

CHAPTER 2

The Search for Sources of Renewal and Strength in Times of Crisis

The period from the eighteenth century onwards was one of crisis in polity and society for both the Muslims and the Hindus. The Mughal Empire gradually dis-integrated after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 leaving in its wake 'times of trouble' that lasted till 1857 when the British finally consolidated their hold over India. However, as the situation was not the same in all parts of India and, there was a distinct difference particularly between the North and the South. The Vijayanagar Empire fell only in 1565 and even after its demise the Naiks who are supposed to have ruled over considerable parts of the region formerly occupied by the Vijayanagar Empire. As the British consolidated their rule in different parts of the country at different times, this too, led to a lack of uniformity in the crisis.

In 'times of trouble' one tends to look to the past to discover reasons for one's present situation as well as for guidance and inspiration from earlier ideal constructs for meeting the challenge. The Muslims turned back to the Koran and the *Hadis* and, to a number of leaders who attempted in diverse ways to meet the challenge and to find a way out. The Hindus, of course, had the Vedas to turn to but, unlike the Muslims they did not have any one text to which they could unambiguously turn for guidance and inspiration. There were not only a number of other texts accepted in the tradition as authoritative besides the Vedas, such as the *Bhagvadgītā*, the *Śrīmad Bhāgvat*, but also no one exactly knew what to include and what to exclude in the Vedic corpus itself. The authority of the four *Samhitās*, of course, formed the indisputable hard core of the Vedic corpus but whether the *Brāhmaṇas*, the *Āraṇyakas* and the *Upaniṣads* were to be included in this corpus or not was uncertain. Moreover, as the *Upaniṣads* themselves form a large number, it has never been clear as to which of them are to be included or excluded from the Vedic Canon even if they are accepted as belonging to the Vedic corpus. This problem was present from the beginning as is clearly shown by the division between the *Mīmāṃsakas* and the *Vedāntins*. The authority of the

Mīmāṃsāsūtras and that of the *Brahmasūtras* are opposed to each other and though many have tried to reconcile the differences between them, there has generally been no consensus about how the problem raised by these two different traditions should be resolved.

These considerations are important in understanding the diverse responses of various groups in different parts of the country in either selecting certain parts of the Vedic corpus or some other recognised authoritative text of the tradition to meet the challenge posed by the contemporary crisis in Indian polity and society.

The earliest response seems to have occurred in Bengal where the British consolidated their position very early and is associated with the name of Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833) and the Brahma Samaj. The Brahma Samaj chose the *Upaniṣads* as its primary text for deriving inspiration and guidance and under Devendranath Tagore turned away even from these texts to rely on personal spiritual experiences. As against this, Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824–1883) in the North turned to the Vedic Saṁhitās alone rejecting the Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and the *Upaniṣads* and, especially, the later Paurāṇic texts which had become such an integral part of Hinduism. In the West, in Gujarat, the Svāmīnārāyaṇa Saṁpradāya founded by Svāmīnārāyaṇa (1781–1830) in the early part of the nineteenth century accepted, unlike Ram Mohan and Dayanand, not only the authority of the Vedas but also that of the *Śrīmad Bhāgvat*, the *Bhagavadgītā* and even the *Yājñavalkya Smṛti*. His inclusion of *Yājñavalkya Smṛti* is surprising while, his exclusion of the *Upaniṣads* seems strange unless it be assumed that he included them in the *Brahmasūtras* whose basic authority he seems to have accepted. However, he seems to belong more to the older Bhakti traditions than to the type of movements that occurred in Bengal, north India and even Maharashtra where the Prarthana Samaj was established (1867) on the lines of the Brahma Samaj by Bhandarkar and Atmaram Pandurang. The Svāmīnārāyaṇa movement in Gujarat should not be confused with the movement associated with Nārāyaṇa Guru in Kerala which appears to be a far more radical movement than the one that occurred in Gujarat.

The attempt to seek inspiration from the Vedas does not seem to have ceased with Dayanand Saraswati as his radical rejection not only of all the other accepted texts in the tradition but also of the *Upaniṣads* aroused a counter attempt to rehabilitate the older orthodox interpretation of the Vedas, which perhaps, also sought to come to terms with the newly-emerging awareness of the scientific challenge from the West. Madhusudana Ojha's work on the Vedas is perhaps the clearest indication of this. However, it is so obscure that even the attempts of his disciple, Paṇḍit Motilal Shastri and of Surjandas Swami do not appear to have made clear what exactly his contention was? Karpatriji's commentary on the Vedas may also be taken as a response to Dayanand's interpretation.

A different kind of interpretation was made by Kapali Shastri and Shri Anirwanji who wrote under the inspiration of Sri Aurobindo's interpretation of the Vedas. The latter's *Veda Mīmāṃsā* is in Bengali while the former's work is in

Sanskrit. Sri Aurobindo wrote his *Secret of Vedas* in English and also wrote *Hymns to the Mystic Fire* on the *mantras*. These do not seem to be in the strictly Sanskritic tradition and appear to be attempts at an understanding of the Vedas independent of the tradition. Sri Aurobindo, however, has written on Dayanand and spoken with appreciation of him.

Attempts at understanding the Vedas occur from the earliest times, particularly in the works known as *Nighaṇṭu* and *Nirukta* ascribed to Yāska. The exact history of Vedic interpretation is, however, not really known even though the *Śrauta Sūtras* and the *Mīmāṃsā sūtras* along with the works deriving from these two basic sources are supposed to elucidate the ritual part of the Vedas and the problem arising from a correct interpretation of those parts of the Brāhmaṇas which deal with them. There, however, seems that no detailed Bhāṣya on each of the Vedic Saṁhitās exists as is usually found on most of the foundational texts of the Indian tradition. Even the texts known as the *Upaniṣads* do not seem to have had detailed commentaries on them before Śaṅkara in the early part of the eighth century A.D. As far as the Brāhmaṇas and the Āraṇyakas are concerned one hardly knows of any detailed commentary on them. The earliest commentaries that we hear of are those of Uvaṭa, Skandasvāmin, Nārāyaṇa and Udgītha belonging to A.D. seventh century, who residing in Vallabhī, collectively seem to have written a *Bhāṣya* on the *R̥gveda*. As for the *Bhāṣya* on the *Saṁhitā*, the earliest that we know of is *R̥gvarthadīpikā* of Venkaṭa Mādhava written in the tenth century. After this, we seem to have a commentary on the *Sāmaveda* by Bharata Svāmin in the thirteenth century in the Hoysala kingdom in the South. The most well-known attempt at writing a comprehensive commentary on the Vedic *Saṁhitās*, *Brāhmaṇas* and *Āraṇyakas* occurred in the Vijayanagar kingdom under the leadership of Sāyaṇa Mādhava, even though it is not clear as to whether all the Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas were also commented upon during this period. Sāyaṇa's commentary is one of the most well-known before the modern period but no one seems to have noticed the radical position of the great commentator with respect to the very notion of *mantra* which is so central to the whole of the Vedic Saṁhitās. In his introduction to the *R̥gveda Bhāṣya*, Sāyaṇa asserts that a *mantra* is what the *ṛtvik* takes to be a *mantra*. This reminds one of the ultramodern behaviouristic position such as is exemplified, for example, in psychology when it is said that intelligence is what the intelligence tests measure. Unlike the behavioural psychologists however, Sāyaṇa does not offer his definition without examining all other possible definitions that were given in the tradition of what was a *mantra*. He examines each and all of them and finds them to be suffering from either an *ativyāptidoṣa* or an *avyāptidoṣa*, that is, if the definition were accepted, then either it will apply to those cases which are obviously not mantras at all or exclude some which everyone accepted as a mantra.

An interesting parallel exists between the modern attempts to return to Vedic roots and those of Sāyaṇa Mādhava in the fifteenth century; both deriving from a self-conscious attempt to revive and preserve the tradition endangered by events in the contemporary situation. The Vijayanagar Empire was consciously

aware of the danger posed to the classical traditions of India from the establishment of Islamic rule in large parts of northern and central India, as also making deep inroads even into the south. The return to Vedic roots in nineteenth-century India also seems to be a self-conscious response to the inroads and challenges that western civilization embodied not only in the actual presence of the British empire in large parts of India but also in the critique they offered of the past traditions of this country in their totality. There was, however, a significant difference between the two situations, in that the European scholars offered not only a critical evaluation of the whole of India's past but also presented a picture of it in terms of their own perspective based on new methods of philological and comparative research backed by a study of the historical past which had never been done in earlier times. The new interpretations of the Vedas thus either completely ignored or bypassed the whole ritualistic aspect of the Vedic *yajña* and tried to give a symbolic and mystical interpretation of the mantra portions, while ignoring the Brāhmaṇas almost completely and even the conflicting evidence from the *Upaniṣads* which classify the Vedas in what they call *aparāvidyā* or, from the *Gītā* which openly criticises them for their undue emphasis on the ritual aspects.

However, there appears to be a difference between interpretations which exclusively emphasize the symbolic and mystical aspects of the Vedas, such as, by Sri Aurobindo and his followers, Kapali Shastri and Sri Anirvanaji or other interpretations providing evidence of modern scientific knowledge in the Vedas which according to them, were a reservoir of all knowledge. The interpretations of Paṇḍit Madhusudana Ojha and Paṇḍit Motilal Shastri appear to illustrate this second aspect, though a reference to modern knowledge occurs even in Dayanand Saraswati's introduction to his commentary on the *Rgveda*. The latter in fact, tried to combine both modern and ancient systems of knowledge through the establishment of Anglo-Vedic institutions of learning sponsored by the Arya Samaj which he had founded. The attempt to find all modern scientific knowledge in the Vedas has continued with extravagant claims, generally founded on arbitrary exegetical interpretations and ignoring the fact that 'scientific' knowledge is not static in its formulations and that it can easily give up any of the so-called 'accepted' truths, if the evidence against them is overwhelming—a position which the orthodox interpretations of the Vedas can never accept.

It may be remembered in this connection that the 'modern' attempt to find 'scientific' knowledge in the Vedas goes not only against its mystical interpretation but also against the whole tradition of the Vedic interpretation of the Mīmāṃsakas or the Vedāntins who held that the *śruti* had no authoritative status in respect of the empirical realm. The Mīmāṃsakas had developed a whole theory of *arthavāda* to ward off the literal interpretation of the descriptive statements in the *śruti* and Śaṅkara had clearly stated that even if a hundred *śrutis* were to declare fire to be cold, no one would believe it, implying thereby that the *śruti* could not be accepted as a *pramāṇa* as far as empirical matters of fact were concerned. What, however, appears to be even more surprising is the fact that

the first school of interpreters do not seem to be concerned with the rival interpretation, sufficiently to show how it is inadequate and has to be rejected. This is strange as most of these interpretations have occurred during the last hundred years or so. A comparative study of their contributions and their awareness of each other's work is still to be made. But it appears that they generally ignore each other's work and follow a hermeneutically sealed system of interpretation which does not provide for any criterion by which their own interpretation could possibly be rejected or refuted.

It is not only that they do not seem to take into account the conflicting interpretations of their own contemporaries but, surprisingly, they do not seem to deal seriously with the counter-evidence that is to be found in the *Brāhmaṇa* texts or in the long tradition of Vedic exegetics. To give but one example, not only Dayanand but also almost everybody else ignores the overwhelming evidence for animal sacrifice in the Vedic *yajña* which is found in the *Brāhmaṇa* texts, necessitating the long discussion in the tradition about the justification of *himsā* in the context of the Vedic ritual. There is nothing 'mystical' or esoteric about the animal sacrifice, as the text itself shows an awareness of the conflict involved in the ritual killing.

The following passage from the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* will confirm the self-awareness of the conflict in an eminent manner:

*paśurvai nīyamānaḥ sa mṛtyuṃ prāpaśyatsa
devānnānvakāmayataitum, taṃ devā abruvannehi
svargaṃ vai tvā lokam gamiṣyāma iti, sa
tathetyabravittasya vai me yuṣmākamekaḥ
purastādaitviti, tatheti tasyāgnih.
purastādaitso'gnimanupracyavat iti ... anvenam
mātā manyatāmanu pitā'nu bhrātā sagarbhyo'nu sakhā
sayūthya iti, janitraivenam
tatsamanumatamālabhante iti.*

(*Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, 6th khaṇḍa of 6th adhyāya; pp.163–64, part 1, of the Ananda Ashram edn.)

As it was being led, the (sacrificial) animal saw death around it. He did not want to go to the gods. The gods asked him to come to them (saying), 'come we will lead you to heaven'. The animal agreed, saying, 'let one of you walk before me'. Agni walked before it and it followed Agni. ...Let its mother (allow the animal to go); let its father and its brother, born of the same mother (allow him), let its friend, who is from the same herd (allow him). It is to be taken with the permission of those related to it by birth.

*saiṣā svargyāhutiryadagnyāhutiryadi ha vā
apyabrāhmaṇokto yadi duruktokto yajate'tha
haiṣāhutirgacchatyeva devānna pāmpānā saṃsṛjyate iti.
(*Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, Ananda Ashram edn., 3, 5)*

The offering of *agni* to *agni* is a heavenly offering (*āhuti*). Even though it may be made without relying on the utterance of a Brāhmaṇa (meaning, as Sāyaṇa says, both a Brāhmaṇa priest and a Brāhmaṇa text), or be made with an utterance not rightly formed, yet it surely reaches out to the gods; it remains untouched by sin.

There are many other such instances but the modern interpreters of the Veda do not seem to have had the *niḥsaṅga buddhi* or 'unattached intellect' in this matter. Perhaps, they were less interested in understanding the Vedic texts as objectively as possible rather than in reviving the contemporary Indian consciousness by re-establishing its connection with those primeval roots which had nourished the tradition for millennia. Yet, this 'interested' search has sometimes brought to attention those aspects of the *mantra* portion which had not been paid attention to in the tradition for a long time.

Kapali Shastri, for example, utilises his vast knowledge of *tantra* to unfold the possible hidden meanings in the hymn to Varuṇa wherein he is enjoined to help one in untying the three knots which bind the soul and keep it in bondage. These, according to him, are the bonds of mind, life and body, each binding the soul in its own way. There are many other such insights abounding in the works of these writers but one always wonders how much of this is really contained in the mantras themselves.

The search for the hidden secret in the works considered to be sacred in a particular tradition has been widespread and, if one were to compare, say, the secret of the Veda, as interpreted by Sri Aurobindo, Kapali Shastri and Sri Anirvana with the one that is found with respect to the Torah, the Bible and the Koran, one might begin to appreciate both the arbitrariness and the inevitability of the approach. The search for the secret meaning of the Torah in the Jewish tradition is well known. So also are the mystical interpretations of the Song of Solomon in the Bible. Even the Koran has had its mystical interpreters and the *Nur-e-Mohammadi* has been postulated as being coeval with the creation of the world and eternally co-present with it. Similarly, there is no dearth of persons who try to find all present empirical knowledge in their sacred books as well as indications of the past and future history of mankind. Perhaps, the very notion of the 'sacredness' of a text implies all this.

What are the historical circumstances in the context of which attempts at such interpretations are situated? Even in India, the interpretation of the Vedas had languished for a long time after the *Nighaṅṭu* and the *Nirukta* as both the Mīmāṃsakas and the Vedāntins had hardly paid any attention to the mantra portion of the Vedic texts. It is only in the seventh century that we seem to have a revival of interest in the interpretation of the *Ṛgveda*, an attempt that seems to have gained momentum from the tenth century onwards.

But, though a number of interpretations of the Vedas exist from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, the main source of inspiration were the *Upaniṣads* and the *Gītā*, particularly among those who knew little Sanskrit and did not know much of the pure Sanskritic traditions deriving from the earliest times.

If the Hindus turned to the Vedas and *Upaniṣads* to derive strength and inspiration in these times of crisis, the Muslims turned to the Koran and the *Hadis* which are the two perennial sources of their faith. There was, however, an interesting difference between the two as while the Hindus, in general, tempted to reach out towards an inward, mystical, trans-rational, universal element in their tradition, the Muslims turned to the observance of extreme behavioural norms prescribed in the *Shariyat* and embodied in the *Hadis* which is mainly concerned with describing the life and behaviour of Muhammad, the sole final authority in their religion. The inward mystical aspect of Islam developed by the various Sufi sects, was not only played down but looked at unfavourably by the new thinkers of the Muslim community as in their opinion it allowed greater latitude and laxity in personal behaviour which was felt by them to be harmful to the preservation of Muslim identity at a time when they had been deprived of political power and even of the favours of the new rulers who considered them as mainly responsible for the revolt of 1857. Shah Waliyullah's (1702–1762) name stands out in this connection and his son Abdul Aziz (early nineteenth century) played an important role in galvanizing the Muslim community. An attempt was made at purifying the Muslim practices of all that seemed to them to have been borrowed from the Indian environment in which Islam had lived for long. The movement in India is supposed to have been greatly influenced by the Wahabi movement of Abdul Wahab in South Arabia.

The more extreme wing of the movement is represented by a Syed Ahmad of Rai Bareilly (1786–1831) who took the idea of *Jihad* seriously. He was uncertain however as to whether such religious battles could be launched from a place ruled by writers of the Book, that is, who share belief in the Old Testament as do the Muslims along with the Jews and Christians. He, therefore, ultimately went to Afghanistan where he collected followers and attacked the Sikhs at the frontiers of India. After an initial victory he with his followers was trapped and killed in some narrow passage among the hills in the north-west frontiers. Syed Ahmad Bareilawi of Bareilly who seems to have been against the Wahabi movement espoused the cause validating many of the current practices such as the worship of the *pīrs* which were widely prevalent among Indian Muslims.

An interesting aspect of these movements is highlighted by the formation of such groups as *Ahl-i-Hadis*¹ and *Ahl-i-Quran*² which give primacy to one or the other for the regeneration of the Muslim community in India. Amongst the controversies between the two groups one related to the omnipotent power of the god Allah. It was asked by members of one group whether Allah could create another Muhammad, which is a very difficult question to answer in the context of Islam. In an interesting anecdote, it is said Ghalib, the famous poet was asked the question and replied that whatever world God may create there would always be a Muhammad in it, thus cleverly avoiding to give a straight answer of either yes or no, in the context of the Islamic faith.

Ultimately, these theological issues were replaced by the demands and exigencies of acquiring a modern western education imparted through an English

medium which alone could provide avenues for employment in those times. Sir Syed Ahmad is strongly associated with this type of movement and a fairly large number of Anglo-Arabic institutions of learning were formed on the same pattern as the Anglo-Vedic ones instituted under the auspices of the Arya Samaj.

There, however, remained a significant difference between the two. The power of the orthodox Mullahs who could issue a *fatwa* on any matter of behaviour or practice or writing by a Muslim increasingly ensured that departures from 'orthodoxy' had dangerous personal and social consequences. Besides this, the status of an institution such as that of Deoband amongst the Muslims resulted in ensuring 'orthodoxy' in the interpretation of the Islamic faith and acquired an authority and prestige which was hardly matched by any institution devoted to Vedic learning or the practice of behaviour prescribed in the *Dharmaśāstras*. This ensured 'orthodoxy' in the interpretation of the Islamic faith and its imposition on the behaviours and practices of Muslims as any transgression was met with social disapproval and punishment by the custodians of the faith. There were, undoubtedly, long-drawn serious debates between the orthodox pandits well versed in the *Smṛti* literature and the *Dharmaśāstras* and the social reformers about such matters as widow remarriage, the practice of Satī, the education of women, the age of marriage, etc., but they never acquired the same status as among the Muslim community. These issues continue to be of central concern even today amongst the Muslims.

Another fact which deserves to be noticed about the developments in the Muslim community during this period is that, the division between the Sunni and the Shia is well known, from the very beginning of Islam, little attention has been paid to the proliferation of sects within the Shia community particularly those that have occurred in India. The Ismaili sect among the Shias appeared very early in the history of Islam but the fact that Ismailis came to India and seem to have got further divided into various sub-sects in the Indian environment has not attracted much attention. Many of these Ismaili sub-sects show a fair affinity with Hindu believers and practices and there exists not only an inter-mixture of Hindu and Muslim practices, but also an emergence of families where even close relatives seem to have subscribed to these two diametrically opposite faiths. The emergence of a sect that treated Muhammad as an *avatāra* a claim substantiated by the work *Daśāvatāra* remains the strongest evidence of this as does the recent empirical study on the living communities which belies the Hindu-Muslim division by Dominique Khan and Shaila Mayaram. Some of the other sects have been known by the name of Bohra (Khojas ?) and the followers of the Agha Khan, but the history of the formation of these sects and their differential response to the changes that were taking place in the social and political sphere during this period, has hardly been studied.

In fact, most of the studies have concentrated heavily on the movements around Delhi and Western U.P. and have ignored the response of other Muslim communities spread all over India during those times with the exception of Bengal.

Surprisingly, this is also the period of the great florescence of Urdu literature just as Islamic scholars were trying to seek reassurance from the *Quran* and *Hadis* while giving up the mystical dimensions of Islam that had flourished amongst some of the Sufi sects in India. The period of Mir to Ghalib extending from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century is one of the richest period in the history of Urdu literature when poetic creativity reached its greatest heights. The stature of Mir and Ghalib is unquestionable and the latter is considered by many to be one of the greatest poets produced in any language of the world. In fact, it was not only literature that flourished during this period but also music and dance when many new *rāgas* were supposed to be created in the court of Mohammad Shah by Sadarang and his brother. Similarly, the Kathak style of dancing which is the most distinctive gift of the north to the repertoire of dance styles of India is supposed to be a creation of Lucknow which had become a rival centre to Delhi from 1748 onwards, particularly after 1819, when East India Company made Oudh independent of the Mughal court at Delhi.

Thus, there seems to have been radically, different responses by the religious and the artistic elites of the Muslim world of the north to the challenge posed by the decline of the Mughal empire at the beginning of the eighteenth century. In fact, with the rise of new centres of patronage and power, the artists and the writers found a new freedom in the sense that they did not have to look up to only one central court or patronage or to model themselves on the standards set by it, if they were located elsewhere. The story of the rise of these centres has not yet been written, though the various schools of painting and music are associated with the names of such states, which were generally not very large in size. The little state of Rampur, for example, attracted not only a number of outstanding musicians, but also a large number of Arabic and Persian scholars who lived close to each other in a locality which, because of this, came to be known as the Madarasa-Mohalla. Elsewhere we have Hindu and Muslim rulers vying for poets, artists and scholars to grace their courts and thus make them famous all around the country. This was, for example, the period when the little state of Jaipur, a new planned city, also became known as second Kashi because of the quantity and quality of Sanskrit scholars it had attracted to itself.

The popular religious movements, on the other hand, showed little awareness of the vast changes occurring in the political realm and the problems they were posing for the educated elite of both the Hindu and Muslim communities. These popular religious movements showed a greater continuity with the past movements as they were primarily confined to those sections of the community who were less formally educated. Thus, the movements of Svāmī Nārāyaṇa sect in Gujarat and Nārāyaṇa Guru in Kerala continued the tradition of the earlier saint poets of India and practically conveyed the same teaching as they had done in the past.

One may, therefore, perhaps make a distinction between the response of those who were more self conscious about the changes in political sphere, than

the large mass of people who responded to problems only as they affected them at the personal level. The story of man, however, is mostly given voice by those who apprehend at the self conscious level and articulate this in terms of concepts.

NOTES

1. Metcalfe, Barbara Holy. *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900*. Princeton. 13, 72, 141, 143.
2. *Ibid.*, 289, 295, 322.

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SECTION TWO

CHAPTER 3

Some New Perspectives in Looking at the Classical Traditions of Indian Philosophising in Indian Terms

Writings in Indian philosophy in the English language usually ignore the earlier Sanskrit works on the subject and start their survey of the philosophical scene in India as if nothing similar had been attempted before. The only exceptions sometimes made are by some authors who refer to the *Sarvadarśana Saṁgraha* of Madhva belonging to the fourteenth century. However, even when they refer to it, they do not try to place their own writings on the various schools of Indian philosophy within its context. Similarly, there is no reason to show why they depart from the scheme which the author of *Ṣaḍdarśana Saṁgraha* had adopted. Fewer still show any awareness of the *Ṣaḍdarśana Samuccaya* which Haribhadra Sūri wrote in the middle of the eighth century. But, while it is acknowledged that, these two works have dealt with the various schools of Indian philosophy known in their times yet little attention is paid to the differences between them.

The general impression thus created is that there has hardly been any self-reflection in Sanskrit philosophical writing on the various trends and schools which had developed in the Indian philosophical tradition over two thousand years of its written history. Yet, this is not a fact and, at least, about thirty works are known to have been written right from the beginning of the eighth century upto the middle of the twentieth century:

1. *Sarvadarśana Siddhānta Saṁgraha* by Śaṁkara (710 A.D.)
2. *Sarvavedānta Siddhānta Sārasaṁgraha* by Śaṁkara (710 A.D.)
3. *Ṣaḍdarśana Samuccaya* by Haribhadra Sūri (750 A.D.)
4. *Ṣaḍdarśana Samuccaya* by Rājaśekhara Sūri (900 A.D.)
5. *Sarvasiddhānta Praveśaka* by unknown Jaina monk (1150 A.D.)
6. *Vivekavilāsa* by Jinadatta Sūri (1220 A.D.)
7. *Sarvadarśana Saṁgraha* by Vidyāraṇya or Sāyaṇa Madhva or Bharatīrtha (1350 A.D.)

8. *Sarvadarśana Saṃgraha* by Chennambhaṭṭa (1390 A.D.) traditionally attributed to Madhava Cf. under Vidyāraṇya.
9. *Ṣaddarśananirṇaya* by Merutuṅga Sūri (1395 A.D.)
10. *Sarvadarśana Kaumudī* of Madhava Sarasvatī (1515 A.D.)
11. *Siddhānta-sāraviveka* by Vijayindra Bhikṣu (1560 A.D.)
12. *Prasthānabheda* of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī (1570 A.D.)
13. *Sarvasiddhānta Saṃgraha* Commentary on Śaṅkara's *Sarvasiddhāntasaṃgraha* by Govinda Śeṣa (1590 A.D.)
14. *Sarvavedānta Sārasaṃgraha* by Sadāśiva (1720 A.D.) (*Advaita*)
15. *Sarvavedānta Siddhānta* by *Upaniṣad* Brahmayogin (1740 A.D.)
16. *Sarvasiddhānta Sāravivecana* of Vijayindra Tīrtha (1850 A.D.)
17. *Sarvajñāna Mañjarī* by Nandakumara Datta (1857 A.D.)
18. *Sarvavedāntasvarasārtha Pradīpikā* by Appaya Dikshita (1890 A.D.) (*Anubhavādvaita*)
19. *Darśanodaya* by Srinivasacharya Lakshmipuram (1905 A.D.)
20. Introduction to *Sarvadarśana Saṃgraha* edited by Vasudeva Shastri Abhyankar (1929 A.D.)
21. *Sarvadarśana Kaumudī* by Damodara Mahapatra (1971 A.D.) (*Sāṅkhya*)
22. *Tattvasaṃgraha* by Śāntarākṣita.

Authors Whose Dates are Unknown

- Sarvamatasāṃgraha* of T. Ganpati Shastri
Sarvamatasāṃgrahavilāsa of Ramasubramanyacharya
Mānameyarahasya Śloka-vārttikasaṃgraha (1925 A.D.)
Śrauta Saṃgraha (1927 A.D.)
Dvādaśadarśanasopānāvali of Śrīpada Śāstri
Svamatasiddhāntarahasyasāra by Trilocana Shivacharya
Sarvataśikṣā by Keshavacharya (son of Sūra Sūri). ed. 1886 A.D.
Darśanasarvasva by Śaṅkara Chaitanya Bharati (1949 A.D.)
Sarvadarśana Śiromaṇi by Rāmānujācārya
Sarvamatasāṃgraha by Rāghavānanda
Sarvasiddhāntasaṃgraha by Bodhanidhi

The history of works of survey in philosophy starts sometime at the beginning of eighth century with two works in Sanskrit which are generally ascribed to Śaṅkara even though most of the scholars are highly doubtful about this ascription. In fact, the title of one of these raises serious doubts as to whether Śaṅkara could have written this as it appears to deal with all schools of Vedānta when these could hardly have existed in his times. As for the other work which is also ascribed to him, it is supposed to deal with all the schools of Indian philosophy. It would be interesting to find out what are the schools referred to and the doctrines discussed therein.

A close analysis of the list reveals that thirteen works occur earlier than the eighteenth century and twelve occur after that period. (These include at least

four works whose dates are unknown but which have been edited and published during this period.)

Another interesting division in the surveys is between those which deal exclusively with schools of Vedānta and those which seem to deal with all the schools of philosophy known to the author. This division continues right up to modern times. If we divide the survey works between those which deal only with the Vedānta and its various schools, we find that there are four such works comprising the following:

1. *Sarvavedānta Siddhānta*
2. *Sarvavedānta Sārasaṅgraha* by Sadāśiva (A.D. 1720) (*Advaita*)
3. *Sarvavedānta Siddhānta* by Upaniṣadbrahmayogin (A.D. 1740)
4. *Sarvavedāntasvarasārtha Pradīpikā* by Appaya Dikshita (A.D. 1890) (*Anubhavādvaita*).

One of the significant features of the pre-eighteenth century works is that five of them have been written by well-known Jaina thinkers thus revealing that the interest of Jainas in all the other schools of philosophy was motivated not for the sake of criticism but for understanding and presenting their viewpoint as objectively as possible. There seems also an interesting indication that some of these surveys have been specifically written from the viewpoint of some special school of philosophy such as Sāṅkhya and Śaiva Siddhānta. The Jainas seem to have lost active interest in other schools of philosophy after the fourteenth century as we only have one work by a Jaina thinker. This conjecture is based on his father's name which has been given as Sūra Sūri and this work was partly edited according to Potter, by Gottingin in A.D. 1886. The cluster of Jaina thinkers who wrote such survey works occur mostly at the beginning of A.D. second millennium when there seems to have been a sudden spurt in Jaina writings.

The last known work in this genre published in A.D. 1971 by Shri Damodara Mahapatra is entitled, *Sarvadarśana Kaumudī*. Earlier, in the twentieth century, Vasudeva Shastri Abhyankar had, in his introduction to *Sarvadarśana Saṅgraha* of Madhva, given a new classification of Indian philosophical schools which, though quite novel, has not attracted the attention of scholars. In fact, just a few years before he wrote his introduction, the well-known scholar, Rama Subramanyashastry had written a work entitled, *Sarvamata Saṅgraha* which again has hardly been discussed by any one.

In his introduction to *Sarvadarśana Saṅgraha* published in 1924, Vasudeva Shastri Abhayankar attempts a new classification of the Indian philosophical schools based on the importance they give to *śruti* and *tarka*, respectively. His contention is that knowledge of the ultimate cannot be gained either by *pratyakṣa* or by *anumāna* if it is without any attributes or without any relation as these could not provide any ground or basis for knowing it. The only way it could even become an object of possible awareness is through the third *pramāṇa* which has been called *śabda*. However, in case one admits that the ultimate reality possesses any property or relations then obviously that could provide some grounds for its knowledge. The basic difference, then, would lie between those who consider the

ultimate reality to be without any attributes or relationship and others who do not agree with this. On the other hand, this difference itself could be a function of the fact that one considers the ultimate reality to be "knowable" by reasoning. As the learned Shastri puts it—the Indian schools of philosophy are divisible into those which give primacy to *śruti* and those which give primacy to *tarka*. The word *tarka* is used here in the general sense of reasoning and not the technical one in which it is used in the Nyāya system. The Shastri further divides the *tarka-pradhāna* schools into *āstika* and *nāstika*, that is, those which believe in the reality of God and those which do not. Under the former he includes Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika, while under the latter he mentions Bauddha, Jaina, Kapālika and Cāravāka thought. Besides these classifications, Shastri also introduces another term to describe those who ostensibly refer to the *śruti* but really do not believe in it. These he calls *pracchanna tārīka* and by it he primarily means the non-Advaitic Vedāntins such as Rāmānuja and Madhva. He, however, does not seem to be aware of the implications of his own insight that if one holds that the ultimate reality has both attributes and relations, then reasoning or *tarka* will obviously play a different role than if one denies that it has attributes and relations. The non-Advaitic Vedāntins employ both *śruti* and *tarka* as for them, the ultimate reality has both attributes and relations while the Advaitin who does not believe this can use reasoning only in the negative sense, that is, to refute the opponents' position and to dispute the counter or alternative interpretation of the *śruti* passages offered by the non-Advaitin Vedāntins in support of their view. However, the distinction between *tārīka* and *pracchanna tārīka* is important because while the latter has to give credence to *śruti* and thus make his reason subservient to the text accepted as authoritative, the *tārīka* schools need not do so.

The distinction between *āstika* and *nāstika* amongst the *tārīkas* or those who accept reason as competent to discover ultimate reality and determine its nature seems to be hastily drawn. For Sāṃkhya and Vaiśeṣika obviously have no special place for Īśvara and even Nyāya introduces it at a very late stage. Also, Shastri does not take into account those who have used reason to demolish reason, such as Nāgārjuna or Śrī Harṣa. Similarly, the pure Śrauta philosophy, that is, Mīmāṃsā, is strangely almost atheistic or *nirīśvarādi*, while the other predominantly Śrauta philosophy, that is, Advaita Vedānta, which uses reason only negatively, is also atheistic in the sense that it does not believe in the reality of Īśvara except for the purposes of *vyavahāra*, that is, in the same sense as the world which also is real in that perspective. Still, it is interesting to note that Shastri is concerned with the problem of the relative position of *śruti* and *tarka* in India's philosophical traditions and introduces a new category of philosophers who were, according to him, '*pracchanna tārīka*'. By the term *pracchanna tārīka* he seems to refer to those philosophers who give the appearance of being wedded to argumentation and reasoning but are not really so as they feel themselves bound by the authority and views of the *śruti*, or rather what they regard as the *śruti*.

In fact, the whole debate between the relative place of reason and revelation in various schools of Indian philosophy has to be discussed once again in the light of what Shastri and Halbfass have said in this connection. Not only this, if we remember that the authority of the *śruti*, even amongst those who explicitly subscribe to it is confined only to those matters which cannot be known by perception and inference, and hence does not extend to any statements about the empirical world which can be known by the other *pramāṇas*, then one would realise how little scope is given for the authority of the *śruti* to operate in. The famous statement of Śaṅkara that even if a hundred *śrutis* were to declare that fire is cold, no one would believe it, is evidence of this, even though it has been underplayed by most people who have quoted it.¹ Halbfass is the latest example of such an 'underplaying' as, even though he quotes it, he does not examine its implications for the issue he is writing about.

There is another aspect of this notion which Shastri introduced but did not explore. This relates to the raising of the issue as to why one has to be a *pracchanna tārṅika* or why has one to 'hide' one's real belief, either in the *śruti* or in reason and to give an appearance to the contrary. This can only be explained by a socio-cultural situation where an open rejection of the *śruti* was considered inadvisable for it led to undesirable consequences for one self. Thus, the verbal acceptance of the *śruti* as a *pramāṇa* on the part of many Indian schools of philosophy would only show that they were living in a socio-cultural climate where such an adherence would make them acceptable to the prevalent orthodoxy. This may even account, at least to some extent, for the change towards the advocacy of God or *Īśvara* in many schools of Indian philosophy in later periods of their development. This, as everyone knows, seems to have occurred both in the case of Nyāya and Sāṅkhya, sometime around A.D. 1000. On the other hand, the use of the *śruti* by the non-Advaitic Vedāntins to establish their position may be seen as part of the attempt to reconcile the āgamic and the Vedic traditions and to give the former a legitimacy in order to be acceptable in the socio-cultural context. Efforts from the time of Yāmuna or Rāmānuja onwards to establish the ultimate metaphysical reality of *Īśvara* may be seen in this regard between Udayana on the one hand and Rāmānuja on the other. Udayana, who had also earlier played a decisive role in establishing the ontological reality of *Īśvara* in the Nyāya tradition, may himself be regarded as *pracchanna advaitic* if one takes the concluding part of his *Ātmatattva Viveka* seriously.

Shastri's introduction of this new category of understanding the philosophical traditions of India, however, opens the possibility of another category similar to this which may be called '*pracchanna śrauta*'. Of course, this category has not been mentioned by the learned Shastri in his new picture of India's philosophical traditions but it may reasonably be regarded as implicit in it. This category would refer to all those who do try to argue and behave as if reason was their primary concern but, in reality, were only interested in saving the truth of the *śruti* as they saw it. Perhaps, all the schools of Vedānta may be placed in this category as they were hardly concerned with the whole of the *śruti* but with only

one part of it, that is, the *Upaniṣads*. The only real believers in the *śruti* then would be the Mīmāṃsakas who are prepared to accept inconsistencies in the *śruti* in case the *śruti* itself explicitly declares unambiguously that it says so. The Mīmāṃsā, of course, is not interested in the *Upaniṣads* and perhaps does not genuinely regard it as part of the *śruti*. It also confines the authority of the *śruti* to the *vidhi vākya* only and treats the rest as an adjunct to it. But if one compares the strategies that the various ācāryas in the Vedānta tradition adopt to reconcile conflicting passages in the *Upaniṣads* and force on them the interpretation that they prefer, with those adopted by the Mīmāṃsakas, one would realise how much closer the latter are to accepting the authority of the *śruti* in the matter of the *vidhi vākyas* than the Vedāntins are with respect to the interpretation of the utterances relating to the Brahmana in the *Upaniṣads*.

But whatever may be one's view regarding these matters, there can be little doubt that the Shastri has opened a new way of looking at India's philosophical traditions where the problem of reason and faith is placed at the very centre of viewing these traditions as they developed over time.

Another survey of the various schools of Indian philosophy was made earlier, in the middle of the nineteenth century by Vijayendratirtha. He classified these not on the basis of *śruti* and *tarka* as Vasudeva Shastri Abhyankar has done but on the basis of their being *vaidika* or *avaidika*. The distinction, of course is old, but the novelty of Vijayendratirtha consists in the fact that he introduces a new category consisting of those, who according to him, are both *vaidika* and *avaidika*. Under this category he includes Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Kumārila and Vyākaraṇa schools while under the category of *vaidika*, he includes Śāṅkara, Yādavaprakāśa, Bhāskara, Rāmānuja, Śrīkaṇṭha and Madhva. However, the basis of this distinction is based on whether one accepts both the *Karmakāṇḍa* and the *Jñānakāṇḍa* of the Vedas or accepts only the former and not the latter. In case one accepts the *Karmakāṇḍa* portion only and rejects the *Jñānakāṇḍa* one is regarded as both *vaidika* and *avaidika*. But while one may accept such a description of the Mīmāṃsakas, it is difficult to understand how this could be true of the Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika and Vyākaraṇa as stated by him. Also, it is not quite clear in what sense the various schools of Vedānta may be said to accept the *Karmakāṇḍa* portion of the Vedas, particularly in the sense the Mīmāṃsakas accept them. It is interesting to note that Vijayendratirtha does not use the word Mīmāṃsā but indicates the school by use of Kumārila's name thus identifying it, not with the author of the Mīmāṃsā Sūtras but with Kumārila who is a very late Mīmāṃsā thinker. It is also not clear how he can include the Prabhākara school of Mīmāṃsā in his classification as Prabhākara belongs to that part of Mīmāṃsā tradition which is supposed to be completely opposed to Kumārila. Amongst the *avaidika* schools, his inclusion of the Pāśupatas is interesting, as normally they are not mentioned amongst the non-*vaidika* schools which are generally confined to the Buddhists, the Jainas and the Cārvākas. Similarly, amongst the pure thinkers of the Vedic schools, that is the Vedāntins, he includes, besides the well-known names, those of Yādavaprakāśa, Bhāskara, Śrīkaṇṭha.

While this middle-nineteenth century work written by Vijayendratirtha still describes India's philosophical traditions in terms of *vaidika-avaidika*, Vasudeva Shastri Abhyankar writing in the first quarter of the twentieth century moves away from the traditional way of looking at various schools of Indian philosophy and classifies them in a new way. The necessity for modifying the traditional dichotomy between *vaidika* and *advaiika* had been felt by Vijayendratirtha and he introduced a third category, *vaidika-avaidika*, that is, containing both the elements in it. This hybrid category seems to have been forced on him by a reflection on such schools as the Nyāya, the Vaiśeṣika, the Sāṅkhya and Yoga which are usually placed by most modern writers on Indian philosophy in the *vaidika* category. Surprisingly, Vijayendratirtha, though a thinker in the pure Sanskritic tradition, is clearly aware of the difficulties in placing these schools in the *vaidika* category whereas the modern writers on Indian philosophy seem to be completely unaware of the difficulties which arise if these schools are considered as belonging to the Vedic tradition in the same sense as the Mīmāṃsā and the Vedānta are generally supposed to be. The twentieth century thinker Vasudeva Shastri Abhyankar goes a step forward and completely leaves the traditional classification aside. He attempts a new way of looking at India's philosophical traditions, thus showing, at least indirectly, an influence of the contemporary way of looking at philosophy deriving perhaps from his acquaintance with the way the Western writers on philosophy tended to define it. It was, therefore, a case of a pure Sanskritic scholar who responded to the challenges posed by the western way of seeing at India's philosophical traditions in a new perspective, unlike those who were writing in English. These writer continued to maintain the division between the so-called *āstika* and *nāstika* traditions of philosophising and enumerated the so-called six orthodox schools of Indian philosophy along with the three unorthodox schools in the accepted way of looking at Indian philosophy today, being taught to students worldwide through texts written in the English language.

Thinkers in the pure Sanskritic tradition however to continue look at the traditional classification in a new way. Thus Sankara Chaitanya Bharati, a well-known Advaita Vedāntin, writing sometime in 1948 reformulates the central philosophical problem and tries to articulate the differences between major schools of Indian philosophy around that.

In his work entitled, *Darśana Sarvasva* published in 1948 he formulates the issue in terms of the relation between *jñāna* and *jñeya*, that is knowledge and its object. Thus a new response to his philosophical heritage is made by a so-called traditional philosopher writing in Sanskrit rather than the 'modern' philosopher.

Sankara Chaitanya Bharati not only distances himself from the *vaidika-non-vaidika* or the *āstika-nāstika* classification which had been almost axiomatically accepted by everybody earlier, displays, a clear awareness of the philosophical school of Kashmir Śaivism associated with the name of Abhinavagupta and underlines its close similarity to the Advaitic tradition in India's philosophising. In fact, he shows a remarkable awareness of how the *mādhyaṃika-sūnyavāda* and

the *viññānavāda* positions of the Buddhists are closely related with that of Advaita Vedānta and tries to distinguish between the two viewpoints, taking care to refute the subtle differences by extremely subtle argumentation. Interestingly, he describes the Kashmir Śaiva position of Abhinavagupta as *Svātantryavāda*, a totally new term to the Indian tradition and tries to articulate the differences between it and the hard core Advaita position and defends the latter against the former.

There is, thus, a rich diversity in the way writers in the Indian philosophical tradition have tried to look at the same at different points of times in its history. A close study reveals the changes that took place on the philosophical scene of India as also the perspective from which thinkers belonging to different schools were trying to view these and judge them from their own point of view. It may be interesting to find whether any of these works tried to present the position of different schools from their own point of view and not judged them from the point of view of the position that one held one self. In fact, there has been a tradition prevailing amongst classical Indian philosophers to write on different schools of Indian philosophy expounding their doctrines from their own point of view. For example, Vācaspati Miśra I not only expounded the doctrines of Nyāya, Advaita Vedānta and Sāṃkhya in his well-known works but also gave a new interpretation to each of them in such a decisive way that these schools did not remain the same after he wrote on them. However no comparative study has been made to find whether the presentation of these schools by these thinkers marks also a departure in their interpretation, as it did in the case of Vācaspati Miśra I. An understanding of India's diverse philosophical traditions from an "Indian" point of view, developed by its own thinkers and not by "outsiders" to it, as almost all of those who write on it at the present time, is possible by a study of these works of survey.

NOTES

1. Halbfass, Wilhelm. 1992. *Tradition and Reflection: Explorations in Indian Thought*. Delhi: Satguru Publications.