

CHAPTER 1

Background to Developments in Traditional Indian Thought from Eighteenth Century Onwards

The eighteenth century constitutes no significant break in the intellectual history of India, especially in the development of traditions of philosophising which were prevalent before it and which had had a continuous growth at least from the time of Śamkara. If any break can be perceived in this continuity it came around A.D. 1200 when Nālanda was destroyed by Bakhtiyar Khilji, resulting in the disappearance of Buddhists from the philosophical scene in India. The disappearance of Buddhism is usually ascribed to Śamkara, even though it is well known that Udayana, who came a few centuries later, boasted that had he not been there to save the existence of God from the attacks of the Buddhists, HE would perhaps not have been there. Yet even Udayana's boast was premature as the Buddhists continued to flourish until A.D. 1200 and the last Buddhist thinker in India mentioned in Potter's bibliography in his *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies* is dated at A.D. 1250.

It is not quite clear why the destruction of Nālandā, the international intellectual centre of the Buddhists should have resulted in the disappearance of Buddhism from India, particularly when all the non-Buddhist schools continued to flourish even in regions which were politically dominated by Muslim rulers. Yet, though there is some evidence of the shifting of Buddhist intellectual activity to Tibet and other places outside India, there is little doubt that it ceased to be a living presence on the Indian philosophical scene. As a result, the Buddhist arguments and positions which had dominated the philosophical scene in India at least from B.C. 200 onwards, were almost totally forgotten. If one remembers the number and quality of Buddhist thinkers during this fourteen hundred year period, one is surprised at how scholar after scholar who has written on the history of Indian philosophy has failed to place Buddhism at the centre of his presentation. Instead Buddhism has been treated mainly in the context of its opposition to the so-called orthodox schools of Indian philosophy, which are placed centre stage.

However, with the disappearance of Buddhism in A.D. 1200, the stage was set for another intense debate. This consisted in interaction and the development of those schools of Indian philosophy which self-consciously prided themselves on being within the Vedic tradition, that was somehow regarded as 'orthodox'. Surprisingly, thinkers of the other great Śramaṇa tradition which, in a certain sense, was even older than Buddhism, seem to have never been taken seriously by any of the great traditions of philosophising in India, including that of the Buddhists. Though Jainism produced great thinkers, and from Kunda-Kunda (A.D. 200) onwards, there was no dearth of outstanding Jaina philosophers, they did not make the impact which they should have made considering both the quantity and the quality of the philosophical work they produced. Potter's bibliography lists ninety-two Jaina thinkers until A.D. 1250, which is a large number, only less than that of the Buddhists during this period. With the Buddhist's disappearance from the scene in A.D. 1250, the Jainas seemed to have gained momentum between A.D. 1250 and 1750, when there were about seventy-six thinkers, an average of fifteen thinkers per century, while in the earlier period covering about eleven hundred years the average was around eight.

The eighteenth century is seen as providing a significant dividing line for the development of philosophical enterprise in India. This division can be traced mainly to political reasons, as Aurangzeb's death in A.D. 1707 is supposed to have led to the decline of the Mughal rule, just as the consolidation of this rule under Akbar is said to have inaugurated the glorious period of the Mughals. But as far as philosophical traditions were concerned, there seems to have been no influence at all traceable either to the Mughals or the earlier Turkish and Afghan rulers in this country. If one reads the philosophical texts produced from A.D. 1200 onwards, or even from A.D. 1000 onwards, when Mahmud Ghazni invaded northern India, one would hardly be aware of the great political changes that were taking place in northern India during this period. The philosophical dividing line, then, has to be seen in a different way from the political dividing lines which until now have dominated the writing of Indian history and its periodization into ancient, medieval and modern.

The development of the philosophical schools in India took a significant turn somewhere around the middle of the tenth century, when Vācaspati Miśra I both summarised and reinterpreted the important philosophical traditions of India centering around Nyāya, Sāṃkhya and Vedānta, and when Udayana (fl. A.D. 984) gave a decidedly theistic turn to Nyāya thought and raised new epistemological issues in the history of that school. Oddly enough, though Vācaspati Miśra I also wrote on Mīmāṃsā and the Yoga Sūtras, his work does not seem to have made any significant contribution to the development of these schools. This is the period which also saw the advent of Yāmunācārya (fl. A.D. 1080), the first great non-Advaitic ācārya who self-consciously argued for the *khilji* of the *āgamic* texts along with those of the Vedas and tried to establish their coordinate authority in the orthodox tradition. His *Āgama-prāmāṇya* is a classic expression of this new attempt to establish the orthodoxy of the non-Vedic tradition in Indian

culture, though he still excluded the Buddhists and the Jains from its purview. Besides Yāmunācārya, it is in this period that Abhinavagupta (fl. 1014) from Kashmir, propounded a new theory of pure consciousness. He saw this as being essentially active rather than purely inactive and passive as had generally been understood both in Sāṃkhya and in Advaita Vedānta. He also brought aesthetic considerations into ontology, which is indeed a rare feature in Indian philosophical thought. The foundations of Śaiva Siddhānta in the South had earlier been laid by Śrīkanṭha in A.D. 850,¹ and it seems to have come into its own in the early thirteenth century with Meyakānta Tevar (fl. 1221).

Other traditions of philosophising centred more on a renewed search for what has been called "transgressive sacrality", that is, an attempt to sacralize all those tabooed aspects of life which are normally looked at askance and are condemned by puritans of all sects. This finds expression in the many varieties of Tantra during this period, a development which penetrated not only almost all schools of Indian spirituality but also Buddhism and Jainism, which have been renunciatory traditions *par excellence* in India from very ancient times. The transgressive sacrality embodied in Tāntric practices turns its attention once again to the body and its diverse functions and tries to change the very attitude towards the body, which was either negative in the earlier spiritual traditions or had ignored this to a great extent. The same outlook seems to have prevailed regarding the life of feelings, which had previously been either rejected or ignored in favour of knowledge or of a life of action primarily centred on the notion of *dharma*.

This is also the time of Rāmānujācārya (fl. A.D. 1120), the founder of the Viśiṣṭādvaita school, the first self-conscious non-Advaitic school of interpretation of the Upaniṣads, the *Brahma Sūtra* and the *Gītā*. This school initiated an unending polemic against Śaṅkara's Advaitic position propounded in the early eighth century. The polemic against the Advaitins acquired increasing importance as the Advaitic view became the focus of sustained criticism by all the non-Advaitic schools of Vedāntic interpretation. While Yāmunācārya in A.D. 1080 had argued for the equal authority of the āgamic texts, Rāmānuja and other non-Advaitic ācāryas appear to have accepted the basic authority of the texts in the Vedic tradition and tried to give them an interpretation which was different from that of Śaṅkara. The tradition of non-Advaitic ācāryas, though initiated with Yāmunācārya, that is, in A.D. 1080, really gained its momentum with the appearance of Rāmānuja. Nimbārka, who appears in A.D. 1250, that is, about 130 years after Rāmānuja, seems to have made no noticeable impact on either the religious or the philosophical scene of India. On the other hand, Madhva, who appears forty years after Nimbārka and 160 years after Rāmānuja, made a decisive impact on the philosophical scene as he stood squarely against the notion of Advaita and argued for a radical difference not only between self and God, but also between the self and other selves and between self and nature. He, thus self-consciously stood in complete opposition to Śaṅkara's position in this respect. The last of the great ācāryas, Vallabha (1525), came more than four hundred years after

Rāmānuja and almost 250 years after Madhva. Earlier, in 1014, Abhinavagupta in northern Kashmir had formulated a radically different notion of consciousness, treating its active aspect as an integral part of its very nature. But though he made a decisive impact on the theory of literature, he seems to have had little impact on the philosophical scene of India. He is not even counted among the non-Advaitic Vedāntins as he did not write on the *Brahma Sūtras* or the Upaniṣads, though, surprisingly, he did write a commentary on the *Gītā*, but even that has hardly been noticed in the tradition. It was primarily Madhva and his disciples, along with those belonging to the Rāmānuja school, who entered into an active discussion with the followers of Śaṅkara, resulting in an unending debate between the Advaitin and the non-Advaitin.

Besides the rise of the Advaitic and non-Advaitic schools of philosophy and the debate between them, the AD second millennium also witnessed developments in Nyāya after Udayana which gradually become so striking that they are characterised by all philosophical observers of the scene as something radically different are hence named "Navya Nyāya", a trend which crystallises in Gaṅgeśa (1350). Having assumed a distinctive direction which remained unchanged until modern times. In fact, Udayana calls himself an "ādhunika", thus self-consciously contrasting his thought with that of the older Naiyāyikas, including Jayanta, whom he calls "prācīna". This has generally not been noticed, but if it were taken seriously, it would require a further distinction to be made not merely between the older or prācīna Nyāya and Navya Nyāya but also between the ādhunika Nyāya of Udayana and the Navya Nyāya which occurs after Gaṅgeśa in the fourteenth century. From Gaṅgeśa to Gadādhara, that is, from A.D. 1350–1650, in a period of three hundred years, we have about sixty-nine thinkers who were totally devoted to carrying this development in new directions so that it not only became successively refined and differentiated but also assumed an analytic power of such magnitude that all other disciplines adopted it for their own purposes. We have, thus an intellectual renaissance in which any cognitive discipline claiming a śāstric status reformulated itself in the light of this new sophisticated technology of precise intellectual discourse almost in the same way as developments in modern logic have affected many areas of philosophical discourse in contemporary times. A still better analogy would be the adoption of mathematical techniques in modern knowledge which aspires to a śāstric, scientific status.

Besides this, there is fair evidence of increasing specialisation in the treatment of philosophical issues. This appears to be most evident in the independent monographs on *vyūtpattivāda*, *śaktivāda*, *sādrśyavāda*, *muktivāda*, etc. written by Gadādhara himself. He has even written an independent text on Mīmāṃsā entitled, *Vidhi Svarūpa Vicāra*. This tendency to deal with important topics in a self-contained manner is so prominent that even his well-known commentary on the work of Raghunātha Śīromaṇi is viewed as important contribution to such topics as *viśayatāvāda*, *prāmāṇyavāda*, *pratibandhakatāvāda*, and *avayava prakaraṇa*, edited and published independently of the original text of which they formed a part. The emergence of a new genre of philosophical writing called the *Kroḍapatras*

also attests to this tendency. The first *Kroḍapatra*, according to Potter's bibliography, was supposed to have been written in 1660 by Dinakara,² though the fashion did not appear to have caught on until later. This new style of philosophical writing became more frequent as people started elaborating on specific topics, presumably for their students, though their works seem to have become well known also among scholars of the subject.

Earlier, different traditions on the interpretation of the basic texts of both Advaita Vedānta and Mīmāṃsā had developed. According to Thangaswami Sarma, there were separate traditions of commentaries on the *Tattva Cintāmaṇi*, such as: (i) the *Ālok* tradition, in which at least thirty-one works are mentioned;³ or (ii) the *Dīdhiti* tradition, started by Raghunātha Śīromaṇi (1530), with thirty-two thinkers, including the famous Gadādhara (iii) and also an independent minor tradition of Rucidutta (1510), whose work on the *Tattva Cintāmaṇi* has at least eight commentaries. There are other traditions of understanding the *Tattva Cintāmaṇi*, such as the *Māthurī paramparā* deriving from Mathurānātha (1650), which comprises eight commentaries. Another major tradition relates to the understanding of the *Dīdhiti* tradition and its subdivisions itself. This consists of Jagadīśa's twenty-one works on it. The other tradition of understanding the *Dīdhiti* is that of Bhavānanda (1600),⁴ which has six works within it.

Similarly, in the *Advaita paramparā* there is the well-known distinction from Śaṅkara's even disciples, Padmapāda and Sureśvara. Also well-known is the tradition of Vācaspati Miśra I which, at a superficial level seems different from that of Padmapāda and Sureśvara. Yet, while the developments in Advaita Vedānta which have taken place after A.D. 1000 seem primarily to be a response to the criticisms of the non-Advaitic schools of Vedānta, the developments in Nyāya appear to have been more internally determined, particularly in logic and epistemology.

The denial of the reality of difference by the Advaitin thinkers posed a fundamental challenge which the Nyāya thinkers took seriously and responded to, particularly as they were interested in maintaining the plurality and the reality of the world. Śaṅkara Miśra I (1430) remained perhaps the most famous example of this response. His *Bheda Ratnam* seems to have disturbed the Advaitic thinkers considerably, as Madhusūdana Sarasvatī (1570) felt the need to reply to it in his *Advaita Ratna Rakṣānant*. Earlier, as Malla Nārāyaṇācārya (1490) and Nṛsimhaśarma (1555) had tried to reply to this attack in their works, *Abheda Ratnam* and *Bheda Dhikkāra*, respectively. It is interesting to note that Madhusūdana Sarasvatī (1570) also felt it necessary to reply to the work of Śaṅkara Miśra in his *Advaita Ratna Rakṣānant*, even though two well-known stalwarts of the Advaita school had already controverted the argument. It is clear that according to Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, the defence of the Advaita position was not satisfactory. The controversy continued, and the Naiyāyikas do not seem to have been overawed by the arguments of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in spite of his eminence and fame, as borne out by the fact that Viśvanātha Nyāya-siddhānta Pañcānana wrote his *Bheda Siddhi* around A.D. 1640, seventy years after the work of Madhusūdana

Sarasvatī. The debate was continued by Rakhaldas Nyayaratna Bhattacharya (1890), who wrote *Advaita Vāda Khaṇḍana*, and by Panchanana Bhattacharya (1906), who wrote the *Dvaitokti Ratna Mālā*. It is interesting to note that even as late as the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century we had scholars arguing in Sanskrit against the position of Advaita Vedānta, trying to defend the reality of difference.

The text book picture of the history of Indian philosophy is thus doubly wrong, as the Advaita position continues to be challenged not only by all the non-Advaitic schools of Vedānta but also by the Nyāya School. The situation fluctuates from century to century, but it is fairly clear that the usual picture presented of the total victory of the Advaitin position in the field of Indian philosophy as we approach modern times is highly mistaken. In fact the period from A.D. 1550–1750 sees eighty-seven Advaitin thinkers against eighty-eight non-Advaitin thinkers belonging to the Vedānta schools, and eighty-nine Naiyāyikas who may be assumed to subscribe to non-Advaitin positions. It is true that non-Advaitic Vedāntins include all those who belong to the schools of Madhva, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka and Vallabha and have important differences among themselves, but they are united in rejecting the Advaitic denial of the reality of difference.

The plea for the admission of the reality of difference arises, however, from different motivations amongst the non-Advaitic Vedāntins, on the one hand, and the Naiyāyikas on the other. The non-Advaitic Vedāntin is primarily interested in maintaining the difference between the self and the Lord so that he may preserve the ultimate reality of *bhakti* as a meaningful relationship and thus accept it as a *paramapurūṣārtha* over and above *mokṣa*, or even as a denial of *mokṣa*. On the other hand, the Naiyāyika is interested in maintaining the difference as he wants to safeguard the plurality and reality of the objects in the world. That is one reason why Gadādhara refuses to accept the definition of *abheda* as the absence of *bheda* or *bhedābhāva*, as *bheda* or difference is the sort of thing which, in the Nyāya framework, can never be absent. It is, to use the Nyāya terminology, a *kevalānvayī*. But Gadādhara did not ask himself how something that is always present can ever be known, as generally knowing, at least at the level of self-consciousness, can only occur when something is sometimes present and sometimes absent in one's experience. That, of course, would imply that neither *kevalānvayī* or *kevalvyatirekī* can ever be known as the one is supposed to be always present while the second is supposed to be always absent. One may, of course, logically postulate them as "possibilities", but one would not be able to find any instance of their exemplification because of the very condition in which knowledge as a self-conscious phenomenon occurs.

Difference is continuously experienced, but then one has to assume that there is not just difference but rather differences, where each particular difference is qualified by the objects in the context of which it is apprehended. The difference of a chair from a table would then be seen as being different from the difference of a chair from, say, a wall. In fact, as difference is a symmetrical

relation, to use the terminology of Western logic, it would occur between any two objects which are apprehended through an act of self-consciousness. But if Nyāya analysis is to be believed, then the difference between A and B or, say, between a chair and a table would not be the same as, that between the table and the chair. In other words, though a difference between X and Y necessarily means that there is also a difference between Y and X, it also means that the difference between X and Y is not the same as the one between Y and X. Thus, difference would become some sort of a universal, every specific instance of which would be conditioned and differentiated by the specific *upādhis* under which it would appear.

The situation becomes even more complicated if we remember that the relation of *tādātmya*, as understood in Advaita Vedānta, or even that of *svārūpa sambandha*, is not one of complete identity as is generally accepted in the western tradition formulated by Aristotle in the famous law of identity, exemplified in the statement "A is A". For Nyāya, and perhaps even for Advaita Vedānta, such a statement would be not only inadmissible but also meaningless, as according to them knowledge must give us something new which was not known before. Thus, the Naiyāyika will not accept a statement like "*Ghaṭo Ghaṭaḥ*", as it does not say anything new about the *ghaṭa*, or the pot, which is supposed to be already known as the statement is being made about it. On the other hand, "*nīlo ghaṭaḥ*" is an admissible statement, for it gives us some new information about the *ghaṭa*, telling us that it is blue.

But if this is the common position of both the Advaitin and the Naiyāyika, then we must ask where exactly do they differ in their understanding of the notion of difference. Perhaps a clue may be found in the Advaitins contention that the assertion of difference is the result of a foundational ignorance which obstacle, when removed, clears the way for the apprehension of the non-difference in the two entities which were supposed to be different. This is perhaps the reason why their position is characterised in terms of a negation, that is, *Advaita*, which may be taken as being close to what the Naiyāyikas mean by *abheda*. Further, the way they tried to interpret the three-fold assertion of identity in the well-known three *mahāvākyas* of the Upaniṣad is also similar.

Such an interpretation of the Advaitin position would not really differentiate between what it holds to be the genuine understanding of the notion of '*abheda*' and the way as it is understood by the Naiyāyika. In fact, as '*abheda*' is accepted by Gadādhara, it would be interesting to know how his understanding of *abheda* is different from the understanding of the Advaitin. What is required, therefore, is a clear understanding of the notions of identity and difference and of the way they have been understood in different schools of Indian philosophy. Till this is done, we may accept the fact that it was around the notion of 'difference' or '*bheda*' that the great controversy raged between the Advaitins and the non-Advaitic Vedāntins, and between the Advaitins and the Naiyāyikas. It would also be interesting in this regard to examine the way in which the reality of difference was understood by different schools of non-Advaitic Vedānta, by the Mīmāṃsaka

and the Sāṃkhya. Generally, it is the difference between the theories of error as elaborated in various schools of Indian philosophy that has engaged the attention of historians and not their understanding of the notion of difference. But perhaps it is the latter that should be seen as being the heart of the controversy between the Advaitins and the non-Advaitins and all those who do not subscribe to the authority of the *Brahma-Sūtra*, the Upaniṣad, the *Gītā* and the *Śrīmad Bhāgvat*.

The situation, however, is further complicated by the fact that many non-Advaitic schools of Indian philosophy such as Sāṃkhya and Nyāya hold that in the state of liberation there is no awareness of differences. As far as Nyāya is concerned, there is supposed to be no consciousness at all in the state of liberation, while in the case of Sāṃkhya, there is supposed to be a de-identification between the *buddhi* and the *puruṣa* in the state of *kaivalya*. As the *buddhi* is supposed to be the source of discrimination, there can be no awareness in the *puruṣa* of its absolute difference from *prakṛti*. While both positions are very close to that held by Advaita Vedānta, Udayana maintains that the Nyāya concept of liberation is superior to that of Advaita Vedānta which asserts the existence of consciousness in the state of liberation, and as consciousness cannot but be awareness of something, some duality and difference inevitably remains.⁵ On the other hand, no one has raised the question as to whether, in the state of *kaivalya*, there is any awareness of *prakṛti* and of its absolute difference from the *puruṣa*. In case it cannot have any such awareness, then how can it be different from Advaitic realisation, which is supposed to be of a similar character? The central issue, of course, is whether one can conceive of consciousness without its being consciousness of something or other. Yet, as both Advaita Vedānta and Īśvara Kṛṣṇa, the author of the *Sāṃkhya Kārikā*,⁵ seemed to opt for the view that consciousness in its pure state is devoid of all intentionality, their position with regard to consciousness in the state of liberation cannot be considered to be different. As for Nyāya, its denial of consciousness to *ātman* in the state of liberation seems to be due to the fact that it appears to regard consciousness as an emergent property which arises when certain conditions obtain, a position very close to that of Cārvāka. Though this is the general reason attributed for Nyāya's denial of consciousness in the state of liberation, it does not form a part of Udayana's own formulation, on the basis of which he regards Advaita Vedānta's position regarding liberation as just below that of the Naiyāyika.

Further, even in some schools of non-Advaitic Vedānta a type of ultimate realisation in *bhakti* is postulated, which is known as *sāyujya*, that is, complete identification with the Lord where the reality of "difference" is only provisionally accepted for purposes of *līlā*.

The situation created by the nature of consciousness in the ultimate state of liberation, or rather when it is established in its pure state, seems to have no ontological consequences as almost all thinkers except the Advaitins do not seem to believe that differences in this regard have any consequences for the reality of the world. The world does not become unreal for the Naiyāyika, nor does *prakṛti*

become unreal for the Sāṃkhya thinker. Similarly, for the non-Advaitic Vedāntins, it is the *līlā* which is real, and the postulation of the *sāyujya* ideal is mainly a theoretical postulation without any ontological implications. It is only the Advaitin who draw the radical conclusion regarding the "unreality", of the world from his postulation of an undifferentiated consciousness as the ultimate state in terms of which liberation or *mokṣa* is to be conceived. This, perhaps, is also the reason why opponents of Advaita Vedānta tried to argue for the reality of "difference" while the Advaitins insist on denying it. All concerned seemed to have agreed at least on the negative point that the usual life in the world, even when it was conceived of as the pursuit of ideal values, including *dharma*, could not be conceived of in terms of liberation or *mokṣa*, which was supposed to be the ultimate *puruṣārtha* for all humankind. The difference in the conception of what ultimately the state of *mokṣa* consisted in becomes, then, relatively insignificant when compared with their agreement about this foundational perspective with regard to human life which reduces it to an utter nullity. Even the concept of *līlā* makes a mockery of the seriousness of human pursuits, including all the genuine *dharma saṃkṣāta* or moral dilemmas in which one becomes necessarily involved in human life. Also, as it is only in *asamprajñāt samādhi* that consciousness is supposed to lose or transcend all differentiated awareness, the differences in the conceptions of the state of liberation are, for all practical purposes, basically only marginal in character. The same seems to be the case so far as the debate around the possibility of *jīvana mukti* is concerned, that is, whether one can attain complete liberation while being alive or whether one has to give up the body in order to attain the final state of liberation.

Yet, just as Buddhism by its insistent denial of the reality of substances, universals, wholes and unities, had provided a continuous challenge to all philosophical schools in India during the first 1500 years of philosophising in this country, so also it may be said that Advaita Vedānta, with its persistent denial of the reality of all "difference", provided a continuous challenge to all schools of Indian philosophy in the second millennium A.D.

While developments in Indian philosophy that occurred in the first and second millenniums A.D. may be seen in terms of this framework, there can be little doubt that many other developments arose from an internal necessity as thinkers sorted out various inconsistencies or removed the weaknesses and incompleteness in the systems. The direction of development was thus determined both internally and externally, in each school of classical Indian philosophy in any particular period in its history. In addition, tension provided by the larger socio-political context which generally functioned as a facilitating or obstructing environment for the pursuit of these philosophical concerns, which had achieved a relatively autonomous intellectual life of their own cannot be disregarded.

This may be apparent in terms of changes in socio-political structures that often led to the migration of scholars from one area to another due to the emergence of new centres of power and patronage as well as the desire to seek more congenial environments for philosophic pursuits. The emergence of

regional, national and even international centres of learning need to be investigated and their history traced during these two thousand years of India's intellectual life. Moreover, as the philosophical development of the various schools of Indian philosophy were closely linked, at least in certain cases, to religious and spiritual sects, understanding their linkage to the history and location of their particular sect will be rewarding. This seems to have taken place particularly in the case of various schools of Vedānta. In the second millennium A.D. were already established the well-known *mathas*, of Śaṅkara in the four corners of India, though not much is known of their history before a certain period. Though Śaṅkara had come from Kerala in the extreme south-west of India, but he is not associated with that region in any pre-eminent manner. The Advaita school of philosophy which he founded does not seem to have any special place where it was pursued, though it may be assumed that the four centres founded by him must have continued this tradition to the extent that they functioned effectively. Their very location in the so-called four corners of India must have assured a pan-Indian identity for his thought which would have had institutional support of the strongest kind. However, this hypothesis, even though it has a strong presumption in its favour, is hardly backed by the fact that Advaita Vedānta does not show any significant spread or growth for centuries after Śaṅkara and seems to come into its own only after the disappearance of Buddhism in A.D. 1200 after the destruction of Nālandā. There seems *prima facie* evidence that the more active institutions of Advaitic thinking were located in the south rather than in the east, west or north. Neither Puri nor Dwaraka ever became known for contribution to Advaita.

In the south, each of the great Vedāntic ācāryas of the non-Advaitic persuasion from Yāmunācārya onwards, established a separate institution for the propagation of the unique interpretation of philosophy founded in the Upaniṣads and the *Brahma Sūtras*. Śaṅkara had proclaimed these texts as the source of true "orthodox" philosophy in the Vedic tradition and, along with the *Gītā*, these came to be mistakenly known as the "*prasthānatrayī*", that is, the foundational sources of all philosophy in India. The myth of the "*prasthānatrayī*" is evident not only in that there were no sources of authority for the non-Vedāntic schools of philosophy in India, but that many of the non-Advaitic founders of the Vedāntic schools did not comment on all of them to establish that their views were in accordance with these three basic texts of 'orthodox' philosophising. It was hardly noticed by many that even Śaṅkara rejected the claim of the *Gītā* to be considered as an *Upaniṣad* and gave it only the status of an important *smṛti* text and not a *śruti* proper. Strangely, hardly anyone seems to have noticed that the claims for the *Gītā* to be considered not only as an *Upaniṣad* but also as a text that propounds the essential doctrine of the *Upaniṣads*, was also a competing claim to that made by the *Brahma Sūtras*. The relation between the *Brahma Sūtras* and the *Gītā* with respect to the classical Upaniṣadic texts has seldom been the subject of investigation. Nor has it been seen as to how the two attempt to give a unified picture of Upaniṣadic thought, and what aspects are emphasised by each in this

enterprise. It would be interesting to find those aspects of Upaniṣadic thought which have been ignored or underplayed by both the *Brahma Sūtras* and the *Gītā* and to highlight them in order to find what aspects seemed unacceptable or unpalatable to the authors of these works. The myth of the *prasthānatrayī* has been perpetuated not only by ignoring the fact that none of the non-Vedāntic schools accepts the authority of these texts as well as the fact that there are important non-Advaitic thinkers who do not comment on all of them. Moreover, many of them accept the equal and even over-riding authority of texts such as the *Śrīmad Bhāgvat*, thus completely subverting the notion that the foundational texts were the only three mentioned in the list.

The establishment of institutions of non-Advaitic Vedānta in the south implied that the debate between the Advaitin and the non-Advaitin was confined primarily to this region of India, specially as Rāmānuja in his *Śrībhāṣya* had started the tradition of controverting the Advaita position in detail after expounding it in his well-known *Pūrvapakṣa*. Similarly, the strong defence of five radical differences by Madhva, between god and soul, soul and soul, soul and nature, god and nature and perhaps between one natural object and another, in his *Aṇubhāṣya* and other works, provided the dynamic motif for the debate between the Advaitins, who denied all difference, and the followers of Madhva, who had to assert the reality of difference at all levels. The arguments of Rāmānuja were carried further by Vedāntadeśika (1330), whose *Ṣaddūṣaṇī* was one of the strongest attacks on the Advaita position.

Madhva's challenge to Advaita, on the other hand, was perpetuated by Jayatīrtha (1370) in his six-volume work, the *Nyāya Sudhā*, which treats encyclopaedically all the important philosophical issues of his time, and by Vyāsatīrtha II (1535), who in his *Nyāyāmṛta* launched an attack on the Advaita position which became doubly famous because of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's point-by-point reply to it in his *Advaitasiddhi*.

Mainly confined to the south, these debates were primarily motivated by sectarian commitments. As far as I know, no comparative study of the arguments and counter-arguments in the debate has been made from a purely philosophical point of view by one affiliated to any *sampradāya*. It would be interesting, for example, to compare the arguments given by Vedāntadeśika, on the one hand, and Jayatīrtha and Vyāsatīrtha II on the other, against the Advaitic position.

As against these *sampradāyika* controversies, the attack by Nyāya thinkers on the Advaitic position seems to have been motivated purely by philosophical considerations as the Naiyāyikas did not have a *sampradāya* or an *ācārya* in the same sense as did the non-Advaitic Vedāntins, as this school of philosophy was not associated with any *sādhana* for the realisation of the *nīḥśreyasa* or *apavarga*, though this had certainly been talked about in the *Nyāya Sūtras* as also by Udayana and Gaṅgeśa. The attack on the Advaita position by Śaṅkara Mīśra (1430) in his *Bhedaratna* was thus a purer philosophical critique than that of Vedāntadeśika, Jayatīrtha and Vyāsatīrtha II coming, as was to be expected, from outside the southern zone where the Vedāntic schools flourished. Śaṅkara Mīśra came from

eastern India, where Nyāya had flourished in Bengal and Bihar for a long time. However, as far as we know, no one has made a comparative study of the arguments given in the *Advaita Siddhi* and those that Vyāsātīrtha II advanced in his *Nyāyāmṛta* or the ones given in *Advaitaratna Rakṣaṇam* and those given by Śaṅkara Miśra in his *Bhedaratnam*. Śaṅkara Miśra's arguments were replied to by Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in his *Advaitaratna Rakṣaṇam*. It is strange that Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, who was so philosophically sensitive to arguments made against the Advaita position by earlier thinkers, did not take into account Vedāntadeśika's work, *Ṣaddūṣaṇī*. It is also not clear whether the work of Śaṅkara Miśra was used by thinkers of the Rāmānuja and the *Madhva sampradāya* in their polemics against Advaita, or, for that matter, what were the exact differences between the arguments given by Śaṅkara Miśra on the one hand and Vedāntadeśika and Vyāsātīrtha II on the other. However, what is interesting in this controversy between the Naiyāyikas and the Advaitins is that the Naiyāyikas who took part in it were concentrated in the region of Bihar and Bengal, where they enjoyed a long established and unchallenged supremacy.

Mithila and Bengal had already started specialising in Nyāya, at least from the time of Gaṅgeśa. In fact, if the surname Miśra in Vācaspati I's name connotes any regional association, then Mithila may be regarded as having become a centre of learning as early as the tenth century. The status of Bengal and Bihar has to be looked at in particular to learn why the region of Mithila and Bengal became such a powerful centre for the study of Nyāya. All in all, one needs to have an idea not only of the shifting centres of political patronage in India but also in the shifting centres of religion and culture to discover the reason for the clustering of centres of philosophical activity in different parts of the country.

Western India had seen a strong concentration of Jaina thinkers almost from the tenth century, possibly due to the influence of the Gurjar Pratihāras and/or the Solankis. The last of the great thinkers, Yaśovijaya (A.D. 1679) hailed from here but, interestingly, he shows strong influences in his work of both Advaita Vedānta and Nyāya as well as the *Gītā*. The *Vallabha sampradāya* also flourished in Gujarat and Maharashtra and it would be interesting to find whether philosophers belonging to this school were also primarily located in this region.

By contrast, it appears that there were no distinctly recognisable centres in the north. Ujjain and Kannauj must have disappeared much earlier. In any case, while they were great centres of the literary arts in general, they were never strong centres of philosophy, even though Bāṇabhaṭṭa (seventh century A.D.) in his *Harṣacarita* has given descriptions of philosophers belonging to various schools who were located there. Kashmir, which had emerged as an intellectual and philosophical centre in the ninth century, had ceased to be important after 1200.

The philosophical scene after 1200, then was concentrated in the south, east and west, having left northern India, where Islamic rule had firmly entrenched itself and from where, by and large, traditional intellectuals had withdrawn to seek patronage elsewhere. Benaras, of course, continued to be the sole exception, and it retained its all-India character as a pan-Indian authority in intellectual

matters, drawing scholars from all over the country. The story of the survival of Benaras as a powerful intellectual centre in an environment which was politically uncongenial has not been written, and it would offer an extremely interesting history of how an intellectual centre survived in a hostile environment for more than a millennium, as clear evidence exists of its overriding intellectual pre-eminence even in the time of Śaṅkara.

Along with this, there occurred the rise of literature in the non-Sanskritic languages of India, which themselves had a long history starting from the time of the Buddha and the Mahāvīra. Pāli, Prākṛit and Apabhraṁśa gradually crystallised into what are now known as the regional languages of India. Tamil, of course, is the oldest of these, and has perhaps had the earliest grammar after the one formulated by Pāṇini for the Sanskrit language. The history of the successive formulations of the grammars of Prākṛit and the various Apabhraṁśa languages, and of the literatures written in them, is an interesting story in itself but, from the philosophical point of view, perhaps the more important point is that except for the Tamil language, no important philosophical work seems to have been written in any of them. The literature of the non-Sanskritic languages of India was generally either confined to translations or to a reworking of stories and themes already dealt with in the writings in Sanskrit, or else concentrated on devotional themes relating to the major gods or goddesses of epic mythology such as Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Śiva and Śakti. Oddly enough, while Sanskrit literature in general and philosophical literature in particular does not seem to reflect the changing socio-political situation in the country, literature in the non-Sanskritic languages definitely does so. Perhaps for such a reflection in the Sanskrit literature, one would have to go to the Smṛti and Vyavahāra texts, which deal with questions of law and thus have inevitably to deal with changes occurring in society and polity as they directly affect the settling of legal disputes between those who seek justice from the courts.

The relations between such languages of the south as Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam, which emerged later, and Tamil has not been the subject of much investigation, nor has been the relation between these other languages and the cultures of the people who spoke them. The term 'south', though generally used from ancient times, should be treated in a more differentiated manner as there is a distinct difference between the Tamil region, which has a long history of language and culture from Graeco-Christian times, and other regions which are today known as Andhra, Karnataka and Kerala. There are reasons to think that there was a distinct difference between the relation of Tamil to Sanskrit and the relation of the other languages of the south to Sanskrit. Tamil, being an older language with a rich literary culture of its own, had an ambiguous relationship with Sanskrit, which was the pan-Indian language of intellectual and cultural discourse at least from the time of Pāṇini Kātyāyana, the first commentator on Pāṇini's work and also his critic, seems to have been from the south and perhaps symbolises this relationship, which had some sort of an in-built tension in it. However, the story of this relationship has, as far as I know, seldom been apparent

except in recent times, when orthodox lovers of Tamil have tried to purge it of all Sanskritic mixtures and have claimed for their language and culture a pre-Aryan or a non-Aryan purity, bringing the suppressed or subterranean hostility into the open. Some indirect evidence of an ambivalent relationship between Tamil and Sanskrit in earlier times also exists particularly in the development of a mixed language consisting of Tamil and a variety of Sanskrit termed "Maṇipravāla", in which some significant literature is said to have been produced. A related development is that of what has come to be called the "Ubhaya Vedānta", that is, Vedānta in both Sanskrit and Tamil, the great exemplar of which is said to have been Vedāntadeśika himself, who wrote in both languages.

Besides these instances, attention has recently been drawn to the work of Maṇvāla (thirteenth century) and Lokācārya Pillai, who are said to have interpreted the well-known works of the Ālvārs, specially the work of Nammālvār. These presented an opposition to the traditional four Vedas of the Sanskritic tradition, and contrasted the religion of the Sanskritic Vedas with that of the Tamil Veda, emphasising that while the former conceived of man in terms of *varṇa* and *dharma* (consisting in the performance of Vedic rituals, the supremacy of Brahmins, etc.), the Tamil Veda rejected this and conceived of man in terms of his inner impulses and relationship with Lord Viṣṇu. This interpretation of the vedas did not accept the *varṇa* division and the social hierarchy implicit in it or the supremacy of Brahmins, both of which were so central to the orthodox religious tradition deriving from the Vedas.

That the developments well-known in *bhakti* took place in the Tamil region or that the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* was composed in the south are a commonplace of the north. *Bhakti* was brought to north by Ramānanda. It has recently been argued by Wilhelm Hardy that the intense emotional *bhakti* which thrives on separation, arose and grew in the south and was later transported to other parts of India.⁶ He has called it 'virahabhakti'. However, emotion became a passion only in Bengal, where Chaitanya took it to its climax and his disciples, Jīva and Rūpa Gosvāmī, developed its philosophical aspects and gave it the intellectual grounding it had lacked. It is of course true that all the great non-Advaitic *ācāryas* had given some sort of intellectual formulation and foundation to the pursuit of *bhakti* as a path of realisation, but the relations between their formulations and those of the Chaitanya school do not seem to have been investigated. Even Śaṅkara, the great Advaitic *ācārya* belonging to the early part of the eighth century, who composed hymns possessing great intensity of feeling and emotion in praise of various gods and goddesses does not seem to have given it a place alongside, let alone above *jñāna* in his system. That *Bhagvad Gītā*, itself was commented upon by Śaṅkara is noteworthy as his is supposed to be, at least in parts, a foundational text devoted to the pursuit of the path of *bhakti* as a means to ultimate realisation.

Just as there is a fundamental difference between the Tamil region and all the other regions in peninsula of India, Kerala too is significantly distinct. Being cut off from the rest of southern India by the Western Ghats, this geographical barrier has given Kerala a cultural distinctiveness and a development in relative

isolation from the rest of the south. Similarly, one should distinguish between the region now known as Karnataka, which comprises Mysore, and other neighbouring areas which were once the centre of the Vijayanagar Empire lasting as late as A.D. 1565 and where, even after the collapse of this empire, the Naiyāyikas ruled for quite some time. The region known today as Andhra is, by contrast, more in contact with central and western India than the other regions of the south.

In spite of these differences among the four regions comprising southern India, its history has a distinctive character because of certain features which differentiate it from large parts of northern and central India. This unique character was shaped by various factors which have not been paid sufficient attention until now. One among these is the prolonged rule of various dynasties which shared a common cultural and traditional ethos dating back to the earliest period of the recorded history of the sub-continent.

The character of Islam in southern India has been significantly different from that in the north. This was perhaps due to the fact that the Muslims who came to the south by sea were primarily traders while those who came to northern India were military adventurers from north-west Asia. Islamic rule in the south was also more accommodating towards the culture of that region. That Aurangzeb, when he planned to conquer the south, wanted to get a *fatwa* for his attack as, in his view, it was almost a *jihad* against the unbelievers is evidence of this. The *fatwa* was refused, but the fact that he made this charge against the Muslim rulers of the south speaks volumes for the differences in the style and the spirit of governance that determined life in the two regions. An interesting divergence and even some sort of hostility in the way the ruling Muslim elite of north India perceived the Muslims in the south must have existed. Most of the rulers in north India traced their descent from the great ruling houses of central and west Asia, and it is well-known that, in innumerable paintings Akbar and Jahangir showed themselves as descendants of Timur, the legendary figure from that region who had conquered the "world" of those times. On the other hand, Andre Wink recalls in his well-known book *Al Hind*, that the Muslims of south India considered themselves to be 'purer' than those of the north. Further as Hindu kingdoms in the south had ruled continuously for a long time and many of them, as in the case of the Vijayanagar Empire, self-consciously thought of themselves as carrying on the great cultural and intellectual traditions which derived from Vedic times, this ensured that a substantial pursuit of traditional learning went on in this region. Sāyaṇa and Madhva are well known example, as is Vidyāraṇya, but there must have been many others whose stories are not so well known. The history of the renaissance of traditional learning under the Vijayanagar Empire has yet to be written. The sixteenth century was also a significant period for the region now known as Kerala, where there were important astronomical pursuits, as has recently been reported in some scientific journals. There were developments in mathematics and in non-Pāṇinian grammar also which have not yet been studied and evaluated in detail.

The connections of southern India from the earliest times with the other countries of south and south-east Asia were strengthened during the rule of the Cholas (872–1279) and were extended from Ceylon to Indonesia, which must have added another dimension to the consciousness of traditional Indian civilisation in the south as distinct from the way it developed in the north during this period.

However, there are evidence of contact even of the Harappan civilisation with the south, particularly Mysore, as the gold found at Harappan sites appears to have come from the gold mines of Mysore. If this was so, the contact must have been through the coastal route rather than the land route which would have been extremely difficult to traverse in those times. The relations between the Harappans and the Dravidians are a matter of conjecture, but it is significant that from Mauryan times onwards, southern scholarship has been an evidence in the intellectual traditions of India, and the route to Sri Lanka was known to lie through this region. Kātyāyana, the first known critic of Pāṇini, is said to have been from the south, as we have noted earlier. Also Aśoka had sent his son and daughter to preach Buddhism in Sri Lanka. Jaina monks went to the south in large numbers during the period of prolonged famine, and the area around Śravaṇabelagolā was a great centre of Digambara life and thought.

It is surprising that in the east the region known as Orissa today, in spite of its proximity to Bengal, did not have an intellectual centre of any repute though it witnessed great creativity in art and architecture. Similarly, Assam in the extreme eastern part of India did not show any signs of development as an intellectual centre even though it remained independent of Islamic rule and self-consciously boasted about it, as is evidenced by the unique historical documents called *buranjis*.

It appears, therefore, that there was little correlation between artistic, architectural and intellectual creativity in different regions of India, and though the nature of political rule exercised in a particular region played a part in the fostering of traditional intellectual pursuits, this was only one factor among several and had a varying significance depending on the nature of the ruler and on the strength of the intellectual traditions and institutions in the region. The exact nature of the rule at the local level in Bengal and Bihar during the period of Muslim domination is yet to be examined. However, Hindu *zamindars* might have ensured a long flourishing of the Nyāya tradition in this region.

The seventeenth century as noted by several studies was also a period of relative peace and prosperity in large parts of India. Silver and gold poured into India because of the favourable balance of trade in this period is an evidence contrary to the contention of Irfan Habib, which had earlier been uncritically accepted. In any case Bengal, and parts of Bihar, were prosperous regions of the Mughal Empire, and it is well established that this region continued to send regular sums to Delhi even during the early part of the eighteenth century when the relatively weak central power was on the verge of total impotence due to the

rising Maratha power and the independence shown by both Muslim and Hindu regional rulers.

The drastic break with the past came in A.D. 1000, when Islamic invasions in the north starting with that of Mahmud Ghaznavi, who repeatedly attacked north India and not only destroyed the famous temple of Somnath in Gujarat but also punished unorthodox followers of Islam in Multan who had allowed the continuance of a sun temple there. Yet, though Al-Baruni said that many of the scholars had fled from north India, it appears that Kashmir remained untouched, as not only apparent from the presence of Abhinavgupta but also because Kashmir Śaivism flourished during this period. The south, on the other hand, did not seem to have been affected very much by the invasions of the north, as the first great *ācārya*, Yāmuna, appeared there in A.D. 1010 and Rāmānuja in A.D. 1120. However, the consolidation of Islamic rule in north India started only around 1192, when Mahmud of Ghur defeated Prithviraj Chauhan. This was almost two hundred years after the invasion of Mahmud Ghaznavi, during which period south India had seen such outstanding dynasties as that of the Cholas, whereas the Gang empire had flourished in Orissa. During this period the rule of the Pals and the Sens in Bengal is recorded. Of the two hundred years in northern and western India, that is, between the invasion of Ghaznavi and that of Mahmud of Ghur, it was in 1279 that Rajendra III, the last king of the Chola dynasty, ceased to reign, and in 1250, that the Sun Temple of Konark was built. Thus, it is only at the end of the thirteenth century, when the Khilji dynasty took over at Delhi, that we can think of the establishment of a firm Islamic rule in India. However, the Khiljis ruled only for thirty years, from 1290 to 1320, and Allauddin Khilji, almost the last Khilji, ruled for only twenty-one years. It was in 1313, just three years before his death, that he marched down to Devagiri in the south and established his suzerainty over the Kakatiyas of Warangal, the Hoysals of Dvarasaumaras and much of the Coromandel coastal region. This so-called suzerainty must have been "notional": it did not last for long since he could have had no time to enforce it. And though his rule in north and central India is supposed to have extended up to Bihar and Tirhut, the situation was difficult because of the repeated Mongol invasions. A firm administration and a cultural presence in an alien civilisation surely requires a longer time interval and a larger time spread than the brief period of 20 years, for which the Khiljis ruled some parts of this country. The Tughlaks who came after them also ruled only for 68 years, and that too mostly in the north. It seems, *prima facie*, that undue importance has been given to these rules around Delhi by Indian historiographers because of Mughal rule which occurred later in history. This is the familiar phenomenon of "retrospective illusions" imposed by the historiography of Indian civilisation, which we also notice in the history of Indian philosophy in the first millennium A.D., where what happened in the second millennium has been read into the earlier material resulting in a topsy-turvy picture of Indian philosophy during that period which highlights minor movements in philosophy and marginalises major trends.⁷

The Sultanate of Madurai's rule from 1334 to 1337 indicates a long and interesting period of Islamic rule in the extreme south while from 1338 there was a separate Sultanate of Bengal. Nevertheless, it is during this very period, that is, from around 1350 onwards, that Mithila and Bengal became great centres of the development of Nyāya with Gaṅgeśa (1350). Around the same time, in 1346, is laid the foundation of the Vijayanagar Empire, while in 1347 Bahman Shah established the Bahmani Sultanate in Central India. In 1370, Vijayanagar conquered the Sultanate of Madurai and, in 1361, Firozeshah Tughlaq invaded Orissa.

The fourteenth century, thus, is perhaps one of the most interesting interregnums in the second millennium A.D. when the political situation is extremely fluid in almost all parts of India. Dynasties succeed dynasties in the north. Independent sultanates begin to rule in Bengal and Madurai. The Vijayanagar Empire came into being, Firozeshah Tughlaq invades Orissa, while Timur devastated Delhi in 1398. In the middle of the century occurred the establishment of the Bahmani Kingdom in Central India. The beginning of the fifteenth century saw the establishment of a separate Sultanate of Gujarat, while the Vijayanagar Empire extended itself to the east coast during 1406–1422 and a new dynasty is established by Kapila in Orissa in 1436, which ruled for forty-one years.

The second millennium A.D. witnessed a marked difference between its first and second halves, a difference which has not been noted in the histories of this period, particularly as it relates to the intellectual and cultural creativity of India. There appears to be a distinct difference between that part of India which lies to the north of the Narmada and the part which lies to the south. These southern Kingdoms generally characterised rule which had a cultural continuity with the past and provided a congenial atmosphere for the development of knowledge, art, culture and spirituality deriving from the first millennium A.D. and going back even earlier to the period of the Upaniṣads, the Mahāvīra and the Buddha. The only significant difference was the disappearance of the Buddhists from the intellectual scene after the destruction of Nālandā. However, the Jainas continued to flourish, and as did the pursuits of knowledge, art and culture. Northern India on the other hand was the scene of political instability after the invasion of Ghazni as also of an intermittent but continuous rule by various Islamic dynasties centred around Delhi which, in their different ways, brought a radically new religion to the Indian sub-continent. At the same time, it opened north India to developments that were taking place in the Arab world in the fields of medicine, mathematics, astronomy and other sciences. The period from the tenth to the thirteenth century was extremely rich and creative in diverse fields of knowledge in the Arab world, particularly in the translation of Greek knowledge into Arabic and its subsequent transformation in the hands of the Arabic masters. Moreover, the influence of neo-Platonism, of Plato and of Aristotle, provided a rich background for the contact that was taking place in India in the political realm and thereby secondarily creating an opportunity for such an interchange in diverse fields of knowledge. Developments in art, particularly in architecture, are to be noticed as almost all the Islamic rulers in Delhi are known to have constructed

buildings in Delhi and the neighbouring areas, though there is nothing earlier than the Qutub Minar built by Qutubuddin Aibak in 1206 (and evidence is still to be found in Sind and in Ghazni mosques and other buildings built by Muslims who were settled there much earlier).

As for painting, it is well known that Humayun had brought two great masters with him who provided a powerful impetus to Indian painting at the court of Akbar. A rough indication of the interaction in the field of scientific knowledge between the Arab and Persian world and the Delhi-based north Indian world is found in Rahman's Bibliography, which lists works in Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit from the eighth century to the eighteenth in such diverse fields as mathematics, medicine and astronomy. The different dynasties of Islamic rule in the north had, however, come from different parts of West Asia at different times. They must have brought with them memories of the arts and the sciences that flourished there. The scholars and savants who accompanied them would normally have belonged to those disciplines which flourished in West Asia. The history of the developments in West Asian Islam and the developments in science and art and technology which occurred there, are therefore, relevant variables for understanding what exactly was happening in north India during this period. It is noticeable, for example, that a world of difference exists between what the Caliph had written in his famous letter to the representative of Islam in Sind some time in the ninth century and what later conquerors such as Mohammad Ghazni or Ghur felt about the same issue. This implies that a tremendous change had occurred in what Islam stood for in West Asia, the causes of which have not been sufficiently investigated. Besides this, there were parallel movements in the expansion of Islam in this very period both towards the west, right up to Spain and certain East European countries; towards the north in Central Asia, as well as in the south towards North Africa. The expansion in the east was only a small part of what was happening in West Asia and this itself must have been the cause of radical transformations in the nature of Islam during this period.

However, what is most relevant for our purpose is the effect these changes had on the nature of successive periods of Islamic rule in India as well as the opportunities provided thereby for interaction with Arab learning and Persian arts during this period. The differences in the Islamic rule of the north which was marked by relative periods of expansion and contraction during the first five hundred years in existence from the centre in Delhi and the character of Islamic rule in south India particularly starting from the establishment of the Bahmani kingdom in 1347 has already been commented upon. The Bahmani kingdom which is supposed to have ended in 1527, was followed by the successor states of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Golkonda, and so on, which defeated the Vijayanagar Empire in 1556. In the last days of his reign, Akbar had moved towards the south, but though he is supposed to have had some initial successes against Ahmadnagar, they do not seem to have been decisive, unlike his conquest of Khandesh, which thereafter came permanently under Mughal rule. The character of the Bahmani kingdom along with that of the successor states needs to be examined and

compared with that of the states in north India. Historians need to explore also the character of the Islamic states in the south. Parallels could be drawn with the Hindu kingdoms of Rajasthan, which not only resisted the Islamic rule centred in Delhi and Agra but also kept their relative autonomy and independence during this period. Apart from examining from this perspective, their composition, their places of origin and the character of their rule have the character of any resistance to their rule is also relevant. It is well known, for example, that Shivaji's initial resistance was against the Bijapur ruler and only secondarily to Mughal rule. Were there any other Shivajis in Bijapur, Golkonda and Ahmadnagar after the disappearance of the Vijayanagar Empire? The Nayaks were the successors to the Vijayanagar Empire in the extreme south, but the extent of their kingdom and the character of their rule have to be ascertained.

Moving to the east, we find that the whole of Orissa was under the Gangs from 1077 to 1435. But it was later on under the non-Gang rulers that the Sun Temple in Konark (1250) was built. As far as Orissa was concerned, Islamic rule came with the Mughals while Bengal and Bihar came under Islamic rule (non-Mughals) much earlier in 1338.

Thus, the first half of the second millennium A.D. can be divided into two major periods: one, extending to around 1300, that is, up to the time when substantial parts of eastern India were under non-Muslim rule; and two, that starting with the establishment of Islamic rule in various parts of India at different times in the latter part of the second millennium A.D., starting somewhere around 1500. The establishment of a consolidated Mughal rule in almost the whole of northern, central and western India around 1560, and later extending deep into the south by 1707, at the death of Aurangzeb, was punctuated partly by the rise of the Marathas and also that of the Sikhs and the Jats on the other. The period from 1707 onwards has to be further divided into the period of Maratha and Sikh supremacy, and later, somewhere from the end of the eighteenth century, to the beginning and consolidation of British rule.

Intellectual activity in the second millennium A.D., then, seems to have been primarily centred in southern and eastern India, areas which were further divided into regions where the great debate between the Advaitins and the non-Advaitins took place in south India while those in which the developments in Nyāya occurred were concentrated in parts of Bihar and Bengal. There was another difference in the two regions where specialisation occurred in the field of philosophy, as the philosophical debate around Advaita is closely related to religious and spiritual differences amongst the followers of these different schools of Vedāntic philosophy, while the developments in Nyāya were motivated purely by logical and epistemological considerations, having nothing to do with any spiritual pursuit.

It is, of course, true that Bengal and Bihar also gave rise to the intense emotional *bhakti* of Jayadeva and Caitanya, which led to the philosophical formulations of Jīva Gosvāmī, Rūpa Gosvāmī and others. The intellectual element, however, appears to be weak in the philosophical formulations of the Caitanya

school, while it is substantially present in the reflections of the south Indian *ācāryas* and their followers, necessitated perhaps by the intense polemics which continued between them over centuries. The philosophical writings of the Chaitanya school do not appear to have given rise to any tradition of philosophical controversy, presumably because the works in that tradition were not written in refutation of any *pūrvapakṣa* propounded by other thinkers. On the other hand, it would be interesting to discover the differences in the treatment of *bhakti* and the philosophical reflection on it in the works of the southern masters and their disciples; one would like to know the differences in this regard between their treatment of the subject and that of the Bengal school which derived its inspiration from Chaitanya, who himself did not write any philosophical text.

Another neglected aspect of the southern masters of non-Advaita Vedānta starting from Yāmuna onwards exists in that there has not been any serious exploration or study of the differences and debates among the non-Advaitic schools themselves.

The second millennium may be divided into the following periods taking into consideration the political and cultural changes that occurred in India directly or indirectly affecting the intellectual life of the country:

1. From 1000 to 1200.
2. From 1200 to 1560.
3. From 1560 to 1720.
4. From 1720 to 1857.
5. From 1857 to 1947.
6. From 1947 onwards.

An interesting overview of these periods is provided by Potter's *Bibliography* so that a period-wise analysis reveals significant developments in the movements of traditional schools of philosophy.

Accepting provisionally this division of the second millennium, which is primarily based on the changing political situation, during the period 1000–1200 numerically there exist Buddhist thinkers, 43 Jaina thinkers, 6 Advaitins, 8 Mīmāṃsakas, 11 Sāṃkhya, 4 Viśiṣṭādvaita thinkers, 3 Yoga thinkers, 11 Kashmir Śaiva thinkers, 6 philosophers of Śaiva Siddhānta, 2 Vaiśeṣika thinkers, and 11 Naiyāyikas, and only one thinker in the philosophy of Grammar. Thus, it is noticeable that during this period Jainism suddenly begins to acquire a pre-eminence not present before, as during the whole of the first millennium A.D. it had only 38 thinkers, while in the two hundred years from 1000 to 1200 there are 43. The Advaitins still lag behind almost every school including the Buddhists, who now disappear from the scene. The interesting emergence of the tradition of Kashmir Śaivism, which indicates the powerful presence of Kashmir in the extreme north of India is witnessed. There is also now the perceptible dominance of Nyāya and Sāṃkhya, though they are less prominent than both the Jainas and the Buddhists.

If we take the period from 1200 to 1500, the Jainas continue to predominate, with 56 thinkers being mentioned in Potter's *Bibliography*; the Advaitins,

with only 30 thinkers, are obviously not a significant presence as one would have normally expected. The Nyāya thinkers number as many as the Advaitins. However, if we include those who appear to have made a common contribution to both Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika, the Naiyāyikas outnumber the Advaitins. Viśiṣṭādvaita, a philosophy which was a recent entrant in the earlier period, now converts philosophers to its camp, with 11 persons in its fold. Kashmir Śaivism seems to have totally disappeared, perhaps due to the changing political situation in Kashmir. The Buddhists are represented by one lonely straggler who seems to have survived the destruction of Nālandā in 1200. Similarly, the presence of Mīmāṃsā and Sāṃkhya during this period is modest as compared to other schools.

From 1500 to 1700 the clear dominance of Nyāya, with 97 exponents, is followed by Advaita Vedānta thinkers, forming a close second. However, one of the interesting things about this period is the growing popularity of Mīmāṃsā, the number of thinkers in which almost equals the Jains which school now registers a decline. There is the significant rise of Śuddhādvaita, the school founded by Vallabhācārya, and the noticeable presence of non-Advaitic Vedānta, particularly Dvaita.

The period from 1700 to 1900 is marked by a continued dominance of Nyāya and Advaita Vedānta on the Indian philosophical scene. There is a decline in the number of Jaina thinkers in this period. On the other hand, a slight increase in those who have worked on Sāṃkhya, while the interest in Mīmāṃsā appears to have declined as compared to the earlier period. Surprisingly, this period has fewer thinkers belonging to the Madhva and the Vallabha Schools as against the distinct increase in thinkers belonging to the Viśiṣṭādvaita school.

From 1900 onwards, the pre-eminent position of the Nyāya and Advaita Vedānta thinkers continues, and significantly, the Naiyāyikas still dominate. At the same time, the Jains have improved their position while the Viśiṣṭādvaitins have maintained their lead over Madhva and the Vallabha Vedānta philosophers, though the latter have improved their position.

This brief survey of the relative strengths of various schools of Indian philosophy reveals many interesting facts while posing questions which need to be explored further. For instance, what was the situation regarding the availability of paper in India from the thirteenth century onwards as this has a bearing on the production of manuscripts. Paper technology is said to have been brought to India by the Arabs. Similarly, how did the introduction of printing in India sometime in the late eighteenth century, as also the establishment of educational institutions, affect the production of books. Various institutions of education, both Sanskrit and non-Sanskrit, were established by the British from the nineteenth century onwards. Similarly, the establishment of societies, such as the Royal Asiatic Society, for the discovery and publication of manuscripts in the classical languages of India, may have had a substantial effect on the production of books during this period. It is extremely likely that the new educational system encouraged the production of a large number of books which were purely

introductory in character, meant for students. It is true that even earlier such texts were written, which were meant for an easy understanding of the subject for novices. The usual description in Sanskrit for these texts is *bālānām sukhbodhāya*. But it is obvious that these must have been increasingly available in large numbers because of the creation of numerous institutions by the British as well as the facility of printing during this period.

Besides the new climate created by the availability of printing in the country, the setting up of educational institutions by the British and the interest generated in the intellectual and cultural achievements of India due to the emergence of interest in the history of past civilisations in the West, the developments in this period were affected by the rise of:

1. The successor states to the Mughal Empire in the eighteenth century.
2. The gradual political and military penetration by the British in different parts of India and the consolidation of their rule from 1750 to 1857.
3. The division of India into 'princely' and British states of different sizes; the power of patronage for traditional knowledge and culture being exercised by the princely states.
4. The unification of British and princely India under a unitary federal government after the transfer of power in 1947, along with the partition into India and Pakistan, including what is now Bangladesh.

As the successor states to the Mughal Empire were ruled by both Hindus and Muslims in different parts of India, they naturally tended to foster the kind of learning to which they were accustomed. Thus Arabic, Persian and later Urdu were fostered by the Muslim rulers, while Sanskrit and other languages were fostered in areas ruled by the Hindus. The British brought new institutions of western learning to the places where their political domination had been consolidated over a period of time, and hence Western learning penetrated different regions depending on when British rule was consolidated there. The emergence of princely states repeats the story of differential patronage of diverse kinds of traditional learning as had occurred earlier during the period of the emergence of successor states to the Mughal Empire. The only difference was that the British actively encouraged the introduction of the western type of education and set the standard by means of model institutions created by them in British India.

The story of the intellectual developments in India during this period, thus, has four different but overlapping parts: the first relates to that which had continued uninterrupted from earlier times, but later got increasingly affected by the new institutions which the British created in that part of India which was ruled directly by them. The second consists in the continuation and development of classical traditional knowledge in various fields in those princely states where it was valued and patronised. The third would examine developments in the study of traditional knowledge which were centred primarily outside India and were known as "Indology". These influenced both directly and indirectly the study in

these fields carried on in India. The fourth part of this story would be about those Indians who were primarily educated in British institutions in India and who were fairly grounded in western traditions of knowledge in various fields and possessed the facility to read and write in English. Many of these persons had some sort of interest in India's ancient traditions of learning but had little knowledge, if any, of the classical articulation or discussion of those subjects, both because of insufficient knowledge of the language in which the original texts were written, and also because they were untrained to grasp these in the way that was traditionally formulated. Also, the perspective they brought to bear on whatever little they knew of the tradition was primarily structured by their Western knowledge of the subject in which they generally had a fairly good grounding.

The prelude to the gradual penetration and eventual consolidation of British rule in India, though studied in fair detail, has not been seen as a tumultuous interregnum in the intellectual life of the country where different intellectual traditions attempted to respond to and cope with the situation created by the decline and disintegration of Mughal rule and by the rise of various regional powers, both Hindu and non-Hindu, in different parts of the country. The responses of Muslims and non-Muslims to this developing situation were, of course, different, as the Muslim intellectuals viewed this as a period of decline while the Hindus in general saw it as a relaxation from the rigidities of the Islamic imposition on the freedom of their religious practices, particularly during the last part of Aurangzeb's rule. The response of the Muslim intellectuals to this situation was basically to search for ways to ensure preservation of their identity in a situation where they no longer had a monopoly of political power. This, by and large, resulted in their going back to the *Quran* and the Hadis and becoming more orthodox. The establishment of various schools of Islamic orthodoxy and learning, such as the Firangi Mahal, the Deoband and Nadwa, are evidence of this. Before the establishment of these schools, centres of Islamic studies in Delhi had some relation to the Delhi College, established by the British as a centre of both traditional and modern learning, catering to the needs of the Muslim community. One does not have any exact information regarding the extent of the teaching and development of classical Arabic and Persian learning as it had developed in west Asia, particularly in its non-theological forms. It would be interesting to know, for example, whether classical Persian or Arabic philosophy, astronomy, mathematics, medicine, etc., were actually taught in these institutions from the time of the Sultanate onwards. It will be equally interesting to learn whether there were substantial differences in this regard between the north and the south. It seems clear that even if there were such traditions of non-theological Arabic learning in India, they ceased to be actively pursued in the context of the preservation of Islamic identity by the Muslims consequent upon the decline of their political authority in the country. Moreover, it seems that these institutions of secular learning did not have as strengthened tradition as the corresponding non-Islamic traditions and institutions of Sanskrit learning in India

had. Therefore non-Islamic traditions and institutions of Sanskrit learning continued even when Islamic rule existed in large parts of the country. In fact, the continuity of India's intellectual traditions in the second millennium A.D. is truly remarkable if one remembers the political climate in which these flourished. This proves that the institutions of maintenance, transmission and development of the intellectual life in India were strong and yet sufficiently dispersed so that they could yet be substantially affected by the political climate of the times. On the other hand, it indicates the commitment to the free life of the intellect, which in Islam had come under the sustained attack of the orthodox Ulema to such an extent that even the spiritual pursuits of the Sufis were not only under constant supervision but under persistent attack from those who considered themselves to be the real inheritors of Islam as embodied in the life and sayings of the Prophet. By contrast in almost all traditions of Indian intellectual life, the spiritual personality has always been granted a higher status than either the intellectual or the one who propounded legal precepts or, as they were known in the Indian tradition, *dharma* and *vyavahārasāstra*.

The period from the eighteenth century onwards is thus one of continuity along with change, as all of the traditional pursuits continued under the new dispersed systems of patronage. This occurred almost throughout the whole of India after the decline of the central authority of Mughal rule in Delhi and the slow consolidation of British rule, which started first around the cities of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. This reduced the autonomy of many of the erstwhile states ruled by Hindu and Muslim princes. However, they continued to exercise sufficient internal power; particularly in relation to the patronage that they could extend to artists and to men of learning. There arose, in the period of transition and during the final British consolidation of political power, new centres of cultural, artistic and intellectual interests where even small states attained fame because of the support given by their rulers to these pursuits in their territory. Many of the new schools of painting which have now become internationally known for their achievements and the development of the new styles of music associated with the *gharānās* fostered by these princes are or ought to be more widely known than they have generally been until now. Besides the new creative innovations in art centred around these places, there were also centres where Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian learning was encouraged and pursued during this period. Generally Muslim rulers encouraged Urdu, Persian and Arabic learning, whereas Hindu rulers encouraged traditional Sanskrit learning.

The coming of the British and their scholarly interest in the ancient Indian civilisation led to a new kind of activity towards which a large number of traditional scholars were drawn. This was the search for manuscripts in all domains of knowledge, their preservation and cataloguing, and the publication of definitive editions of works with all the paraphernalia of western scholarship, which itself had developed in Europe earlier in the context of the editing of their own Greek and Latin texts. Moreover, as the western world wanted access to the traditional knowledge of India, the presentation of these texts in English

translation was undertaken by a large number of English scholars who thought that in this way the western world would come to know and appreciate the achievements of Indian civilisation and not consider it as inferior as Macaulay had done. Thus, a large part of the activity of the best traditional scholars in India was devoted not to developing traditional thought further, but rather to its preservation, collection, publication and translation. This resulted in an archival attitude among some towards the past knowledge of the civilisation, which was treated as something finished and final, only to be researched into, interpreted and written about; as something which was dead and gone, no longer living and with no future of its own. Thus, the advancement of learning was seen as belonging only to the knowledge that had been imported from the West and taught in the English language. The dynamics of growth and development of the knowledge from the West lay elsewhere, and as it was both the preserve and the vision of the other, one could hardly view oneself as playing any significant role in its growth and development.

This was not a "renaissance" as it has generally been labelled until now, but a counter-renaissance as it developed in the Indian mind, with regard to both India's traditional heritage in the field of knowledge and the new knowledge which was imported from the West. Indians, it was felt, could not do anything on their own to help it grow in new directions nor could they be active participants in the collective enterprise of knowledge which belonged to no single civilisation or people or to those who were located in any particular space or time. The far-reaching consequences of this are writ large on the intellectual scene of India in the last three centuries. What is surprising is that in spite of the deep inculcation of this attitude by all the forces and institutions during this period, innovative pursuits in the field of knowledge did not completely disappear.

Intellectual activity within the framework of traditional schools of Indian philosophy continued unabated and even took some interesting directions, as will be evident in the surveys which will occur in the course of this work. Along with this, there was also a healthy growth of interest in the diverse philosophical traditions of the West and attempts at making creative contributions to that tradition. The two traditions, then, intermingled and interacted in the personalities of some outstanding thinkers whom India produced during this period, whose thoughts we will examine later on.

NOTES

1. Potter, Karl H. 1983. Bibliography. *Encyclopedia of India Philosophies*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. 1: 193.
2. *Ibid.* 429.
3. Sarma, Thangaswami. 1985. *Darśanamañjarī*, Madras, 52-53.
4. Udayana. 1940. *Ātmattvaviveka*. Varanasi: Chowkhamba Prakashana.
5. Daya Krishna. Is Īśvarakṛṣṇa's Sāṃkhya-Kārikā Really Sāṃkhyan. *Philosophy—East and West*, July 1968.

6. Hardy, Wilhelm. 1995. The Ācāryarahasyam and Its Wider Implications. In *Representing Hinduism*, ed. Vasudha Dalmia and H. Von Stietencron, 40–41. New Delhi, London; Sage Publications.
7. See, for example, Vedānta in the First Millennium A.D., A Retrospective Illusion imposed by historiography of India.