
An Outline of Indian Philosophy System

For Part III, Paper VIII
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Why study Indian philosophy?

- Philosophy literally means the love of knowledge or more precisely, the love of wisdom.
 - In the past, many thinkers asked fundamental questions and probed the depths of their own mind for answers.
 - As far back as 1500 B.C., we find in the hymns of the Rig Veda, a spirit of inquiry into the nature of things.
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The Upanisads

- In the Mundaka Upanisad (1.1.3), we find the following verse:
 - *Kasmin nu bhagavo vijñate sarvam idam vijñatam bhavati iti.*
 - “What is that by knowing which everything is known?”
 - In the Chandogya Upanisad (6.1.4), we find a variation:
 - “Just as the knowledge of one slab of clay gives us knowledge of all clay, what is that by knowing which everything else becomes known.”
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Outline of Indian Philosophy

- Vedic Period (2500 BCE – 600 CE)
 - Epic Period (600 BCE – 200 CE)
 - Sutra Period (200 CE – 600 CE)
 - Scholarly Period (600 CE – 1700 CE)
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Sanskrit

- This is a highly structured language with precise rules of grammar.
 - It is phonetic.
 - The roots of many European languages, including English can be traced back to Sanskrit.
 - Linguists infer the existence of Proto-Indo European (PIE) language from which Sanskrit is derived going as far back as 3500 BCE.
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The Four Vedas

- Rig Veda
 - Yajur Veda
 - Sama Veda
 - Atharva Veda
 - Each Veda is divided into four parts:
 - Mantras, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and Upanishads.
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Mantra

- This word is derived from two Sanskrit words:
 - *Manas* which refers to the mind
 - *Trayate* which means to protect.
 - Thus *mantra* is that which protects the mind.
 - The word *trayate* also refers to that which reveals, or releases or delivers.
 - It also refers to the power of reflection of the human mind.
 - *Manush* in Sanskrit means “human being”
 - The English word “man” is derived from this word.
 - The word *mananam* refers to reflection.
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Brahmana

- This word is derived from the Sanskrit root word *brih* which means vast and expansive.
 - Thus, *Brahmana* refers to that which is vast and expansive.
 - The word *brahmin*, refers to a priest, or more accurately, to a scholar.
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Aranyakas and Upanisads

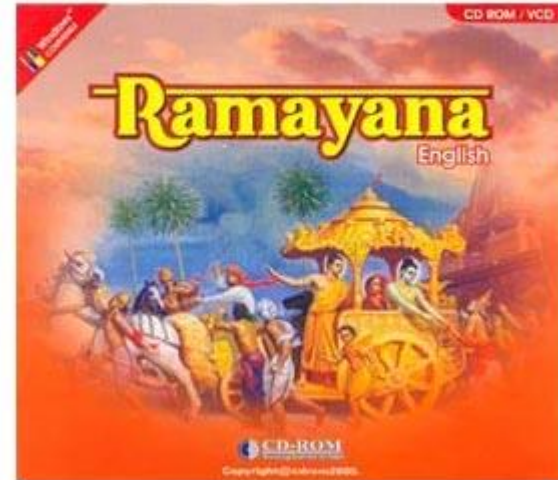
- These are the philosophical portions of the Vedas.
 - *Veda* is derived from the root word *vid* which means “to know”.
 - *Aranya* means “forest” and *aranyaka* means “forest writing”
 - *Upanisad* is a combination of three Sanskrit words: *upa*, *ni*, *shad* whose translation approximates: “near”, “below” and “sit”
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Monism versus Non-dualism

- Dualism refers to any theory that states that there are two irreducible components to the subject under investigation.
 - Monism is the assertion that there is only one.
 - Non-dualism is the assertion that there are not two.
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The Epic Period

- The Ramayana of Valmiki
- The Mahabharata of Vyasa



The Bhagavadgita

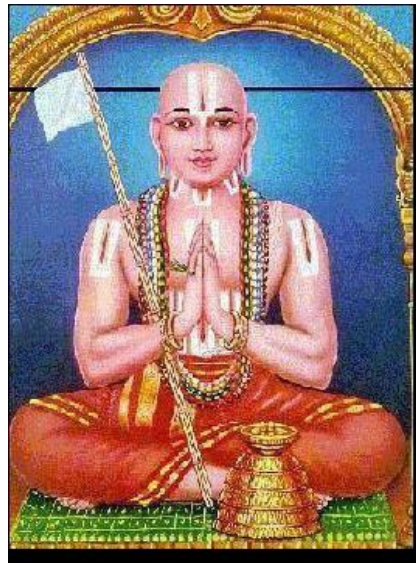
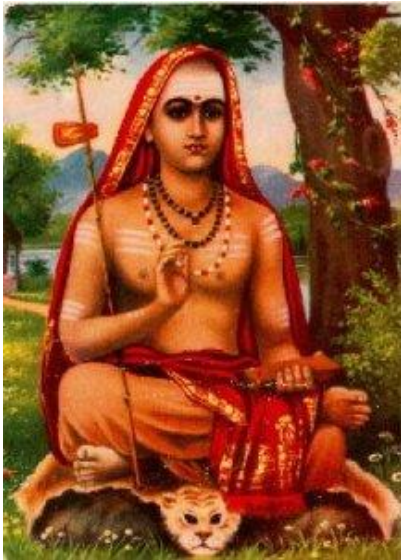


Sutra Period

- Six systems of Philosophy
 - Nyaya
 - Vaisesika
 - Samkhya
 - Yoga
 - Purva Mimasa
 - Uttara Mimamsa or Vedanta
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Scholarly Period (600 CE-1700 CE)

- Three great philosophers stand out during this period.
- They are Shankara, Ramanuja, and Madhva.



Thank you
