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DAVID E. COOPER

**WORLD
PHILOSOPHIES**
AN HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION
Second Edition



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Preface to the Second Edition

Among the reasons I wrote this book, first published in 1996, was a sense – communicated, for example, by several of my own students – that the appetite for philosophy of many people was becoming increasingly unsatisfied by the relatively meagre diet provided in supposedly ‘general’ histories of the subject. Not only did these books virtually ignore non-Western contributions, but the range of Western contributions they covered was a narrow one. To judge by the outpouring, over the last five years, of books that help to redress this situation, my impression of an appetite for a richer diet was accurate. There is now a Blackwell *Companion to World Philosophies*; histories of ‘world philosophy’ by such distinguished authors as Rom Harré and Ninian Smart have appeared; and the new *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward Craig, provides copious coverage of traditions and thinkers barely acknowledged by its predecessors. Had my impression not been accurate, there would, I suppose, have been no call for a new, second edition of my own book. Gratifyingly, there has been such a call.

Preparation of a second edition affords me the opportunity to make corrections and amendments, sometimes in the light of publications not originally available to me and now listed in an expanded bibliography. It also allows me to include some additional material. I am grateful to students, friends and the publisher’s advisers for indicating gaps that might be filled. Some suggestions for further material, frankly, failed to take sufficient heed of the self-imposed limits on the scope of the book which I explain in chapter 1. Other suggestions were perfectly apposite and I can only regret the impossibility of taking all of them up in a book that I and my publisher want to remain a single-volume work. I have contented myself with adding new sections or subsections on an important school of Indian philosophy (ch. 2, sect. 2), a significant Persian development in Islamic thought (ch. 6, sect. 4), and recent feminist and environmental philosophy (ch. 10, sect. 5).

In the Acknowledgements of the original edition, I remarked that no one should be rash enough to write a history of world philosophies – ones from