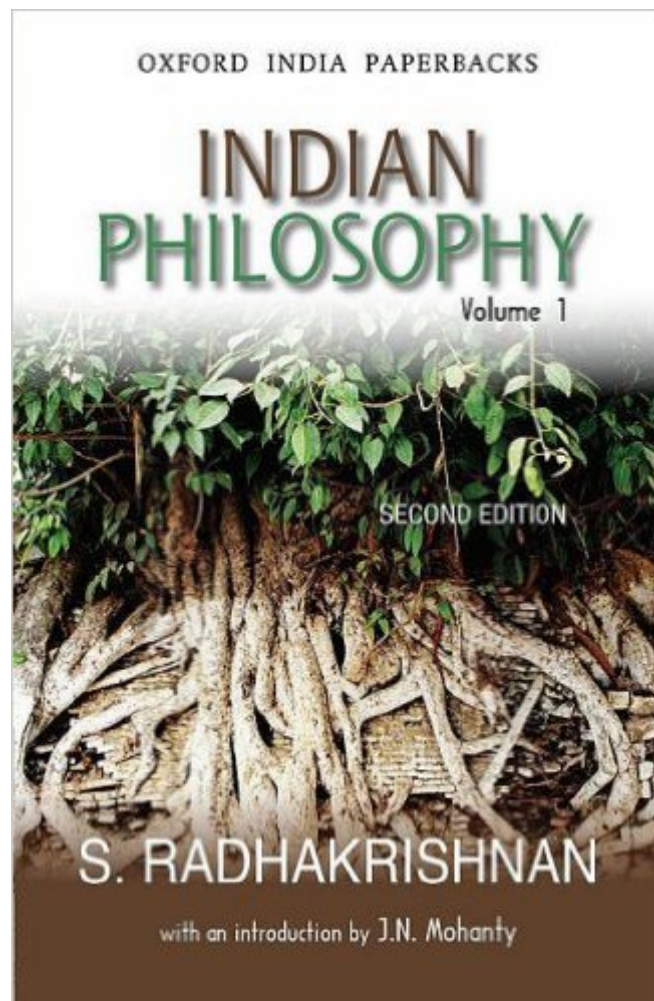


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Indian Philosophy: Volume I: With An Introduction By J.N. Mohanty (Oxford India Collection) (Oxford India Collection (Paperback))



Synopsis

This classic work is a general introduction to Indian philosophy that covers the Vedic and Epic periods, including expositions on the hymns of the Rig Veda, the Upanisads, Jainism, Buddhism and the theism of the Bhagvadgita. Long acknowledged as a classic, this pioneering survey of Indian thought charts a fascinating course through an intricate history. From the Rig Veda to Ramanuja, Radhakrishnan traces the development of Indian philosophy as a single tradition of thought through the ages. The author showcases ancient philosophical texts and relates them to contemporary issues of philosophy and religion. This second edition with a new Introduction by eminent philosopher J.N. Mohanty, highlights the continuing relevance of the work and the philosophic tradition it represents.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An acknowledged scholar, S.Radhakrishnan, in this classic holds you by hand and takes you through the myriad hues of Indian Philosophy. The result is an honest and at times brutal appraisal of the works of thinkers of the bygone era. Radhakrishnan's consummate ease with the subject comes out in no uncertain terms. The book left me spell bound and answered questions which have been plaguing me for some time now. The book with its well laid out chapters is full of clarity and is scholarly. To start off, His evaluation of the Vedas is clinical - "The religion of Vedas certainly more joyous, but it was a lower form of religion where thought never penetrated beneath the husk of things." "Men's relations with the gods were mechanical, a question of give and take, profit and

loss."He completely adores the Upanishads and comes out as one on home turf when dealing with them. He never misses an opportunity to praise them profusely. It is worth quoting the famous Deussen lines on Upanishads here - "but one thing we may assert with confidence - whatever new and unwonted paths the philosophy of the future may strike out, this principle will remain permanently unshaken, and from it no deviation can possibly take place." You can see him getting despondent in the last section of the chapter titled 'Philosophy of the Upanishads'. To quote him from there "But the true was overwhelmed by the false".Jaina logic and its strong ethical system stand out.

Scholarly and immense, but in accessible Victorian prose. I'm not surprised it's remained the standard text for so long - who would now even begin to attempt to collate the whole of a civilisation's philosophy! Simultaneously ambitious and sprawling, complete and partial, disciplined and wayward, pedantic and phantastic, objective and personal, this worthy tome is a gathering and a marker. It serves well as fundamental introduction to the avenues of understanding that the mode of 'Indian' experience must go down to achieve wisdom. Some prior interest in Indian philosophy - and therefore some patience - is presumed even in its Victorian compendiousness. My interest in reading often depended on which parts I found most pertinent. The first hundred pages or so go over the polytheism/henotheism of the Veda, and there is some accounting of the various Hindu deities etc. I was happier once we got to the Upanishads and, from there, the on-going reconfigurations and considerations of the absolute that is the contribution of India to world philosophy - the various formulations of the ground that have been overlooked [or one of which has been posited thoughtlessly as absolute and primary] by the narrower, religiously influenced 'western' tradition. But for such an apparently comprehensive tome, it does sometimes feel sketchy. The book is not self-contained. Radhakrishnan frequently refers to things he himself hasn't yet described within his own text: he references sunyata without having explained what that might be. In fact, he steers clear of an exposition of the way in which Buddhism might be fundamentally different to Hinduism. It increasingly appears, in the course of his writing, that Radhakrishnan is not entirely self-effacing.

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