

What is indian philosophy is there indian philosophy

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Indian Philosophy This text will provide a clear summary of what Indian philosophy is. Additionally, I will argue that Indian philosophy exists. First, step is to define Indian philosophy by looking at the epistemology, linguistics, high standard of logic and metaphysics that formed the basis of the various different Indian philosophical systems. Indian philosophy is the philosophical speculations of all ancient and modern thinkers (Radhakrishnan 67). They include Hindus, atheists, theists or non-Hindus. In Indian philosophy, the main schools of thought are divided into two: the orthodox and non-orthodox schools. The orthodox schools include Mimamsa, Nyaya, Sankhya, Vaiseshika. The unorthodox schools are comprised of Buddhism and Abhidharma (Dasgupta 38). Further, Indian philosophy also incorporates the sceptical and materialist philosophies of Carvaka in addition to the religious schools of Jainism. Focus will be centred on the vigorous debates over argumentative strategies and conceptual analysis by which the Indian philosophical schools presented their philosophical positions, defended themselves against attacks from other philosophical schools and in turn mounted their own attacks. By analysing Indian philosophy this way demonstrates its existence and the way vital issues of philosophy have been addressed in India.

All Indian school systems of thought agreed about reincarnation and karma (Dasgupta 45). Karma is a synonym for actions. They believed that individuals will experience consequences for their evil or good actions (fruits of karma). However, when the consequences "fruits of karma" cannot be experienced in a person's present life, then he or she must die and be born again in order to experience them. In addition, apart from Buddhism, the

Indian schools of thought agreed on the presence or existence of a permanent soul (Radhakrishnan 67). The soul had to go through some kind of purification for it to exist permanently. However, the thought on this differed from one school to another. The Indian schools of thought implied that ethically, desires and passions were to be put under check while no form of life was supposed to be harmed.

Materialists and atheists were very common in India. As such, the schools of thought had to respond to non-believers arguments repeatedly. The materialist system was referred to as Lokayata. This is translated to mean, “that which is found among humans or people in general”. The scepticism of Lokayata about theology, reincarnation, and karma stemmed from its epistemology (Radhakrishnan 87). This school of thought implied that the only source of knowledge is perception. Therefore, all other sources for example, inference and testimony are unreliable. Religious rituals contained no significant insight and were therefore useless. However, critics of Lokayata often described its ethics as being hedonistic, egoistic, and even nihilistic.

To explain the existence of Indian philosophy, it is vital to try to examine briefly some of the major schools of thought of Indian philosophy. Western philosophical schools tended to rise and fall while the Indian philosophical schools competed against one another for centuries. Indians had vast conceptions about the nature of time and space. The ancient Indians did not view philosophy as a disinterested exploration of nature. Rather, philosophy was vital for daily life in addition to determining one’s destiny. As such, it was a practical matter.

The most interesting dialogue is perhaps one between an orthodox believer and a materialist. It was recorded in the Payasi Suttanta (6th century B. C). In this dialogue, payasi (a materialist) denies reincarnation, dualism and karma. Kassapa (an orthodox thinker) challenged Payasi to prove that those elements do not exist. Payasi wondered why holy men who believe in karma, reincarnation and dualism do not kill themselves because they believe life after death is much better. To this, Kassapa replies that good people have a reason and purpose in this world, which Payasi cannot comprehend because he is foolish. I think this is enough to illustrate that Indian philosophy does exist and is real.

Works cited

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