

Confusing Words Series
Vedanta, Buddhism, Theosophy



Abstract and train of thoughts

Vedanta and Esoteric Buddhism

There is no difference whatever between Esoteric Buddhism and those Vedantins who understand the correct meaning of Shamkaracharya's teachings, the advanced Advaitis.	3
Parabrahm as defined by Vedantins.	3
Is God kind?	3
Do you pray?	3
Are you then a nāstika [atheist]?	3
Are you a Mussulman or a Christian?	3
What religion to you then belong to?	3

Vedanta and Theosophy

Suggested reading for students.

More commonly confusing words.	6
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Vedanta and Esoteric Buddhism

There is no difference whatever between Esoteric Buddhism and those Vedantins who understand the correct meaning of Shamkaracharya's teachings, the advanced Advaitis.

THE ESOTERICISMS OF THE BUDDHISTS AND VEDĀNTINS, though one and identical, sometimes differ in their expressions. Thus what we call *Linga-śarīra*, the interior subtle body of the gross, or the Sūkshma of the *Sthūla-śarīra*, is called by the Vedāntins the *Karana-śarīra* or causal body, the rudimentary or ethereal embryo of the body.¹

Parabrahm as defined by Vedantins.

I beg to call the attention of those who are interested in the question of "Personal, Impersonal, or No God," to the following extract of a dialogue in Urdu which took place between myself and a Sannyāsi (Brahman ascetic) at Lahore Railway station on the evening of the 3rd instant. He is a Chela of a Vedāntin Sannyāsi of Benares known as Śankar-Giri Swami. He has studied, he said, *Guru Gītā* and *Upanishads*. He refused to give out his name, of course, for no Sannyāsi will ever give it.

Is God kind?

Paramātma is the *sat* (essence) of everything and *all* the rest is *mithyā* (illusion) brought on by ignorance. There is nought but Parabrahm. To whom or to what then can it be kind?

Do you pray?

To *whom* am I to pray? I do not, for I am myself Parabrahm. I only contemplate. Contemplation is a state of mind.

* * * * *

Are you then a nāstika [atheist]?

No.

Are you a Mussulman or a Christian?

Neither.

What religion to you then belong to?

I am a Buddhist, that is to say, a Vedāntin of Śamkarāchārya's school.

I *thrice* questioned whether he was a Buddhist, and to my utter amazement he *thrice* replied in the affirmative. I am myself a strict orthodox Brahman and believe in one Personal God, discarding the idea of the thirty-three crores¹ of gods.

¹ Blavatsky Collected Writings, (A LEVY OF ARMS AGAINST THEOSOPHY) IV p. 548 fn.

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Sialkot, 4th April, 1883

The above statement took place in the presence of a Chela from the north who corroborates the statement.

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So true is the claim that there is no difference whatever between esoteric Buddhism and those Vedāntins who understand the correct meaning of Śamkarāchārya's teachings — the advanced Advaitīs — that the latter are spoken of throughout southern India as *Prachchanna Bauddhas* — or “Buddhists in disguise” especially by the *Viśishtādvaitīs*.²

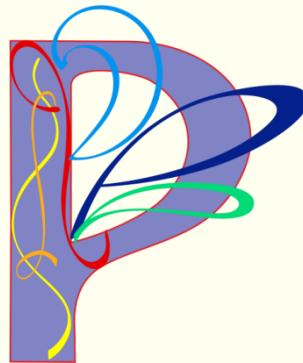


¹ [33 x 10,000,000]

² First published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. IV (No. 8), May 1883, pp. 204-5. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (PARABRAHM, DEFINED BY VEDANTINS) IV pp. 450-51.

Vedanta and Theosophy

THE SEEMINGLY PARADOXICAL USE of the “Seventh Eternity,” thus dividing the indivisible, is sanctioned in esoteric philosophy. The latter divides boundless duration into unconditionally eternal and universal Time and a conditioned one (*Khandakāla*). One is the abstraction or noumenon of infinite time (Kāla); the other its phenomenon appearing periodically, as the effect of *Mahat* (the Universal Intelligence limited by Manvantaric duration). With some schools, Mahat is “the first-born” of Pradhāna (undifferentiated substance, or the periodical aspect of Mūlaprakriti, the root of Nature), which (Pradhāna) is called Māyā, the Illusion. In this respect, I believe, esoteric teaching differs from the Vedāntin doctrines of both the Advaita and the Viśishtādvaita schools. For it says that, while Mūlaprakriti, the noumenon, is self-existing and without any origin — is, in short, parentless, Anupādaka (as one with Brahman) — Prakriti, its phenomenon, is periodical and no better than a phantasm of the former, so Mahat — with the Occultists, the first-born of Jñāna (or *gnosis*) knowledge, wisdom or the Logos — is a phantasm reflected from the Absolute NIRGUNA (Parabrahman, the one reality, “devoid of attributes and qualities”; see *Upanishads*); while with some Vedāntins Mahat is a manifestation of Prakriti, or Matter.¹



¹ *Secret Doctrine* I, p. 62; [on Stanza III.1a, THE LAST VIBRATION OF THE SEVENTH ETERNITY THRILLS THROUGH INFINITUDE. Also refer to “Time was not” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

Suggested reading for students.



More commonly confusing words.

- ADULTERY, LUST, MALICE
- ADYTUM AND ASYLUM
- AETHER AND ETHER
- AGNOSTICISM, ATHEISM, MONISM
- AION, ETERNITY, DURATION
- APPREHENSION AND COMPREHENSION
- ASTRAL LIGHT IS A TERM VERY LITTLE UNDERSTOOD
- AURA AND MAGNETISM
- BUDDHA AND PRINCE SIDDHARTHA BUDDHA
- BUDHISM IS INNER WISDOM
- CELIBACY, CONTINENCE, MONASTICISM
- CHEMIST AND ALCHEMIST
- CHILIASTS, MILLENNIUMISTS, MILLENARIANS
- DARKNESS IS INNER LIGHT
- DEVOTION, WORSHIP, LOYALTY
- EMANATION AND RADIATION
- EMBLEM AND SYMBOL
- GRAIKOS, HELLENE, HELLAS
- HIGHER SELF AND HIGHER EGO
- IMAGINATION AND IMITATION
- JIVA AND JIVATMAN
- JNANA AND YAJNA
- KAMIC VERSUS MANASIC ACTION
- KARMA AND KRIYA

CONFUSING WORDS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- KARMA, NEMESIS, ADRASTEIA, THEMIS
- KOSMOS AND COSMOS
- KRONOS AND CHRONOS
- LAUGHTER, SMILES, TEARS
- LIGHT AND HEAT
- LUST, JEALOUSY, PHYSICAL LOVE
- MAGNETISM, MESMERISM, HYPNOTISM
- MATERIALISM, SPIRITUALISM, MONISM
- MUZIRIS, MNIZURIN, MNOUZIRIS
- NIRVANA AND PARINIRVANA
- PANTACLE AND PENTACLE
- RAJA AND RISHI
- REMEMBRANCE, RECOLLECTION, REMINISCENCE
- SKANDHA, SHLOKA, STANZA, SUTRA
- SPIRIT, SPIRITS, SPIRITUALISM
- SPIRITUALISM IS A PHILOSOPHY OF YESTERDAY
- SVABHAVA AND SVAYAMBHU
- TELETE, MYESIS, EPOPTeia
- THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL OCCULTISM
- THEOSOPHIST AND THEOSOPHER
- TRANSMIGRATION, REINCARNATION, GILGULIM
- TRIRATNA AND TRISHARANA
- TRUE AND FALSE PERSONALITY
- UNITY AND DUALITY
- VACH IS NOT MERE SPEECH
- VRIL AND BOVRIL
- WILL AND DESIRE
- YOGIS AND MAHATMAS

