

NOTES AND DISCUSSION

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THREE MYTHS

ABOUT INDIAN PHILOSOPHY*

I

Indian Philosophy, like Indian culture, seems peculiarly prone to arouse either violent antipathy or violent enthusiasm.¹ Rarely does it engender an attitude which tries to present and assess it coolly and *calmly*, without positive or negative emotion. Nothing perhaps stands more in the way of such an attitude than the universally accepted ideas which I wish to explore in this paper. These three ideas are treated as indubitable facts about Indian philosophy. They seem so self-evident to enthusiasts and detractors alike that to question them seems to question the very concept of

* Footnotes preceded by an asterisk were graciously contributed by Mlle Rita Régnier.

¹ This article is dedicated to Dr. B. N. Consul and his staff without whose surgical help and skill it might never have been completed. Dr. Consul holds the Chair of Ophthalmology at the Medical College, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur India.

Notes and Discussion

Indian philosophy as it has been traditionally conceived and presented by almost every writer on the subject. Yet, it seems to me that the time has come to question the traditional picture itself, to raise doubts about the indubitable, to investigate the sacrosanct and the self-evident. Myths have always masqueraded as facts and many a time the emperor's nudity has only been discovered by a child's disingenuity.

The self-evident claims about Indian philosophy are legion. First and foremost to strike even the most careless eye is the claim to spirituality. Who does not know that Indian philosophy is spiritual? Who has not been told that this is what specifically distinguishes it from Western philosophy and makes it something unique and apart from all the other philosophical traditions of the world? The claim, of course, is never put to the test. In fact, it seems so self-evident as to require no argument or evidence on its behalf. Nobody questions it. In point of fact, no serious or even casual student of the subject deems it worth questioning.

Yet, the moment we begin to doubt the claim and examine it for what it is worth, we find it spurious and mythical, to say the least.

After all, what exactly is meant by calling a whole philosophical tradition "spiritual." The term, in the ontological context, means that the nature of ultimate reality is held to be the same or similar to that of mind or spirit. The distinctive feature lies in the assertion of the primacy of consciousness as opposed to the inertness associated with and displayed by objects that are purely material in their nature. Spirit is opposed to Matter and the spiritualist Metaphysics implies that Spirit *alone* is real and what appears as Matter is *only* an appearance, something illusory, something unreal. The qualifying terms "*alone*" and "*only*" are of the utmost importance, for without them the view held cannot be characterized as "spiritual" in the ontological sense of the term.

Viewed in this perspective, Indian philosophy can hardly be characterized as spiritual in character. It certainly is true that most of the schools of Indian philosophy* do recognize the ultimate

* In Indian philosophy one traditionally lists six systems or, better, "views" (*darśana*): *Mīmāṃsā*, *Vedānta*, *Sāṃkhya*, *Yoga*, *Vaiśeṣika* and *Nyāya*. The followers or faithful can be designated respectively as *mīmāṃsaka*, *vedāntin*, *sāṃkhya*, *yogin*, *vaiśeṣika* and *naivāyika*. The materialistic movement *cārvāka*, stands

reality of Spirit in some form or other. But so do they also recognize the ultimate reality of Matter in some form or other. The Jainas, the Vaisesikas and the Sāmkhyans recognize it so openly that it can hardly be missed by even the most starry-eyed student of the subject. The Cārvākas need not be mentioned in this connection, as they are regarded as “unmentionable” for this very reason by everybody except Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya and Walter Ruben who turn the tables and regard all the others as “untouchables” of Indian philosophy. The Naiyāyikas are usually supposed to accept the Vaisesika metaphysics, but it is seldom noted that they go a step further in the Cārvāka direction. Unlike the Cārvākas, they certainly believe in the ontological reality of soul but they deny to it the essential characteristic of consciousness which alone, according to everybody else, differentiates it from Matter. Consciousness, according to the Naiyāyikas, is not an inalienable quality of the soul but rather, as the Cārvākas say, a quality which arises in it when a collocation of circumstances accidentally comes to pass. In a radical sense, then, the Naiyāyika thinker comes closest to the classic position of Materialism as propounded in the history of thought. He, of course, believes in the ontological reality of God also. But that is another story and another matter.

There remain the Buddhists, the Mīmāṃsakas, the Vedāntins and the followers of the so-called Yoga school of philosophy. Among these, the Mīmāṃsakas subscribe to the metaphysical reality of all the substances which the Nyāya-Vaisesika thinkers hold to be real. Only they add certain others of their own also. Any one who contends for the ultimate reality of earth, water, fire and air among other things, can hardly be considered to believe in the reality of spirit *alone*. As for the Buddhists, their fundamental denial is of substantiality, whether it be that of spirit or of matter. In fact, two of the traditional schools of Buddhism assert the reality of the external world while denying, of course, its substantiality. It is only the Yogācāra who explicitly contends for the ideality or mentality of whatsoever exists. The Mādhyamikas, like the Advaita Vedāntists of a later date, accept phenomenal

somewhat apart from the classical *darśana*. The Buddha (Buddhists) and the Jaina (Jainas) embrace the doctrines proclaimed by the religious reformers Buddha and Jina.

reality and deny the ultimate reality of anything that can ever possibly be asserted.*

Vedānta, of course, is not Samkara-Vedānta only. It is merely a name to suggest that the philosopher who chose to call himself or his thought by that name assumed consciously the added responsibility of showing that that is exactly what the *Upanisads* really meant. Any doctrine, therefore, can call itself Vedānta provided it is prepared to sustain that it alone expresses the true and authentic meaning of the *Upanisads*. There are frank dualists like Mādhva who regard Matter or Prakṛti as an eternal, independent principle in its own right and who call themselves Vedāntists. There is Rāmānuja who believes in the ultimate distinction in the nature of Matter from God but denies its independence in the sense of its not being subordinate to Him. And, then, there is the great Samkara who believes that the saying or the asserting of anything is in itself the surest sign of its ultimate unreality. For him, the individual soul and God are as unreal as Prakṛti or Matter.

Matter, thus, is not unreal for Vedānta either. It is distinctly asserted to be ultimately real by the two major schools, those of Rāmānuja and of Mādhva. For the only remaining major school, the one of Samkara, it is as real as anything else. As for Yoga, it perhaps is counted among the traditional schools of Indian philosophy only as a matter of courtesy. There seems scarcely any reason to do so. It is entirely a system of practice and no one ever contends that it has any distinctive philosophical views of its own except the Sāṃkhya view of the independent reality of Prakṛti. It thus constitutes no exception to the almost universal acceptance of the ontic reality of Matter among the various schools of Indian philosophy.

Ontologically, then, the characterization of Indian philosophy as “spiritual” is completely erroneous. The only other context in which it may be regarded as “spiritual” is that of morals or ethics. Here, it certainly is true that Indian thought has held spiritual salvation as the highest goal of individual seeking and striving. But this, it should be remembered, is a generalized feature of tra-

* The Advaita Vedantins are followers of a special form of Vedānta which professes absolute monism (advaita). The *Yogācāras* (“those who practice *Yoga*”) make up one school of Buddhism; the Mādhyamikas (“those who adopt ‘half-way terms’ or views”) constitute still another.

ditional Indian culture as a whole. Philosophy, as it were, only *accepts* this goal which the culture in general had set for the individual. It, of course, articulates, accentuates, defines and redefines the goal in a sharper and more conscious manner.

Even here, it would be interesting to point out that it was not until later that Moksa as a distinctive separate goal was accepted in Indian thought. As is well known, the early formulations of the goals of human seeking confined them to no more than three in number. These were known as *dharmā*, *artha* and *kāma* which may roughly be described as the realms of law, rule or the prescribed, on the one hand (*dharmā*), with those of the things desired (*kāma*) and the instrumentalities for their realization (*artha*), on the other. The introduction into this tripartite division of the ends of human life of a fourth goal was not so much the result of philosophical speculation as of the emergence into prominence of certain trends which were already present in the religious atmosphere of India. The so-called Sramana* tradition of Sāṃkhya, Bauddha and Jaina traditions, is the root source from which stems the concept of Moksa in the orthodox Vedic traditions of India.² These traditions, at their origins, were primarily religious and their importance lay rather in the spiritual exploration of man than in his philosophical speculation. In the course of their evolution, they certainly produced later philosophical thinkers who articulated and argued for the theoretic and conceptual position supposed to be relevant to the specific differential insights of the original religious founders of their traditions.

The ideal of Moksa was, thus, a later take-over from the non-vedic religious and spiritual traditions of India. In this process, it was given a more positive content than it had in the relatively more negative traditions of Buddhism, Jainism and Sāṃkhya. The philosophers, here as there, defined and redefined, pointed out the difficulties of the concept and tried to meet those difficulties. But in the initial discovery of the concept they were not the initiators

* *Sramana*, term in diametric opposition to *brāhmana* (Brahmin) to designate a thinker or monk of lay origin as opposed to a member or representative of the sacerdotal caste.

² See G. C. Pande, *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism* (Allahabad University, Allahabad, India, 1957).

Notes and Discussion

and innovators but only followers who worked and reworked what they had taken over or what had been handed down to them.

It may equally be remembered in this connection that there are few philosophers in any of the great historic traditions whose views on the ends of human life are not idealistic in some sense or other. The only distinctive feature of the Indian philosophers in this context seems to lie in their emphasis on the spiritual as against the moral, and the creation of a dichotomy or division between the two. The addition of Moksa as the fourth and final end of human seeking and striving was not a fulfilment of the other three but ultimately a denial or negation of them. Many thinkers of later India have striven to bridge the gulf between morality and spirituality but the legacy of the original dualism has persisted unchanged until today. The baffling paradox of a country which is felt by almost every foreigner to be at one and the same time the most spiritual and the most immoral can perhaps be rendered intelligible only in this way.

II

Indian philosophy, however, is not uniquely and distinctively characterized in terms of “spirituality” alone. There are other characterizations which are almost as universally current and which, on examination, are found to be as mythical as the one regarding spirituality. The other such characterization is in terms of “authority.” Almost invariably, each writer on Indian philosophy starts his account by drawing a distinction between the “orthodox” and “unorthodox” schools of Indian philosophy. This distinction is drawn in terms of their acceptance or non-acceptance of the authority of the Vedas.

This is a commonplace about Indian philosophy, a commonplace that is repeated with such assurance of self-evidence that no possible doubt could be entertained about it. But what exactly could be meant by the acceptance of the Vedas as an authoritative basis for one’s philosophical system? As far as I can see, the only legitimate meaning of such a claim in the philosophical context would be to maintain that the Vedas contain the ultimate philosophical truth and that the test of the truth of a philosophical

position is whether or not it is in accordance with what is written in the Vedas.

Now if this were to be really the case, then the differences between the so-called “orthodox” schools of Indian philosophy would arise from their varying interpretations of what the Vedas really meant. But, is it really so? Is it true to say that Sāṃkhya or Yoga or Nyāya or Vaiśeṣika differ about the exact meaning which is to be put on the Vedic texts? Are they, so to speak, schools of interpretation which clash over what the Vedas really mean? This obviously is not the case. The classical texts of the various schools are not, even in form, a commentary upon the vedic texts. The two schools which may seem an obvious exception to this are Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta. The former specifically upholds the authority of the Vedas and the latter ostensibly champions a genuine interpretation of the *Upanisads* which are supposed to be a part of the Vedas. The various schools of Vedānta may be said, with some justification, to be schools of interpretation in the required sense of the term. But even if the various schools of Vedānta may legitimately be so designated, it would not do to interpret the differences between Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta in the same way. They appear rather to differ as to what is to be regarded as really constituting the Vedas.

What, then, is to constitute the Vedas, seems to be the crucial question which first has to be answered if one is to have a meaningful discussion of the question about their authority in regard to Indian philosophy in particular and to Indian culture in general. The authoritative Vedas themselves were originally thought to be only three in number. Later, the authority of the fourth Veda also began to be accepted. In any case, the Vedas, it should be remembered, were always plural in number. Moreover, the authority of all of them was not equally securely established even during the times when they were being composed. Further, on the most conservative estimate, it took them at least a thousand years to assume their present shape. During these thousand years at least, their authority was never such as to preclude the possibility of making further additions to them. This obviously does not speak very much for their authority in those times. Later, even among those who have held seriously to their authority, there has always been a difference to which portion of the Vedas was to be

regarded as authoritative and in reference to what subject matters and for what purposes.

The latter, it has not always been noted, is almost as important as the former. The Mīmāṃsā, for example, does not merely deny the *Upanisads* the privilege of being counted among the corpus of vedic authority but even contends that any utterance which is not a pure injunction, that is, either a command or a prohibition, is also to be considered as Veda. This, it should be emphasized, is a revolutionary position whose implications for the issue of vedic authority for philosophy in India have hardly ever been noted. Vedas, according to this view, have no philosophic content whatsoever. Being pure injunctions, they have nothing to do with epistemological or metaphysical speculations or even with ethical reflection. A command or a prohibition, however moral, is not a reflection on the nature and problem of morals which ethics undoubtedly is. The Mīmāṃsaka's own philosophy, thus, is not a vedic philosophy at all since, according to him, Vedas do not contain any philosophy, whether of their own or of any other type. Vedic philosophy, strictly speaking, is a contradiction-in-terms and as such the purest type of non-being that we can imagine.

The Vedāntins, for their part, do certainly recognize the authority of the *Upanisads* but not of *Upanisads* only. They also recognize the authority of the *Gītā* and the *Brahma-sūtra* which are definitely not regarded as a part of the Vedas by anybody. Equally they honor with scant recognition the authority of the non-upanisadic portion of the Vedas. Nay more, their attitude to vedic authority is quite casual not to say almost Pickwickian in manner. Samkara, for example, in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras*, explicitly implies that they are not to be taken seriously when they deal with empirical matters of fact.³ They are deemed authoritative only when they deal with transcendental matters alone. Thus, for Vedānta as well as for Mīmāṃsā, the term Veda is restricted not only to certain portions of the classical vedic

³ "A conflict of statements (in Vedānta-passages) regarding the world would not even matter greatly, since the creation of the world and similar topics are not at all what the scripture wishes to teach... the passages about the creation and the like form only subordinate members of passages treating of *Brahman*." *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, Ed. Radhakrishnan and Moore (Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 516.

literature but also to certain of their contents or subject matter. The Vedas, in this way, enjoy only a very circumscribed authority even for Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta, the only schools which seem to take it seriously.

The notion of “vedic” authority, then, is a myth. It certainly cannot be held to be the dividing line between the schools as has been stated by almost every text book on the subject. Yet, it may be contended that the issue of authority in Indian philosophy is far broader than the question of the authority of the Vedas. Even if it be conceded that the Vedas hold little authority for most schools of Indian philosophy, is it not true that something else fulfills that function? Do not the sūtras hold the same position and does not the time-honored way of writing philosophy in the form of commentaries on the traditional texts prove this? And, is not Sabda or Testimony* regarded as an independent pramāna, that is, both a criterion and a source of valid knowledge?

These two contentions seem so obviously convincing as to finally clinch the issue of authority in Indian philosophy. But, is it really so? Would not a closer look reveal something entirely different? Why should philosophers, of all people, be taken in by appearances without even critically examining them? After all, does not one of the so-called “orthodox” schools of Indian philosophy, that is, the Vaiśeṣika, believe in Sabda or testimony as an independent source of valid knowledge? Why should these things be glossed over as if they were of no importance whatsoever? As for the authority of the Sūtras, one may legitimately ask what is the authority of the Nyāya-sūtras after Gaṅgeśa.

This, we should realize, is not just a rhetorical question asked to save a desperate situation. Rather, it should be seen as a plea for looking at the facts from a different vantage point. After Gaṅgeśa, Nyāya does not merely take a new turn which was recognized as such by his contemporaries and the thinkers who came after him, but enters on a path of *continuous development* which leads later to such giants as Viśvanātha, Gaḍādhara and Raghunātha Śiromani. Such a continuous development and its proliferation into other schools provides decisive evidence against the view

* *Sabda* can mean both “sound” and “word”; by extension it may also mean “oral testimony”. *Pramāna* means measure, authority, norm.

which gives to the sūtras an *unquestionable authority* for the whole school itself. The authority, rather, goes on changing and as soon as some new important thinker appears on the scene, the mantle falls on him and he becomes the point of departure for further thought.

This, it should be remembered, is not the case for Nyāya alone. The situation is not very much different for Vedānta or Mīmāṃsā or Vaiśeṣika or Sāṃkhya. Yoga, as we have said earlier, is hardly a school of philosophy and thus need not be considered in this connection. It may, for example, be reasonably asked what is the authority of the *Brahma-sūtras* after Samkara for Advaitic Vedāntins. The numerous Advaita thinkers after Samkara take their departure from him and not from the *Brahma-sūtras*. Is this not true for such outstanding post-Samkarite figures as Padmapāda, Suresvara, Prakāśātman, Citsukha, Prakāśananda, Vacaspati Misra and Madhusūdan Sarasvatī? Even the famous *Brahma-siddhi* of Mandan Misra is an independent work and not a commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras*. There is, in fact, hardly any significant Advaitic commentary directly on the *Brahma-sūtras* after Samkara. They were just not seriously taken into account and if, in the present century, Radhakrishnan has chosen to write a commentary once again, it is rather because of the desire to follow in the path of the great Achāryas* than because of any real belief in their over-riding authority for his own philosophical thought.

It is, of course, true that Rāmānuja, Mādhva and Nimbārka wrote their independent commentaries on the *Brahma-sūtras* after Samkara. But they did this merely because they wanted to depart fundamentally from the Advaitic interpretation of the *Brahma-sūtras*. The great subsequent thinkers of these schools cared hardly at all for the *Brahma-sūtras*. There is no difference in this respect between the post-Samkarite thinkers of the Advaitic school and, say, the post-Rāmānuja, the post-Mādhva and the post-Nimbārka thinkers of these respective schools. Thus, even where a great thinker tries to buttress his new thought by an appeal to the traditional texts, his immediate successors take him as the point of departure and not the text from which he presumedly derived his thought.

* *Āchāryas* means spiritual master.

The same may be said about Mīmāṃsā, the other great school which ostensibly argues a great deal in favor of the authority of the traditional texts. The sutras of Jaimini hold little interest or authority after Prabhākara and Kumārila. It is they who are discussed, argued, assented to or differed with. Sāṃkhya and Vaiśeṣika have no great independent lines of outstanding thinkers around them. The first has hardly any original sūtras which could even reasonably be construed as providing the authoritative text for the system. Iswarkrsna's Sāṃkhya-Kārikā is the oldest known text of the system. But, as everybody recognizes, the system is far, far older than this and Iswarkrsna can hardly be said to enjoy any exceptional authority except as a clue to some of the main tenets which the thinkers belonging to this school generally held. As for Vaiśeṣika, it is Prasastapāda who provides us with a real perspective on Vaiśeṣika thought. Subsequent Vaiśeṣika thinkers generally start from Prasastapāda's work. Sūtras themselves, it should be remembered, are *only* cogent summaries of previous thought. They are, thus, simultaneously the end of a line of thought and the point of departure for a fresh philosophical enterprise. It is only thus that they make sense and not as the final arbiters of what may legitimately be thought by a philosopher in India. The latter way of presenting them is usual, but it is so totally false that one wonders how it ever came to be propagated and accepted.

The Buddhists and the Jainas have no sacred *philosophical* texts, except the *Abhidharma*, which may be regarded as vested with the type of authority that the Vedas and the Sūtras are supposed to enjoy in the so-called "orthodox" tradition of Indian philosophizing. There are important thinkers and important books but nothing vested with a divine or superhuman authority. This is as it should be, and my contention is that it is the same with the so-called classical schools of Hindu philosophy.

III

The myth of spirituality and the myth of authority are not the only two myths about Indian philosophy. There is a third one which is even more subtle than the other two. This is the myth of the schools without which no book on Indian philosophy has yet

been written. The myths of spirituality and authority are stated on the first pages and the conveniently forgotten. The schools however, are in a different category. They are the very stuff or rather the very structure out of which and around which the whole story of Indian philosophy has been woven. Indian philosophy is divided first into the “orthodox” and the “unorthodox” schools and then these are subdivided into Buddhism, Jainism and Cārvāka on the one hand, and into Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta on the other. This is the unvarying classification one reads about and the only attempt at a little exception is that of Karl H. Potter in his *Presuppositions of India's Philosophies*. But Potter has only tried to diversify the picture a little and not to question it in its very foundations as we are trying to do here.

The classification into schools is time-honored and accepted even by the classical thinkers themselves. Why, then, should we attempt to question it? But it is at least equally apparent that the veil of authority and the veil of spirituality were woven and accepted also by the classical thinkers. So, there is nothing distinctively different in this respect which may be said to apply to the problem of “schools” alone.

The concept of “school” is closely tied up to the concept of “authority” in Indian philosophy. If the authority of the Vedas or the *Upanisads* or the Sūtras is final, then what is presumed to be propounded in them as philosophy is final also. There thus arises the notion of a closed school of thought, final and finished once and for all. This may seem fantastic, but most presentations of the various schools of Indian philosophy are so non-historical in their nature that they belie the title *History of Indian Philosophy* under which they are usually presented. History is always the story of change, development, differentiation, innovation. How can there be any real history if some primordial authority is posited at the very beginning of thought? If, therefore, we deny the “authoritative” character of Indian philosophy then, in an important sense, we deny the concept of “schools” also. There is no such thing as final, frozen positions which the term “school,” in the context of Indian philosophy, usually connotes. If “schools” change, develop, differentiate, divide then they are never closed, finished or final with respect to what they are trying to say. There

could, then, be no fixed body of Nyāya-Vaisesika, Sāṃkhya, Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta, Bauddha, Jaina or Cārvāka positions except in a minimal sense. These would, on the other hand, be rather styles of thought which are developed by successive streams of thinkers and not fully exemplified by any. Nor would these styles be treated as exhausted by any group or groups of thinkers belonging to any particular historical epoch.

The difference between a “school” and a “style” of thought is not merely a verbal one, as many may think. The question centers on the issue of how one is to conceive these so-called schools of Indian philosophy. Are they something like the various schools that one meets with in Western philosophy? Are they something of the same kind as, say, “rationalism,” “empiricism,” “realism,” or “idealism”? If so, there is no problem, for while each of these has a recognizable identity of its own, it still has had and is capable of continuous development in new and varied directions. No single thinker or group of thinkers could ever exhaust what is signified by any of these schools of Western philosophy. The case of Indian philosophic schools would then be similar.

However, the traditional presentation of the schools of Indian philosophy is hardly ever along these lines. They are treated as something finished and final. No distinction, therefore, is ever drawn between the thought of an individual thinker and the thought of a school. A school is, in an important sense, an abstraction. It is, so to say, a logical construction springing out of the writings of a number of thinkers who share a certain similarity of outlook in tackling similar problems. On the other hand, it is also some sort of an ideal governing the direction of thought as well as a Platonic idea, more or less exemplified in one thinker rather than another. In more modern terms, it may also be conceived as a morphological form which both governs the evolution of species and is intuited from a continuous and varied observation of them. These different ways of understanding the concept of “school” should be treated not as exclusive alternatives but rather as supplementary to each other.

Basically, this is the reality of the “schools” of Indian philosophy also. Yet it is never presented as such. Sāṃkhya, for example,

is too much identified with Iswarkrsna's work or Vedānta with the work of Samkara. But this is due to a confusion between the thought of an individual thinker and the style of thought which he exemplifies and to which he contributes in some manner. All that Samkara has written is not strictly Advaita Vedānta. Nor is all that Iswarkrsna has written Sāmkhya. Unless this is realized, writings on Indian philosophy will continuously do injustice either to the complexity of thought of individual thinkers concerned or to the uniqueness of the style of thought they are writing about. If such an injustice is to be avoided, then the history of Indian philosophy will either be the history of individual thinkers in relation to each other or the history of styles of thought as growing over a period of time. In this, then, it will be no different from a history of Western or any other philosophy which also can be and has been written in either of the two ways.

IV

Indian philosophy, then, is neither exclusively spiritual nor bound by unquestionable, infallible authority, nor constricted and congealed in the frozen molds of the so-called "schools" which are supposed to constitute the essence of Indian philosophy by every one who has written on the subject. These are just plain myths and unless they are seen and recognized to be such, any new fresh look at Indian philosophy would be impossible. The dead, mummified picture of Indian philosophy will come alive only when it is seen as a living stream of thinkers who have grappled with difficult problems that are, philosophically, as alive today as they were in the ancient past. Indian philosophy will become contemporarily relevant only when it is conceived as philosophy proper.⁴ Otherwise, it will remain merely a subject of

⁴ See my article: "Three Conceptions of Indian Philosophy," in the forthcoming issue of *Philosophy East and West* (Hawaii, USA).

It has been asked what I mean by "philosophy proper." The only thing I wish to make clear in this context is that the Indian philosophical tradition is "philosophical" in the same sense as is Western philosophical tradition.

antiquarian interest and research which is what all the writers on Indian philosophy have made it out to be. It is time that this false picture be questioned and that the living concerns of ancient thought be made alive once more. The destruction of these three myths would represent a substantial step in this direction.⁵

⁵ I have been greatly helped in this paper by discussions with Dr. G. C. Pande, the outstanding scholar on Indian philosophy and culture and at present Tagore Professor of Indian Culture in the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, India. I am also thankful to Dr. S. K. Gupta of the Sanskrit Department in the University for bringing to my attention the different meanings of the term "Veda" in the tradition of classical Indian thought.