

The *Ā'in-i Akbarī* and Western Indology: with Special Reference to the Category of the Six Systems of Philosophy

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The *ṣaḍḍarśana* or the six orthodox systems of philosophy is a widely known concept of Indian philosophy that comprises Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta, Nyāna, and Vaiśeṣika systems. However, Sanskrit doxographies of philosophical systems composed in the period between the sixth century and the fifteenth century did not employ such the method of categorization regarding them as *āstika* or orthodox systems. As far as we know, the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* is the earliest work that classified the aforementioned six systems as orthodox calling the category *ṣaḍḍarśana*. The source of the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*'s classification is unclear. Even after the compilation of the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, Sanskrit and Persian doxographies kept a variety of classification of philosophical systems.

Thanks to an English translation of the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* by Francis Gladwin published in Calcutta in the 1780s, the Western Indologists who stayed in Calcutta at the turn of the century such as William Jones and Henry Thomas Colebrooke employed the category of the six orthodox systems according to the description of the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*. Western Indologists of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries including Fredrich Max Müller and Paul Deussen followed Colebrooke's view and the category of the six systems of philosophy have widely accepted in Western Indology by the middle of the twentieth century. The *Ā'in-i Akbarī* thus occupies an important place in the history of the classification of Indian philosophical systems.

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Introduction: the *Ṣaḍḍarsana* or Six Systems of Philosophy

It is widely received among scholars of Indology to equate a Sanskrit concept known as *darśana* with the Western concept of philosophy. The word *darśana* originates from the verb-root *drś* (to see, to look at) and literally means “view,” “world view,” or “insight.” When this word forms compounds with the words for particular approaches to truth, liberation, epistemology, and ontology, we interpret *darśana* as meaning philosophy (Nyāya-darśana, Bauddha-darśana, and so on) [Marui 2005: 24].

In portraying and teaching the history of Indian philosophy, scholars accept a manner to divide *darśanas* or philosophical systems into orthodox and heterodox according to whether a *darśana* recognizes the revelation of the Vedas. The *darśanas* that recognize the revelation of the Vedas are classified as *āstika* or orthodox, while those which deny the authority of the scriptures such as Buddhism, Jainism, and the Lokāyatas (atheism) are classified as *nāstika* or heterodox. The orthodox systems are frequently called as the *ṣaḍḍarsana* or the six systems of philosophy, which includes the following:

- Sāṃkhya (enumeration): The system which employs dualism between self (*puruṣa*) and matter (*prakṛti*). The scholars who belonged to this system did not acknowledge Īśvara (supreme God) as the creator of the world.
- Yoga: The school of Patañjali based on the metaphysics of Sāṃkhya. In contrast to the former, the followers of the Yoga system recognize Īśvara as the creator of the world.
- Mīmāṃsā (reflection): The system on the exegesis of the Vedas to accomplish an appropriate ritual.
- Vedānta (end of the Vedas): the system developed from the Upaniṣads, which deals with the ultimate reality, and knowledge as means to liberation.
- Nyāya (logic): The system that aims at liberation through logic and analytic.
- Vaiśeṣika (peculiarity): The system of atomism and natural philosophy that explains all existence as categorized by *padārthas* of substance, quality, activity, commonness, particularity, and inherence [Flood 2004: 231–2].

These six systems with each primal text¹⁾ were supposed to be established between the first and the fifth century AD, and their influences surpassed those of Buddhism and Jainism in the late Gupta period, particularly in the sixth century. However, the fact that the principal doctrines of these systems were established between 100 and 450 AD does not mean that the manner of classification differentiating the six systems of philosophy or *āstika* from the other systems was also established in the same period. Even though this category is referred to in casual introductions to Hinduism for elementary students and taught in university classes, we still do not have a clear understanding of the period of its establishment.

1) The *Sāṃkhyakārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa (4–5c), the *Yogasūtra* of Patañjali (2–4c), the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* of Jaimini (around 100AD), the *Brahmasūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa (400–450CE), the *Nyāyasūtra* of Akṣapāda (3C?), and the *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* of Kaṇāda (50–150CE) [Marui 2005: 32–45].

Moreover, as we will see below, studies in Sanskrit doxographies composed in the medieval and early modern periods reveal that there was a variety of ways of classifying Indian philosophical and religious systems, and the category of the six systems of philosophy as we know it today had never been dominant. Relying on these findings, some scholars doubt that the *ṣaḍdarśana* was established inside India, suggesting it was instead a Western invention.

This essay discusses the following two points: (1) The *Ā'in-i Akbarī* surely refers to the *ṣaḍdarśana* as orthodox philosophical systems for contemporary Brahmins denying Buddhism and other *nāstika* schools. (2) In the earliest stage, Western Indologists may have obtained the concept of the six systems of philosophy from the description in the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*. These findings contribute to making clear that the category existed in North India by the end of the sixteenth century at the latest, and to suggesting the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*'s influence in the intellectual encounters between India and the Western world.

1. Darśanas in the Sanskrit Doxographies

The issue of how pre-modern Sanskrit doxographies and other Indic literature categorized *darśana* or philosophical systems was first observed by Wilhelm Halbfass [Halbfass 1988: 263–86, 349–68], and other scholars such as Gerdi Gerschheimer and Hiroshi Marui analyzed relevant materials in more detail. Here relying on their studies, I take a general view of the history of the classification of philosophical systems prior to the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*.

We can find what is probably the earliest reference to the “six systems” in the Tamil Buddhist epic *Maṇimēkalai* composed by Chithalai Satthanar in the sixth century. Chapter 27 of this Tamil epic narrates that the leaders or their disciples of various kinds of philosophical and religious schools who came to the capital Vañci respectively explicated the righteousness of their teachings to the eponymous protagonist *Maṇimēkalai* [Marui 2005: 30; Nicholson 2011: 155]. This work employs the category “six camayam (<Skt. samaya)” enumerating Lokāyata, Buddhism, Sāṃkhya, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, and Mīmāṃsā [Maṇimēkalai: 274–5; Marui 2005: 30]. In spite of the coincidence of the number of systems six, the six systems in the *Maṇimēkalai* includes Lokāyata and Buddhism, which do not acknowledge the authority of the Vedas and must be categorized as heterodox systems according to the *ṣaḍdarśana* we understand it.

About two centuries after the *Maṇimēkalai*, the tradition as compiling Sanskrit doxographies had appeared at the hands of Jain scholars. The *Ṣaḍdarśanasamuccaya* or the compendium of the six systems of philosophy of the Haribhadra in the eighth century enumerates Buddhism, Nyāya, Sāṃkhya, Jaina, Vaiśeṣika, and Mīmāṃsā, adding Lokāyata to the six systems of philosophy. Haribhadra's usage of the words *āstika* and *nāstika* indicates that only Lokāyata should be called *nāstika* or heterodox, while even Buddhism and Jainism are treated as *āstika*. It is not surprising that Haribhadra's categorization of the six systems of philosophy included Jainism among orthodox schools, considering Haribhadra himself was a Jain.

Following the *Ṣaddarśanasamuccaya*, Jain authors of the early medieval period intermittently classified systems of Indian philosophy in their works, such as the *Upamitibhavaprapaṅcā kathā* of Siddharṣi in the tenth century, the *Sarvasiddhāntapravesaka* of an anonymous author in the twelfth century, and the *Abhidānacintāmaṇi* of Hemacandra in the twelfth century. All of them include Buddhism and Jainism in the six orthodox systems, excluding the Yoga and the Vedānta systems,²⁾ while the *Vivekavilāsa* of Jinadatta puts Vedānta into Mīmāṃsā and combines Vaiśeṣika and Nyāya into one system. Jinadatta also includes Shaivism. The *Ṣaddarśanasamuccaya* of Rājaśekhara of the fourteenth century, who was famous for the Jain biography *Prabandhakosa*, categorized philosophical systems as follows: (1) Jaina, (2) Sāṃkhya, (3) Jaiminiya (i.e., Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta), (4) Nyāya, (5) Vaiśeṣika, and (6) Buddhism, referring also to (6.5) Yoga and (7) Nāstika. Yoga occupies an ambiguous position neither fully orthodox nor heterodox, while Nāstika is heterodox. Following the previous doxographies, Rājaśekhara classified Buddhism and Jainism into the six systems [Marui 2005: 27].

In contrast to the Jain doxographers who were particular about the number six, Hindu doxographers, most of whom were Advaita Vedāntins, did not hesitate to categorize into more than six systems due to their inclusive belief that all beings are derived from the absolute one. Indeed, Sanskrit doxographies compiled by Advaita Vedāntins often adopted the word *sarva* (all) instead of *ṣaḍ* (six) in their titles. A Hindu philosopher of the fourteenth century Vijayanagar kingdom Mādhava, who was a follower of the philosophy of Śāṅkara (eighth century), introduced sixteen systems of philosophy³⁾ in his *Sarvadarśanasamgraha*. Following Mādhava, an anonymous doxographer of the fifteenth century who is also known as Pseudo-Śāṅkara arranged 11 systems in his *Sarvasiddhāntasamgraha* [Halbfass 1988: 351; Gerschheimer 2000: 180].⁴⁾ The *Sarvadarśanakaumudī* by Mādhava Sarasvatī of the sixteenth century introduced philosophical systems in an original way: He first divides systems into two large groups of *vaidika* (orthodox) and *avaidika* (heterodox). The *vaidika* contains three subgroups of Tarka, Tantra, and Sāṃkhya. Tarka includes Vaiśeṣika and Nyāya; Tantra consists of Śābdamīmāṃsā or Vyākaraṇa and Arthamīmāṃsā, which is further divided into Pūrvamīmāṃsā (bhaṭṭa and pravākara) and Uttaramīmāṃsā or Vedānta; and Sāṃkhya comprises Seśvarasāṃkhya or Yoga and Nirīśvarasāṃkhya. The last two systems are divided according to whether they acknowledge Īśvara. On the other hand, the *avaidika* group contains Cārvāka, Ārhata, and Bauddha, which is further divided into

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- 2) Like the categorizations by Hemacandra, a Kashmirī philosopher, poet, and politician of the ninth century Bhaṭṭa Jayanta lists “six tarka (logic)” in his *Nyāyamañjarī* as follows: (1) Lokāyata, (2) Buddhism, (3) Jainism, (4) Sāṃkhya, (5) Nyāya, and (6) Vaiśeṣika [Marui 2014: 117–9].
- 3) (1) Cārvāka (atheism), (2) Bauddha (Buddhism), (3) Ārhata (Jainism), (4) Rāmānuja (Vviśiṣṭādvaita), (5) Madhva (dvaita), (6) Nakuliśapāsupata, (7) Śaiva, (8) Prathyabhijñā, (9) Raseśvara, (10) Aulūkyā (Vaiśeṣika), (11) Akṣapāda (Nyāya), (12) Jaiminiya (Mīmāṃsā), (13) Pāṇiniya (Vyākaraṇa), (14) Sāṃkhya, (15) Pātañjala (Yoga), (16) Śāṅkara.
- 4) (1) Lokāyata, (2) Ārhata, (3) Bauddha (divided into four sub types), (4) Vaiśeṣika, (5) Nyāya, (6) Prabhākara Mīmāṃsā, (7) (Kumārila) Bhaṭṭa Mīmāṃsā, (8) Sāṃkhya, (9) Yoga, (10) Vedavyāsa, and (11) Advaita Vedānta.

Mādhyaṃika, Yogācāra, Sautrāntika, and Vaibhāṣika [Gerschheimer 2000: 182; Marui 2005: 30]. Mādhava Sarasvatī's categorization of *vaidika* systems is relatively similar to what we know as the six systems of philosophy, but does not correspond completely; he regarded the grammarian school as orthodox calling it Śabdāmīmāṃsā.

We have found no Sanskrit doxography completed up to the end of the sixteenth century that distinguishes only Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā, and Vedānta as orthodox systems that acknowledge the revelation of the Vedas. To put it mildly, such a categorization was not mainstream in Indian philosophy. Based on the absence of this kind of classification in Sanskrit doxographies, some Indologists suppose that this concept of the *āstika*, six systems of philosophy was fabricated in the British colonial period, not in India but in Europe, and its vestige survives up to date.⁵⁾

2. The *Khaṭ-darsan* in the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*

In contrast to the supposition of some Indologists, the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* clearly lists six philosophical systems which completely accords with what we know as the *ṣaḍdarśana*. Moreover, Abū al-Faẓl introduces contemporary Brahmins' view that regards Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Vedānta, Mīmāṃsā, Sāṃkhya, and Yoga as orthodox and excludes Buddhism, Jainism, and Lokāyata as heterodox. The relevant passage lies in the section of learnings, manners, and customs of India. This section first introduces nine systems of Indian philosophy, followed by descriptions of eighteen scientific fields (i.e., *vidyāsthāna*). He states:

Distinguishing nine [kinds of] knowers: Naiyāika (NYYAYK) [means] scholars on the knowledge of Nyāya (NYAY), Vaiśeṣika (BYShYKHK) distinguishes learning and knowing. Vedāntin (BYDANTY) [means] scholars on the knowledge of Vedānta, Mīmāṃsaka (MYMANSK) [means] knowers of the knowledge of Mīmāṃsā (MYMANSĀ). Sāṃkhya (SANKH), Pātañjala (PATNJL), Jaina (JYN), Bauddha (BWDDH), and Nāstika (NASTK). The distinct and accepted [doctrines] of each of them will be hereafter explained. The Brahmins consider the last three as heretical and they admit no philosophical systems beyond the first six which they term *khai-darsan*, that is, the six modes of knowledge (*shish rawish-i dānish*) [AA: II 62].

The word *khai-darsan* is of course a Prakrit-like corrupted pronunciation of Sanskrit *ṣaḍdarśana*; he correctly explains its meaning as “the six modes of knowledge.” This passage gives readers the impression that such classification distinguishing orthodox and heterodox systems was common among Hindu Brahmins of the sixteenth century, various types of categorizations found in previous Sanskrit doxographies notwithstanding.

5) Katsura Shoryu made such a comment at a RINDAS Traditional Indian Thought Seminar held at Ryukoku University on July 9, 2016. I am grateful to him for encouraging me to write a paper on this topic.

It is unlikely that Abū al-Faẓl himself created this categorization *ex nihilo*. More likely, he obtained the idea of *ṣaḍḍarṣana* from pandits who went in and out of Akbar's court, or from Sanskrit books on philosophy. However, Abū al-Faẓl's source has never been confirmed. Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi claimed that Abū al-Faẓl's source was the *Sarvadarśanasamgraha* [Rizvi 1975: 273]. The basis of Rizvi's claim is not clear, since Mādhava's policy to cover "all" sixteen systems is far from Abū al-Faẓl's categorization. In addition, Abū al-Faẓl keeps silent on schools such as Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita, Madhva's Dvaita, and Kashmīrī Pratyabhijñā philosophy in this section. We thus cannot agree with Rizvi's opinion. In his recent monograph, Shankar Nair pointed out Abū al-Faẓl's reference to the name of Mādhava Sarasvatī followed by Madhusūdana in the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* [AA: I 233; Nair 2020: 60–1]; Nair's finding reveals that Abū al-Faẓl knew the names of these Advaita Vedāntins, and raises the possibility that he had access to some of Mādhava Sarasvatī's works. But as we saw above, the *Sarvadarśanakaumudī* includes Vyākaraṇa also into *vaidika*, and divides Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta at a different level with the other orthodox systems. Another possibility for Abū al-Faẓl's source is Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, a contemporary philosopher in Advaita Vedānta with Akbar. Halbfass has keenly demonstrated that the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*'s classification of the eighteen scientific fields follows that in Madhusūdana's *Prasthānabheda* [Halbfass 1988: 33]. However, as Halbfass indicated, the *Prasthānabheda* does not employ the same categorization of *ṣaḍḍarṣana* as the *Ā'in* because Madhusūdana's categorization of philosophical systems is as follows: Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika are labeled as *nyāya* and Vedānta and Mīmāṃsā as *mīmāṃsā*, while Sāṃkhya is a part of Darmaśāstra [Halbfass 1988: 354]. Although it is possible that Abū al-Faẓl heard about it in conversation with pandits at the court, we have yet to find a textual source for the category of the *ṣaḍḍarṣana* in the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*.

In his monumental monograph, Andrew Nicholson claims that some thinkers between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries gradually treated these philosophical schools as *ṣaḍḍarṣana* of mainstream Hindu philosophy [Nicholson 2011: 2]. Although Nicholson's argument is convincing, we have yet to find a definite Sanskrit doxography of the time that deals with Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Vedānta, Mīmāṃsā, Nyāya, and Vaiśeṣika as orthodox calling them *ṣaḍḍarṣana*. Without textual evidence that acknowledges *ṣaḍḍarṣana* as orthodox Hindu philosophical systems, Nicholson's argument leaves a missing link between medieval Hindu philosophers and modern view on Hindu orthodoxy. The account in the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* is thus precious for it is apparent textual evidence of the notion of the orthodox *ṣaḍḍarṣana* we know today. I hope that future studies find probable Sanskrit sources for Abū al-Faẓl.⁶⁾

6) As for the descriptions on the contents of each philosophical system, the informants of Abū al-Faẓl probably referred to some Sanskrit elementary treatises on each school composed in the late medieval period. In a private conversation, Yoshimizu Kiyotaka taught me the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*'s description of the Mīmāṃsā has similarity to those in the *Mānameyodaya* of Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, who was supposed to flourish in late sixteenth century Malabar. We can suppose that Abū al-Faẓl relied on such kind of treatises in writing the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* for the descriptions of the other systems.

3. Classification of Philosophical Systems after the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* in Sanskrit and Persian Texts

We confirmed above that the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* introduces the *ṣaddarśana* or the six systems of philosophy whose contents are the same as those we know today. To my knowledge, the preceding Sanskrit doxographies never employ such a classification and the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*'s case is the earliest known example. This raises the question, did such classification of philosophical systems become dominant in Sanskrit and Persian texts composed in India after the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*? Observations of Sanskrit doxographies and Persian encyclopedic works give, if anything, a negative answer.

The *Ṣaṭtantrīsāra* composed in the late seventeenth century, whose author is supposed to be Nīlakaṇṭha Caturdhara of Varanasi, lists (1) Cārvāka (atheism), (2) Buddhism, (3) Jainism, (4) Tārkika (i.e., a combination of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika), (5) Sāṃkhya, and (6) Pātañjala (Yoga), eliding instead Vedānta and Mīmāṃsā [Gerschheimer 2000: 181]. The *Ṣaḍdarśanīsidhāntasamgraha* of Rāmabhadra Dikṣita, completed in around 1700 AD, appears to employ a similar classification to the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, but it also classifies the Vyākaraṇa or grammarian school as an orthodox system [Gerschheimer 2000: 176, 181]. Descriptions of these works suggest that even after the time of Akbar and Abū al-Faẓl, Hindu philosophers who composed Sanskrit doxographies preserved diversity in their methods of classifying philosophical systems; they did not always employ the way of classification of six *āstika* or orthodox systems: Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, and Vedānta-Mīmāṃsā.

Turning our attention upon Persian texts in the seventeenth century, we can find a Persian chronicle composed by a Hindu munshī (accountant), the *Khulāṣat al-tawārīkh* of Sujān Rāy of Batala completed in the 40th regnal year of Aurangzeb 'Ālamgīr (r. 1658–1707), or 1695 AD. The chronicle contains a section that introduces Indic sciences, in which Sujān Rāy faithfully quotes the descriptions of the six systems of philosophy from the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* [KhT: 18–9]; his quotation is not surprising, as Sujān Rāy admittedly referred to the *Akbar-nāma* as a source in writing this Persian chronicle [KhT: 7]. As in the case of the *Khulāṣat al-tawārīkh*, a Persian guide for the education of kāyasthas or clerks, the *Khulāṣat al-khulāṣa* of Devī Dās⁷⁾ completed in 1673 lists six śāstras: Nyāya, Vedānta, Mīmāṃsā, Sāṃkhya, Pātañjala, and Vaiśeṣika [KhKh: f. 357b; Sakaki 2015: 40]. This work too employs the same classification of philosophical systems as the *Ā'in*. By contrast, a Persian encyclopedic work dealing with religions on the subcontinent, the *Dabistān-i mazāhib* of Muḥsin Fānī Kashmīrī, Kaykhusraw Isfandiyyār, or Mīr Zū al-Fiḡār Ardīstānī⁸⁾ written between 1645

7) He was born in Darbangha in Bihar in November 1644. At the age of nine, Devī Dās became a disciple of a Kāyastha teacher from whom he learned skill as a clerk, and at the age of 18 he started his job. He visited Ayodhyā with his father at the age of 27, where he became a disciple of Svāmi Nanda Lal [Sakaki 2015: 36].

8) There are several opinions on the name of the author [Mojtabā'ī 1993]. Although the identification of the author has yet to reach a definite conclusion, it is in all likelihood that he had a connection with an esoteric Zoroastrian teacher Āzar Kayvān or his disciples. For the contents of the *Dabistān* and its reception, see [Ernst 2019].

and 1658 introduces the following religious groups in India (‘aqā’id-i Hinduwān): Būdah mimāns (Bhaṭṭa Mimāṃsā?), Smārta, Vedānta, Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Śākta, Vaiṣṇava, Cārvāka, Tārkaika, Buddhism (actually Jains), and other minor groups [DM: 121–212]. It is true that some Persian works in the seventeenth century employed Abū al-Faẓl’s classification of philosophical systems, but there were other methods such as the contemporary Sanskrit doxographies that employ various methods of classification.

4. Introduction to Western Indologists:

Francis Gladwin, William Jones, and Henry Thomas Colebrooke

Europeans who visited Mughal India in the meanwhile began introducing philosophy of non-Muslims on the subcontinent to the contemporary Europeans. One of the earliest introducers was a French traveler and physician named Francois Bernier (1620–88). On his return to France in October 1667, he wrote a famous letter addressed to Jean Chapelain (1595–1674) on the beliefs and religious practices of Indian non-Muslims. Interestingly, in this letter, Bernier briefly refers to six different sects of philosophers who were confrontational with one another [Bernier 2008: 333]. However, the fact that he counted Buddhism (Bauté) as the sixth among them reveals that the six sects he refers to are not same as those of the *ṣaḍdarśana* in the *Ā’in-i Akbarī*.

About a century after Bernier, an army officer of the East India Company Alexander Dow (1735/6–79), who is famous for an English translation of the *Gulshan-i Ibrāhīmī* of Muḥammad Qāsim Astarābādī, called Firishta, wrote his dissertation dealing with the “Customs, Manners, Languages, Religion, and Philosophy of the Hindoos,” which is included in the second volume of the first edition of the *History of Hindostan*, or his English translation of the *Gulshan-i Ibrāhīmī* published in London in 1768 [Patterson 2021: 88].⁹⁾ At the beginning of his dissertation, Dow gives a long description on Akbar, Abū al-Faẓl, and his elder brother Abū al-Fayẓ Fayẓī [Dow 2000: xxv]. He nevertheless introduces only two from the six systems throughout the dissertation, stating that “[t]he Hindoos are divided into two great religious sects:” Nyāya (NEADIRZIN/NEADIRSEN) and Vedānta (BEDANG, confounding with Vedāṅga) [Dow 2000: xl, lx].¹⁰⁾ He refers to neither *ṣaḍdarśana* nor *āstika*. We should conclude that Dow was unlikely to have used the *Ā’in-i Akbarī*’s accounts of philosophical systems as a source. It would be about two decades before the *Ā’in-i Akbarī*’s classification of Indian philosophical systems became known to Western scholars through the earliest English translation of this encyclopedic work.

The first translator of the *Ā’in-i Akbarī* into English, Francis Gladwin (d. ca. 1813), served first in the Bengal Army, and then became a professor of Persian at Fort William College in Calcutta in 1800 [Loloi 2012]. He was also one of the founding members of the Asiatic Society of Bengal thanks to his close relationship with Warren Hastings (1732–1818). Gladwin’s English translation of the *Ā’in-i Akbarī*, *Ayeen Akbery; or, the Institutes of the Emperor*

9) For Dow’s understanding on Indic religion, see also [Patterson 2021: 88–93].

10) See also Franklin’s introduction.

Akber, was first published in Calcutta between 1783 and 1786 in three volumes, and its second edition was published in London in 1800 in two volumes. An observation of the section on the “learnings of the Hindoos” reveals that Gladwin surely conveyed the concept of the *ṣaḍḍarsāna* from the original Persian text. He describes:

Among the Hindoos there are nine sects, eight of whom teach the creation; and of a future fate; of the divine essence and attribution; of the order of the upper and the lower religion; of the forms of worship; morality; and of political government.

The ninth sect deny the existence of God; and believe neither a beginning nor an end (partly skipped).

1. Neyayek; 2. Beysheekheh; 3. Beydantee; 4. Meymansuck; 5. Sankh; 6. Patanjil; 7. Jien; 8. Bodh; 9. Nastick.

The principles of each shall be hereafter particularized and explained. The Brahmins, however, admit only the six first doctrine; and call them *Khuttdursun*, six modes of knowledge. The three left they consider as heretical. The Neyayek and the Beisheekhek agree in many point; as do the Beydantee and Meymansuck. The Sankh and Patanjil have very considerable difference [Gladwin 1800: 407].

Gladwin’s style of translation is so literal that the account of the *ṣaḍḍarsāna* was conveyed literally to English readers. To my knowledge, this section is the earliest appearance of the six systems of philosophy as we know it today in English.

As Gladwin was one of the founding members of the Asiatic Society, his English translation was immediately referred to by the other founding members and British people in Calcutta [Wilson 1825: 2]. The third volume of the *Ayeen Akbery* published in Calcutta in 1786 contains the list of subscribers of this volume; the list enumerates Sir William Jones (1746–94), the founder of the Asiatic Society and one of the most well-known orientalisks of the time, Warren Hastings, the current governor general of Calcutta, John Macpherson, 1st Baronet (c. 1745–1821), a British administrator who succeeded Hasting’s position of governor general, and other names of more than 200 persons [Gladwin 1786: v–ix]. It seems that the quick spread of Gladwin’s English translation informed the readers of the *Ā'in*’s methods of classifying philosophical systems. Indeed, William Jones mentioned “their six philosophical sāstras” and the names of the founders of each system: Vyāsa (Vedānta),¹¹ Kapila (Sāṃkhya), Patañjali (Yoga), Gautama (Nyāya), Kaṇāda (Vaiśeṣika), and Jaimini (Mīmāṃsā) in his lecture “on the philosophy of Asiatics” presented on February 20th, 1794, only two months before his death [Jones 1798: 169–72]. Interestingly, in this lecture Jones also refers to the *Dabistān-i mazāhib* as a source of Indic religions [Jones 1798: 172]. This fact suggests that he relied not only Sanskrit but also Persian works on the sources of Indian philosophy. Although Jones gives no information about the source of the classification of

11) The reason why Jones regarded not Bādarāyaṇa but Vyāsa as the founder of Vedānta is probably he followed the account of the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* [AA: II 79]. I am indebted to Harimoto Kengo for the information of Jones’s lecture.

philosophical systems, he almost certainly employed the methods of the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*.

Another British orientalist in Calcutta also read the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* and introduced the concept of the six systems of philosophy to European academia. A quarter of a century after the publication of Gladwin's translation in London, Henry Thomas Colebrooke (1765–1837), one of the famous European scholars in Sanskrit and Indology in the early nineteenth century gave a talk on the philosophy of the Hindus at a public meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society in London on June 21th, 1823. Colebrooke was appointed as an officer of the East India Company in Calcutta in 1782, and after working in various cities including Mithila, Mirzapur, and Nagpur, he returned to Calcutta in 1805 because Lord Wellesley had appointed him professor of Hindu law at Fort William College [Chisholm 1910: 665], where Colebrooke was a colleague of Gladwin. He became a member of the council of the Asiatic Society in 1807 and was elected president. After returning to Great Britain in 1815, he founded the Royal Asiatic Society in March 1823. That public meeting was held only three months after the foundation of the Royal Asiatic Society.

In the lecture, Colebrooke first referred to the names of founders and general observations of each philosophical system, in which he regarded Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta, Nyāna, and Vaiśeṣika as orthodox, while he presented an ambiguous attitude as to whether the remaining Sāṃkhya and Yoga were orthodox or heterodox [Colebrooke 2001: 143–4]. His own ambiguous evaluation notwithstanding, Colebrooke admitted that Sāṃkhya and Yoga were respected by adherents of the Vedas [Colebrooke 2001: 144]; the evaluation of these two systems was clearly different from other systems such as Cārvāka, Jainism, and Pāśupata, which he called heretical. His quotations in the lecture indicate, as Nicholson has pointed out, that Colebrooke's understanding of the doctrines of some of these systems relied on the works of a Bhedābheda Vedānta philosopher from early modern Bihār Vijiānabhikṣu [Nicholson 2011]. It is probable that Vijiānabhikṣu's integrative tendency on philosophical systems other than Vedānta influenced Colebrooke's view on these systems. However, it should be stressed that he surely referred also to the English translation of the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* prior to his lecture in London. One of Colebrooke's essays during his days in Calcutta, titled "Observations on the sect of Jains," originally included in the *Asiatick Researches* volume 9 published in 1807, mentions the "Ayin-Acbery" of "ABUL-FAZIL" while deviating from the main topic to discuss the history of Kashmir [Colebrooke 1807: 294; Colebrooke 2001: 284]. In fact, Rosane Rocher and Ludo Rocher have demonstrated that Colebrook began his oriental scholarship with his interests in Arabic, Persian, Islamic law, and the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* [Rocher and Rocher 2012: 17]. We should note that in the first decade of the nineteenth century, Gladwin's English translation caught Colebrooke's attention, and we can further suppose that he reached the description on the systems of Indian philosophy. Abū al-Faẓl's account of the *ṣaḍdarśana* may have been the last push for Colebrooke's classification of orthodox and heterodox systems of Indian philosophy.

5. Diffusion of the Category: Friedrich Max Müller, Paul Deussen, and Max Weber

Colebrooke's classification of philosophical systems seems to have been accepted by

other Western Indologists of the nineteenth century. For example, Friedrich Max Müller (1823–1900) presented a paper titled “Beiträge zur Kenntniss der indische Philosophie” early in his academic career. We can easily find Müller’s many references to Colebrooke and his essays [Müller 1852: 3–4]. Although Müller was occupied for decades with preparing a complete edition of the *Ṛg-veda* and its commentary, editing the series of the *Sacred Books of the East* (1879–94), and his new translation of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* (1881), he returned to the topic of *śaddarśana* in his later days [Müller 1919: i]. Müller’s last major work titled *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* published in 1899 clearly refers to “Hindus’ self-distinctions of the six orthodox systems of philosophy” as “they acknowledged the authority of the Veda,” and adds the sentence “Orthodox might be replaced by Vedic” [Müller 1919: 450]. A reader of this book may notice Müller’s frequent mentions of Colebrooke [Müller 1919: 55, 75, 77, 113, 118, 121, 188, 197, 225, 262, 318] and his high esteem for Colebrooke’s essays as Müller states “Colebrooke’s essay on the Yoga, like all his essays, is still most useful and trustworthy” [Müller 1919: 318]. It is therefore not surprising if Müller employed Colebrooke’s definition on philosophical systems that differentiates orthodox from heterodox. Indeed, in spite of his reference to the *Sarvadarśanasamgraha*, the *Prasthānabheda*, and other Sanskrit works, Müller defined Vedānta, Mīmāṃsā, Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, and Vaiśeṣika as the six orthodox systems while regarding Buddhism and Lokāyata as heterodox.

Only eight years after Müller’s last major work was published, another influential German Indologist of the time, Paul Jakob Deussen (1845–1919),¹²⁾ published *Outlines of Indian Philosophy, with an appendix: On the philosophy of the Vedānta in its relations to Occidental metaphysics* in 1907. This short book let it down as an axiom that the six systems are orthodox owing to the recognition of the authority of the Vedas. He wrote as follows:

The thoughts of the Upanishads led in the post-Vedic period not only to the two great religions of Buddhism and Jainism but also to a whole series of philosophical systems. Six of these are considered as orthodox, because they are believed to be reconcilable with the Vedic creed, the others are rejected as heretical. The six orthodox systems are: (1) the Sāṃkhyam of Kapila, (2) the Yoga of Patañjali, (3) the Nyāya of Gotama, (4) the Vaiśeṣikam of Kaṇāda, (5) the Mīmāṃsā of Jaimini, (6) the Vedānta of Bādarāyaṇa [Deussen 1907: 34].

Although Deussen’s referential link to the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* is not clear,¹³⁾ his close connection to Müller suggests that Deussen shared his conception of orthodox and heterodox with

12) As is well known, Deussen was interested in Anquetil-Duperron’s Latin-translation of the *Oupnek’hat*, the Persian translation of the Upaniṣad under the commission of the prince Dārā Shukūh (d. 1659) in studying the Upaniṣads [Deussen 1897]. For European reception of the *Oupnek’hat*, see [Winter 2018].

13) Needless to say, Deussen referred to Colebrooke’s works on the Upaniṣads [Deussen 1897: xv, 537–8], and it is probable that he also read Colebrooke’s other essays on philosophical systems. See also [Nicholson 2011: 133–138] for Deussen’s view on philosophy.

Müller to a certain extent.

Furthermore, a contemporary of Deussen and one of the most influential scholars and theorists in almost all fields of social sciences at the turn of the century, Max Weber (1864–1920) referred to the six systems of philosophy in brief. In his *Hinduismus und Buddhismus: Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie II* (English title: *The Religion of India: The Sociology of Hinduism and Buddhism*) published in 1916, Weber enumerates (1) Mīmāṃsā of Jaimini, (2) Sāṃkhya of Kapila, (3) Vedānta of Vyāsa, (4) Nyāya of Gotama, (5) Vaiśeṣikas of Kanāḍa, and (6) Yoga of Patañjali as orthodox schools apart from “heterodox” Lokāyata [Weber 2009: 254–5, 261]. Weber’s broad reference to studies in Indology and history makes difficult to identify his source on the six systems of philosophy.¹⁴ His enumeration rather indicates that the concept of the six systems of Indian philosophy had gained popularity beyond Indologists at the beginning of the twentieth century, and Weber considered this classification of orthodox and heterodox reliable when theorizing on Indic religions. Thus, Western academic discourse became accustomed to the concept of authentic philosophical systems of India without knowing the concept’s original source, the *Ā’in-i Akbarī*.

Conclusion

The notion of classification and enumeration of the various systems of Indian philosophy first appeared in a Tamil literature in the sixth century, and a number of Sanskrit doxographies were compiled after the eighth century. However, until the end of the fifteenth century, there is no known Sanskrit literature that classifies the currently accepted the six systems of philosophy we discussed as orthodox. To say the least, such a classification does not appear to have been widespread among the masters of Indian philosophy.

Following the view of the contemporary Indian Brahmins, Abū al-Faḥl identifies Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Vedānta, Mīmāṃsā, Sāṃkhya, and Yoga as the orthodox schools of philosophy, and mentions the name of the classification *ṣaḍdarśana*, or the six systems of philosophy. It is not known who they were, although it is likely that Abū al-Faḥl wrote this based on information from the masters of the Vedānta school who were present at Akbar’s court at the time.

The *Ā’in-i Akbarī* was translated into English by Gladwin, and this English translation also caught the attentions of Jones and Colebrooke during their days in Calcutta.¹⁵ After the second publication of Gladwin’s translation in London in 1800, Colebrooke referred to the concept of the six systems of philosophy in a public lecture in 1823, and his ideas were further disseminated by Müller.

Of course, it remains possible that the Bengali Brahmins whom Jones and Colebrooke

14) Immediately before enumerating the orthodox systems, Weber refers to Deussen’s German translation of the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* [Weber 2009: 260–1].

15) The reason for the very early translation of the *Ā’in-i Akbarī* into English, in 1786, was that it had the character of an administrative handbook and encyclopedia, and thus contained useful information for the British who wanted to advance into and encroach upon India.

befriended during their stay in Calcutta, had a similar classification of orthodox philosophical systems to that of the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, and that they explained it to them. However, there is no doubt that they were referring to the English translation of the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*. Even if Jones and Colebrooke had obtained information about the six systems of philosophy from another source, the *Ā'in*'s description must have strengthened their conviction.

In the same period Colebrooke was working at Fort William College, a future Hindu social-religious reformist was working in Calcutta as a munshī for the East India Company. This was Rāmmohan Roy (1772–1833), the founder of Brahmo Samāj. Rāmmohan Roy is supposedly the person who first used the word “Hinduism.” Some studies which claim the Western invention of the concept of Hinduism presume the impact of European literature on his project to establish religious concepts [Oddie 2010: 45]. In her dissertation dealing with the works by the Mughal prince Dārā Shukūh, Supriya Gandhi has, in contrast, asserted that Roy rather inherited religious discourses in early modern Persian literature in writing his treatises on religions, noting the similarity of Roy's word-usage to that of Dārā [Gandhi 2011: 283–91]. We can say that the case of *ṣaḍdarśana* shares a common feature with that of Roy's thought, i.e., that a “traditional” Indic concept that has been discussed as a Western or colonial invention had probably sprouted in the late medieval or early modern cosmopolitan culture on the subcontinent before the time of Western impact. We thus should keep in mind the tendency of classification of Indic knowledge in Persianate discourses and its legacies in modern writings in both India and the Western world when depicting an overview of South Asian intellectual history.

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