

## INTRODUCTION

The *Upaniṣads* are the foundations of Indian philosophy, which teaches spiritual monism and mysticism. The systems of Indian philosophy are systematic speculations on the nature of reality in harmony with the teachings of the *Vedas* and the *Upaniṣads*. They aim at the knowledge of the reality with a view to transform and spiritualise human life in India. Philosophical knowledge does not aim only at the satisfaction of our theoretical and speculative interest but also at realisation of the highest truth of life.

Indian philosophy is essentially spiritual. In India philosophy and religion are found to be intimately connected with one another. Religion is not a system of dogmas, but a living experience. It is the realisation of the spiritual truth. Philosophy in India also as a theory of reality is an insight into the nature of the reality, which leads to the highest spiritual truth viz., liberation. So Indian philosophy cannot be regarded as mere theorizing but a spiritual quest. It is based on logical reasonings, which subordinate to the authority of the *Vedas*, which are believed to embody the intuitions of seeds of truth. So it is said that Indian philosophy, which is based on rational speculation in harmony with the *Vedas*, is consciously aimed at achieving the highest perfection (*mokṣa*) attainable in human life. It is,

therefore, highly ethical, and always gives importance to the practical realisation of truth.

In Sanskrit the word '*darśana*' stands for two things, viz., 'vision' itself and also the 'instrument of vision'. In other words, it stands for the direct, immediate and intuitive vision of reality, the actual perception of Truth and also includes the means, which leads to this realisation.

According to Indian philosophers, there are three kind of pains – (1) *ādhyātmika* (2) *ādhibhautika* and (3) *ādhidaiivika*. By (1) is meant the physical and mental sufferings produced by natural and intra-organic causes; by (2) is meant the physical and mental sufferings produced by natural and extra-organic causes and the (3) *ādhidaiivika* stands for the physical and mental sufferings produced by supernatural and extra organic causes and the ultimate goal of life should be to get rid of these three kinds of pain. This is, according to the Indian thinkers, is possible only by knowing the souls and contemplating it.

In the eyes of the Western thinkers, Indian philosophy is concerned with India, which is otherwise known as 'Hind' or '*Hindusthān*'. Traditionally, however, it is known as '*Bhārat*' or '*Bhāratvarṣa*'. The language of the philosophy was written either in '*Sanskrit*' or '*Prakrita*' and '*Pāli*'. Ideological contributions to the Indian philosophy were '*vaidika*'

(*hindus*). *Jainism* and *Buddhism* are the dissenting offshoots of *Hinduism*. Indian philosophy is an indigenous product, which has its roots in Indian soil. “ ... Indian philosophy which is the indigenous product of Indian thinkers and which has developed from immemorial antiquity ...”<sup>1</sup>

According to a traditional principle of classification, most likely adopted by orthodox *hindu* thinkers, the schools or systems of Indian Philosophy are divided into two broad classes, namely, orthodox (*āstika*) and heterodox (*nāstika*). To the first group belong the six chief philosophical systems (popularly known as *ṣaḍ-darśana*), viz., the *mīmāṃsā*, the *vedānta*, the *sāṃkhya*, the *yoga*, the *nyāya* and the *vaiśeṣika*. These are regarded as orthodox (*āstika*), not because they believe in God, but because they accept the authority of the *Vedas*. The *mīmāṃsā* and the *sāṃkhya* do not believe God as the creator of the world, yet they are called orthodox (*āstika*), because they believe in the authoritativeness of the *Vedas*. The six systems mentioned here are not the only orthodox systems; they are the chief ones, and there are also some other less important orthodox schools such as the grammarian school, the medical school. etc., mentioned by *mādhavācārya*. Under the other class of heterodox systems, the chief three are the school of the materialists like the *Cārvākas*, the *Bauddhas* and the *Jainas*. They are called heterodox (*nāstika*) because they do not believe in the authority of *Vedas*.

The orthodox schools recognise the authority of *Vedas*. The heterodox schools do not recognise their authority. The *Cārvāka*, the *Bauddha* and the *Jaina* are called heterodox not because they are atheists, but because they reject the authority of *Vedas*. Among orthodox group the *sāṃkhya* and *mīmāṃsā* are atheists. The *nyāya*, the *vaiśeṣika*, the *yoga* and *vedānta* are theists. The *sāṃkhya* advocates dualism of ‘*prakṛti*’ and ‘*puruṣas*’ or individual selves. The *vedānta* advocates spiritualistic monism, and recognises the reality of *Brahman* or the absolute. It regards the world and the individual souls as their appearances, or parts, or attributes, modes or accessories of *Brahman*. The *nyāya* and the *vaiśeṣika* advocate the reality of God, plurality and individual souls and the world of diverse objects. They consider the world to be composed of the eternal atoms of earth, water, fire and air existing in self-existent material world and reject the concept of God as the creator of the world. The *yoga* grafts the notion of god on the *sāṃkhya* dualism of ‘*prakṛti*’ and ‘*puruṣas*’ and makes it theistic. So it is called the theistic *sāṃkhya*.

To understand this more clearly we must say something regarding the place of the *Vedas* in the evolution of Indian thought. The *Vedas* are the earliest available records of Indian literature and subsequent Indian thought, specially philosophical systems accepted *Vedic* authority. The *mīmāṃsā* and the *vedānta* may be regarded as the direct continuation of

the *Vedic* culture. The *Vedic* tradition had two sides, ritualistic and speculative (*karma* and *jñāna*). The *mīmāṃsā* emphasised the ritualistic aspect and evolved a philosophy to justify the continuation of the *Vedic* rites and rituals. The *vedānta* emphasised the speculative aspect of the *Vedas* and developed an elaborate philosophy out of *Vedic* speculations.

As both these schools were direct continuations of *Vedic* culture both are sometimes called by the common name. *mīmāṃsā* and for the sake of distinction the first is called *pūrva-mīmāṃsā* (or *karma-mīmāṃsā*) and the second *uttara-mīmāṃsā* (or *jñāna-mīmāṃsā*). But the more usual names of these two are *mīmāṃsā* and *vedānta* respectively and we shall follow this common usage here. The theories of *sāṃkhya*, *yoga*, *nyāya* and *vaiśeṣika* being based on ordinary human experience and reasoning did not challenge the authority of the *Vedas*. They rather tried to show that the testimony of the *Vedas* was quite in harmony with their rationally established theories. The *Cārvāka*, the *Bauddha* and the *Jaina* schools, however, arose mainly by opposition to the *Vedic* culture and as a consequence, they reject the authority of the *Vedas*.

It has been said that though the *vaidika* outlook has inspired Indian philosophy all through its development, the inspiration has not worked in the same direction. Some of the Indian schools have accepted the *vaidika*

world-view and scheme of values, while others have rejected the *Vedas*, either outright or in part only.

Thus Indian philosophy is broadly divided into two groups, viz., (1) heterodox (*nāstika*) and (2) orthodox (*āstika*). The heterodox philosophy is of three types, that is, (a) the *Cārvākas* with its different sub-types, (b) the *Buddhists* attached either to the *hīnayāna* or to the *mahāyāna* and (c) the *Jainas*. And the orthodox philosophy is mainly divided into two types, viz., (1) the *mīmāṃsāka* (exegetical) and (2) the *ānvīkṣaka* (rationalistic). The former has two forms – *pūrva-mīmāṃsā* and *uttara-mīmāṃsā* or the *vedānta* while the latter is sub-divided into *śābdika* and non-*śābdika*, which consists of *sāṃkhya*, *yoga*, *vaiśeṣika* and *nyāya*. “The attitude of Indian philosophy is called ‘*ādhyātmika*’ which is designated in English as ‘spiritual’, first by the European philosophers and then by the Indians too under the influence of European philosophy”.<sup>2</sup>

The moral character of Indian philosophy is separately related to the Indians’ introspective attitude and the introspective approach to reality. Philosophy for the ancient Indians was ‘the knowledge of the soul’ or ‘*ātmaśāstra*’; and although a study of philosophy could start with the external world, more often than not it started with the internal world or man’s inner nature viz., the soul of man. The introspective interest is highly conducive to idealism, of course and consequently most Indian

philosophy is idealistic in one form or another. Its general tendency has been in the direction of monistic idealism – that reality is ultimately one and ultimately spiritual. But the non-rigidity of the Indian mind as well as the attitude of monistic idealism which is so plastic and dynamic that it takes many forms and expresses itself even in seemingly conflicting doctrines which are in fact merely different expression of an underlying conviction which provides basic unity to Indian philosophy as a whole. True, at one time materialism did enjoy widespread acceptance, but its influence has not been quite as great as that of idealism. However, Indian philosophy has not totally ignored materialism; rather, it has known it, has overcome it, and has accepted idealism as the only tenable view, whatever specific form that idealism might take. In India, philosophy has been essentially a quest for values in terms of speculations about the nature of existence and theories of spiritual liberation (*mokṣa*). Thus, the most significant feature of Indian philosophy is in its concentration upon the spiritual.

A lot of discussions regarding liberation has been made in various books, literatures, journals etc., but some of the problems relating to it have escaped the notice of the researchers. He proposes to work on these problems, which are not explored or investigated, into earlier.

It is to be remarked that various terms like *apavarga*, *kaivalya*, *niḥśreyasa* etc. are found in the Indian philosophical texts to signify the same status of the soul in its liberated state. Let us now see what exactly is meant by these words. Do they signify the same status?

The proposed work will solely be concerned with some of the problems, which are not dealt earlier. For instances, (a) so it is possible to reconcile the *mahāyāna* and *hinayāna* views regarding *nirvāṇa*, (b) the terms, viz., *kaivalya*, *nirvāṇa*, *apavarga*, *mukti*, *niḥśreyasa* do not signify the same meaning. Further the soul does not enjoy only in a disembodied state, the state of liberation, (c) the socio-psychological ingredients of *mokṣa* or liberation has been also unfortunately overlooked. *Mokṣa* has been considered as the *parama-puruṣārtha* by the classical Indian thinkers. These problems will be dealt in Chapter 3,4 and 5.

It seems to the present writer that *mokṣa* has relevance to the socio-psychological crisis of present day. That is why he intends to confine his research work to Indian concept of liberation. In this dissertation he shall try to clarify these points.

## REFERENCES

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