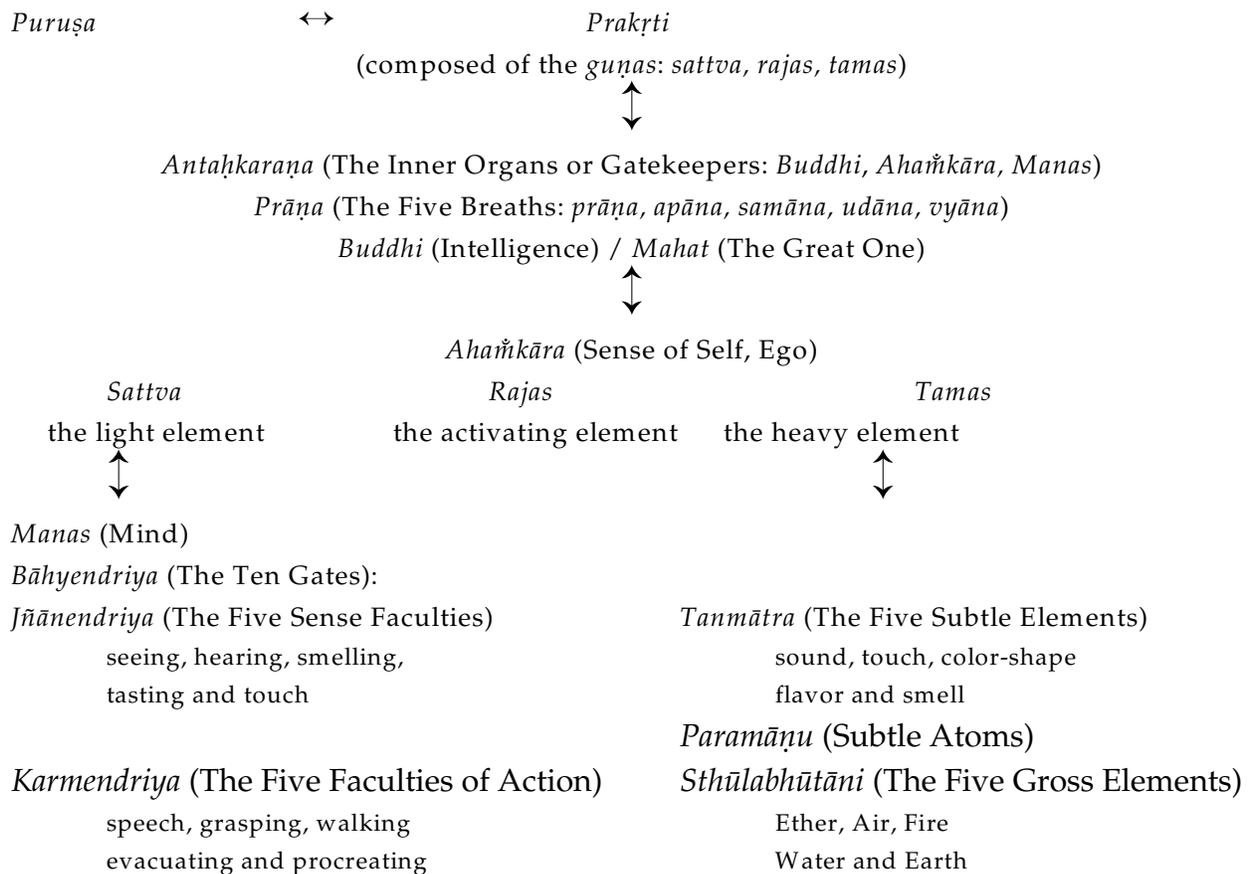


THE ORTHODOX DARSHANAS

<p>वेदान्त vedānta <i>Vedanta</i></p>	<p>The word <i>Vedanta</i> simply means “the end or final aim of the Veda.” The Vedanta is the most important of the orthodox darshanas as it is the most widely accepted view. The <i>Vedanta</i> philosophers were highly critical of the realistic, dualistic, and pluralistic conclusions of the other orthodox systems, which they felt to be inconsistent with the Upaniṣadic teaching concerning the unity of reality and the identity of self with reality. The most important of the <i>Vedanta</i> philosophers was Shankara (788-820 C.E.).</p>
<p>पूर्व मीमांसा pūrva mīmāṃsā <i>Purva Mimamsa</i></p>	<p>This darshana is solidly fundamentalist, holding to the doctrine that the only way to achieve liberation is to live according to <i>dharma</i> which can only be determined by following the injunctions of the sacred <i>Vedas</i>.</p>
<p>साँख्य sāṃkhya <i>Samkhya</i></p>	<p>This system is noted for its theory of evolution, which is accepted by many other Indian systems and its metaphysical dualism that conceives reality as composed of both <i>Spirit (Purusha)</i> and <i>Nature (Prakriti)</i>.</p>
<p>योग yoga <i>Yoga</i></p>	<p>The Yoga system founded by Patanjali (2nd century B.C.E.) is closely allied with the Samkhya philosophy, adopting its psychology and metaphysics. <i>Yoga</i>, according to Patanjali, is a practical discipline to attain liberation, through the control of the different elements of human nature, physical (<i>Prakriti</i>) and psychical (<i>Purusha</i>).</p>
<p>न्याय nyāya <i>Nyaya</i></p>	<p>This system of philosophy is an analytic type philosophy. The primary focus is on the nature of our <i>knowledge</i> of reality. The distinctive character of this system is its critical examination of the objects of knowledge through logical analysis. “<i>Nyaya</i>” literally means that by which the mind is led to a conclusion.</p>
<p>वैशेषिक vaiśeṣika <i>Vaisheshika</i></p>	<p>Also an analytic type of philosophy. Adopting the Nyāya analysis of the structure of human knowledge, Vaiśeṣika philosophy emphasized the nature of what it known, and came up with an atomistic picture of the structure of the universe. The system takes its name from “<i>viśeṣa</i>” which means “particularity.” The Vaiśeṣika thus emphasizes the significance of particulars or individuals, and is decidedly pluralistic.</p>

THE HETERODOX DARSHANAS

<p>चार्वाक cārvāka <i>Carvaka</i> (<i>Charvaka</i>)</p>	<p>This is the only materialistic system in Indian philosophy. This system assumed various forms of philosophical skepticism and logical fatalism. The Cārvāka is also known for its indifference to religious concerns. The principle doctrine holds that only this world exists, there is no beyond, no future life.</p>
<p>बुद्धमार्ग buddhamārga <i>Path of the Buddha</i> (<i>Buddhism</i>)</p>	<p>Buddhism is the system founded by the Buddha (c. 563 B.C.E. — 483 B.C.E.). The Buddha rejected the Upanishadic doctrine of an unchanging Self (<i>Atman</i>) and underlying reality (<i>Brahman</i>). For the Buddha, life is a stream of becoming. The central concern of Buddhism is the practical problem of suffering. The Four Noble Truths of Buddhism are (1) there is suffering, (2) suffering has a cause, (3) there is an end to suffering—<i>nirvana</i>, and (4) the eightfold path that lead to <i>nirvana</i>.</p>
<p>जैन jaina <i>Way of the</i> <i>Conquerors</i> (<i>Jainism</i>)</p>	<p>Jainism is the system founded by Mahāvira (599 B.C.E. — 527 B.C.E.). The Jain system is known for its atomistic metaphysics, its theory of knowledge, and its ascetic ethics. The whole universe is traced to the everlasting, uncreated, independent categories of <i>jiva</i> and <i>ajiva</i>, the conscious and nonconscious. Animate beings are composed of soul and body. The cause of the soul's embodiment is the presence of what is called karmic matter. The way to deliverance is through the three “jewels” of right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct. Right conduct consists of the five virtues, (1) <i>ahimsa</i> (non-violence), (2) truth-speaking, (3) non-stealing, (4) chastity, and (5) non-attachment. The Jainas were the first to make <i>ahimsa</i>, non-violence, into a rule of life.</p>
<p>तान्त्र tāntra <i>Tantra</i></p>	<p>There remains some controversy surrounding the origin of <i>Tantra</i>. Some say it developed out of <i>Mahayana Buddhism</i> and others claim it has roots stretching back to the <i>Vedas</i> and perhaps even to the Indus Valley culture. In any case, both Hindu and Buddhist Tantric traditions have developed. The main theme of Tantric teaching, whether Hindu or Buddhist, is that liberation can be achieved through channeling energy through the seven <i>chakras</i> of the psycho-physical body. Tantric practice focused on yogic exercises called <i>sadhanas</i>. Tantric practice sometimes involved exercises strictly forbidden by orthodox teaching.</p>

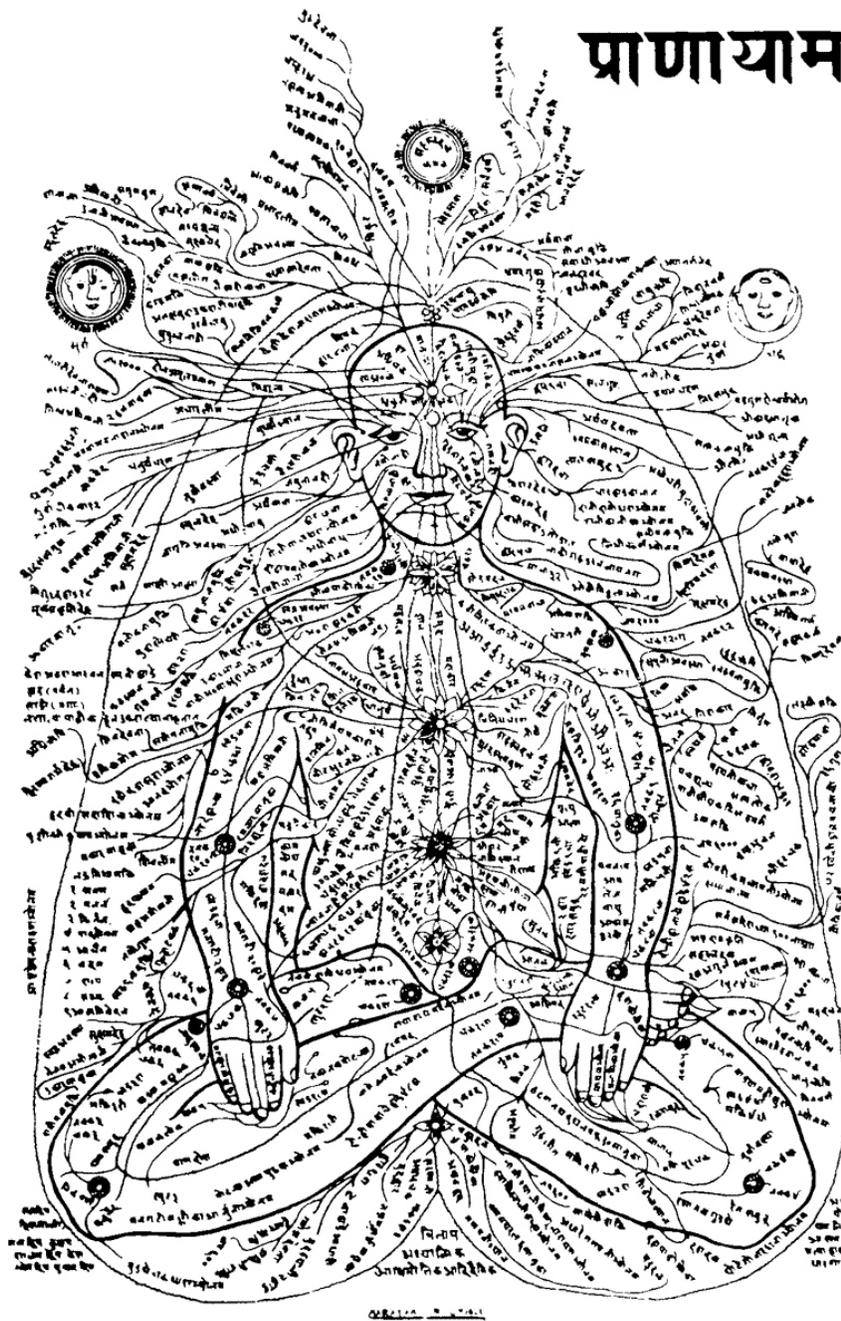
SĀṆKHYA THEORY**YOGA PRACTICE**

Kleśas (The Five Hindrances)

1. *Avidyā* (nescience, ignorance);
2. *Asmitā* (egoism);
3. *Rāga* (attachment, affection);
4. *Dveśa* (aversion, repugnance, hatred);
5. *Abhiniveśa* (love of life, the will to live, clinging to life)

Sādhanās (The Eight Methods or "Limbs" of Yoga)

1. *Yama* (The 5 Restraints: non-violence, non-lying, non-stealing, non-grasping, celibacy)
2. *Niyama* (Observances: cleanliness, contentment, purificatory action, study, devotion)
3. *Āsana* (body postures)
4. *Prāṇāyāma* (skillful breathing exercises)
5. *Pratyāhāra* (control of the senses)
6. *Dhāraṇā* (concentration)
7. *Dhyāna* (meditation, meditative absorption)
8. *Samādhi* (highest state of meditation, concentration)

TANTRA**The Seven Chakras****Sāhasrāra-cakra**

("the thousand-spoked wheel")
Crown Chakra: a varicolored lotus of a thousand petals at the crown of the head

Ājñā-cakra

("the command wheel")
Third Eye Chakra: a white lotus of two petals in the middle of the forehead

Viśuddha-cakra

("the wheel of purity")
Throat Chakra: a smoky purple lotus of sixteen petals

Anāhata-cakra

("the wheel of unstruck sound")
Heart Chakra: a ruddy lotus of twelve petals

Maṇipūra-cakra

(the wheel of the jewel city)
Navel Chakra: a blue-black lotus of ten petals

Svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra

("wheel of the self-base")
Genital Chakra: a vermillion lotus of six petals

Mūlādhāra-cakra

("base-root wheel")
Base of the Spine Chakra: a crimson lotus of four petals

Illustration showing the nadis and the major and minor chakras

From David V. Tansley, *Subtle Body - Essence and Shadow*, (1977, Art and Imagination Series, Thames and Hudson, London) In that book this illustration is labelled "The nadis, diagram, Tibet", but the writing is sanskrit not Tibetan, and both the artistic style and also the arrangement of the chakras is Indian.

KEY TERMS

पुरुष

puruṣa
puruṣa

Spirit, Soul, Pure consciousness

प्रकृति

prakṛti
prakṛiti

Nature, the primordial matter from which everything evolves

गुण

guṇa
Guna

a thread or strand; the qualities of *Prakṛiti*

सत्त्व

sattva
Sattva

the *guna* of lucidity

रजस्

rajas
Rajas

the *guna* of activity, passion

तमस्

tamas
Tamas

the *guna* of inertia, ignorance

प्राणायाम

prāṇāyāma
Pranayama

disciplined breathing, breath exercises
the 4th limb of Yoga

ध्यान

Meditation; the 7th limb of Yoga

dhyāna

Dhyana

समाधि

absorption, concentration, ultimate awareness; the 8th limb of Yoga

samādhi

the culmination of Yoga

Samadhi

QUESTIONS

1. What is the principle difference between the orthodox and heterodox *darshanas* of Indian philosophy?
2. What is the distinctive teaching concerning the nature of reality of the Sankhya/Yoga philosophy? How does Yoga practice lead to enlightenment in the Sankhya philosophy?
3. What is the distinctive teaching concerning reality in the Nyaya/Vaisheshika system of philosophy?
4. What are the main features of Shankara's "Advaita Vedanta" philosophy?
5. How do Shankara, Ramanuja, and Madva differ in their interpretation of the relations between selves, things, and *Brahman*?
6. How does Vishnu's incarnation as Krishna reveal his essential functions?
7. Why does Kali appear in terrifying forms? How do these forms help her devotees?
8. What are the fundamental polarities that are reconciled in Shiva?
9. What is *Tantra*?