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Surendranath Dasgupta

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A HISTORY OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

BY THE LATE
SURENDRANATH DASGUPTA

VOLUME III

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To the

HON. SRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

who went through great sufferings and hardships all his life in the cause of the liberation of his countrymen, and who is still labouring with almost superhuman effort for the unification of the subcontinent of India, and who is working with steady devotion and faith for the establishment of peace at home and among the nations of the world, the foremost Indian who is piloting the progress of the country through troubled waters in the most hazardous period of India's history, this work is most respectfully dedicated as a tribute of personal gratefulness

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PREFACE

The second volume of this work was published as long ago as 1932. Among the many reasons which delayed the publication of this volume, one must count the excessive administrative and teaching work with which the writer is saddled; his continued illness; the regrettable failure of one eye through strenuous work, which often makes him depend on the assistance of others; and the long distance between the place of publication and Calcutta. The manuscript of the fourth volume is happily ready.

In writing the present volume the author has taken great trouble to secure manuscripts which would present a connected account of the development of theistic philosophy in the South. The texts that have been published are but few in number and the entire story cannot be told without constant reference to rare manuscripts from which alone the data can be collected. So far, no work has been written which could throw any light on the discovery and interpretation of a connected history of Vaiṣṇava thought. It would have been well if the Tamil and Telegu works could have been fruitfully utilized in tracing the history of Vaiṣṇavism, not only as it appeared in Sanskrit but also as it appeared in the vernaculars of the South. But the author limited himself as far as possible to Sanskrit data. This limitation was necessary for three reasons: first, the author was not master of the various vernaculars of South India; secondly, the inclusion and utilization of such data would have made the present book greatly exceed its intended scope; and thirdly, the inclusion of the data from the vernacular literature would not have contributed materially to the philosophical problems underlying the theistic speculations dealt with in this work. Looked at from the strictly philosophical point of view, some of the materials of the present book may be regarded as somewhat out of place. But, both in the present volume and the volume that will follow it, it will be impossible to ignore the religious pathology that is associated with the devotional philosophy which is so predominant in the South and which so much influenced the minds of the people not only in the Middle Ages but also in the recent past and is even now the most important element of Indian religions.

Philosophy in India includes not only morality but religion also. The most characteristic feature of religion is emotion or sentiment associated with a system of beliefs, and as such in the treatment of the dominant schools of philosophy that originated in South India one cannot help emphasizing the important pathological developments of the sentiment of devotion. The writer hopes, therefore, that he may be excused both by those who would not look for any emphasis on the aspect of *bhakti* or religious sentiment and also by those who demand an over-emphasis on the emotional aspect which forms the essence of the Vaiṣṇava religion. He has tried to steer a middle course in the interest of philosophy, which, however, in the schools of thought treated herein is so intimately interwoven with religious sentiment.

The writer has probably exceeded the scope of his treatment in dealing with the Ārvārs, whose writings are in Tamil, but there also he felt that without referring to the nature of the devotional philosophy of the Ārvārs the treatment of the philosophy of Rāmānuja and his followers would be historically defective. But though the original materials for a study of the Ārvārs are in Tamil, yet fortunately Sanskrit translations of these writings either in manuscript or in published form are available, on which are almost wholly based the accounts given here of these Tamil writers.

The treatment of the Pañcarātra literature offered some difficulty, as most of these works are still unpublished; but fortunately a large volume of this literature was secured by the present writer in manuscript. Excepting Schrader's work, nothing of any importance has been written on the Pañcarātra School. Though there are translations of the *bhāṣya* of Rāmānuja, there has been no treatment of his philosophy as a whole in relation to other great philosophers of his School. Practically nothing has appeared regarding the philosophy of the great thinkers of the Rāmānuja School, such as Veṅkaṭa, Meghanādāri and others, most of whose works are still unpublished. Nothing has also been written regarding Vijñānabhikṣu's philosophy, and though Nimbārka's *bhāṣya* has been translated, no systematic account has yet appeared of Nimbārka in relation to his followers. The writer had thus to depend almost wholly on a very large mass of published and unpublished manuscript literature in his interpretation and chronological investigations, which are largely based upon internal evidence;

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though, of course, he has always tried to utilize whatever articles and papers appeared on the subject. The subjects treated are vast and it is for the scholarly reader to judge whether any success has been attained in spite of the imperfections which may have crept in.

Though the monotheistic speculations and the importance of the doctrine of devotion can be traced even to some of the Ṛg-veda hymns and the earlier religious literature such as the *Gītā* and the *Mahābhārata* and the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, yet it is in the traditional songs of the Āṛvārs and the later South Indian philosophical writers, beginning from Yāmuna and Rāmānuja, that we find a special emphasis on our emotional relation with God. This emotional relation of devotion or *bhakti* differentiated itself in many forms in the experiences and the writings of various Vaiṣṇava authors and saints. It is mainly to the study of these forms as associated with their philosophical perspectives that the present and the succeeding volumes have been devoted. From this point of view, the present and the fourth volumes may be regarded as the philosophy of theism in India, and this will be partly continued in the treatment of Śaiva and Śākta theism of various forms. The fourth volume will deal with the philosophy of Madhva and his followers in their bitter relation with the monistic thought of Śaṅkara and his followers. It will also deal with the theistic philosophy of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* and the theistic philosophy of Vallabha and the followers of Śrī Caitanya. Among the theistic philosophers the followers of Madhva, Jayatīrtha and Vyāsātīrtha occupied a great place as subtle thinkers and dialecticians. In the fifth volume, apart from the different schools of Śaiva and Śākta thinkers, the Tantras, the philosophy, of grammar, of Hindu Aesthetics, and of Hindu Law will be dealt with. It is thus expected that with the completion of the fifth volume the writer will have completed his survey of Hindu thought so far as it appeared in the Sanskrit language and thus finish what was begun more than twenty years ago.

A chapter on the *Cārvāka* materialists has been added as an appendix, since their treatment in the first volume was practically neglected.

The writer has a deep debt of gratitude to discharge to Dr F. W. Thomas—the late Boden Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford, and a highly esteemed friend of his who, in spite of his various activities,

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pressure of work and old age, has been a true *jñānabandhu* to the author, helping him with the manuscript and the proofs, and offering him valuable suggestions as regards orthography, punctuation and idiomatic usage. Without this continued assistance the imperfections of the present work would have been much more numerous. The author is specially grateful to his wife, Dr Mrs Surama Dasgupta, Śāstrī, M.A., Ph.D. (Cal. et Cantab.) for the continued assistance that he received from her in the writing of this book and also in reading a large mass of manuscripts for the preparation of the work. Considering the author's great handicap in having only one sound eye it would have been impossible for him to complete the book without this assistance. He is also grateful to Dr Satindra Kumar Mukherjee, M.A., Ph.D., for the help that he received from him from time to time.

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