

Theophania and three Options open to the Adept

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Ecstasy of St Paul (1628-29) Johann Liss, Staatliche Museen, Berlin



Each cloud-capt mountain is a holy altar;
An organ breathes in every grove;
And the full heart's a Psalter,
Rich in deep hymn of gratitude and love.
— Thomas Hood: *Ode to Rae Wilson, Esq.*

The holy Triad emanates from the One, and is the Tetraktys; the gods, daemons, and souls are an emanation of the Triad. Heroes and men repeat the hierarchy in themselves.

Thus said Metrodorus of Chios, the Pythagorean,¹ the latter part of the sentence meaning that man has within himself the seven pale reflections of the seven divine Hierarchies; his Higher Self is, therefore, in itself but the refracted beam of the direct Ray. He who regards the latter as an Entity, in the usual sense of the term, is one of the “infidels and atheists,” spoken of by Epicurus, for he fastens on that God “the opinions of the multitude”—an anthropomorphism of the grossest kind.² The Adept and the Occultist know that “what are styled the Gods are only the first principles.”³ None the less they are intelligent, [51] conscious, and *living* “Principles,” the Primary Seven Lights *manifested* from Light *unmanifested* — which to us is Darkness. They are the Seven — exoterically four — Kumaras or “Mind-Born Sons” of Brahmā. And it is they again, the Dhyani-Chohans, who are the prototypes in the aeonic eternity of lower Gods and hierarchies of divine Beings, at the lowest end of which ladder of being are we — men.

Thus perchance Polytheism, when philosophically understood, may be a degree higher than even the Monotheism of the Protestant, say, who limits and conditions the Deity in whom he persists in seeing the Infinite, but whose supposed actions make of that “Absolute and Infinite” the most absurd paradox in Philosophy. From this standpoint Roman Catholicism itself is immeasurably higher and more logical than Protestantism, though the Roman Church has been pleased to adopt the exotericism of the heathen “multitude” and to reject the Philosophy of pure Esotericism.

Thus every mortal has his immortal counterpart, or rather his Archetype, in heaven. This means that the former is indissolubly united to the latter, in each of his incarnations, and for the duration of the cycle of births; only it is by the spiritual and intellectual Principle in him, entirely distinct from the lower *self*, never through the earthly personality. Some of these are even liable to break the union altogether, in

¹ [Greek pre-Socratic philosopher, 4th century BCE, of the school of Democritus and important forerunner of Epicurus. Credited with the following apophthegm: “A single ear of corn in a large field is as strange as a single world in infinite space.” Aëtius, *Placita Philosophorum* i, 5.4.]

² “The Gods exist,” said Epicurus, “but they are not what the *hoi polloi* (the multitude) suppose them to be. He is not an infidel or atheist who denies the existence of Gods whom the multitude worship, but he is such who fastens on the Gods the opinions of the multitude.” [Diog. Laert., *Lives*, X, 123.]

³ [Aristotle: *Metaphysics*, Bk. XII, 8, p. 1074b.]



case of absence in the moral individual of binding, viz., of spiritual ties. Truly, as Paracelsus puts it in his quaint, tortured phraseology, man with his three (compound) Spirits is suspended like a foetus by all three to the matrix of the Macrocosm; the thread which holds him united being the “Thread-Soul,” Sutratman, and Taijasa (the “Shining”) of the Vedantins. And it is through this spiritual and intellectual Principle in man, through Taijasa — the Shining, “because it has the luminous internal organ as its associate” — that man is thus united to his heavenly prototype, never through his lower inner self or Astral Body, for which there remains in most cases nothing but to fade out.

Occultism, or Theurgy, teaches the means of producing such union. But it is the actions of man — his personal merit alone that can produce it on earth, or determine its duration. This lasts from a few seconds — a flash — to several hours, during which time the Theurgist or Theophanist is that overshadowing “God” [52] himself; hence he becomes endowed for the time being with relative omniscience and omnipotence. With such perfect (divine) Adepts as Buddha⁴ and others such a hypostatical state of avataric condition may last during the whole life; whereas in the case of full Initiates, who have not yet reached the perfect state of Jivanmukta,⁵ Theopneusty, when in full sway, results for the high Adept in a full recollection of everything seen, heard, or sensed.

Taijasa . . . has fruition of the supersensible.⁶

For one less perfect it will end only in a partial, indistinct remembrance; while the beginner has to face in the first period of his psychic experiences a mere confusion, followed by a rapid and finally complete oblivion of the mysteries seen during this super-hypnotic condition. The degree of recollection, when one returns to his waking state and physical senses, depends on his spiritual and psychic purification, the greatest enemy of spiritual memory being man’s physical brain, the organ of his sensuous nature.

The above states are described for a clearer comprehension of terms used in this work. There are so many and such various conditions and states that even a Seer is liable to confound one with the other. To repeat: the Greek, rarely-used word, “Theophania,” meant more with the Neo-Platonists than it does with the modern maker of dictionaries. The compound word, *Theophania* (from *theos*, “God,” and *phainesthai*, “to appear,”) does not simply mean “a manifestation of God to man by actual appearance” — an absurdity, by the way — but the actual presence of a God in man, a *divine* incarnation. When Simon the Magician claimed to be “God the Father,” what he wanted to convey was just that which has been explained, namely, that he was a *divine* incarnation of his own Father, whether we see in [53] the latter an Angel, a God,

⁴ Esoteric, as exoteric, Buddhism rejects the theory that Gautama was an incarnation or Avatara of Vishnu, but teaches the doctrine as herein explained. Every man has in him the materials, if not the conditions, for theophanic intercourse and Theopneusty, the inspiring “God” being, however, in every case, his own Higher Self, or divine prototype.

⁵ One entirely and absolutely purified, and having nothing in common with earth except his body.

⁶ *Mandukyopanishad*, 4.



or a Spirit; therefore he was called “that power of God which is called great,”⁷ or that power which causes the Divine Self to enshrine itself in its lower self — man.

This is one of the several mysteries of being and incarnation. Another is that when an Adept reaches during his lifetime that state of holiness and purity that makes him “equal to the Angels,” then at death his apparitional or astral body becomes as solid and tangible as was the late body, and is transformed into the real man.⁸ The old physical body, falling off like the cast-off serpent’s skin, the body of the “new” man remains either visible or, at the option of the Adept, disappears from view, surrounded as it is by the Akashic shell that screens it. In the latter case there are three ways open to the Adept:

(1) He may remain in the earth’s sphere (Vayu or Kama-loka), in that ethereal locality concealed from human sight save during flashes of clairvoyance. In this case his astral body, owing to its great purity and spirituality, having lost the conditions required for Akashic light (the nether or terrestrial ether) to absorb its semi-material particles, the Adept will have to remain in the company of disintegrating shells — doing no good or useful work. This, of course, cannot be.

(2) He can by a supreme effort of will merge entirely into, and get united with, his Monad. By doing so, however, he would

(a) deprive his Higher Self of posthumous Samadhi — a bliss which is not real Nirvana — the astral, however pure, being too earthly for such state; and

(b) he would thereby open himself to Karmic law; the action being, in fact, the outcome of personal selfishness — of reaping the fruits produced by and for oneself — alone.

(3) The Adept has the option of renouncing conscious Nirvana and rest, to work on earth for the good of mankind. This he can do in a twofold way:

[a] either, as above said, by consolidating his astral body into physical appearance, he can re-assume the self-same personality;

[b] or he can avail himself of an [54] entirely new physical body, whether that of a newly-born infant or — as Shankaracharya is reported to have done with the body of a dead Raja — by “entering a deserted sheath,” and living in it as long as he chooses. This is what is called “continuous existence.”

The Section entitled “The Mystery about Buddha” will throw additional light on this theory, to the profane incomprehensible, or to the generality simply *absurd*. Such is the doctrine taught, everyone having the choice of either fathoming it still deeper, or of leaving it unnoticed.

The above is simply a small portion of what might have been given in *Isis Unveiled*, had the time come then, as it has now. One cannot study and profit by Occult Science, unless one gives himself up to it — heart, soul, and body. Some of its truths are too awful, too dangerous, for the average mind. None can toy and play with such

⁷ Acts viii, 10 (Revised Version)

⁸ See the explanations given on the subject in “The Elixir of Life,” by G. Mitford (From a Chela’s Diary), *Five years of Theosophy*, London, 1885 [Theosophy Co. reprint, 1980.]



terrible weapons with impunity. Therefore it is, as St. Paul has it, “unlawful” to speak of them. Let us accept the reminder and talk only of that which is “lawful.”⁹



⁹ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (SOME REASONS FOR SECRECY) XIV, pp. 50-54

