and much used.

It is greatly regretted that there is neither any formal history nor any archaeological remain to throw light on the early home of this ancient race or on the time when the great historical people hived off from it. Our principal source for the history, religion, and philosophy of the Indian branch is the *Vedas* besides the Epics and the *Purāṇas*.

The Vedas.—Among the *Vedas*, the oldest is *Rg-Veda* which consists of more than a thousand hymns composed by successive generations of poets during a period of many centuries. The hymns are connected in various ways with the sacrifices, the domestic ceremonies, and the religious speculation of the time, and are concerned chiefly with the worship of gods, who represent personification of natural forces, and the propitiation of demoniac beings.

In the Indo-Iranian period the refreshing drink prepared from the *soma*-plant was offered to gods in a special ritual and the singing of a hymn was a

¹ Maurice Bloomfield, *The Religion of the Rig-Veda*, Putnam, N. Y., 1908, p. 16.

necessary part of the ritual. The Aryans brought this custom with them and continued to compose verses for the *soma*-ritual and for the occasions of annual sacrifices in their new homeland. As the hymns were to be sung, a class of priests arose whose duty it was to recite poems of praise in honour of gods. The priests who could sing better hymns and were in possession of a secret lore, which enabled them by conducting sacrifices in the right way to win the favour of gods for their patrons, were in great demand. Consequently, a number of priestly families vied with one another in composing hymns in the best language and metre then available. The *Rg-Veda* gives evidence of seven such families each bearing the name of a patriarch to whom the hymns are ascribed. At first the hymn collections of six families were brought together and then of nine. At a much later stage some scholars collected one hundred and ninety-one poems which were taught as the last section of the oral curriculum of hymns. Thus, there became ten books of the *Rg-Veda*.

The *mantras* of the *Atharva-Veda* consist largely of spells for magical purposes and advocate pure and unalloyed polytheism. The other *Vedas* are entirely sacrificial in purpose. The *Sāma-Veda* consists of verses borrowed from the *Rg-Veda* to be applied to *soma*-sacrifice. The *Yajur-Veda* consists of ritual formulas of the magical type.

For a long time the number of the *Vedas* was limited to three, the *Atharva-Veda* being totally excluded from the group of the *Vedas*. In support of this contention the following verse from Manu can be cited: "From Agni, Vāyu, and Ravi, He drew forth for the accomplishment of sacrifice the eternal triple *Veda*, distinguished as *Rik*, *Yajush* and *Sāman*."² Similarly, in *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇas* it is said, "The *Rik-Yajush-Sāman* verses are the threefold science."³

A probable reason for the exclusion of the *Atharva-Veda* from the *Vedas* is that "it consists mostly of magic spell, sorcery, and incantations which were used by the non-Aryans and the lower classes to achieve worldly goods such as wealth, riches, children, health, freedom from disease. . . . The *Atharva-Veda* was recognized later on when hymns relating to sacrifices seem to have been added to it to gain recognition from the orthodoxy."⁴

Vedic Conception of God.—The religion of the *Vedas* is polytheism. It has not the charm and grace of the pantheon of the Homeric poems; but it certainly stands nearer the origin of the gods. All gods whether great or small are deified natural phenomena. The interesting thing about them is that they are identified with the glorious things whose deifications they are and are also distinguished from them. They are still thought of as being sun, moon, rain, wind, etc., yet each god is conceived as a glorious being who has his home in heaven, and who comes sailing in his far-shining car to the sacrifice and sits

² Manu, I. 23.

³ *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇas*, IV: 6, 7.

⁴ Manūnāi C. Pandya, *Intelligent Man's Guide to Indian Philosophy*, Bombay, 1935, p. 21.

down on the grass to hear his own praise recited and sung and to receive the offerings.⁵ The hymns sung by the priests were mainly invocations of the gods meant to accompany the oblation of *soma*-juice and the fire-sacrifice of the melted butter.

The *Vedas* are not consistent in their account of the gods. In one myth the sun is a male, in another a female. The sun and the moon are mentioned in one place as rivals, elsewhere as husband and wife. The dog is extolled in one place as a deity and in another mentioned as a vile creature. Again the sun, the sky, and the earth are looked upon sometimes as natural objects governed by particular gods and sometimes as themselves gods who generate and control other beings.

In the *Rg-Veda*, heaven and earth are ordinarily regarded as the parents of gods, *pitra*⁶ or *mātra*.⁷ In other passages heaven (*dyaus*) is separately styled as father and the earth (*prithivi*) as mother.⁸ At other places, however, they are spoken of as having been created. Thus it is said,⁹ that he who produced heaven and earth must have been the most skilful artisan of all the gods. Again, Indra is described as having formed them, to follow him as chariot wheels do a horse. At other places the creation of the earth and the heaven is ascribed to Soma and Pushan.

Thus, while the gods are regarded in some passages of the *Rg-Veda* as the offsprings of heaven and earth, they are at other places considered independent of these deities and even their creators.

In various texts of the *Rg-Veda* the gods are spoken of as being thirty-three in number. Thus it is said in the *Rg-Veda*: "Come hither Nasatyas, Asvins, together with the thrice eleven gods, to drink our nectar."¹⁰ Again, "Agni, the wise gods lend an ear to their worshippers. God with the ruddy steeds, who lovest praise, bring hither those three and thirty."¹¹ In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇas* this number of thirty-three gods is explained as made up of eight *vasus*, eleven *rudras*, and twelve *adityas*, together with heaven and earth, or, according to another passage, together with Indra and Prajāpati instead of heaven and earth.

The enumeration of gods as thirty-three is not adhered to throughout the *Vedas*. In the *Rg-Veda*, the gods are mentioned as being much more numerous: "Three thousand, three hundred, thirty and nine gods have worshipped Agni."¹² This verse which is one of the many shows that the *Vedic* Indian

⁵ Farquhar, *An Outline of the Religious Literature of India*, Oxford University Press, 1920, p. 13.

⁶ *Rg-Veda*, i: 159, 2; iii: 3, 11.

⁷ *Ibid.*, ix: 85, 12; x: 35, 3.

⁸ *Ibid.*, i: 89, 4.

⁹ *Ibid.*, i: 160, 2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, i: 34, 11.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, i: 45, 2.

¹² *Ibid.*, iii: 39.

believed in the existence of a much larger number of supernatural beings than thirty-three.

The gods were believed to have had a beginning; they were stated to be mortal, but capable of overcoming death by the practice of austerity. The *Rg-Veda* says that the gods acquired immortality by drinking *soma*. Still the gods are not self-existent or unbeginning beings. It has been seen that they are described in various passages of the *Rg-Veda* as offsprings of heaven and earth. In various texts of the *Rg-Veda* the birth of Indra is mentioned, and his father and mother are also alluded to.¹³

The *Vedic* gods can be classified as deities of heaven, air, and earth:

1. *Celestial Gods*.—The oldest god is Dyaus, generally coupled with Prithivi when the two are regarded as universal parents. Another is Varuṇa, the greatest of the *Vedic* gods besides Indra. It is he who sustains and upholds physical and moral order. In the later *Vedas*, when Prajāpati became creator and supreme god, the importance of Varuṇa waned, and in the post-*Vedic* period Varuṇa retained only the dominion of waters as god of the sky. Various aspects of the solar activity are represented by five gods, namely, Mitra, a personification of the sun's beneficent power; Sūrya, the proper name of the sun, regarded as the husband of dawn; Sāvitrī, the life-giving activity of the sun; Pusan, a pastoral deity personifying the bountiful power of the sun; and Viṣṇu occupying the central place in this pantheon.

2. *Atmospheric Gods*.—The most important of these gods is Indra, a favourite national deity of the Aryan Indians. He is not an uncreated being. It is said of him, "Thy father was the parent of a most heroic son; the maker of Indra, he also produced the celestial and unconquerable thunder . . . was a most skilful workman."¹⁴ Again, "A vigorous (god) begot him, a vigorous (son), for the battle; a heroic female (*nāri*) brought him forth, a heroic soul."¹⁵ His whole appearance is golden; his arms are golden; he carries a golden whip in his hands; and he is borne on a shining golden car with a thousand supports. His car is drawn by two golden steeds with flowing golden manes. He is famous for slaying Vṛta after a terrific battle, as a result of which water is released for man and light is restored to him. Certain immoral acts are also attributed to him. He occasionally indulges in acts of violence such as slaying his father or destroying the car of Dawn. Less important gods of this group are Trita, Apāṇapāt and Matarisvan. The sons of Rudra, the malignant deities of the *Vedas*, are the Maruts (the storm-gods) who help Indra in his conflicts. The god of wind is Vāyu while that of water is Āpaḥ.

3. *Terrestrial Gods*.—Rivers are deified. Thus Sindu (Indus), Vipas (Bias), and Sutudri (Sutlej) are invoked in the *Rg-Veda*. The most important god is Sarasvatī, often regarded as the wife of Brahmā. Another very important god

¹³ *Ibid.*, iv: 17, 4, 12.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, iv: 17, 4.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, vii: 20, 5.

is Agni, the god of fire. The number of hymns addressed to him far exceed those addressed to any other divinity with the exception of Indra. In the *Rg-Veda* he is frequently spoken of as a goblin-slayer. Another god is Soma, the divine drink which makes those who drink it immortal. A priest says in the *Rg-Veda*: "We have drunk *Soma*, we have become immortal, we have entered into light, we have known gods."

In addition to these, there is a host of abstract deities and also deities of less importance which cannot be described here for want of space. Suffice it to say that an attempt was made by the sages (*ṛṣis*) to introduce order in the bewildering multiplicity of gods. As several gods had similar functions, they were in some cases bracketed together, so that it might be said that when Indra and Agni performed identical functions, Agni was Indra or Indra was Agni. Hence arose many dual gods. A further effort in the direction of systematization was made through what Max Müller has called henotheism—a tendency to address any of the gods, say, Agni, Indra, Varuṇa, or any other deity, "as for the time being the only god in existence with an entire forgetfulness of all other gods." Macdonell has a different theory to explain the so-called henotheism by ascribing to it exaggeration, thus retaining the charge of polytheism against the *Vedas*. Some modern Hindus under the influence of Swami Dayananda repudiate both these theories as inconsistent with the true spirit of the *Vedas*.¹⁶ "He is One, sages call Him by different names, e.g., Agni, Yama, Maarishvan."¹⁷ No doubt, a few verses of this nature can be found in the *Vedas*; but the consensus of scholars is that monotheistic verses are a product of the later *Vedic* period and that they do not express the dominant strain of the *Vedic* thought. Shri Krishna Saksena in his chapter "Indian Philosophy" in *A History of Philosophical Systems* edited by V. Ferm says that the early *mantras* contain a religion of nature-worship in which powers of nature like fire (*agni*) and wind (*vāyu*) are personified. In later hymns and the *Brāhmaṇas*, monotheistic tendencies begin to crop up a little. Swami Dayananda was a product of Hindu-Muslim culture and his insistence on monotheism shows the extent to which Muslim thought has influenced Indian religious beliefs.

Vedic Eschatology.—The *Rg-Veda* makes no distinct reference to a future life except in its ninth and tenth books. Yama, the god of death, was the first of the mortals to die. He discovers the way to the other world; guides other men there, assembles them in a home, which is secured for them for ever. He grants luminous abodes to the pious and is an object of terror for the wicked. Yama is said to have two insatiable dogs with four eyes and wide nostrils who act as his messengers and convey the spirits of men to the abode of their forefathers. After a person's dead body has been burnt, his spirit soars to the realm of eternal light in a car or on wings and enters upon a more perfect

¹⁶ Sir Gokal Chand Narang, *Message of the Vedas*, New Book Society, Lahore, 1946, pp. 42-56.

¹⁷ *Rg-Veda*, i: 164, 46.

life which fulfils all of his desires and grants him unending happiness. Since the *Vedic* gods did not have purely spiritual pleasures but were often subject to sensual appetites, it can be said that the pleasures promised to the pious in the world to come were not altogether spiritual. Yama is described as carousing with the gods,¹⁸ and *Gandharvas*, a class of gods who are described as hairy like dogs and monkeys, often assume handsome appearance to seduce the earthly females.¹⁹ Indra is said to have had a happy married life.

Brāhmaṇas.—Each of the four *Vedas* has three sub-divisions: the *Samhitās* (sacred texts), the *Brāhmaṇas* (commentaries), and the *Āraṇyakas* (forest books). The *Brāhmaṇas* are, therefore, an integral part of the *Vedas*. Sayana, a great scholar of the *Vedas*, says, "*Veda* is the denomination of the *Mantras* and the *Brāhmaṇas*."²⁰ (Swami Dayananda differs on this point.) By the *Mantras* are meant hymns and prayers; and the *Brāhmaṇas* are intended to elucidate objects which are only generally adverted to in the hymns. The *Brāhmaṇas* comprise precepts which inculcate religious duties, maxims which explain those precepts, and arguments which relate to theology.

Considering the fact that the *Brāhmaṇas* often quote from the *Vedas* and devote themselves to the clarification of the ritualistic and the philosophical portions of the *Vedas*, it may be concluded that the *Samhitās* must have existed in their present form before the compilation of the *Brāhmaṇas* was undertaken. In fact in the *Brāhmaṇas*, we find fully developed the whole *Brāhmaṇical* system, of which we have but faint indications in the *Vedas*. We have the whole body of religious and social institutions far more complicated than the simple ritual of the *Samhitās*; four castes with the Brāhmins at the top and the Śūdras at the bottom have been recognized both in theory and in practice—all this shows that the *Brāhmaṇas* must have been composed a long time after the *Vedas*. It is, however, obvious that the *Brāhmaṇas* were a kind of a scriptural authority for the *Brāhmaṇical* form of worship and social institutions.

Upaniṣads.—The third integral part of the *Vedas*, namely, the *Āraṇyakas*, intended for the study of the anchorites in the forests in the third stage of their life, led ultimately to the *Upaniṣads* or *Vedāntas* as the concluding portion of the *Vedas*. These were meant for the ascetics in the fourth stage of their lives called the *Sannyāsa Āśrama*. Literally, the word *Upaniṣad* means "a sitting besides," i.e., a lesson taught by the teacher to the pupils sitting by his side. These discourses expounded in enigmatic formulæ a series of esoteric doctrines to the selected few students, mainly Brāhmins, who were deemed fit to receive such a course of instruction.

Considering the age which gave birth to the *Upaniṣads* for understanding some of the major problems of life, one marvels at the depth and insight of the early Hindu seers. Their attitude towards the *Vedas* was not one of veneration;

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, x: 135, 1.

¹⁹ *Atharva-Veda*, v: 37, 11 f

²⁰ M. Müller. Ed., *Rg-Veda*

tion; it was on the contrary an attitude of doubt and disrespect. While they considered *Vedas* to be of divine origin, they felt at the same time that the *Vedic* knowledge was inferior to the true divine insight and could not liberate them.²¹ They were not concerned with the world of phenomena and denounced with all the force at their disposal the rich and elaborate ritualism then prevalent. Sacrifice, an integral part of the *Vedic* faith, had no significance for them. Their interest lay not in the outer world but in the inner and, within that, in the mystery of the self. The introverted Brāhmins were accordingly carried far beyond the realm of the anthropomorphic deities of the early *Vedic* period and devoted attention to that all-transcending principle from which all natural forces and events were supposed to proceed. The *Upaniṣads*, however, fall short of offering a coherent presentation of the *Brāhmaṇic* doctrine of the Universal Soul-in-all-things. "This is only found in them in fragments, some small, some large. And in addition these fragments are the work of various schools and various ages. Those who have described the *Upaniṣads* as chaotic are not altogether wrong."²² It would be hard to say what philosophical opinions might not be supported on their authority, for the most part contradictory statements find a place in them, yet the tendency is on the whole towards pantheism. The *Upaniṣads* teach the identity of the soul of all beings both animate and inanimate with the Universal Soul. Since the Universal Soul dwells in all, one finds one's own self in all things, both living and non-living. In this light alone can the meaning of the famous *tat tvam asi* (That art thou) of the *Upaniṣads* be understood. The human self is not a part of the Divine Self, but is the *Brahman-Ātman* whole and undivided. The Self is consequently a single principle, which, philosophically speaking, can offer an explanation for the entire spectacle of nature.

It is often said that the pillars on which the edifice of Indian philosophy rests are *Ātman* and *Brahman*. These terms have no fixed connotation in the *Upaniṣads*. Generally speaking, *Ātman* is used to designate self or soul, while *Brahman* is used to denote the primary cause of things. What is remarkable about these terms is that though their significance is different, one denoting an inner world of subjectivity and the other an objective principle of explanation, yet in course of time the two came to be used interchangeably—both signifying an eternal principle of the universe. The notion of the self was arrived at through introspection and it was thought by the *Upaniṣadic* thinkers that the outer reality should correspond exactly with the psychical reality within. In this way what was simply a psychical principle came to be recognized as a world principle. This strain of thought was supported by another which objectively traced the visible universe to a single source, namely, *Brahman*, and *Brahman* was identified with the *Ātman*. Thus, two independent currents of

²¹ Radhakrishnan, *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, Allen & Unwin London, 1924, p. 25.

²² Albert Schweitzer, *Indian Thought and Its Development*, Adam & Charles Black, London, 1931, p. 32.

thought met together and paved the way to monism of an idealistic type which has remained till now the hallmark of Indian philosophy. By combining subjective and objective principles into one, the ultimate principle partook of the characteristics of both—it became infinite as well as spiritual. All this is very well expressed in *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* in a dialogue between a father and a son. The sum and substance of the story is that the primal spiritual principle is all-comprehensive and that the principle is no other than the self of the person then engaged in the discussion. With regard to the nature of *Brahman* (the Absolute) there is a great divergence of opinion. At some places He is conceived as cosmic, i.e., all-comprehensive, at others acosmic, i.e., all-exclusive. Further, at some places *Brahman* is imagined as the impersonal Absolute without attributes; at other places he is recognized as the highest spiritual Being that unites all forms of perfection in Himself. Hence it would be no exaggeration to say that though the *Upaniṣads* contain flashes of insight, yet they are not a self-contained homogeneous system and that they also lack completeness. It is for this reason that Śaṅkara believes that there are two types of doctrines in the *Upaniṣads*: esoteric, understanding God as the impersonal, unknowable Absolute without attributes, and the other exoteric, regarding God as a Person who manifests Himself in the various divinities.

The second interpretation of the Absolute as a Person led to the development of a theology largely theistic in spirit yet polytheistic in practice, since it sanctioned symbol-worship which expressed itself in various forms of idol-worship. The *Upaniṣads* are not, however, responsible for the excesses of later theology. In them breathes a spirit of monism. They preach a cult of mystical union with the Absolute, and suggest practical methods for its realization. In the main the stress is laid upon complete detachment from all that is mundane and belongs to the world of phenomena. Accordingly, one finds in the *Upaniṣads* a whole series of sayings in which complete renunciation is recommended. "When all desires which are in his heart disappear, then man becomes immortal. Here he has already reached *Brahman*. As the old slough of a snake lies on an ant-hill, so now does the body lie there."²³ According to the *Upaniṣads*, the highest merit called *Shreyas*, which consists in the realization of one's true self, can be reached through knowledge alone. The purpose of ethics, on the other hand, is quite distinct, namely, mundane good called *Preyas* which is reached by moral actions. The two ends are consequently poles apart, one concerned with the timeless good and the other with the temporal and evanescent good. It is said in *Katha-Upaniṣad*²⁴ that the ethical and the spiritual goals are opposed to each other as light and darkness and cannot co-exist. A man has to renounce all activity for worldly goods if he wants to achieve spiritual unity with the Supreme Being. One cannot, therefore, select

²³ *Bṛhā-āraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, iv: 4.

²⁴ *Katha-Upaniṣad*, 2: 1-5.

both knowledge and action as two ends of life, since the highest end must be one and not many.

The ideal of detachment was emphasized by the Indian thinkers not only for the reason that it was necessitated by their theory of human deliverance, but also because they regarded the whole phenomenal world of names, forms, and plurality as *māyā* or a mere unreality, an illusion having only a temporary reality which is transcended ultimately in the being of the Supreme Self. The *Upaniṣads* demand the votaries of *Brahmā* to ponder over the illusoriness and unreality of the world of senses and to extricate themselves from its temptations and enchantments by contemplation of a transcendental reality within the soul of each person. Thus can a person get to spiritual heights and achieve *mukti* or salvation. Hence along with the renunciation of the phenomenal world another thing required is the concentration of the spirit on the super-sensible reality. The *Upaniṣads* contain detailed instructions on this subject. The aim is to reach a stage of ecstasy in which a person has the psychical experience of feeling one with the Ultimate Reality.

The ethics-negating tendencies, however, could not be maintained consistently in face of the demands and concrete realities of life. The ideal of human salvation as outlined by the *Upaniṣads* cannot be achieved easily and so many are destined to fail. This is realized by the Indian sages. "What is hard for many even to hear, what many fail to understand even though they hear: a marvel is the one that can teach it and lucky is its obtainer; a marvel is he that knows it when taught by the wise."²⁵ The majority are born again after death and can win release from the cycle of births and deaths through the performance of good deeds. Thus ethics rejected by *Brāhmaṇic* mysticism enters through the doctrine of the Transmigration of Souls—a doctrine unknown to the *Vedas*.

The doctrine referred to above appears in connection with a myth. "All who depart from this world go to the moon. The waxing half fills itself with their lives; in the waning half it is effecting their rebirth. The moon is the gate of the heaven. He who knows how to reply to it, him it allows to pass by. He who cannot reply, it sends him as rain down to the earth; he is reborn here and there according to his deeds and knowledge as worm, moth, fish, bird, lion, wild bear, jackal, tiger, man, or whatever it may be. For when a man comes to the moon, the moon asks: 'Who art thou?' Then he ought to answer: 'I am thou. . . .' If he speaks thus, then the moon lets him get away, out above itself."²⁶ One finds no reference to the myth in the *Vedas*. From this it is concluded that it is not Aryan in origin but belonged to the religious world of the aboriginal inhabitants of India.

The law which governs the kind of birth a soul is destined to have after each death is the law of *karma*, which signifies that nothing can happen in the

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 1: ii. 7.

²⁶ *Kausitaki-Upaniṣad*, i.

moral world without a cause. But the recognition of the fact that moral events are caused by antecedent factors cannot explain the palpably indemonstrable and poetic way in which the moral causes are believed to operate. That moral causes can work in *śamsāra*, that is to say, in a series of births and deaths, all of which do not necessarily pertain to human beings, is a hypothesis of a very doubtful nature and utility. That the doctrine of reincarnation is inconsistent with the *Brāhmanic* mysticism of the identity of the individual with the Universal Soul goes without saying. Instead of the doctrine that every individual soul returns to the Universal Soul after inhabiting the body once, we are required to believe in a theory which starts from new premises altogether. This theory is based on the supposition that souls are prisoners in the world of sense and can return to their Primal Source not at once after their first death, as required by the theory of mystical absorption of the Brāhmins, but after undergoing a long process of reincarnation necessitating a series of births in the animate and inanimate realms. Schweitzer thinks²⁷ that the acceptance of this doctrine created insuperable difficulties for Hindu thought. On the older hypothesis of mystical reunion with the Divine Source it was easy to explain world redemption on the assumption that all souls returned to their Source after their death. But if the theory of reincarnation is accepted, world redemption becomes possible only if all souls reach the level of human existence and become capable of acquiring that knowledge and conduct which is required for liberation and of which human beings alone are capable.

The Epic Period.—Two great events belong to this period. The first is the expedition of Rāma from Oudh to Ceylon to recover his wife Sita who had been carried off by Rāvana, the king of that island, and the second is the struggle for supremacy between two rival Kṣatriya groups, the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas, in which Lord Kṛṣṇa played a significant part.

Rāma is an *avatār*, i.e., a divine incarnation of Viṣṇu, who being the preserver of the universe had to leave his celestial abode very often and to assume different forms in order to destroy evil and establish truth. The purpose of this *avatār* was to kill the ten-headed Rāvana, who had pleased the mighty gods through his austerities and as a result had received a boon from them which was that he could not be killed by any god. Feeling secure, he started a campaign of terror against both gods and men. The gods approached Brahmā who had granted immunity to Rāvana. He remarked that Rāvana could be killed by a god assuming the form of a man since Rāvana had not been granted immunity from mankind. Viṣṇu undertook to be born as a man to rid the world of evil. He was accordingly born in the house of a king, Dasaratha by name, who ruled over Ayodhyā and bore the name of Rāma. As he came of age he married Sita, who "was an incarnation of Lakṣmī,

²⁷ Albert Schweitzer, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

Viṣṇu's wife, and was born of no woman but of mother earth herself, and was picked up by Janaka from a paddy field."²⁸

Rāma became the victim of court intrigues, and for fourteen years had to suffer exile in jungles from where Sita was carried off by Rāvana. To rescue Sita from the clutches of Rāvana, Rāma contracted military alliance with Hanumān, the king of monkeys, with whose active support he reached Ceylon and learnt the secrets of Rāvana's power from a brother of Rāvana. Then ensued a fierce battle in which the armies suffered losses. At last Rāvana came out and met Rāma in a single combat. "Each like a flaming lion fought the other; head after head of the ten-necked one did Rāma cut away with his deadly arrows, but new heads ever rose in place of those cut off, and Rāvana's death seemed no wise nearer than before. The arrows that had slain Maricha and Khara and Bali could not take the king of Lanka's life away. Then Rāma took up the Brahmā weapon given to him by Agastya, the Wind lay in its (weapon's) wings, the Sun and Fire in its head, in its mass the weight of Meru and Mandara. Blessing that shaft with Vedic *Mantras*, Rāma set it with his mighty bow and loosed it and it sped to its appointed place and cleft the breast of Rāvana and, bathed in blood, returned and entered Rāma's quiver."²⁹

The most popular *avatār* of Viṣṇu is Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose main object was to kill Kansa, a demon born of a woman, and who was well known for his childish tricks and many practical jokes on milk-maids. He was, however, a great warrior and a strategist. He killed many demons and kings.

Bhagavad-Gītā. It was Lord Kṛṣṇa who sang the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (the song celestial) to Arjuna, giving the most widely accepted view of life among the Hindus. Says Mahātmā Gandhi, "I find a solace in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount. When disappointment stares me in the face and all alone I see not a ray of light, I go back to the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. I feel a verse here and there and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming tragedies, and if they have left no scar on me I owe it all to the teachings of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*."

According to Śaṅkaracharya, a great scholiast, the main function of the *Gītā* is to epitomize the essentials of the whole *Vedic* teachings. A knowledge of its teachings leads to the realization of all aspirations. The real purpose of this great song, as Zimmer thinks,³⁰ is to harmonize the non-*Brāhmanical* pre-Aryan thought of aboriginal India with the *Vedic* ideas of the Aryan invaders. The *Gītā*, therefore, "displays a kaleidoscopic interworking of the two traditions that for some ten centuries had been contending for the control and mastery of the Indian mind. Its teachings are founded upon the *Upaniṣadic* principle of an all-unifying, transcendental reality, but they also accommodate not only the gods of the earlier *Vedic*

²⁸ P. Thomas, *Epic Myths and Legends of India*, Bombay, p. 14.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

³⁰ Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1952, p. 378.

pantheon but also the philosophic and devotional formulae of the non-Aryan and aboriginal tradition. It was not an easy task. The *Gītā* had to pick up scattered and heterogeneous material to reconcile the irreconcilable tendencies of that age and to present a unified view of life. Little wonder that the attempt has appeared to the Western scholars as no better than an 'ill-assorted cabinet of primitive philosophical opinions.'³¹ There were the *Vedas* with their belief in multiple divinities; there were the *Upaniṣads* with their revolt against the ritualism of the *Vedas* and their anthropomorphic conception of gods; there was the doctrine of renunciation; and finally there were the *Sāṅkhya* and the *Yoga* principles. And if we add to them the heretical tendencies, particularly those represented by Buddhism, we realize how confusing the situation was and what an uphill task Lord Kṛṣṇa had before him.

It would be futile to look for a consistent and neat metaphysical system in the *Gītā*, for the *Gītā* is not primarily a book of recondite and abstruse thinking, written with the object of presenting a world-view. It has a much loftier purpose, which is to relate the broad principles of metaphysical reality to the fundamental aspirations of mankind. This is not accomplished through abstract reasoning which only a few can understand but by selecting a specific situation involving a moral dilemma and pointing out how it is overcome.

The occasion was a battle between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas. The latter were led by Arjuna whose spirits were unmanned and who felt reluctant to start the battle seeing on both sides his friends, relations, and teachers who were likely to be killed in the event of a war. At this juncture his charioteer who was none other than Lord Kṛṣṇa himself addressed to him the Song Celestial, propounding to him as well as to the whole of mankind the *Yoga* of selfless action (*karma-yoga*).

The significance of this teaching will become obvious if we refer to the two ideals which were prevalent then: one, the negative one of renunciation and the other, the positive one, of active life. The first recommended complete withdrawal from the work-a-day world and the second encouraged living in society undertaking all the obligations implied thereby. The object of the *Gītā* is to discover a golden mean, to reconcile as it were the claims of renunciation and active participation in the affairs of society. This is done through the doctrine of *karma-yoga* which means doing one's duty without the thought of consequences.

"Giving up or carrying on one's work, both lead to salvation; but of the two, carrying on one's work is the more excellent," says Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. He also says, "Neither does man attain to (the state of) being without work by undertaking no work, nor does he reach perfection by simply shunning the world." What is required is a spirit of detachment where the heart of a person is free from the outward motives to action. "Thy interest shall only be directed to the deed, never to the fruits thereof," says Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Hopkins, quoted by Desai in the *Gītā according to Gandhi*, Ahmedabad, p. 13.

A natural consequence of this theory is that even what is judged as evil from human standards can be approved of, if the agent feels that the task selected by him is one which must be fulfilled. "Even if a thorough scoundrel loves me and nothing else, he must be deemed good; for he has well resolved."³² "Even if thou wert the most sinful of all sinners, yet thou wouldst pass over all guilt with the boat of knowledge alone."³³ With these words Arjuna is urged to fight against his relations, for his killing would not be an evil: it would be a necessary consequence of the duty he has to discharge.

The ethics of detachment as preached by the *Gītā* is laudable no doubt, but, as Schweitzer says, "It grants recognition to activity, only after activity has renounced natural motives and its natural meaning."³⁴ An action loses its significance when it ceases to be purposive. The *Gītā* raises a voice of protest against the soul-killing and life-negating cult of renunciation, but it has not gone far enough. Renunciation remains when the end of an activity is no concern of a person. "The *Bhagavad-Gītā* has a sphinx-like character. It contains such marvellous phrases about inner detachment from the world, about the attitude of the mind which knows no hatred and is kind, and about loving self-devotion to God, that we are wont to overlook its non-ethical contents."³⁵

The Heterodox Systems.—Among the systems which defied the authority of the *Vedas* may be mentioned the Cārvāka, Jainism, and Buddhism:

1. *The Cārvāka.*—This system seems to be fairly old. It is mentioned in the *Rg-Veda*, the Epics, and the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. The main work on the system, the *Bṛhaspati-Sūtra* (600 B. C.), is lost and its teachings have to be reconstructed from criticism of it in other works.

The Cārvāka is a non-Vedic, materialistic, and anti-supernaturalistic doctrine which holds that only this world exists and there is nothing beyond. There is no future life. Mādhava Acharya says in *Sarvadarśana-saṅgraha*, "The efforts of Cārvāka are indeed hard to be eradicated, for the majority of living beings hold by the refrain:

While life is yours, live joyously;
None can escape Death's searching eye:
When once this frame of ours they burn,
How shall it e'er again return?"³⁶

"The mass of men, in accordance with the Śāstras of policy and enjoyment, are found to follow only the doctrine of Cārvāka. Hence another name for that school is Lokāyata—a name well accordant with the thing signified."³⁷

³² *Gītā*, xviii: 48.

³³ *Ibid.*, iv: 36.

³⁴ Albert Schweitzer, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

³⁶ S. Radhakrishnan and Charles A. Moore, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, London, 1957, p. 228.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

The four elements alone are the ultimate principles and these are earth, water, fire, and air. Only the perceived exists; the unperceivable does not exist, simply for the reason of its never having been perceived. The only source of knowledge and the criterion of validity is perception. Every other source including that of inference is rejected. Inferential knowledge involves inductive relations and can never be demonstrably certain. Empirical generalizations may possess a high degree of probability, but their operation in unknown cases can never be guaranteed. To avoid this difficulty, if it is maintained that the empirical laws connect the common features of the particular instances observed by a person, the Cārvāka objects to it by saying that such a course would leave the particulars unrelated and that it is the particulars alone which matter.

As against the *Upaniṣads* which postulated five elements, the Cārvāka admits of only four discarding the fifth one, viz., space. The whole universe including souls is interpreted strictly in terms of these elements. The self is nothing but the physical body as characterized by sentience. "The soul is but the body characterized by the attributes signified in the expressions, I am stout, I am youthful, I am grown up, I am old, etc. It is not something other than that (body)." ³⁵

The Cārvāka rejects outright all types of spiritual values and has faith in the present world only. "There is no world other than this; there is no heaven and no hell; the realm of Śiva and like regions are invented by stupid impostors of other schools of thought. . . . The wise should enjoy the pleasures of this world through the proper visible means of agriculture, keeping cattle, trade, political administration, etc." ³⁶ The authority of the *Vedas* is repudiated not only on the ground that their teachings are irrational, but also because of the inconsistencies which render it impossible to know what they really teach.

The Cārvāka is a protest against the excessive spirituality of the early *Brāhmaṇic* thought. It recognizes neither god nor conscience. It cares not for a belief in the life to come. Hence the ethical ideal is pleasure in this life and that too of the individual.

Since the main trend of Hindu thought has been idealistic, the Cārvāka system has contributed very little to the sum of Indian thought, ⁴⁰ and this is rather unfortunate. In view of the fact that the *Vedas*, the *Upaniṣads*, and the *Gītā* reject the evidence of the senses as illusory, the Cārvāka contention might have served as a corrective.

2. *Jainism*.—Jainism, according to Tomlin, ⁴¹ is the most perplexing of all religions, for it is not only incredible but also impracticable. It denies life to the extent of recommending suicide as the most sacred act of which man is capable, and yet it has survived for two thousand years.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1932, p. 195.

⁴¹ Tomlin, *The Great Philosophies: The Eastern World*, Skeffington, London, 1952, p. 170.

The founder of Jainism, Mahāvīra, was born in a Kṣatriya family. His father was a wealthy person belonging to a religious sect which was opposed to the *Vedas*. This school of thought had materialistic tendencies and sceptical attitude very much akin to that of Cārvāka. But it was not a thoroughgoing materialism. It shared with the masses the horror of rebirth and advocated slow suicide through starvation as a remedy against transmigration. Mahāvīra's father got his wife converted to his viewpoint and in due course shared with her the martyrdom they desired.

Before following the example of his parents, Mahāvīra embarked upon a quest of wisdom and adopted an ascetic life. After two years of abstinence and self-denial he withdrew himself from civilized life and dispensed with all the amenities of life including those of clothing. During the first six years of his peregrination, he observed frequent fasts of several months' duration. He voluntarily exposed himself to be maltreated by the Mlechha tribes of *Vajrabhumi* and *Lat* who abused and beat him, and shot arrows at him, and baited him with dogs, to all of which he offered no resistance. At the end of the ninth year, Mahāvīra relinquished his silence, but continued the practice of self-mortification. The whole of the time spent by him in these preparatory exercises was twelve years and six months, and of this he fasted nearly eleven years.

The Jains have a tradition that saviours are sent to the world whenever mankind is plunged in corruption and sin. Mahāvīra was twenty-fourth in the line.

Mahāvīra denied the divine origin and infallible authority of the *Vedas*. His religion is, therefore, reckoned as a heterodox religion. Its cosmology and anthropology is non-Aryan. While Brāhmaṇism is the representative of *Vedic*-Aryan thought and beliefs, Buddhism, Jainism, and a host of other doctrines relate themselves to the native genius and expose the pessimistic dualism which underlies so much of Indian philosophy. Jainism is a philosophy of the profoundest pessimism. It visualizes the world as a round of endless rebirths, full of sufferings and entirely useless. One shall have to pass through periods of inconsequential pleasures and unbearable pains unless one obtains a release through austerities and self-abnegation. In the *Jaina-Sūtras*, suicide is called "the incomparable religious death," requiring in some cases a whole life-time to cultivate a proper frame of mind for its performance. It is essential that all types of longings including those of death be completely eradicated from one's consciousness. Hence one has to bring about one's extinction in a mood beyond both desire and aversion.

As regards the philosophy of Jainism, it may be said that an eternal and presiding First Cause forms no part of this system, nor do the Jains admit of soul or spirit as distinct from the living principle. They do believe in the independent and eternal existence of spirit and matter, but by spirit they do not mean universal spirit as they have no faith in the Supreme Soul.

The spirits called *jīvas* are eternal but limited and variable because of which

they can adjust themselves to the size of the body they happen to inhabit. Their essence is knowledge which is not empirical or sensory. As a matter of fact, perception is a check upon the absolute sight of the soul. In order that the soul may regain its true nature, it is necessary that limitations imposed by the senses be done away with.

The Jains believe in both transmigration and *karma*. The latter operates by itself. Being a subtle particle of matter, it enters the soul and soils it. Hence no supreme being in the form of God is required to allot rewards and punishments. Mahāvira says, "The world is without bounds like a formidable ocean; its cause is action (*karma*) which is as the seed of the tree. The being (*jīva*) invested with body, but devoid of judgment, goes like a well-sinker ever downwards by the acts it performs, whilst the disembodied being which has attained purity goes ever upwards by its own acts like the builder of a palace."⁴²

Ajīva, the second predicate of existence, comprises objects or properties devoid of consciousness and life. It is regarded as five-fold. Out of these, matter is atomic in the final analysis. It possesses the qualities of colour, taste, odour, and touch. All the atoms are supposed to possess souls so that the whole universe seems to be pulsating with life. Time, another *ajīva*, is eternal. The world has neither an origin nor an end.

As already observed, the *karmic* particles are mingled with the life-monads. It is held that they communicate colours to them which may be white, yellow, flaming-red, dove-grey, dark-blue, or black. These colours are perceived by the Jaina Tirthaṅkaras by virtue of their boundless intuition or omniscience. Ordinarily, black is the characteristic colour of the cruel and the merciless, dark-blue that of the greedy and the sensual, dove-grey of the reckless and the hot-tempered, red of the prudent, yellow of the compassionate, and the white of the dispassionate and the impartial.

In the ethics of Mahāvira, social life has no place. It is perfect non-activity in thought, speech, and deed that is recommended. One should be dead to pain and enjoyment and also to all other interests including the intellectual, social, and political to achieve liberation from the bondage of physical existence. Cessation of activity is a stepping-stone to the super-human sphere—a sphere which is not only above human beings but also beyond gods.

The doctrine of *ahimsā* which means renunciation of the will to kill and to damage is an article of faith with the Jains. In the *Ayaramgasutta*, a Jaina text, it is written, "All saints and Lords . . . declare thus: One may not kill, nor ill-use, nor insult, nor torment, nor persecute any kind of living beings, any kind of creature, any kind of thing having a soul, any kind of beings."⁴³

The Jains do not offer bloody sacrifices, do not eat meat, never hunt, and

⁴² Wilson, *Essays and Lectures on the Religion of the Hindus*, London, 1862. Vol. I, p. 297.

⁴³ Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, Calcutta University, Calcutta. ii, p. 436.

take care that they do not trample on creeping things and insects. The laying down of this commandment is a great thing in the spiritual history of mankind; but it has to be said that the principle is altogether impracticable. It has been assumed that non-killing and non-harming are possible of fulfilment in this world of ours. Even on purely biological grounds, if on no others, it becomes necessary sometimes to kill as well as to damage both intentionally and unintentionally. "It is more cruel to let domestic animals which one can no longer feed die a painful death by starvation than to give them a quick and painless end by violence. Again and again we see ourselves placed under the necessity of saving one living creature by destroying or damaging another."⁴⁴

3. *Buddhism*.—As a prince, Buddha's name was Siddhārtha and his family name Gautama; his father's name Suddhodana, and his mother's Māyā. It is interesting to note that all these names have meanings from which it is conjectured that Buddha might not have been a historical person. Suddhodana means "he whose food is pure," Māyā means "an illusion," Siddhārtha means "he by whom the end is accomplished," while Buddha signifies "he by whom all is known." These meanings suggest an allegorical signification, very much in the style of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. The city of Buddha's birth, Kapilavastu, which has no place in the geography of the Hindus, lends weight to this supposition. But, in spite of the allegorical interpretation as suggested by the etymology of the names, the historians are pretty well agreed in regarding Buddha as a historical person who lived six centuries before Christ and who was so much disturbed by the transience and miseries of the earthly existence that he renounced his power and wealth and devoted himself to solitary meditation. He engaged himself in sacred study under different Brāhmins, but dissatisfied with their teaching he retired into solitude. For six years he practised rigorous austerities. Finding their effect upon the body unfavourable to intellectual energy, he desisted from it and adopted a more genial course of life. At last knowledge dawned upon him, and he was in possession of the object of his search, which he communicated to others.

Buddha had no doubt that the mundane existence is replete with sorrows, afflictions, and tribulations. Not only this; he also believed that the misery of life is unending. All fulfilment of desires is attended by pain. The causes of pain, according to Buddha, are not economical, social, or political. They are rooted in the very nature of human life because of the fact that like everything else it is ephemeral and transitory. Even souls are impermanent and our ignorance on this point is the major reason of our suffering. Everything is in a flux. We deceive ourselves into thinking that there is a permanent base for change. It is the Law of Causality which binds together the continuous vibration and infinite growth which characterize this world. Buddha did not believe in any ontological reality which is permanent and which endures beneath the shifting appearances of the visible world. He also repudiated the

⁴⁴ Schweitzer, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

Upaniṣadic view of a permanent *Ātman* and held that search for a permanent soul inside the body is in vain.

Buddha supposed that the law of *karma* worked into our very nature and that there was no escape from it, the present and the future being the result of the past. *Karma* is overcome through *nirvāṇa* which puts an end to the cycle of births and deaths. *Nirvāṇa* literally means blowing out; hence it suggests extinction. It is sometimes contended that *nirvāṇa* is not a negative goal; it has a positive aspect as well. It is not simply extinction but also a state of blessedness or perfection. It is a kind of existence, devoid of egoity and full of peace, calm, and bliss.

To achieve *nirvāṇa*, Buddha recommended a path of self-discipline which is eight-fold: right faith, right resolve, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right thought, and right concentration. The emphasis is on right living which is different in the case of a layman and a monk. The first four are applicable to all, while the remaining four are applicable especially to the priestly class.

The practical part of Buddha's system has the same duality. Five negative injunctions, namely, not to kill, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to lie, and not to use strong drinks, are binding on all, while not to take repasts at improper times, not to witness dances and plays, not to have costly raiments and perfumes, not to have a large bed or quilt, and not to receive gold or silver, are meant for priests only. Similarly, the virtues of charity, purity, patience, courage, contemplation, and silence have to be cultivated by all, but there are twelve observances binding on recluses only. They have to use clothes made of rags picked up from burning grounds, to have only three such suits all sewn by the wearer's own hand, to have a cloak of yellow wool prepared in the same manner, to live only on food given in charity, to take only one meal daily, never to eat or drink after midday, to live in forests, to have no roof but the foliage of trees, to sit with the back supported by the trunk of a tree, to sleep sitting and not lying, never to change the position of the carpet when it has once been spread, and to go once a month to burning grounds to meditate on the vanity of life on the earth.

Thus, there is a complete distinction between the religion for the masses and the discipline for priesthood. The former is quite human while the latter is cold-hearted and unnatural. Ultimate release from transmigration can be attained, in the opinion of Buddha, only after one becomes a monk. The religion of the masses is good for human relationship, but not for the liberation of the soul from the cycle of births and deaths. For Buddha a Brāhmin is one who cares not for others, who has no relations, who controls himself, who is firmly fixed in the heart of truth, in whom the fundamental evils are extinguished, and who has thrown hatred away from him. No doubt, one finds here an emphasis on the cultivation of ethical virtues but renunciation and condemnation of worldly ties are also evident. Buddha wants men to be occupied with their own redemption and not with that of their fellow-beings.

Buddha attaches no importance to such knowledge as entangles a man in the net of life. There are no doubt practical and theoretical systems of knowledge which enable people to acquire skills and crafts, but ultimately they have no value. Says Buddha, "Such knowledge and opinions, if thoroughly mastered, will lead inevitably to certain ends and produce certain results in one's life. The enlightened one is aware of all these consequences and also of what lies behind them. But he does not attach much importance to this knowledge. For within himself he fosters another knowledge—the knowledge of cessation, of the discontinuance of worldly existence, of utter repose by emancipation. He has perfect insight into the manner of the springing into existence of our sensations and feelings and their vanishing again with all their sweetness and bitterness, into the way of escape from them altogether, and into the manner in which by non-attachment to them through right knowledge of their character he has himself won the release."⁴⁵

The Religious Schools of Buddhism.—Religiously, Buddhism is divided into two great schools, the orthodox, known as the Hinayāna, and the progressive, known as the Mahāyāna. The former, representing Buddhism, faithfully believes in the relentless working of the law of *karma* and refuses to assign any place to God in the scheme of things. The individual has to win his liberation through his own efforts by treading the path of rightness as delineated by Buddha. The responsibility of achieving salvation falls squarely on the shoulders of the individual. Before Buddha breathed his last, he advised his followers to work out their salvation with diligence. Philosophically, the Hinayāna Buddhism advocates pure phenomenalism, maintaining the non-existence of substances or individuals. What exists is merely passing entities, there being feelings but no feeler, thoughts but no thinker.

The Hinayāna school could not satisfy the masses because of its abstract, dry, and arid approach to the problems of life and also because of its denial of God. Its ethics smacked of egoism, since the Hinayāna Buddhist was exclusively concerned with his own emancipation, having nothing to do with the moral needs of others. The Mahāyāna school sought to rectify these mistakes by taking a more realistic view of religion. Instead of the ideal of personal liberation it recommended the "liberation of all sentient beings" as the *summum bonum* of human life. It also rehabilitated God, by identifying Buddha with a transcendental reality behind the world of phenomena, Gautama being an incarnation of the Buddha. The Hinayāna school denied reality to the Self; but the Mahāyāna school resuscitated the Self too, by holding that it was the little individual self that was false and not the Self of all beings, the one transcendental Self (*Mahātman*).

The Philosophical Schools of Buddhism.—Though Buddha had an abhorrence for metaphysical jargon, his religion being an ethical system with no supernaturalism, yet his followers failed to keep themselves away from

ontological and epistemological questions of abstruse nature. Consequently, there emerged four schools, two under the Hinayāna and two under the Mahāyāna sect, on the basis of their metaphysical predilections.

1. *The Mādhyamika School of Sūnyavāda*.—According to this school, everything is void and the universe is totally devoid of reality. In support of their contention they argue that the knower, the known, and knowledge are interdependent and if any one in the series is proved false it will entail the falsity of the other two. It is maintained by the proponents of this theory that cases of illusion demonstrate the falsity of knowledge; consequently, the truth of the other two factors in this epistemological trinity cannot be guaranteed.

2. *The Yogācāra School of Subjective Idealism*.—This school was one with the Mādhyamika in dismissing all external reality as illusion, but could not see eye to eye with it in respect of mind. It was urged that if mind was pronounced unreal along with matter, then all reasoning and thinking would be false. It would be as impossible to establish your own position as to demolish the position of your adversary, once mind is dismissed as *māyā*. To this school, mind is the only reality; the external objects exist simply as ideas. No object can be known without consciousness of it; hence the objects cannot be proved to have an existence independent of consciousness.

3. *The Sautrāntika School of Representationism*.—This school believes in the existence of mind and also of the external world. The Sautrāntikas maintain that illusions cannot be explained in the absence of external objects. Moreover the objects do not exist as ideas; rather our ideas are copies of objects which exist by their own nature.

4. *The Vaiśhṣika School*.—This school recognizes the reality of mind as well as of matter and further holds like the neo-realists of the West that unless the object is perceived, there is no means of certifying that the so-called copy is a faithful representation of the original. The only plausible position in that case would be subjective idealism of the Yogācāra school; and if for some reason the theory of subjective idealism is untenable, then it should be conceded that objects are capable of being perceived directly.

Systems of Indian Philosophy.—There are six systems which are recognized as orthodox. Each is called a *darśana* or a view because it embodies a way of looking at the world. They are generally treated together, in pairs. The first pair includes the *Nyāya* or the school of Logic founded by Gautama and the Atomic school founded by Kaṇāda. There are, however, reasons to believe that the two systems were organized into one in the fourth/tenth century long after the Muslims had settled down in India and had made their mark on Indian thought and culture. The analysis of the ideas incorporated into the systems after their unification will amply bear this out. Accordingly, these two systems will receive separate treatment after the other systems. The remaining four systems were organized into two pairs before the advent of the Muslims and will be discussed together. While discussing these systems we shall have to ignore such thinkers as were born after the second/eighth century and whose contri-

butions show unmistakable signs of Muslim influence. Their thinking is not purely Indian; it is at least not on conservative lines. There are radical departures both in the understanding of problems and their solutions, and these departures can be accounted for on no other hypothesis than the impact of Muslim thought on the Indian mind.

The first pair to be mentioned will include the *Sāṅkhya* or Numeral system, said to be founded by Kapila and the *Yoga* or the Mystic system founded by Patañjali; the second pair will include the *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā*, the original decider, founded by Jaimini, and the *Uttara-Mīmāṃsā*, the second decider, said to be founded by Vyāsa.

The authors of the various schools as given above are generally accepted by the Hindus as real, but there is a great deal of doubt about their authenticity. René Guenon writing about Gautama, the author of *Nyāya*, says, "This name should not be taken as referring to any single individual and it is not accompanied in this case by any biographical details of the vaguest kind... the name denotes what is really an 'intellectual aggregate' made up of all those who over a period... devoted themselves to one and the same study... The same could be said of the proper names that we find associated in a similar way with each of the other *darśanas*."⁴⁶

1 & 2. *Sāṅkhya and Yoga*.—These two systems are the outer and the inner aspects of a single discipline. In the *Bhagavad-Gītā* there is written, "Puerile and unlearned people speak of 'enumerating knowledge' (*Sāṅkhya*) and the 'practice of introvert concentration' (*Yoga*) as distinct from each other, yet anyone firmly established in either gains the fruit of both. The state attained by the followers of the path of enumerating knowledge is attained also through the exercises of introvert concentration. He truly sees who regards as one the intellectual attitude of enumerating knowledge and the practice of concentration."⁴⁷ *Sāṅkhya* is a theoretical system describing the elements of human nature, its bondage and release, while *Yoga* is a practical discipline to gain the same end through the practice of *yogic* exercises.

According to Zimmer, "The main conceptions of this dual system are: (i) that the universe is founded on an irresolvable dichotomy of 'life-monads' (*puruṣa*) and lifeless matter (*prakṛti*), (ii) that 'matter,' though fundamentally simple and uncompounded, nevertheless exfoliates, or manifests itself, under three distinctly differentiated aspects (the so-called *guṇas*) which are comparable to the three strands of a rope, and (iii) that each one of the 'life-monads' (*puruṣa*) associated with matter is involved in the bondage of an endless 'round of transmigration' (*saṁsāra*)."⁴⁸

Prakṛti is a primal entity, out of which the physical universe with all its infinite diversity has evolved. It is all-pervasive and complex. Its complexity

⁴⁶ *Introduction to the Study of the Hindu Doctrines*, Luzac, London, 1945 pp. 239-40.

⁴⁷ *Gītā*, 5: 4-5.

⁴⁸ Zimmer, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

is due to the fact that it is constituted of three *guṇas*, namely, *sattya*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, which, though different, nevertheless work harmoniously to produce an ordered world. *Sattya* means what is pure, *rajas* signifies what is active, while *tamas* stands for what offers resistance. These three *guṇas* are present in every object since the effect cannot be other than its material cause. This doctrine, according to which nothing new can originate and the effects should be entirely determined by their antecedent factors, goes by the name of "the doctrine of pre-existent effect." The *guṇas* do not combine in the same ratio in every object and that accounts for the multiplicity and the infinite diversity of things.

The first thing to evolve from the *prakṛti* was the intellect, which in turn produced egoism or individuality. From the *sattya* aspect of egoism there proceeded five sense-organs, while from the *tamas* aspect there emerged five motor organs. Thus, the first to emerge in the course of evolution were those objects which *puruṣa* needed. Out of the simple and subtle elements arose gross elements, e.g., space emerged from elemental sound, air from space and elemental touch, fire from these two and elemental colour, so on and so forth.

So far we have naturalism in its most aggressive form, but it is diluted by its recognition of *puruṣa* alongside *prakṛti* as an equally important principle in the constitution of the world. *Puruṣa* is manifold and simple in contradistinction to *prakṛti* which is single and complex. How can two principles of contradictory attributes come to work together, is a difficult point in this theory.

Puruṣa is often defined as a pure spirit by virtue of the fact that it is non-matter, and yet it has no spirituality about itself. It can be defined only negatively: it is without attributes, without motion—"imperishable, inactive, and impassive." After a person acquires full knowledge of the *puruṣa*, he becomes indifferent to both the subtle and the gross elements of his material existence. When death comes finally, the subtle and the gross elements dissolve, but the *puruṣa* continues to exist having now been released once for all from the clutches of the *guṇas*. This is "final aloofness," or isolation, the *summum bonum* of *yogic* practices.

"*Yoga* consists in the (intentional) stoppage of the spontaneous activities of the life-stuff."⁴⁹ As the mind is in constant commotion, it assumes the shapes of the objects it cognizes. In order to understand its true nature all impulses from within and without have to be stopped. The life-monad is so to say in the bondage of life and consciousness; it has to reveal all the processes of the subtle and gross body. In its own nature it is propertyless, without beginning and end, infinite, and all-pervading. The only problem with man is to realize his actual freedom by separating the life-monad from all distracting and turbulent conditions. To achieve this objective the *Sāṅkhya-Yoga* philosophy prescribes the suppression of right notions arising from correct

⁴⁹ Patañjali. *Yoga-Sūtras*, I. 1.2.

ceptions, and wrong notions due to misapprehensions, fantasy, sleep, and memory. When this is accomplished, the mind is stilled. The goal is isolation which becomes possible when the purity of contemplation equals the purity of the life-monad. This is explained by a commentator of Patañjali in the words, "When the contemplative power (*sattya*) of the thinking substance is freed from the defilement of the active power (*rajas*) and the force of inertia (*tamas*) and has no further task than that involved in transcending the presented idea of difference between itself (*sattya*) and the life-monad (*puruṣa*) and when the interior seeds of hindrances (*kleśa*) have all been burnt, then the contemplative power (*sattya*) enters into a state of purity equal to that of the life-monad. This purity is neither more nor less than the cessation of the false attribution of experience to the life-monad. That is the life-monad's isolation. Then the *puruṣa* having its light within itself becomes undefiled and isolated."⁵⁰

According to the *Yoga* philosophy, hindrances to the manifestation of the true nature of the *puruṣa* are ignorance, I am I, attachment or sympathy, repugnance or hatred, and the will to live. Moreover, the interplay of the *guṇas* is a source of confusion. All these can be eradicated through asceticism, learning, and devotion, or complete surrender to the will of God. Asceticism rids a *yogi* of passions and spiritual inertia; recitation of holy prayers initiates him in the art of religious detachment; while complete surrender to the will of God develops him spiritually, by making him regard God as the real cause of his achievements. Through this programme, the *kleśa*, i.e., hindrances and impediments, are reduced to nothingness, the *rajas* and *tamas* are destroyed, and *sattya* alone remains to recognize the life-monad in its pristine glory. The *yogic* exercises of starving and torturing the body are calculated to eradicate not only the conscious but also the unconscious tendencies of our biological existence and so to attune the personality to a supersensible type of experience.

Through meditation and self-torturing practices one reaches knowledge of the Truth, "Neither I am, nor is aught mine, nor do I exist." Having gained this knowledge the *puruṣa* in peace and inaction contemplates nature which is of no interest to him, and at death attains its true life of isolation.

3 & 4. *Mīmāṃsā-Pūrva and Uttara*.—The object of the *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā*, also called the *Kārama-Mīmāṃsā*, i.e., Action-Investigation, is to reach certainty on the subject of *dharma* or the religious duty of the Hindus, chiefly about the sacrifices and the methods of offering them. In course of time there came into vogue variant opinions and customs for the performance of every kind of ceremony. The Brāhmins had laid down very detailed instructions with regard to sacrificial duties but alongside them there had emerged local and family customs and conventions. These two were often hard to reconcile. Hence the problem was to bring the Brāhmanic instructions into harmony with one another and also with the existing family and local customs. A further

⁵⁰ Zimmer. *op. cit.*, p. 293.

problem was to discover in these customs a meaning that should satisfy every new generation.

The *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā* consists of twelve books, all full of positive and negative injunctions about principal and subordinate rites concerning sacrifices. A cursory perusal of the *Mīmāṃsā* clearly shows that the work is principally concerned with the interpretation of those *Vedic* texts as are required for sacrificial purposes and that it raises only incidentally, if at all, genuine metaphysical questions. It does raise the question of the absolute authority of the *Vedas* together with the doctrine of their eternity, and discusses in this connection the problem of the eternity of sound and the relation between the sound of a word and its meaning.

The *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā* is not a treatise on philosophy. Nevertheless, certain metaphysical ideas are implied, or find incidental expression in it. A charge of atheism is often brought against this system. The advocates of the *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā* say, "There is no God, or Maker of the world; nor has the world any sustainer or destroyer, for every man obtains a recompense in conformity with his own work. Nor indeed is there any maker of the *Vedas*, for their words are eternal. Their authoritativeness is self-demonstrated; since it has been established from all eternity, how can it be dependent upon anything but itself?"⁵¹ But in Max Müller's view this charge is based upon a misconception. The system does not attribute the fruit of sacrificial acts to any divine agency, nor does it make God responsible for the injustice that seems to prevail in the world. Further, it gives evidence of a firm faith in the operation of the law of cause and effect and, consequently, ascribes the inequalities of the world to the working of good and bad deeds. But all this would not make the system atheistic. It simply proves that the *Mīmāṃsā* has an unorthodox conception of God. Max Müller's contention seems to conflict with the *Mīmāṃsā* itself, for the latter says, "Wherefore God? The world itself suffices for itself."⁵²

Uttara-Mīmāṃsā or *Vedānta*.—The term *Vedānta* literally means the end of the *Vedas* or the doctrines set forth in the closing chapters of the *Vedas* which are the *Upaniṣads*. The *Uttara-Mīmāṃsā* or Later Investigations as against *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā* which are Prior Investigations is usually called *Vedānta-sūtras* or *Brahmā-sūtras*. The latter name is given to indicate that *Brahman* is the spirit embodied in the universe. The work is attributed to Bādarāyana, but in reality many writers of different times appear to have made their contributions towards its compilation. In five hundred and five *sūtras* which consist mostly of two or three words each, the whole system is developed. The *sūtras* are, however, unintelligible by themselves and leave everything to the interpreters.

The *Vedānta-sūtras* discuss the whole theory of the *Brahman* in four chapters. The first chapter deals with the nature of the *Brahman* and his relation to the

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

Hiriyanna, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

world and the individual souls; the second is polemical; the third deals with the ways and means of attaining *Brahman-vidyā*; and the fourth treats of the fruit of *Brahman-vidyā* and after-life.

Bādarāyana believes both in the eternity and infallibility of the *Vedas*. He recognizes two sources of knowledge: *śruti* and *smṛti* or perception and inference, and maintains that *śruti* is the basis for *smṛti*. Similarly, he draws a hard and fast line between two realms: one amenable to reason and the other lying beyond it. The area where reason is competent is that of *prakṛti* together with its manifestations, while the realm of *Brahman* lies beyond the reach of discursive reasoning. Reason can flourish among properties, relations, and characteristics, while *Brahman* is devoid of all these things and, therefore, cannot be reached through inferential knowledge. The only way to reach the *Brahman* is to cultivate intuition through meditation and devotion. It will reveal that the *Brahman* is the basis of reality: the material as well as the final cause of the universe. In creating the world God had no purpose to fulfil; what seems to be His activity is nothing but sport. God is omniscient, formless, and one, in whom the *prakṛti* and the *puruṣa* of the *Sāṅkhya* system combine, both being manifestations or modes of the same Ultimate Reality.

After creating the elements, *Brahman* entered into them and determined the characteristic manner of their development and production of other things. The *Brahman*, as it were, transforms Himself into everything that is caused by Him since cause and effect must have similar natures. Two illustrations are given to prove the identity of cause and effect; one is drawn from an inanimate object and the other from an animate object. It is said that when a piece of cloth is rolled up its real nature remains hidden, but when it is spread out it can be known truly. Likewise a person is paralyzed if his breath is held but becomes active the moment his breath is released. In both these cases the qualities of the antecedent are different from those of the consequent although the object is the same, which shows that despite differences the cause and the effect remain identical. *Brahman* and the world are not disparate in spite of differences. The wooden table is not different from the wood in its essential nature; similarly, *Brahman* is not different from the multiform objects of the universe.

The world is a sport or *līlā* of the *Brahman*, which means that it is without purpose and without significance. It is hard to assign any meaning to the universe, since Vedāntism declares, "*Brahman* is true, the world is false, the soul is *Brahman* and nothing else." And again, "There is nothing worth gaining, there is nothing worth enjoying, there is nothing worth knowing but *Brahman* alone, for he who knows *Brahman* is *Brahman*."⁵³

In calling the world a sport there is however no implication that God created sufferings for mankind to take pleasure out of them. This would be a very uncharitable view and altogether cynical. Sufferings, woes, and ills of men as

⁵³ Max Müller *op. cit.*, p. 160.

well as of other objects, both animate and inanimate, are the result of their own *karma*—a law of moral causation which works inexorably and leaves no scope for the interference of divine or non-divine agencies. Likewise all evils and sins are due to *karma*; they are not caused by *Brahman*.

The self is concealed within five sheaths, that is to say, five superimposed psycho-somatic layers which should be torn away through ethical discipline and self-denial. *Avidyā* (nescience) is lack of insight into the nature of reality and is a major hindrance in the path of *mokṣa* or release. It is an article of faith with Vedantism that liberation can be obtained through knowledge. Since the Self is with us, though concealed and hidden behind five sheaths, when true knowledge is gained it will be seen that one realizes one's own true nature. This realization can be effected through *yogic* practices, critical thought, or any other orthodox way. Ethical discipline is also directed to the same end. Its object is to cleanse the soul through rigorous self-discipline and impeccable conduct, in a spirit of non-attachment.

The highest knowledge is *Brahman-vidyā* or vision of God which is attained through the realization of the Self. After an individual soul has reached *Brahman* there is no return for the liberated soul. This goal is expressed through the oft-quoted verse from the *Upaniṣads*, "He who realizes *Brahman* through knowing becomes *Brahman*."⁵⁴

5. *The Nyāya System*.—As already observed, because of the singular absence or deficiency of historical data, little is known of Gautama, the author of *Nyāya*. He is as much a subject of fanciful legend as Kapila, the author of the *Sāṅkhya* system.

The word *nyāya* means "propriety" or "fitness." The system undertakes to declare the method of arriving at that knowledge of truth the fruit of which, it promises, is the chief end of man. The name is also used in a more limited application to denominate the proper method of setting forth an argument. This has led to the practice of calling the *Nyāya* the Hindu logic, which by the way does not adequately describe the scope of the system. According to the author of the system, "Supreme felicity is attained through knowledge about the true nature of the sixteen categories (*Padārthas*)."⁵⁵

The first work of the *Nyāya* system consists of sixty aphorisms, and the first *sūtra* gives a list of the subjects to be discussed. These are sixteen in number: (1) *pramāṇa* or the means by which right knowledge may be gained; (2) *prameya* or the object of thought; (3) doubt; (4) motive; (5) instance or example; (6) dogma or determinate truth; (7) argument or syllogism; (8) confutation; (9) ascertainment; (10) controversy; (11) jangling; (12) objection or cavilling; (13) fallacy; (14) perversion; (15) futility; (16) conclusion or the confounding of an adversary.

Of the sixteen categories the first two are important; others are only

⁵⁴ *Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad*, 3. 2. 9.

⁵⁵ *Nyāya-Sūtra*, Book I, Chapter IV, *Sūtra* I

subsidiary indicating the course which a discussion may take from the start to the finish, i.e., from the enunciation of the doubt to the confounding of the doubter.

The first category by the name of *prāmāṇa* signifies proof or evidence, and denotes the legitimate means of knowledge within the rational order. It enumerates four kinds of proofs, namely, perception by the senses (*pratyakṣa*); inference (*anumāna*); comparison (*upamāna*); and verbal authority (*śabda*) including revelation and tradition. Inference, it says, is of three kinds: from cause to effect, from effect to cause, and by analogy.

The argument which is also called *nyāya* consists of five constituent members. These are: (1) the proposition to be proved (*pratijñā*), (2) the reason justifying this proposition (*hetu*), (3) the example cited in support of the reason (*udāharaṇa*), (4) the application of the first proposition to the particular case in question (*upanaya*), and (5) the result (*niṣamaṇa*), which is a statement of the fact that the proposition has been proved.

A typical Indian syllogism would be as follows:

1. Yonder mountain has fire.
2. For it has smoke.
3. Whatever has smoke has fire.
4. Yonder mountain has smoke such as is invariably accompanied by fire.
5. Therefore, yonder mountain has fire.

The linguistic form is not considered necessary to syllogism. This is common to all forms of Indian logic.

According to the *Nyāya*, a notion or a concept can be either right or wrong. In the first case it is obtained through perception or inference or comparison or revelation. A wrong notion is one which is not derived from proof and originates either from doubt or from false premises or from error. A wise man avoids these as well as passions and aversions and is profoundly indifferent to all action.

Blissedness is deliverance from pain. The primary evil is pain. There are twenty-one varieties of evil which spring from the organs of sense, from the objects of sense, from mental apprehensions, and even from pleasure. "The soul attains to this deliverance by knowledge, by meditation on itself, by not earning fresh merit or demerit through actions sprung from desire, and by becoming free from passions through knowledge of the evil inherent in objects. It is knowledge... and not virtue which obtains final deliverance from the body."⁵⁶

The *Nyāya* is predominantly intellectual and analytical. Its value lies in its methodology or the theory of knowledge on which it builds its philosophy. This theory it applies not only to one system but to all systems with modifications here and there. Chatterjee and Datta observe that "the *Nyāya* theory

⁵⁶ John Davies, *Hindu Philosophy*, Kegan Paul, London. 1884, p. 124.

of pluralistic realism is not so satisfying as its logic. Here we have a common-sense view of the world as a system of independent realities. . . . It does not give us a systematic philosophy of the world in the light of one universal absolute principle."⁵⁷

The Indian syllogism bears a close resemblance to Aristotelian syllogism especially when it is simplified or abridged, consisting either of the last three or the first three terms only. It is, therefore, suggested by a good many historians that either Aristotle or the builders of the *Nyāya* system drew inspiration from the other. It is also possible that the obligation is mutual.

6. *The Vaiśeṣika System*.—*Vaiśeṣika* is derived from *viśeṣa* which means difference, signifying thereby that multiplicity and not unity lies at the basis of the universe. It is expounded by Kaṇāda in the *Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra* which contains about five hundred and fifty aphorisms. Book 1 discusses the five categories—substance, quality, action, community or genus, and particularity; Book 2 deals with the substances—earth, water, air, ether, space, and time; Book 3 is concerned with the problems of mind and self and also touches the theory of inference; Book 4 is about the atomic theory and discusses the nature of body and the visibility of quality; Book 5 deals with motion; Book 6 contains duties of the four stages of life; Book 7 treats of quality, the atomic theory, the self, and inherence together; Books 8 and 9 deal with perception and inference; while Book 10 is concerned with causality and other related questions.

A fundamental assumption of this system is that objects are independent of the perceiving mind and also of one another. Philosophically, the doctrine may be called pluralistic realism. The entire world of experience can be divided into nine *dravya* or substances together with their properties and relations. These substances are earth, water, fire, air, *ākāśa*, time, space, self, and *manas*. Besides substances which simply provide a framework for the whole universe there are *padārtha*, or categories, seven in number, namely, *guṇa*, *karma*, *viśeṣa*, *samavāya*, *sāmānya*, *abhāva*, and *dravya*, which can be translated as quality, action, individuality, necessary relation, universals, negation, and substance. Qualities depend upon substances, but they can be independently conceived and so exist by their own nature. No distinction is recognized between mental and material qualities or between the primary and secondary qualities. Quite consistent with its pluralistic standpoint, the doctrine holds that the substances reveal their nature through the qualities in which they differ and not in which they agree.

In regarding earth, air, water, and fire as substances, what is implied is that the entire structure of the universe can be interpreted in terms of material causes which are supersensible. The ultimate stuff of which this universe is made is the mass of atoms that are round, extremely minute, invisible, incapable of division, eternal in themselves but not in their aggregate form. Even

⁵⁷ *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, Calcutta University, Calcutta, 1944, p. 247

mind (*manas*) is regarded as an atom extremely small, because of which only one sensation can be conveyed to the soul at one time.

Vaiśeṣika is basically a dualistic philosophy inasmuch as it recognizes the eternality both of atoms and souls. In fact every Hindu system regards matter as eternal. The only exception is the school of the Vedāntists which takes matter as the illusive manifestation of the one Supreme *Brahman* who is Himself the all.

According to Kaṇāda, the *summum bonum* for man is nothing but deliverance from pain, which can be achieved through knowledge, resulting in the soul getting into a state of a tranquil, unconscious passivity.

The Influence of Islam on Hinduism.—From the account of the six systems of Indian philosophy given above, such writers as were born after the advent of Islam in India have been excluded; not that they were in any way less important than those who saw the light of the day before the first/seventh century, but because their thinking shows unmistakable signs, implicit as well as explicit, of Muslim impact. Details of this impact have been provided in a separate chapter of this volume. Here it will suffice to say that the impact was very deep, firm, and abiding, and left no aspect of Indian thought untouched.

The contact of the Muslims with the Indians began as early as the end of the first/seventh century, and still continues to the advantage of both. Islam was introduced into the Indian sub-continent by Arab traders; it was propagated by mystics and saints; and it was established by Muslim rulers of various dynasties who made India their home like several other Muslim immigrants. The Muslims brought with them their ideology, their philosophy and religion, their beliefs and practices, and, above all, an unconquerable passion to share this wisdom with others. The Sufis who were thinkers of no mean order succeeded by their example and precept in imparting to the natives that ideology and philosophy which the Muslims had expounded from their understanding of the Qur'an, the Hadith, and the Sunnah.

Muhammad bin Qāsim is ranked as the first Muslim who entered India as a conqueror in 94/712. His example was followed by a long line of Muslim rulers who wielded the sceptre of authority over the Indian sub-continent till 1274/1857, when Indian "mutiny" took place and the Britishers found a splendid excuse to wipe off the last vestige of the Muslim Empire. During a period of one thousand years when the Indian sub-continent lay prostrate at the feet of the Muslim emperors, many of whom enjoyed full autocratic powers, it is very unlikely that the culture and philosophy which they cherished and treasured should have left no imprint on the thoughts and beliefs of the native population.

There was, however, no imposition of one culture over another. Culture can never be introduced by the sword, no matter how long and sharp. What happened on the Indian soil was not the replacement of one culture by another but an amalgamation of the two. It was a case of the willing acceptance of the

salient features of Muslim culture and making them a part and parcel of the culture of India. What Saṅkara and Rāmānuja did in the sphere of philosophy was done by others in the fields of religion, ethics, and social polity. The result was a great upheaval in the world of Hindu thought. A re-evaluation and a re-appraisal of old values and thoughts took place on a gigantic scale. Monotheism was stressed and so was universal brotherhood of mankind and a positive approach to life. Casteless society became the goal of social reforms and the Sūdras, the accursed and the condemned, were accorded the right to live like others. All this was the product of the impact of Islam on Hinduism.

There is evidence to show that the *Nyāya* and the *Vaiśeṣika* were organized into one system after Islam had firmly entrenched itself in India. Not only were the two systems welded into one, they also became monotheistic and advanced for the first time in the history of Hindu thought what are known as the Hindu proofs for the existence of God.

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Chapter II

PRE-ISLAMIC CHINESE THOUGHT

In the present chapter we shall attempt to survey some of the salient features of Chinese philosophy avoiding any specialized or detailed discussion of the individual schools or of the philosophical technicalities involved. Our purpose is to present, in brief compass, an account of Chinese philosophical thought indicating a number of its peculiar characteristics and its apparent major limitations. This, then, will be a summary of the outstanding peculiarities of Chinese philosophy prior to the arrival of any significant foreign influence.

First, a few words with respect to the period of Chinese philosophy we are covering, that of the Chou Dynasty (1122?-256 B.C.). The last centuries of the Chou were marked by political and social turmoil associated with the disintegration of feudalism. The Chinese world was torn by internecine warfare, old political powers were overturned and old values challenged or discarded. During this "time of troubles," to use Toynbee's term, China produced a great variety of original schools of philosophical thought, such as Confucianism, Taoism, Mohism, and Legalism as well as a Chinese version of Epicureanism, the so-called Logicians, and the Yin Yang school. Because of the creative freshness and richness of the later Chou, it may be regarded as the classical period of Chinese philosophy. Our discussion is, perforce, limited to these classical philosophies and their spirit; Chinese medieval and modern philosophies are not delineated, nor is Buddhism in China, nor Chinese Buddhism. The primary reason for this concentration on the Chou philosophies is that they represent the indigenous Chinese schools of philosophy before they