

*Black Magic is in
full sway amidst mankind*



Overview of the main ideas¹

Live, ye saints, hiding your good works, and showing your sins.
— GAUTAMA BUDDHA

MANKIND IS AT BEST A SORRY HERD OF PANURGIAN SHEEP, following blindly the leader that happens to suit it at the moment. The majority, at any rate, hates to think for itself, and ignores the tremendous problems of man's inner nature.

“Old times” are just like “modern times”; nothing is changed as to magical practices except that they have become still more esoteric and arcane, and that the caution of the adepts increases in proportion to the traveller's curiosity.

Magic is indissolubly blended with the Religion of every country and is inseparable from its origin. It is as impossible for History to name the time when it was not, as that of the epoch when it sprang into existence, unless the doctrines preserved by the Initiates are taken into consideration.

Modern society, on the authority of some men of Science, calls Magic charlatany. Still, the whole ancient world, with its Scholars and Philosophers, its Sages and Prophets, believed in it. Where is the country in which it was not practiced? At what age was it banished, even from our own country? In the New World as in the Old Country (the latter far younger than the former), the Science of Sciences was known and practiced from the remotest antiquity.

The Mexicans had their Initiates, their Priest-Hierophants and Magicians, and their crypts of Initiation. The Mexican pyramids are those of Egypt, built according to the same secret canon of proportion as those of the Pharaohs, and the Aztecs appear to have derived their civilization and religion in more than one way from the same source as the Egyptians and, before these, the Indians. Among all these three peoples arcane Natural Philosophy, or Magic, was cultivated to the highest degree.

Herodotus knew that the *real* purpose of the pyramid was very different from that which he assigns to it. Were it not for his religious scruples, he might have added that, externally, it symbolized the creative principle of nature, and illustrated also the principles of geometry, mathematics, astrology, and astronomy. Internally, it was a

¹ Excerpted and compiled by the Series Editor *in lieu* of an abstract. Frontispiece: “The Truth,” by Natsuki.

majestic fane, in whose sombre recesses were performed the Mysteries, and whose walls had often witnessed the initiation-scenes of members of the royal family. The porphyry sarcophagus, which Professor Piazzi Smyth, Astronomer-Royal of Scotland, degrades into a corn-bin, was the *baptismal font*, upon emerging from which, the neophyte was “born again,” and became an *adept*.

Democritus applied himself to discover the method by which the Theurgists could produce them; in a word, his philosophy brought him to the conclusion that Magic was entirely confined to the application and the imitation of the laws and the works of nature.

The true Theosophist knows indubitably that the Secret Doctrine of the East contains the Alpha and the Omega of Universal Science; that in its obscure texts, under the luxuriant, though perhaps too exuberant, growth of allegorical Symbolism, lie concealed the corner- and the key-stones of all ancient and modern knowledge. That Stone, brought down by the Divine Builder, is now rejected by the too-human workman, and this because, in his lethal materiality, man has lost every recollection, not only of his holy childhood, but of his very adolescence, when he was one of the Builders himself; when “the morning stars sang together, and the Sons of God shouted for joy,” after they had laid the measures for the foundations of the earth — to use the deeply significant and poetical language of Job, the Arabian Initiate. But those who are still able to make room in their innermost selves for the Divine Ray, and who accept, therefore, the data of the Secret Sciences in good faith and humility, they know well that it is in this Stone that remains buried the absolute in Philosophy, which is the key to all those dark problems of Life and Death, some of which, at any rate, may find an explanation in these volumes.

Like an immense boa constrictor, Error, in every shape, encircles mankind, trying to smother in her deadly coils every aspiration towards truth and light. But Error is powerful only on the surface, prevented as she is by Occult Nature from going any deeper; for the same Occult Nature encircles the whole globe, in every direction, leaving not even the darkest corner unvisited. And, whether by phenomenon or miracle, by spirit-hook or bishop’s crook, Occultism must win the day, before the present era reaches “Śani’s (Saturn’s) triple septenary” of the Western Cycle in Europe, in other words — before the end of the twenty-first century A.D.

People laugh at Magic! Men of Science, Physiologists and Biologists, deride the potency and even the belief in the existence of what is called in vulgar parlance “Sorcery” and “Black Magic.” The archaeologists have their Stonehenge in England with its thousands of secrets, and its twin-brother Carnac of Brittany, and yet there is not one of them who even suspects what has been going on in its crypts, and its mysterious nooks and corners, for the last century. More than that, they do not even know of the existence of such “magic halls” in their Stonehenge, where curious scenes are taking place, whenever there is a new convert in view.

The conscience of the Roman Catholic priest is most likely at peace. He works *personally* for no selfish purpose, but with the object of “saving a soul” from “eternal damnation.” In his view, if Magic there be in it, it is holy, meritorious and divine Magic. Such is the power of blind faith. Hence, when we are assured by trustworthy

and respectable persons of high social standing, and unimpeachable character, that there are many well-organized societies among the Roman Catholic priests which, under the pretext and cover of Modern Spiritualism and mediumship, hold *séances* for the purposes of conversion by suggestion, directly and at a distance.¹

The Adept of the “Left Hand” throws a spell without ceremony and by his sole disapproval, upon those with whose conduct he is dissatisfied, and whom he thinks it necessary to punish; he casts a spell, even by his pardon, over those who do him injury, and the enemies of Initiates never long enjoy impunity for their wrong-doing. The executioners of martyrs always perish miserably; and the Adepts are the martyrs of Intelligence. Providence seems to despise those who despise them, and puts to death those who would seek to prevent them from living.

The legend of the Wandering Jew is the popular poetry of this arcanum. A people had sent a sage to crucifixion; that people had bidden him “Move on!” when he tried to rest for one moment. Well! that people will become subject, henceforth, to a similar condemnation; it will become entirely proscribed, and for long centuries it will be bidden “Move on! move on!” finding neither rest nor pity.

Our modern Symbologist is superlatively clever only at detecting phallic worship and sexual emblems even where none were ever meant. But for the true student of Occult Lore, White or Divine Magic could no more exist in Nature without its counterpart Black Magic, than day without night, whether these be of twelve hours or of six months’ duration. For him everything in that Nature has an occult — a bright and a night-side to it. True, Left-hand Magic has lost its name, and along with it its rights to recognition. But its practice is in daily use; and its progeny, “magnetic influence,” “power of oratory,” “irresistible fascination,” “whole audiences subdued and held as though under a spell,” are terms recognized and used by all, generally meaningless though they now are.

The real truth is that Magic is still in full sway amidst mankind, however blind the latter to its silent presence and influence on its members, however ignorant society may be, and remain, to its daily and hourly beneficent and maleficent effects. The world is full of such unconscious magicians — in politics as well as in daily life, in the Church as in the strongholds of Free-Thought. Most of those magicians are “sorcerers” unhappily, not metaphorically but in sober reality, by reason of their inherent selfishness, their revengeful natures, their envy and malice. The true student of Magic, well aware of the truth, looks on in pity, and, if he be wise, keeps silent. For every effort made by him to remove the universal cecity is only repaid with ingratitude, slander, and often curses, which, unable to reach him, will react on those who wish him evil. Lies and calumny — the latter a teething lie, adding actual bites to empty harmless falsehoods — become his lot, and thus the well-wisher is soon torn to pieces, as a reward for his benevolent desire to enlighten.

COMPILED BY THE SERIES EDITOR

¹ [See “Papal dispensation for murder and mayhem,” in the same series. — ED. PHIL.]

Black Magic is in full sway amidst mankind

No matter how blind mankind is to its silent presence and pernicious influence, no matter how ignorant society may be to its hourly maleficent effects.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (PRELIMINARY SURVEY) XIV pp. 16-33.

Initiates who have acquired powers and transcendental knowledge can be traced back to the Fourth Root Race from our own age. As the multiplicity of the subjects to be dealt with prohibits the introduction of such a historical chapter, which, however historical in fact and truth, would be rejected *a priori* as blasphemy and fable by both Church and Science — we shall only touch on the subject. Science strikes out, at its own sweet will and fancy, dozens of names of ancient heroes, simply because there is too great an element of myth in their histories; the Church insists that biblical patriarchs shall be regarded as historical personages, and terms her seven “Star-angels” the “historical channels and agents of the Creator.” Both are right, since each finds a strong party to side with it. Mankind is at best a sorry herd of Panurgian sheep, following blindly the leader that happens to suit it at the moment. Mankind — the majority at any rate — hates to think for itself. It resents as an insult the humblest invitation to step for a moment outside the old well-beaten tracks, and, judging for itself, to enter into a new path in some fresh direction. Give it an unfamiliar problem to solve, and if its mathematicians, not liking its looks, refuse to deal with it, the crowd, unfamiliar with mathematics, will stare at the unknown quantity, and getting hopelessly entangled in sundry x 's and y 's, will turn round, trying to rend to pieces the uninvited disturber of its intellectual Nirvana. This may, perhaps, account for the ease and extraordinary success enjoyed by the Roman Church in her conversions of nominal Protestants and Freethinkers, whose name is legion, but who have never gone to the trouble of thinking for themselves on these most important and tremendous problems of man's inner nature.

And yet, if the evidence of facts, the records preserved in History, and the uninterrupted anathemas of the Church against “Black Magic” and Magicians of the accursed race of Cain, are not to be heeded, our efforts will prove very puny indeed. When, for nearly two millenniums, a body of men has never ceased to lift its voice against *Black Magic*, the inference ought to be irrefutable that if Black Magic exists as a real fact, there must be somewhere its counterpart — *White Magic*. False silver coins could have no existence if there were no genuine silver money. Nature is dual in whatever she attempts, and this ecclesiastical persecution ought alone to have opened the eyes of the public long ago. However much travellers may be ready to pervert every fact with regard to abnormal powers with which certain men are gifted in “heathen” countries; however eager they may be to put false constructions on

such facts, and — to use an old proverb — “to call white swan black goose,” and kill it, yet the evidence of even Roman Catholic missionaries ought to be taken into consideration, once they swear in a body to certain facts. Nor is it because they choose to see Satanic agency in manifestations of a certain kind, that their evidence as to the existence of such powers can be disregarded. For what do they say of China? Those missionaries who have lived in the country for long years, and have seriously studied every fact and belief that may prove an obstacle to their success in making conversions, and who have become familiar with every exoteric rite of both the official religion and sectarian creeds — all swear to the existence of a certain body of men, whom no one can reach but the Emperor and a select body of high officials. A few years ago, before the war in Tonkin, the archbishop in Peking, on the report of some hundreds of missionaries and Christians, wrote to Rome the identical story that had been reported twenty-five years before, and had been widely circulated in clerical papers. They had fathomed, it was said, the mystery of certain official depositions, sent at times of danger by the Emperor and ruling powers to their Shen and Kuei, as they are called among the people. These Shen and Kuei, they explained, were the Genii of the mountains, endowed with the most miraculous powers. They are regarded as the protectors of China, by the “ignorant” masses; as the incarnation of Satanic power by the good and “learned” missionaries.

The Shen and Kuei are men belonging to another state of being to that of the ordinary man, or to the state they enjoyed while they were clad in their bodies. They are disembodied spirits, ghosts and larvae, living, nevertheless, in objective form on earth, and dwelling in the fastnesses of mountains, inaccessible to all but those whom they permit to visit them.¹

In Tibet certain ascetics are also called Lha, Spirits, by those with whom they do not choose to communicate. The Shen and Kuei, who enjoy the highest consideration of the Emperor and Philosophers, and of Confucianists who believe in no “Spirits,” are simply Lohans — Adepts who live in the greatest solitude in their unknown retreats.

But both Chinese exclusiveness and Nature seem to have allied themselves against European curiosity and — as it is sincerely regarded in Tibet — desecration. Marco Polo, the famous traveller, was perhaps the European who ventured farthest into the interior of these countries. What was said of him in 1876 may now be repeated:

The district of the Gobi wilderness, and, in fact, the whole area of Independent Tartary and Tibet is jealously guarded against foreign intrusion. Those who are permitted to traverse it are under the particular care and pilotage of certain agents of the chief authority, and are in duty bound to convey no intelligence respecting places and persons to the outside world. But for this restriction, even we might contribute to these pages accounts of exploration, adventure, and discovery that would be read with interest. The time will come, sooner or later, when the dreadful sand of the desert will yield up its long-buried secrets, and then there will indeed be unlooked-for mortifications for our modern vanity.

¹ This fact and others may be found in Chinese Missionary Reports, and in a work by Monseigneur Delaplace, a Bishop in China, *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, [Lyon, Chez L'Éditeur des Annales]

“The people of Pashai,”¹ says Marco Polo, the daring traveller of the thirteenth century, “are great adepts in sorceries and the *diabolic* arts.” And his learned editor adds: “This Pashai, or Udyāna, was the native country of Padma-Sambhava, one of the chief apostles of Lamaism, *i.e.*, of Tibetan Buddhism, and a great master of enchantments. The doctrines of Śākya, as they prevailed in Udyāna *in old times*, were probably strongly tinged with Śivaitic magic, and the Tibetans still regard that locality as the classic ground of sorcery and witchcraft.”

The “old times” are just like the “modern times”; nothing is changed as to magical practices except that they have become still more esoteric and arcane, and that the caution of the adepts increases in proportion to the traveller’s curiosity. Hiuen-Tsang says of the inhabitants: “The men . . . are fond of study, but pursue it with no ardour. *The science of magical formula has become a regular professional business with them.*”² We will not contradict the venerable Chinese pilgrim on this point, and are willing to admit that in the seventh century *some* people made “a professional business” of Magic; so, also, do *some* people now, but certainly not the true adepts. [Moreover, in that century, Buddhism had hardly penetrated into Tibet, and its races were steeped in the sorceries of the Bön — the pre-Lamaic religion.] It is not Hiuen-Tsang, the pious, courageous man, who risked his life a hundred times to have the bliss of perceiving Buddha’s shadow in the cave of Peshawar, who would have accused the holy lamas and monkish thaumaturgists of “making a professional business” of showing it to travellers. The injunction of Gautama, contained in his answer to King Prasenajit, his protector, who called on him to perform miracles, must have been ever-present to the mind of Hiuen-Tsang. “Great king,” said Gautama, “I do not teach the law to my pupils, telling them, ‘Go, ye saints, and before the eyes of the Brāhmans and householders perform, by means of your supernatural powers, miracles greater than any man can perform.’ I tell them, when I teach them the law, ‘Live, ye saints, *hiding your good works, and showing your sins.*”

Struck with the accounts of magical exhibitions witnessed and recorded by travellers of every age who had visited Tartary and Tibet, Colonel Yule comes to the conclusion that the natives must have had “at their command the whole encyclopaedia of modern ‘Spiritualists.’ Du Halde mentions among their sorceries the art of producing by their invocations the figures of Lao Tzu³ and their divinities *in the air*, and *of making a pencil to write answers to questions without anybody touching it.*”⁴

The former invocations pertain to religious mysteries of their sanctuaries; if done otherwise, or for the sake of *gain*, they are considered *sorcery*, necroman-

¹ The regions somewhere about Udyāna and Kashmir, as the translator and editor of Marco Polo (Colonel Henry Yule) believes. *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, I pp. 172-73; 2nd ed. London, J. Murray, 1875

² *Histoire de la vie de Hiuen-Tsang, etc.*, Vol. I of *Voyages des Pèlerins Bouddhistes*. Traduit du chinois par Stanislas Julien. Cf. Yule, *op. cit.*, I, 173-74.

³ Lao Tzu, the Chinese philosopher. [See “The Sayings of Lao Tzu - *tr.* Giles,” in our Living the Life Series.]

⁴ *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, Vol. I, p. 290 *fn.* (*tr.* by Col. H. Yule, London, J. Murray, 1871.)

cy, and strictly forbidden. The latter art, that of making a pencil write *without contact*, was known and practiced in China and other countries centuries before the Christian era. It is the ABC of Magic in those countries.

When Hiuen-Tsang desired to adore the shadow of Buddha, it was not to “professional magicians” that he resorted, but to the power of his own soul-invocation; the power of prayer, faith, and contemplation. All was dark and dreary near the cavern in which the miracle was alleged to take place sometimes. Hiuen-Tsang entered and began his devotions. He made one hundred salutations, but neither saw nor heard anything. Then, thinking himself too sinful, he cried bitterly, and despaired. But as he was going to give up all hope, he perceived on the eastern wall a feeble light, but it disappeared. He renewed his prayers, full of hope this time, and again he saw the light, which flashed and disappeared again. After this he made a solemn vow: he would not leave the cave till he had the rapture to see at last the shadow of the “Venerable of the Age.” He had to wait longer after this, for only after two hundred prayers was the dark cave suddenly “bathed in light, and the shadow of Buddha, of a brilliant white colour, rose majestically on the wall, as when the clouds suddenly open and, all at once, display the marvellous image of the Mountain of Light.’ A dazzling splendour lighted up the features of the divine countenance. Hiuen-Tsang was lost in contemplation and wonder, and would not turn his eyes away from the sublime and incomparable object.” Hiuen-Tsang adds in his own diary, *Si-yu-ki*,¹ that it is only when man “prays with sincere faith, and if he has received from above a hidden impression, [that] he sees the shadow clearly, but he cannot enjoy the sight for any length of time.”²

. . . From one end to the other the country is full of mystics, religious philosophers, Buddhist saints, and *magicians*. Belief in a spiritual world, full of invisible beings who, on certain occasions, appear to mortals objectively, is universal. “According to the belief of the nations of Central Asia,” remarks I.J. Schmidt, “the earth and its interior, as well as the encompassing atmosphere, are filled with Spiritual Beings, which exercise an influence, partly beneficent, partly malignant, on the whole of organic and inorganic nature. . . . Especially are Deserts and other wild or uninhabited tracts, or regions in which the influences of nature are displayed on a gigantic and terrible scale, regarded as the chief abode or rendez-vous of evil Spirits . . . And hence the steppes of Turan, and in particular the great sandy Desert of Gobi, have been looked on as the dwelling-place of malignant beings, from days of hoary antiquity.”³

. . . The treasures exhumed by Dr. Schliemann at Mycenae, have awakened popular cupidity, and the eyes of adventurous speculators are being turned toward the localities where the wealth of ancient peoples is supposed to be buried, in crypt or cave, or beneath sand or alluvial deposit. Around no other locality, not even Peru, hang so many traditions as around the Gobi Desert. In In-

¹ [tr. by Samuel Beal, London, Trübner, 1906; Rprnt. by Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi 1981]

² Max Müller, “Buddhist Pilgrims,” *Chips From a German Workshop*, Vol. I, pp. 272-73 [London, Longmans, Green & Co., 1867]

³ [Ssanang-Ssetzen Chungtaidschi, *Geschichte der Ost-Mongolen*, St. Petersburg, 1829, p. 352]

dependent Tartary this howling waste of shifting sand was once, if report speaks correctly, the seat of one of the richest empires the world ever saw. Beneath the surface is said to lie such wealth in gold, jewels, statuary, arms, utensils, and all that indicates civilization, luxury, and fine arts, as no existing capital of Christendom can show today. The Gobi sand moves regularly from east to west before terrific gales that blow continually. Occasionally some of the hidden treasures are uncovered, but not a native dares touch them, for the whole district is under the ban of a mighty spell. Death would be the penalty. Bahti — hideous, but faithful gnomes — guard the hidden treasures of this prehistoric people, awaiting the day when the revolution of cyclic periods shall again cause their story to be known for the instruction of mankind.¹

The above is purposely quoted from *Isis Unveiled* to refresh the reader's memory. One of the cyclic periods has just been passed, and we may not have to wait to the end of Mahā Kalpa to have revealed something of the history of the mysterious desert, in spite of the Bahti, and even the Rākshasas of India, not less "hideous." No tales or fictions were given in our earlier volumes, their chaotic state notwithstanding, to which chaos the writer, entirely free from vanity, confesses publicly and with many apologies.

It is now generally admitted that, from time immemorial, the distant East, India especially, was the land of knowledge and of every kind of learning. Yet there is none to whom the origin of all her Arts and Sciences has been so much denied as to the land of the primitive Āryans. From Architecture down to the Zodiac, every Science worthy of the name was imported by the Greeks, the mysterious Yavanas — agreeably with the decision of the Orientalists! Therefore, it is but logical that even the knowledge of Occult Science should be refused to India, since of its general practice in that country less is known than in the case of any other ancient people. It is so, simply because:

With the Hindus it was and is more esoteric, if possible, than it was even among the Egyptian priests. So sacred was it deemed that its existence was only half-admitted, and it was only practiced in public emergencies. *It was more than a religious matter, for it was [and is still] considered divine.* The Egyptian hierophants, notwithstanding the practice of a stern and pure morality, could not be compared for one moment with the ascetical Gymnosophists, either in holiness of life or miraculous powers developed in them by the supernatural abjuration of everything earthly. By those who knew them well they were held in still greater reverence than the Magians of Chaldea. "Denying themselves the simplest comforts of life, they dwelt in woods, and led the life of the most secluded hermits,"² while their Egyptian brothers at least congregated together. Notwithstanding the slur thrown by history on all who practiced magic and divination, it has proclaimed them as possessing the greatest secrets in medical knowledge and unsurpassed skill in its practice. Numerous are the volumes preserved in Hindu convents, in which are recorded the proofs of their learning.

¹ *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, pp. 599-601, 603, 598

² Ammianus Marcellinus, *Rom. Hist.*, XXIII, vi, 32, 33

To attempt to say whether these Gymnosophists were the real founders of Magic in India, or whether they only practiced what had passed to them as an inheritance from the earliest Rishis¹ — the seven primeval sages — would be regarded as a mere speculation by exact scholars.²

Nevertheless, this must be attempted. In *Isis Unveiled*, all that could be stated about Magic was set down in the guise of hints; and thus, owing to the great amount of material scattered over two large volumes, much of its importance was lost upon the reader, while it still more failed to draw his attention on account of the faulty arrangement. But hints may now grow into explanations. One can never repeat it too often — *Magic is as old as man*. It cannot any longer be called charlatantry or hallucination, when its lesser branches — such as mesmerism, now miscalled “hypnotism,” “thought reading,” “action by suggestion,” and what not else, only to avoid calling it by its right and legitimate name — are being so seriously investigated by the most famous Biologists and Physiologists of both Europe and America. Magic is indissolubly blended with the Religion of every country and is inseparable from its origin. It is as impossible [for History] to name the time when it was not, as that of the epoch when it sprang into existence, unless the doctrines preserved by the Initiates are taken into consideration. Nor can Science ever solve the problem of the origin of man if it rejects the evidence of the oldest records in the world, and refuses from the hand of the legitimate Guardians of the mysteries of Nature the key to Universal Symbology. Whenever a writer has tried to connect the first foundation of Magic with a particular country or some historical event or character, further research has shown his hypothesis to be groundless. There is a most lamentable contradiction among the Symbologists on this point. Some would have it that Odin, the Scandinavian priest and monarch, originated the practice of Magic some 70 years B.C., although it is spoken of repeatedly in the Bible. But as it was proven that the mysterious rites of the priestesses *Valas* (Völvas) were greatly anterior to Odin’s age,³ then Zoroaster came in for an attempt, on the ground that he was the founder of Magian rites; but Ammianus Marcellinus, Pliny and Arnobius, with other ancient Historians, have shown that Zoroaster was but a reformer of Magic as practiced by the Chaldeans and Egyptians, and not at all its founder.⁴

Who, then, of those who have consistently turned their faces away from Occultism and even Spiritualism, as being “unphilosophical” and therefore unworthy of scientific thought, has a right to say that he has studied the Ancients; or that, if he has studied them, he has understood all they have said? Only those who claim to be wiser than their generation, who think that they know all that the Ancients knew, and thus, knowing far more today, fancy that they are entitled to laugh at their ancient

¹ The Rishis were seven in number and lived in days anteceding the Vedic period. They were known as sages and held in reverence like demigods. [But they may now be shown as something more than merely mortal Philosophers. There are other groups of ten, twelve and even twenty-one in number.] Haug shows that they occupy in the Brāhmanical religion a position answering to that of the twelve sons of Jacob in the Jewish Bible. The Brāhmins claim to descend directly from these Rishis.

² *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. 1, p. 90 & fn.

³ See Münter, *On the most Ancient Religion of the North before the time of Odin*. In *Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de France*, tome II, pp. 230, 231.

⁴ Ammianus Marcellinus, XXIII, vi, 31-32; Arnobius, *Adv. Gent.*, I, ch. 5 & 52; Pliny, XXX, iv. [*Isis Unveiled*, I p. 19]

simple-mindedness and superstition; those, who imagine they have discovered a great secret by declaring the ancient royal sarcophagus, now empty of its King Initiate, to be a “corn-bin,” and the Pyramid that contained it, a granary, perhaps a wine-cellar!¹ Modern society, on the authority of some men of Science, calls Magic charlatantry. But there are eight hundred millions on the face of the globe who believe in it to this day; there are said to be twenty millions of perfectly sane and often very intellectual men and women, members of that same society, who believe in its phenomena under the name of Spiritualism. The whole ancient world, with its Scholars and Philosophers, its Sages and Prophets, believed in it. Where is the country in which it was not practiced? At what age was it banished, even from our own country? In the New World as in the Old Country (the latter far younger than the former), the Science of Sciences was known and practiced from the remotest antiquity. The Mexicans had their Initiates, their Priest-Hierophants and Magicians, and their crypts of Initiation. Of the two statues exhumed in the Pacific States, one represents a Mexican Adept, in the posture prescribed for the Hindu ascetic, and the other an Aztec Priestess, in a headgear which might be taken from the head of an Indian Goddess; while the “Guatemalan Medal” exhibits the “Tree of Knowledge” — with its hundreds of eyes and ears, symbolical of seeing and hearing — encircled by the “Serpent of Wisdom” whispering into the ear of the sacred bird. Bernal Díaz del Castillo, a follower of Cortéz, gives some idea of the extraordinary refinement, intelligence and civilization, and also of the magic arts of the people whom the Spaniards conquered by brute force. Their pyramids are those of Egypt, built according to the same secret canon of proportion as those of the Pharaohs, and the Aztecs appear to have derived their civilization and religion in more than one way from the same source as the Egyptians and, before these, the Indians. Among all these three peoples arcane Natural Philosophy, or Magic, was cultivated to the highest degree.

That it was natural, not supernatural, and that the Ancients so regarded it, is shown by what Lucian says of the “laughing Philosopher,” Democritus, who, he tells his readers,

Believed in no [miracles] . . . but applied himself to discover the method by which the theurgists could produce them; in a word, his philosophy brought him to the conclusion that Magic was entirely confined to the application and the imitation of the laws and the works of nature.²

Who then can still call the Magic of the Ancients “superstition”?

[In this respect the opinion of Democritus] is of the greatest importance to us, since the Magi left by Xerxes at Abdera, were his instructors, and he had stud-

¹ “The date of the hundreds of pyramids in the Valley of the Nile is impossible to fix by any of the rules of modern science; but Herodotus informs us that each successive king erected one to commemorate his reign, and serve as his sepulchre. But, Herodotus did not tell all, although he knew that the *real* purpose of the pyramid was very different from that which he assigns to it. Were it not for his religious scruples, he might have added that, externally, it symbolized the creative principle of nature, and illustrated also the principles of geometry, mathematics, astrology and astronomy. Internally, it was a majestic fane, in whose sombre recesses were performed the Mysteries, and whose walls had often witnessed the initiation-scenes of members of the royal family. The porphyry sarcophagus, which Professor Piazza Smyth, Astronomer-Royal of Scotland degrades into a corn-bin, was the *baptismal font*, upon emerging from which, the neophyte was ‘born again,’ and became an *adept*.” (*Isis Unveiled*, I pp. 518-19)

² *Philopseudes*

ied Magic, moreover, for a considerable time with the Egyptian priests.¹ For nearly ninety years of the one hundred and nine of his life, this great philosopher had made experiments, and noted them down in a book, which, according to Petronius,² *treated of nature* — facts that he had verified himself. And we find him not only disbelieving in and utterly rejecting *miracles*, but asserting that every one of those that were authenticated by eyewitnesses, had, and could have taken place, for all, even the most *incredible*, were produced according to the “*hidden laws of nature*.” . . . Add to this that Greece, the “later cradle of the arts and sciences,” and India, cradle of religions, were, and one of them still is, devoted to its study and practice — and who shall venture to discredit its dignity as a study, and its profundity as a science?³

No true Theosophist will ever do so. For, as a member of our great Oriental body, he knows indubitably that the Secret Doctrine of the East contains the Alpha and the Omega of Universal Science; that in its obscure texts, under the luxuriant, though perhaps too exuberant, growth of allegorical Symbolism, lie concealed the corner and the keys-tones of all ancient and modern knowledge. That Stone, brought down by the Divine Builder, is now rejected by the too-human workman, and this because, in his lethal materiality, man has lost every recollection, not only of his holy childhood, but of his very adolescence, when he was one of the Builders himself; when “the morning stars sang together, and the Sons of God shouted for joy,” after they had laid the measures for the foundations of the earth — to use the deeply significant and poetical language of Job, the Arabian Initiate. But those who are still able to make room in their innermost selves for the Divine Ray, and who accept, therefore, the data of the Secret Sciences in good faith and humility, they know well that it is in this Stone that remains buried the absolute in Philosophy, which is the key to all those dark problems of Life and Death, some of which, at any rate, may find an explanation in these volumes.

The writer is vividly alive to the tremendous difficulties that present themselves in the handling of such abstruse questions, and to all the dangers of the task. Insulting as it is to human nature to brand truth with the name of imposture, nevertheless we see this done daily and accept it. For every occult truth has to pass through such denial and its supporters through martyrdom, before it is finally accepted; though even then it remains but too often —

A crown

Golden in show, yet but a wreath of thorns.⁴

Truths that rest on Occult Mysteries will have, for one reader who may appreciate them, a thousand who will brand them as impostures. This is only natural, and the only means to avoid it would be for an Occultist to pledge himself to the Pythagorean “vow of silence,” and renew it every five years. Otherwise, cultured society — two-thirds of which think themselves in duty bound to believe that, since the first ap-

¹ Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives, etc.*, “Democritus,” §34, 35

² *Satyricon*, lxxxviii. Cf. M. Vitruvius Pollio, *On Architecture*, IX, iii

³ *Isis Unveiled*, I pp. 512, 560

⁴ [*Paradise Regained*, Bk. II, line 458, by John Milton. Many eds.]

pearance of the first Adept, one half of mankind practiced deception and fraud on the other half — cultured society will undeniably assert its hereditary and traditional right to stone the intruder. Those benevolent critics, who most readily promulgate the now famous axiom of Carlyle with regard to his countrymen, of being “mostly fools,” having taken preliminary care to include themselves safely in the only fortunate exceptions to this rule, will in this work gain strength and derive additional conviction of the sad fact, that the human race is simply composed of knaves and congenital idiots. But this matters very little. The vindication of the Occultists and their Archaic Science is working itself slowly but steadily into the very heart of society, hourly, daily, and yearly, in the shape of two monster branches, two stray offshoots of the trunk of Magic — Spiritualism and the Roman Church. Fact works its way very often through fiction. Like an immense boa constrictor, Error, in every shape, encircles mankind, trying to smother in her deadly coils every aspiration towards truth and light. But Error is powerful only on the surface, prevented as she is by Occult Nature from going any deeper; for the same Occult Nature encircles the whole globe, in every direction, leaving not even the darkest corner unvisited. And, whether by phenomenon or miracle, by spirit-hook or bishop’s crook, Occultism must win the day, before the present era reaches “Śani’s (Saturn’s) triple septenary” of the Western Cycle in Europe, in other words — before the end of the twenty-first century “A.D.”

Truly the soil of the long bygone past is not dead, for it has only rested. The skeletons of the sacred oaks of the ancient Druids may still send shoots from their dried-up boughs and be reborn to a new life, like that handful of corn, in the sarcophagus of a mummy 4,000 years old, which, when planted, sprouted, grew, and “gave a fine harvest.” Why not? Truth is stranger than fiction. It may any day, and most unexpectedly, vindicate its wisdom and demonstrate the conceit of our age, by proving that the Secret Brotherhood did not, indeed, die out with the Philaletheians of the last Eclectic School, that the Gnosis flourishes still on earth, and its votaries are many, albeit unknown. All this may be done by one, or more, of the great Masters visiting Europe, and exposing in their turn the alleged exposers and traducers of Magic. Such secret Brotherhoods have been mentioned by several well-known authors, and are spoken of in Mackenzie’s *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*. The writer now, in the face of the millions who deny, repeats boldly, that which was said in *Isis Unveiled*.

If they [the Initiates] have been regarded as mere fictions of the novelist, that fact has only helped the “brother-adepts” to keep their incognito the more easily

.

The Saint-Germains and Cagliostros of this century, having learned bitter lessons from the vilifications and persecutions of the past, pursue different tactics now-a-days.¹

These prophetic words were written in 1876, and verified in 1886. Nevertheless, we say again,

¹ *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 403

. . . there are numbers of these mystic Brotherhoods which have naught to do with “civilized” countries; and it is in their unknown communities that are concealed the skeletons of the past. These “adepts” could, if they chose, lay claim to strange ancestry, and exhibit verifiable documents that would explain many a mysterious page in both sacred and profane history.¹ Had the keys to the hieratic writings and the secret of Egyptian and Hindu symbolism been known to the Christian Fathers, they would not have allowed a single monument of old to stand unmutilated.²

But there exists in the world another class of adepts, belonging to a brotherhood also, and mightier than any other of those known to the profane. Many among these are personally good and benevolent, even pure and holy occasionally, as individuals. Pursuing collectively, however, and as a body, a selfish, one-sided object, with relentless vigour and determination, they have to be ranked with the adepts of the Black Art. These are our modern Roman Catholic “fathers” and clergy. Most of the hieratic writings and symbols have been deciphered by them since the Middle Ages. A hundred times more learned in secret Symbology and the old Religions than our Orientalists will ever be, the personification of astuteness and cleverness, every such adept in the art holds the keys tightly in his firmly clenched hand, and will take care the secret shall not be easily divulged, if he can help it. There are more profoundly learned Kabbalists in Rome and throughout Europe and America, than is generally suspected. Thus are the professedly public “brotherhoods” of “black” adepts more powerful and dangerous for Protestant countries than any host of Eastern Occultists. People laugh at Magic! Men of Science, Physiologists and Biologists, deride the potency and even the belief in the existence of what is called in vulgar parlance “Sorcery” and “Black Magic.” The archaeologists have their Stonehenge in England with its thousands of secrets, and its twin-brother Carnac of Brittany, and yet there is not one of them who even suspects what has been going on in its crypts, and its mysterious nooks and corners, for the last century. More than that, they do not even know of the existence of such “magic halls” in their Stonehenge, where curious scenes are taking place, whenever there is a new convert in view. Hundreds of experiments have been, and are being made daily at the Salpêtrière,³ and also by learned hypnotisers at their private houses. It is now proved that certain sensitives — both men and women — when commanded in trance, by the practitioner, who operates on them, to do a certain thing — from drinking a glass of water up to simulated murder — on recovering their normal state lose all remembrance of the order inspired — “suggested” it is now called by Science. Nevertheless, at the appointed hour and moment, the subject, though conscious and perfectly awake, is compelled by an irresistible power within himself to do that action which has been suggested to him by his mesmeriser; and that too, whatever it may be, and whatever the period fixed by him who controls the subject, that is to say, holds the latter under the power of his will, as a snake holds a bird under its fascination, and finally forces it to jump into its open jaws.

¹ This is precisely what some of them are preparing to do, and many a “mysterious page” in sacred and profane history are touched on in these pages. Whether or not their explanations will be accepted — is another question.

² *ibid.*

³ [Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital, the celebrated University Hospital in the 13th arrondissement of Paris.]

Worse than this: for the bird is conscious of the peril; it resists, however helpless in its final efforts, while the hypnotized subject does not rebel, but seems to follow the suggestions and voice of its own free will and soul. Who of our European men of Science, who believe in such *scientific* experiments — and very few are they who still doubt them now-a-days, and who do not feel convinced of their actual reality — who of them, it is asked, is ready to admit this as being Black Magic? Yet it is the *genuine*, undeniable and actual *fascination* and *sorcery* of old. The Mula-Kurumbas of Nilgiri do not proceed otherwise in their *envoûtements*¹ when they seek to destroy an enemy, nor do the Dugpas of Sikkim and Bhūtān know of any more potential agent than their *will*. Only in them that will does not proceed by jumps and starts, but acts with certainty; it does not depend on the amount of receptivity or nervous impressibility of the “subject.” Having chosen his victim and placed himself *en rapport* with him, the Dugpa’s “fluid” is sure to find its way, for his will is immeasurably more strongly developed than the will of the European experimenter — the self-made, untutored, and *unconscious* Sorcerer for the sake of Science — who has no idea (or belief either) of the variety and potency of the world-old methods used to develop this power, by the *conscious* sorcerer, he “Black Magician” of the East and West.

And now the question is openly and squarely asked: Why should not the fanatical and zealous priest, thirsting to convert some selected rich and influential member of society, use the same means to accomplish his end as the French Physician and experimenter uses in his case with his subject? The conscience of the Roman Catholic priest is most likely at peace. He works *personally* for no selfish purpose, but with the object of “saving a soul” from “eternal damnation.” In his view, if Magic there be in it, it is holy, meritorious and divine Magic. Such is the power of blind faith.

Hence, when we are assured by trustworthy and respectable persons of high social standing, and unimpeachable character, that there are many well-organized societies among the Roman Catholic priests which, under the pretext and cover of Modern Spiritualism and mediumship, hold *séances* for the purposes of conversion by suggestion, directly and at a distance — we answer: We know it. And when, moreover, we are told that whenever those priest-hypnotists are desirous of acquiring an influence over some individual or individuals, selected by them for conversion, they retire to an underground place, allotted and consecrated by them for such purposes (*viz.*, ceremonial Magic); and there, forming a circle, throw their combined will-power in the direction of that individual, and thus by repeating the process, gain a complete control over their victim — we again answer: Very likely. In fact we know the practice to be so, whether this kind of ceremonial Magic and *envoûtement* is practiced at Stonehenge or elsewhere. We know it, we say, through personal experience; and also because several of the writer’s best and most loved friends have been unconsciously drawn into the Romish Church and under her “benign” protection by such means. And, therefore, we can only laugh in pity at the ignorance and stubbornness of those deluded men of Science and cultured experimentalists who, while believing in the power of Dr. Charcot and his disciples to “envoûte” their subjects, find nothing better than a scornful smile whenever Black Magic and its potency are mentioned before

¹ [The magical practice of using an image or likeness of a person to influence his actions or destiny usually with malevolent intent.]

them. Éliphas Lévi, the Abbé-Kabbalist, died before Science and the Faculté de Médecine of France had accepted hypnotism and influence *par suggestion* among its scientific experiments, but this is what he said twenty-five years ago, in his *Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie*, on “Les Envoûtements et les Sorts”:

That which sorcerers and necromancers sought above all things in their evocations of the Spirit of Evil, was that magnetic potency which is the lawful property of the true Adept, and which they desired to obtain possession of for evil purposes . . . One of their chief aims was the power of spells or of deleterious influences . . . That power may be compared to real poisonings by a current of astral light. They exalt their will by means of ceremonies to the degree of rendering it venomous at a distance . . . We have said in our “Dogma” what we thought of magic spells, and how this power was exceedingly real and dangerous. The true Magus throws a spell without ceremony and by his sole disapproval, upon those with whose conduct he is dissatisfied, and whom he thinks it necessary to punish;¹ he casts a spell, even by his pardon, over those who do him injury, and the enemies of Initiates never long enjoy impunity for their wrong-doing. We have ourselves seen proofs of this fatal law in numerous instances. The executioners of martyrs always perish miserably; and the Adepts are the martyrs of intelligence. Providence [Karma] seems to despise those who despise them, and puts to death those who would seek to prevent them from living. The legend of the Wandering Jew is the popular poetry of this arcanum. A people had sent a sage to crucifixion; that people had bidden him “Move on!” when he tried to rest for one moment. Well! that people will become subject, henceforth, to a similar condemnation; it will become entirely proscribed, and for long centuries it will be bidden “Move on! move on!” finding neither rest nor pity.²

“Fables,” and “superstition,” will be the answer. Be it so. Before the lethal breath of selfishness and indifference every uncomfortable fact is transformed into meaningless fiction, and every branch of the once verdant Tree of Truth has become dried up and stripped of its primeval spiritual significance. Our modern Symbolist is superlatively clever only at detecting phallic worship and sexual emblems even where none were ever meant. But for the true student of Occult Lore, White or Divine Magic could no more exist in Nature without its counterpart Black Magic, than day without night, whether these be of twelve hours or of six months’ duration. For him everything in that Nature has an occult — a bright and a night-side to it. Pyramids and Druid’s oaks, dolmens and Bo-trees, plant and mineral — everything was full of deep significance and of sacred truths of wisdom, when the Arch-Druid performed his magic cures and incantations, and the Egyptian Hierophant evoked and guided

¹ This is incorrectly expressed. The true Adept of the “Right Hand” never punishes anyone, not even his bitterest and most dangerous enemy; he simply leaves the latter to his Karma, and Karma never fails to do so, sooner or later.

² *op. cit.*, II 239, 241, 240 [Paris, G. Bâillière, 1856 & 1861. HP Blavatsky’s translation is from Chapter XVI of the early 2-volume French editions. Later, in London, 1896, Arthur Edward Waite translated the 2 vols. under one title: *Transcendental Magic, Its Doctrine and Ritual*. The above quotation may be found on p. 317 of Waite’s edition published in Chicago by The de Laurence Co. Inc., in 1946. For a complete bio-bibliographic sketch of Éliphas Lévi, (pseud. of Alphonse-Louis Constant) see *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. I, pp. 491-95. — *Dara Eklund*.]

Chemnu, the “lovely spectre,” the female Frankenstein-creation of old, raised for the torture and test of the soul-power of the candidate for initiation, simultaneously with the last agonizing cry of his terrestrial human nature. True, Magic has lost its name, and along with it its rights to recognition. But its practice is in daily use; and its progeny, “magnetic influence,” “power of oratory,” “irresistible fascination,” “whole audiences subdued and held as though under a spell,” are terms recognized and used by all, generally meaningless though they now are. Its effects, however, are more determined and definite among religious congregations such as the Shakers, the Negro Methodists, and Salvationists, who call it “the action of the Holy Spirit” and “grace.” The real truth is that Magic is still in full sway amidst mankind, however blind the latter to its silent presence and influence on its members, however ignorant society may be, and remain, to its daily and hourly beneficent and maleficent effects. The world is full of such unconscious magicians — in politics as well as in daily life, in the Church as in the strongholds of Free-Thought. Most of those magicians are “sorcerers” unhappily, not metaphorically but in sober reality, by reason of their inherent selfishness, their revengeful natures, their envy and malice. The true student of Magic, well aware of the truth, looks on in pity, and, if he be wise, keeps silent. For every effort made by him to remove the universal cecity is only repaid with ingratitude, slander, and often curses, which, unable to reach him, will react on those who wish him evil. Lies and calumny — the latter a teething lie, adding actual bites to empty harmless falsehoods — become his lot, and thus the well-wisher is soon torn to pieces, as a reward for his benevolent desire to enlighten.

Enough has been given, it is believed, to show that the existence of a Secret Universal Doctrine, besides its practical methods of Magic, is no wild romance or fiction. The fact was known to the whole ancient world, and the knowledge of it has survived in the East, in India especially. And if there be such a Science, there must be naturally, somewhere, professors of it, or Adepts. In any case it matters little whether the Guardians of the Sacred Lore are regarded as living, actually existing men, or are viewed as myths. It is their Philosophy that will have to stand or fall upon its own merits, apart from, and independent of any Adepts. For in the words of the wise Gamaliel,¹ addressed by him to the Synedrion: “If this doctrine is false it will perish, and fall of itself; but if true, then — *it cannot be destroyed.*”



“Black versus White Magic, the two Opposing Powers,” in the same series.

¹ [Gamaliel the Elder (also spelled Gamliel); Hebrew: הזקן גמליאל רבן Greek: Γαμαλιήλ ὁ Πρεσβύτερος; or Rabban Gamaliel I, a leading authority in the Sanhedrin in the early 1st century CE.]