

VIEWS OF OTHER FAITHS

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The important philosophies and religions or faiths prevalent in the world at the present time are Buddhism, Sháunkara philosophy, Pátainjala Philosophy, Sámkhya Philosophy, Árya Samáj, Marxism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. These are arranged into the following groups due to their similarities, and their outstanding principles and beliefs are discussed together.

1. **Buddhism and Sháunkara Philosophy**
2. **Pátainjala Philosophy and Kápil Sámkhya Philosophy**
3. **Árya Samája**
4. **Marxism**

Besides these there are the Semitic faiths comprising Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

1. Buddhism and Sháunkara Philosophy

All Ástika or theistic Indian philosophies unanimously believe that Átman or unit consciousness is a continuous flow of Jinána or knowledge. This is called Vijnána in Páli. There is a continuous flow of Jinána, or in other words Jinána itself is a flow (Praváha). Every object in the universe has its own flow and wave or dynamic force. According to Yoga philosophy Paramátman or Supreme Consciousness is an infinite flow of Jinána.

**Ekam' jinánam nityamádantashúnyam
Nányat kimcit varttate vastu satyam;
Tayor bhedo'smin indriyopádhiná vae
Jinánasyá yam bhásate nanyathaeva.
–Shiva Samhitá**

Buddha did not use the word *Átman*, hence there was a difference of opinion among the Bhikkhus or Buddhist monks after his death. Three conferences were held to compile the Tripitaka or Buddhist scriptures and as a result the Tripitáka was compiled in three parts in Páli – Vinaya Pitáka or the practical side, Suttapitaka or the theoretical side and Abhidhamma Pitaka or the philosophical side.

All of these parts combined together were known as the Tripitaka and were called the Buddhist scriptures. The Bhikkhus who patronized or supported the Sannyása Mára or the path of renunciation were not prepared to accept anything more than what was laid down in the Tripitaka, and hence they were called Sthaviravádii or Theravádii, the southern school of Buddhism. Those who were influenced by the Nyáya school of philosophy were called Mahásámghika or the northern school of Buddhism.

The word Páli originated from Pallii which means “rural”, rustic or unsophisticated. As Buddha preached in the language of common people, Hindu scholars called his language Bhákhá. Páli was also known as Páli Bhásha. The common people could not follow Samáskṛta which was the language of scholars only.

Later on the Mahásámghikas called themselves Maháyánii and they called the Sthaviravádiis Hiinayániis. But the Hiinayániis called themselves Theravádii. In India there was no state backing for Hiinayániis except at the time of the rulers Kaniska, and Vasiska, and hence the Hiinayána did not flourish. The Maháyána had state backing so it naturally had a larger number of followers. The philosophy of the Hiinayániis was preached in Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Java and Borneo, etc., whereas the philosophy of the Maháyániis was propagated in India, Siberia, Japan Tibet, etc.

There are four kinds of philosophical doctrines among the Maháyániis. The reason for this difference of opinion is *Átman* and its object. Buddha used the word “Attá” in Páli for *Átman*. The word Attá is also used in place of “Self”. The Bhikkhus could not understand the sense in which Buddha used the word Attá.

CÁRVÁKA

At the time of Buddha, Nástika Váda or non-belief in God was dominant. Maharási Ajita Keshakamballi was the scholar of the Nástiká Váda. Most of

the books on Nástikyaváda were written in incomprehensible language and so its propagation was not very widespread. Ajita Keshakambalii followed Cárváka who had a materialistic philosophy. The Cárváka school of philosophy believes in Caturbhúta or the four fundamental factors. This is also known as Dehátmaváda, that is, the belief that the body is everything and that the soul is identified with the body. This philosophy accepts Caturbhúta, namely earth, water, fire and air or Ksíti, ap, tejas and marut respectively. According to Cárváka, Caetanya or Conscious came into existence by the combination of the four bhútas in the same way as the mixing of lime and catechu produces a red colour. According to Cárváka, Painabhúta or the fifth factor is formed in this way and does not actually exist. Cárváka philosophy does not believe in Átman, Paramátman and the Vedas and hence Cárváka was termed Nástika, since those who do not believe in Átman, Paramátman or the Vedas are called Nástika (atheist).

Púrva Mimámsá school of philosophy also does not admit the existence of Paramátman. Kapila, the propounder of the Sámkhya philosophy, accepted Átman and the Vedas, but he did not believe in Paramátman. The Śádarshana or the six major school of theistic Indian Philosophy believe in the Vedas. The following are the six schools of philosophy.

1. Kapila Sámkhya which accepts the existence of Prakrti and the Vedas but does not accept Paramátman.
2. Pátainjala Sámkhya which believes in innumerable Puruśas and one Prakrti. The creator of the universe according to this school cannot be a Mukta Puruśa or a liberated being.
3. Gaotama Nyáya philosophy.
4. Kańáda's Nyáya philosophy or Vaesheśika.
5. Jaemini's Púrva Miimámsá or early Miimámsá philosophy which believes in Kriyákanda or the doctrine of action. Those who believe in this school accept the existence of heaven and hell.
6. Uttára Miimámsá or later Miimámsá philosophy propounded by Vádráyaná Vyása believes in Brahma and the vedas but does not believe

in Átman and Jagat or the world. This philosophy is commonly known as Vedanta philosophy.

The Buddhist philosophy believes in all the five bhútas or fundamental factors while Cárváka believes in Caturbhúta or four fundamental factors. Baoddha Darshana and Cárváka philosophy do come under the purview of Śádadarshana, and neither of them believe in the Vedas. They are Atheistic philosophies.

Pramána or validity is of three kinds, that is, Pratyakśa or direct knowledge, anumána or inference and ágama or authority. Cárváka accepts only pratyakśa as pramána.

Pratyakśaeka pramánaváditayá anumánáde
Ranaranaungiikáreña prámányábhávát.

Buddha accepts karmaphala or the reactions of actions, whereas Cárváka does not.

Yávajjivamsukham jivam násti mrtyuragocarah.
Yávajjivet sukham jivet Rnamkrtá [[ghrtam]] pivet.

Na svargo na pavargo vá naevátma páralaokikam.
Bhasmiibhútasya dehasya purnarágamanam kutah.

There is another aspect of Cárváka philosophy, Dehaparińámáváda.

Caturbhyokhalu bhútebhyo caetanyamupajáyate.
Kińvádibhyoh sametebhyo dravyebhyo madashaktivat.

In this respect Buddhist philosophy is superior to Cárváka philosophy. Buddha says, Attá hi attánám náthah.

BUDDHISM

Why did India accept Buddhism? There are various reasons for this and the main ones are as follows. First, the scholars of that time never preached philosophy to the common people. They hated the language of the common people and called it Bhákhá. Secondly, at that time there was no

Tattvadarshii or eminent philosopher. Thirdly, the people in general were not ready to accept the pandits or scholars. Fourthly, the Ácáryas of that age, Shrii Sainjaya and Shrii Gayá Kashyapa, could not convince Buddha. All these factors led to the wide propagation and acceptance of Buddhism.

Buddhism believes in rebirth and transmigration of souls, so the question arises: Who is reborn if there is no Átman? This question became a point of controversy among the Bhikkus (monks) and later among the Maháyánii scholars.

Buddhism believes in Karmaphala or the reaction of actions. If karmaphala is accepted, the question arises: who performs karma or action and who gets the karmaphala? Therefore, the existence of Átman has got to be recognized.

Towards the end of Buddha's life some of his disciples asked Buddha about the existence of God. They asked two questions: "Does God exist?" and "Is it a fact that God does not exist?" In reply to both questions Buddha remained silent. As Buddha remained silent to both the questions some of his disciples interpreted this to mean that there is no God. Another section of disciples understood that God exists. Yet a third section came forward with the interpretation that there is God, but God is beyond the expression of "Asti" and "násti" or "is" and "is not"; that is, God's existence is inexplicable. Actually God is supramental.

Yato váco nivartante aprápya manasásaha,
Ánandam brahmano vidvá má vibheti kutahcanah.

There are four sections in Buddhist philosophy – Pratyakśa Váhya Vastuváda or Soutántrika Darshana, Anumeya Váhya-vastuváda or Vaebháśika Darshana, Sarvashúnyaváda or Mádhyamika Darshana and Kśáñika Vijnánavá da or Baoddha Yogácára.

Pratyakśa Váhya-vastuváda accepts the universe as infinite, that is, anádii and ananta or beginningless and infinite when Caetanya or Consciousness becomes álayiibhúta or objectivated then it becomes jinána. The outer world is transitory but due to rapid movement (Saincara or Prati-saincara : extroversion or introversion) it appears to exist constantly. (According to Hindu philosophy Saincara means "to go away from Brahma" and Pratisaincara means "to come near to Brahma," that is Saincara means the

Vikarśanii Shakti of Brahma and Prati-saincara means the Ákarśanii Shakti of Brahma).

Anumeyaváhya Vastuváda accepts the waves of Jinána as a permanent entity (sattá). There is the external world but the world will never be realized. When the waves of consciousness (Jinána) come, the mind takes a form according to the Samśkáras or potential reactions of past actions of the Citta or mental plate. Formations created in the mind are taken to be Satya or veracity. When Jinána comes in contact with Álambana or desideratum, Citta takes a form: it takes the outward álambana as the object realized.

Sarvashúnyaváda is also called Mádhyamika Darshana and was propounded by Shriinágárjuna. He did not accept the páincabhaotika world or the world of the five fundamental factors. The external world which we see is Máyá or illusion. This philosophy is similar to Sháunkara's philosophy, Brahma Satyam jagatmithyá. According to Sháunkara the universe has been created out of nothing and is like a dream, nothing more. Bhává i.e. something has been created out of Abhává i.e. nothing. This school of philosophy accepts only the present and ignores the past and the future. It also says that the universe will merge into nothing.

Kśańika-vijinávada does not admit the physical world: here everything is internal. Even álambana is internal. Whatever is seen in this physical world is pratikriyá or the outer projection of internal álambana. Átman is the collection of the "I" feelings. It is not a continuous flow but appears to be so on account of the quick succession of its creation and destruction.

During the age of Bhagaván Sháunkarácárya there was no outstanding philosopher (tattvadraśta) among the Buddhists. Among different sections of the Buddhist schools of philosophy a serious dispute was going on. At that time Shrii Manadana Mishra was the only scholar who believed in Sarva Shúnyaváda or complete nihilism and he was also a Kriyá Kándii or follower of the path of action. He debated with Sháunkarácárya and was defeated.

According to Buddhist philosophy there are four noble truths (Satya) which are called Caturajja satya. They are as follows:

Duhkha or sorrow

Kárańa of duhkha or the cause of sorrow

Nivrtti of duhkha or the cessation of sorrow

Upáya of dukkha nivritti or the means of the cessation of sorrow.

The Vikrti or distortion of the Duhkhaváda or the school of pessimism became Atisukhaváda or ultra-hedonism. Atisukhaváda was prevalent in Bengal, Assam and Tibet.

According to Buddhism, dukkha is Árya Satya or the absolute truth. This is a wrong interpretation as it is only the Mánas or mind which experiences dukha. Dukha can thus be only a relative truth but it cannot be an absolute truth

SHÁUNKARA PHILOSOPHY

Sháunlarácárya was a Shaeva Tántrika or a practitioner of Tantra who followed Shiva, and that is why he did not go against Tantraváda or the doctrine of Tantra. He believed in Nirguña Brahma or the non-qualified Supreme Entity only. His theories to some extent fall in line with the theories of the Baoddha Shuñyaváda or the Buddhist nihilists. He did not believe in the existence of jagat or the physical world. He accepted Guñánvita Máyaváda or the doctrine of qualified illusion. Due to his influence Buddhist Tantra disappeared. In Hindu Tantra, gods and goddesses still remained. Even today the common people worship the goddesses of Buddhist Tantra like Tárá, Manasá (the goddess of snakes) Shiitalá, Bárahi etc. out of devotion.

Shúnyaváda was very influential during the time Shrii Sháunlarácárya preached. Shrii Sháunlarácárya accepted Uttára Miimámsá as later Miimámsá philosophy propounded by Shrii Vádaráyana Vyása.

Shrii Sháunlarácárya discussed the following subjects with Buddhist philosophers. The Shúnyavádiis said that the universe came out of nothing and will go into nothing, that everything is a dream. This was questioned by Sháunkara who said that even if the universe is nothing or a dreamland, there should be someone who witnessed the dream. The Shúnyavádiis replied that there was no dreamer. The universe is an illusion just as a rope mistaken for a snake is an illusion. Sháunkara said, that could not be possible. The Shúnyavádiis replied that this could only be understood by Sádhaná while Sháunkara said that it was not possible to have a dream without a dreamer. If

the universe is an illusion like mistaking a rope for a snake, there had to be something like a rope which could be mistaken for the universe. Without a rope it would be impossible to mistake it for a snake. Besides this there must be a person to make the mistake. Similarly, there must be someone to experience the illusion of the universe. This means that there must be some other entity to experience it. Mádhyamika said that nothing does not mean actually nothing (Shúnya). What you call Brahma we call nothing. So the illusion of the universe is Brahma. That is,

**Yathá shúnyavádinám shúnyam
Brahma Brahmaividámstathá.**

Sháunkara replied that this means that the one who sees and the object which is seen are both illusion. Where there is no one to see, who will mistake the rope for snake? The Shunyavadiis could not give any explanation for this. The Kshanikavadiis – those who believed in the doctrine of transience – explanation of Sháunkara’s questions was that the illusion is always Kśanika or transient. Sháunkara’s point was that he believed that Brahma was anádi and ananta but that Kśána comes in a moment and disappears the very next moment. Thus where does the Kśanika entity come from? Something must exist between the span of creation and the span destruction. The Kśanikavadiis replied that it is destroyed with the creation, but Sháunkara replied that this shows that there is no existence. The Kśanikavadiis felt defeated but they still replied that existence was negligible. This was not a satisfactory explanation. The scholars of the Pratyakśa Váhyavastuváda and Anumeya Váhyavastuváda argued for their philosophies but no one could withstand that questioning of Shamkaracarya, hence all the four sections of Buddhism were defeated by Shrii Sháunkara . On defeat they made friends with Shrii Sháunkara and accepted Kúlikuńdalini Tattva or the practice of raising the serpentine power in human beings, and as a result Baoddha Yogácára came into existence.

There are several defects in Sháunkara’s philosophy. According to Sháunkara the universe is based on a fixed object by the illusion of Máya, which is called Brahma. There is an illusion of a snake for a rope. Now the question arises, who has the illusion of a snake? One who already knows about snakes. If there is an illusion of the universe for Brahma it means that the real universe is somewhere else. Thus the theory Brahma satyam jagatmithya is defective. This is a wrong interpretation given by Sháunkara .

The Buddhists did not question it and hence it was accepted at the time.

Sháunkara does not believe in jiiva and jagat . Thus the question arises, for what reason does the illusion exist?

Astákulácaláh saptasamudráh
Brahmapurandara dinakara rudrah.
Na tvam ná ham ná yam lokah
Vyarthah kimartham kriyate shokah.

The universe has not been created and hence there is no Saguña Brahma or Qualified Supreme Entity. Sháunkara believed only in Nirguña Brahma or the non-qualified Supreme entity. Sháunkara said that the universe is like a dream and the dreamer is also Brahma, as he did not believe in jiiva. When Brahma is Nirguña how could Sháunkara see , as seeing is a quality? But this was also forgotten by Shamkara.

Again, according to Sháunkara's philosophy what is seen and experienced is all due to the influence of Máyá. This means Máyá is also an entity which Advaitavada or monism cannot accept.

Sháunkara's philosophy believes in the necessity of sádhaná, but who will perform the Sádhaná when the existence of jiiva is not accepted?

When Brahma is anádi and ananta, why should Brahma be influenced by Máyá? Secondly, when the universe is created by the influence of Máyá, how is it that Brahma remains Nirguna? Máyá is a greater force than Brahma as it influences Brahma!

In addition, Sháunkara says that there is nothing exactly like Máyá as it is an illusion. A person in the desert sees water, houses, and trees etc. from a distance but there is actually nothing. In the absence of Jinána the person experiences an illusion. When there is Vikára or distortion in Brahma, how can the universe be an illusion?

Sháunkara says where there is Brahma there is Máyá. Then the question arises, is Máyá nothing? If there is no Máyá, how can it influence Brahma? To overcome this Sháunkara says that it is not even nothing . It is inexplicable (anirvacaniiya). Again the question arises as to who created Máyá if Brahma

did not create it. Then Maya becomes Saguna Brahma.

Shankara was able to defeat Buddhist philosophers only by a display of words. The Maya of Shankara is not the Prakrti of Ananda Marga. One of the great critics of Shankara philosophy was Jayanta Bhatta, the propounder Nyaya Manjari philosophy.

2. KAPIL SAMKHYA AND PATAINJALA YOGA

The common features of these two philosophies include the following:

(1) Both believe in the existence of many Puruas.

(2) Both believe that the universe is created by Prakrti for the satisfaction of these Puruas. This is not logical as no bhoga or satisfaction is possible without the existence of mind. Puruas do not have mind and they cannot be satisfied by the creation of the universe by Prakrti.

(3) Both believe that Prakrti is not within Purua but is a separate Entity. This is also illogical since Prakrti is only energy or the shakti of Purua, and like the dahika shakti or burning facility of agni or fire, it cannot be a separate entity. These philosophies are called Dvaetavadii or dualistic because they believe in two separate entities of Purua and Prakrti.

(4) In Samkhya there is no god and thus it is called Niriishwaravada or atheism, while Patainjala philosophy believes in God but does not believe in Brahma. This is therefore called Seshvaravada or theism.

(5) Idol worship is supported by both these philosophies.

3. ARYA SAMAJA

(1) It believes that jiiva, jagat and Brahma are all anadi. This only shows that jiiva and jagat do not need any further entity like Brahma and all the three alike are anadi. This is unacceptable as this leaves no necessity for sadhana or spiritual practice which is the Dharma or essential duty of every jiiva or human being. This also does not explain the reason for action and progress in the universe.

(2) It believes in yajinas or sacrifices not as karma or action but as a form of worship. Yajina means karma but in Árya Samája it means offering to agni or fire in a particular form. There is no rational meaning in performing such Yajinas.

(3) They also believe in pralaya or dissolution which is also irrational, since jīva and jagat are anádi and as such there is no place for pralaya.

4. MARXISM

(1) It believes in equality between human beings which is only theoretical and not possible in practice because no two individuals are alike, hence they cannot be equal.

(2) This faith finds its field in the exploitation of poverty and hence it can only thrive in poverty-stricken areas.

(3) It has no tolerance for other religions or organizations.

(4) Its goal is purely imaginary equality.

(5) This faith exists on violence only.

BESIDES THESE, THE FOLLOWING THREE GROUPS BELONG TO THE SEMITIC FAITH –

5. MUSLIMS,

6. CHRISTIANS AND

7. JEWS.

SEMITEIC FAITH

The following three religions are of this Faith :--

1. Muslim
2. Christian and
3. Jews

COMMON FEATURES

1. Social structure of Muslims and Jews is similar while that of the Christians is slightly different.
2. Their scriptures are written in old Arabic and its sister language Hebrew.
3. None of these religions have any tolerance for others.
4. There is no philosophy in these and their way of thinking is only theological.
5. Scriptures of these are claimed by their followers as God's own words and hence are unquestionable.
6. Satan is a common fear in all the three.
7. The belief in Eternal Hell and Eternal Heaven is a common feature.
8. None of them believe in transmigration of soul. Only Protestants are more liberal in this respect in their outlook.
9. They all believe that sins can be excused by the Prophet or Paigambar or Avataara.
10. All the three religions are based on faith that their scriptures cannot be questioned. The supporters are fanatics and have no tolerance for others.

11. The source of existence of all the three religions is exploitation of the fear complex of Eternal Hell.

DISCUSSION OF THE BELIEF OF THIS FAITH

- 1. It is said that the scriptures are God's own words. They also believe that God is shapeless. If God is shapeless how could HE have a vocal chord which has to have a particular shape and without which speaking is not possible. Then, either the God is not shapeless and has a shape or He could not speak and hence either their God is not shapeless or their scriptures are not God's own words.**
- 2. The reason and purpose for which God created the universe or world is not clear in these religions. The only purpose which can be assigned to creation of world according to these is that man should worship God. But they also say that God is merciful. If God is merciful why should HE want men to worship or praise HIM before giving HIS blessings. This is only lowering God to the position of a common man and hence is not desirable.**
- 3. Christ is said to be son of God. How can God have a son when He is shapeless and formless.**

This lacks in logical justification.

- 4. All these believe in the existence of Satan and that Satan tries to undo whatever God creates. Thus Satan is something other than God and is as powerful as God Himself. According to them there are two powers, one that of God and the other that of Satan. Hence God is not all powerful and has an equally powerful enemy in Satan and Ghosts or evil spirits. Existence of separate Satan is illogical.**
- 5. Satan's existence is admitted before the beginning of creation. That is Satan is not created by God. Satan is a negative force and hence there are two Gods -- one good and the other bad. They say that God is omnipresent, but how could God be present where Satan is present? Hence, the two beliefs are self-contradictory.**
- 6. According to the scriptures of the faith one must pray and one who does not pray goes to Eternal Hell i.e. he can never get out of the hell. This is illogical as nowhere it can be admitted that an individual's fate is sealed for ever.**
- 7. They believe that God created world but they have not explained from what materials the world was created. Thus God and Creation are**

two different things. If world is not part of God then it could be part of Satan but as it does not accept Satan as the nucleus of its physical, psychic or spiritual orbit, it is clear that it is not a part of Satan. Then there is a third thing out of which it was created. This means that there were three Gods before creation. One the real God, the second Satan and the third out of which the Universe was created.

8. The source of their existence is the common belief in the Eternal Hell and it is exploitation of this fear, that these religions are able to exist.

Therefore, it is clear that Islam, Christianity and Zionism are Faiths and not Philosophies.