

*Madame Blavatsky about
to unveil Isis to the world.*



The cold, stony lips of the once vocal Memnon and of these hardy sphinxes, keep their secrets well. Who will unseal them? Who of our modern, materialistic dwarfs and unbelieving Sadducees will dare to lift the Veil of Isis?¹

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¹ Isis was baptised as “Geneviève” by Christendom!

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The sole purpose of philosophy to free the soul from the clutches of sense, and raise her to the majesty of pure thought, and to a vision of truth, goodness, and beauty.

Joan — Advance our waving colours on the walls!

— SHAKESPEARE, *King Henry VI*, part 1, act i, scene 6

My life has been devoted to the study of man, his destiny and his happiness.

— J.R. BUCHANAN, M.D., *Outlines of Lectures on Anthropology*

From *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I (BEFORE THE VEIL), pp. ix-xlv. Frontispiece by Ilene Meyer.

IT IS NINETEEN CENTURIES SINCE, as we are told, the night of Heathenism and Paganism was first dispelled by the divine light of Christianity; and two-and-a-half centuries since the bright lamp of Modern Science began to shine on the darkness of the ignorance of the ages. Within these respective epochs, we are required to believe, the true moral and intellectual progress of the race has occurred. The ancient philosophers were well enough for their respective generations, but they were illiterate as compared with modern men of science. The ethics of Paganism perhaps met the wants of the uncultivated people of antiquity, but not until the advent of the luminous “Star of Bethlehem,” were the true road to moral perfection and the way to salvation made plain. Of old, brutishness was the rule, virtue and spirituality the exception. Now, the dullest may read the will of God in His revealed word; men have every incentive to be good, and are constantly becoming better.

This is the assumption; what are the facts? On the one hand an unspiritual, dogmatic, too often debauched clergy; a host of sects, and three warring great religions; discord instead of union, dogmas without proofs, sensation-loving preachers, and wealth and pleasure-seeking parishioners’ hypocrisy and bigotry, begotten by the tyrannical exigencies of respectability, the rule of the day, sincerity and real piety exceptional. On the other hand, scientific hypotheses built on sand; no accord upon a single question; rancorous quarrels and jealousy; a general drift into materialism. A death-grapple of Science with Theology for infallibility — “a conflict of ages.”

At Rome, the self-styled seat of Christianity, the putative successor to the chair of Peter is undermining social order with his invisible but omnipresent network of bigoted agents, and incites them to revolutionize Europe for his temporal as well as spiritual supremacy. We see him who calls himself the “Vicar of Christ,” fraternizing with the anti-Christian Moslem against another Christian nation, publicly invoking the blessing of God upon the arms of those who have for centuries withstood, with [x]

fire and sword, the pretensions of his Christ to Godhood! At Berlin — one of the great seats of learning — professors of modern *exact* sciences, turning their backs on the boasted results of enlightenment of the post-Galilean period, are quietly snuffing out the candle of the great Florentine; seeking, in short, to prove the heliocentric system, and even the earth's rotation, but the dreams of deluded scientists, Newton a visionary, and all past and present astronomers but clever calculators of unverifiable problems.¹

Between these two conflicting Titans — Science and Theology — is a bewildered public, fast losing all belief in man's personal immortality, in a deity of any kind, and rapidly descending to the level of a mere animal existence. Such is the picture of the hour, illumined by the bright noonday sun of this Christian and scientific era!

Would it be strict justice to condemn to critical lapidation the most humble and modest of authors for *entirely rejecting the authority of both these combatants*? Are we not bound rather to take as the true aphorism of this century, the declaration of Horace Greeley: "I accept *unreservedly* the views of no man, living or dead"?² Such, at all events, will be our motto, and we mean that principle to be our constant guide throughout this work.

Among the many phenomenal outgrowths of our century, the strange creed of the so-called Spiritualists has arisen amid the tottering ruins of self-styled revealed religions and materialistic philosophies; and yet it alone offers a possible last refuge of compromise between the two. That this unexpected ghost of pre-Christian days finds poor welcome from our sober and positive century, is not surprising. Times have strangely changed; and it is but recently that a well-known Brooklyn preacher pointedly remarked in a sermon, that could Jesus come back and behave in the streets of New York, as he did in those of Jerusalem, he would find himself confined in the prison of the Tombs.³ What sort of welcome, then, could Spiritualism ever expect? True enough, the weird stranger seems neither attractive nor promising at first sight. Shapeless and uncouth, like an infant attended by seven nurses, it is coming out of its teens lame and mutilated. The name of its enemies is legion; its friends and protectors are a handful. But what of that? When was ever truth accepted *a priori*? Because the champions of Spiritualism have in their fanaticism magnified its qualities, and remained blind to its imperfections, that gives no excuse to doubt its reality. A forgery is impossible when we have no model to forge after. The fanaticism of Spiritualists is itself [xi] a proof of the genuineness and possibility of their phenomena. They give us facts that we may investigate, not assertions that we must believe without proof. Millions of reasonable men and women do not so easily succumb to collective hallucination. And so, while the clergy, following their own interpretations of the Bible, and science its self-made *Codex* of possibilities in nature, refuse it a fair hearing, *real* science and *true* religion are silent, and gravely wait further developments.

The whole question of phenomena rests on the correct comprehension of old philosophies. Whither, then, should we turn, in our perplexity, but to the ancient sages,

¹ See the last chapter of this volume, p. 622.

² *Recollections of a Busy Life*, p. 147

³ Henry Ward Beecher

since, on the pretext of superstition, we are refused an explanation by the modern? Let us ask them what they know of genuine science and religion; not in the matter of mere details, but in all the broad conception of these twin truths — so strong in their unity, so weak when divided. Besides, we may find our profit in comparing this boasted modern science with ancient ignorance; this improved modern theology with the “secret doctrines” of the ancient universal religion. Perhaps we may thus discover a neutral ground whence we can reach and profit by both.

Plato is the world’s interpreter; his wisdom is divine and eternal.

It is the Platonic philosophy, the most elaborate compend of the abstruse systems of old India, that can alone afford us this middle ground. Although twenty-two and a quarter centuries have elapsed since the death of Plato, the great minds of the world are still occupied with his writings. He was, in the fullest sense of the word, the world’s interpreter. And the greatest philosopher of the pre-Christian era mirrored faithfully in his works the spiritualism of the Vedic philosophers who lived thousands of years before himself, and its metaphysical expression. Vyāsa, Jainimi, Kapila, Brihaspati, Sumati, and so many others, will be found to have transmitted their indelible imprint through the intervening centuries upon Plato and his school. Thus is warranted the inference that to Plato and the ancient Hindu sages was alike revealed the same wisdom. So surviving the shock of time, what can this wisdom be but divine and eternal?

Plato taught justice as subsisting in the soul of its possessor and his greatest good. “Men, in proportion to their intellect, have admitted his transcendent claims.” Yet his commentators, almost with one consent, shrink from every passage which implies that his metaphysics are based on a solid foundation, and not on ideal conceptions.

But Plato could not accept a philosophy destitute of spiritual aspirations; the two were at one with him. For the old Grecian sage there was a single object of attainment: REAL KNOWLEDGE. He considered those only to be genuine philosophers, or students of truth, who possess the knowledge of the really-existing, in opposition to the mere seeming; of [xii] the *always-existing*, in opposition to the transitory; and of that which exists *permanently*, in opposition to that which waxes, wanes, and is developed and destroyed alternately. “Beyond all finite existences and secondary causes, all laws, ideas, and principles, there is an INTELLIGENCE or MIND [vous, nous, the spirit], the First Principle of all Principles, the Supreme Idea on which all other ideas are grounded; the Monarch and Lawgiver of the universe; the ultimate Substance from which all things derive their being and essence, the First and efficient Cause of all the order, and harmony, and beauty, and excellency, and goodness, which pervades the universe, who is called, by way of pre-eminence and excellence, the Supreme Good, the GOD (ο θεος) ‘the God over all’ (ο επι πασι θεος).”¹ He is not the truth nor the intelligence, but “the father of it.” Though this eternal essence of things may not be perceptible by our physical senses, it may be apprehended by the mind of those who are not wilfully obtuse. “To you,” said Jesus to his elect disciples, “it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them [the πολλοι] it is

¹ Cocker, *Christianity and Greek Philosophy*, ch. xi, p. 377

not given; . . . therefore speak I to them in parables [or allegories]; because they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.”¹

The philosophy of Plato, we are assured by Porphyry, of the Neoplatonic School, was taught and illustrated in the MYSTERIES. Many have questioned and even denied this; and Lobeck, in his *Aglaophamus*, has gone to the extreme of representing the sacred orgies as little more than an empty show to captivate the imagination. As though Athens and Greece would for twenty centuries and more have repaired every fifth year to Eleusis to witness a solemn religious farce! Augustine, the papa-bishop of Hippo, has resolved such assertions. He declares that the doctrines of the Alexandrian Platonists were the original esoteric doctrines of the first followers of Plato, and describes Plotinus as a Plato resuscitated. He also explains the motives of the great philosopher for veiling the interior sense of what he taught.² [xiii]

As to the *myths*, Plato declares in the *Gorgias* and the *Phædo* that they were the vehicles of great truths well worth the seeking. But commentators are so little *en rapport* with the great philosopher as to be compelled to acknowledge that they are ignorant where “the doctrinal ends, and the mythical begins.” Plato put to flight the popular superstition concerning magic and daimōns, and developed the exaggerated notions of the time into rational theories and metaphysical conceptions. Perhaps these would not quite stand the inductive method of reasoning established by Aristotle; nevertheless they are satisfactory in the highest degree to those who apprehend the existence of that higher faculty of insight or intuition, as affording a criterion for ascertaining truth.

His philosophy is the Wisdom of Love, not the love of wisdom.

Basing all his doctrines upon the presence of the Supreme Mind, Plato taught that the *nous*, spirit, or rational soul of man, being “generated by the Divine Father,” possessed a nature kindred, or even homogeneous, with the Divinity, and was capable of beholding the eternal realities. This faculty of contemplating reality in a direct and immediate manner belongs to God alone; the aspiration for this knowledge constitutes what is really meant by *philosophy* — the love of wisdom.³ The love of truth is

¹ *Gospel according to Matthew* xiii, 11, 13

² The accusations of atheism, the introducing of foreign deities, and corrupting of the Athenian youth, which were made against Socrates, afforded ample justification for Plato to conceal the arcane preaching of his doctrines. Doubtless the peculiar diction or “jargon” of the alchemists was employed for a like purpose. The dungeon, the rack, and the fagot were employed without scruple by Christians of every shade, the Roman Catholics especially, against all who taught even natural science contrary to the theories entertained by the Church. Pope Gregory the Great even inhibited the grammatical use of Latin as heathenish. The offense of Socrates consisted in unfolding to his disciples the arcane doctrine concerning the gods, which was taught in the Mysteries and [this] was a capital crime. He also was charged by Aristophanes with introducing the new god Dinos into the republic as the demiourgos or artificer, and the lord of the solar universe. The Heliocentric system was also a doctrine of the Mysteries; and hence, when Aristarchus the Pythagorean taught it openly, Cleanthes declared that the Greeks ought to have called him to account and condemned him for blasphemy against the gods. But Socrates had never been initiated, and hence divulged nothing which had ever been imparted to him.

³ [Cf. “The philosophers were scientists, and philosophy was a real science — not simply verbiage, as it is in our day. The term is composed of two Greek words whose meaning is intended to convey its secret sense, and ought to be interpreted as “wisdom of love.” Now it is in the last word, “love,” that lies hidden the esoteric significance: for “love” does not stand here as a noun, nor does it mean “affection” or “fondness,” but is the term used for Eros, that primordial principle in divine creation, synonymous with *ποθος*, [pothos] the abstract desire in Nature for procreation, resulting in an everlasting series of phenomena. It means “divine love,” that universal element of divine omnipresence spread throughout Nature and which is at once the chief cause and effect. The “wisdom of love” (or “philosophia”) meant attraction to and love of everything hidden beneath objective phenomena and the knowledge thereof. Philosophy meant the highest Adeptship — love of and assimilation with Deity. In his modesty Pythagoras even refused to be called a Philosopher (or one who knows every hidden thing in

inherently the love of good; and so predominating over every desire of the soul, purifying it and assimilating it to the divine, thus governing every act of the individual, it raises man to a participation and communion with Divinity, and restores him to the likeness of God. “This flight,” says Plato in the *Theætetus*,¹ “consists in becoming like God, and this assimilation is the becoming just and holy with wisdom.”

Life is more like a dream than a reality.

The basis of this assimilation is always asserted to be the pre-existence of the spirit or *nous*. In the allegory of the chariot and winged steeds, given in the *Phædrus*,² he represents the psychical nature as composite and two-fold; the *thymos*, or *epithymetic* part, formed from the substances of the world of phenomena; and the *θυμοειδης*, *thymoeides*, the essence of which is linked to the eternal world. The present earth-life is a fall and punishment. The soul dwells in “the grave which we call *the body*,” and in its incorporate state, and previous to the discipline of education, the noëtic or spiritual element is “asleep.” Life is thus a dream, rather than a reality. Like the captives in the subterranean cave, described in *The Republic*,³ the back is turned to the light, we perceive only the shadows of objects, and think them the actual realities. Is not this [xiv] the idea of *Māyā*, or the illusion of the senses in physical life, which is so marked a feature in Buddhistical philosophy? But these shadows, if we have not given ourselves up absolutely to the sensuous nature, arouse in us the reminiscence of that higher world that we once inhabited. “The interior spirit has some dim and shadowy recollection of its antenatal state of bliss, and some instinctive and proleptic yearnings for its return.” It is the province of the discipline of philosophy to disenthral it from the bondage of sense, and raise it into the empyrean of pure thought, to the vision of eternal truth, goodness, and beauty. “The soul,” says Plato, in the *Phædrus*, “cannot come into the form of a man if it has never seen the truth. This is a recollection of those things which our soul formerly saw when journeying with Deity, despising the things which we now say *are*, and looking up to that which REALLY IS. Wherefore the *nous*, or spirit, of the philosopher (or student of the higher truth) alone is furnished with wings; because he, to the best of his ability, keeps these things in mind, of which the contemplation renders even Deity itself divine. By making the right use of these things remembered from the former life, by constantly perfecting himself in the perfect mysteries, a man becomes truly perfect” — an initiate into the diviner wisdom.⁴

The life of the interior spirit is the death of the external nature.

And the night of the physical world denotes the day of the spiritual.

Hence we may understand why the sublimer scenes in the Mysteries were always in the night. The life of the interior spirit is the death of the external nature; and the night of the physical world denotes the day of the spiritual. Dionysus, the night-sun,

things visible; cause and effect, or absolute truth), and called himself simply a Sage, an aspirant to philosophy, or to Wisdom of Love — love in its exoteric meaning being as degraded by men then as it is now by its purely terrestrial application.” *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE ORIGIN OF THE MYSTERIES) XIV p. 255 *fn.* — ED. PHIL.]

¹ [176B]

² [246 *et seq.*]

³ [VII, 514 *et seq.*]

⁴ [249C]

is, therefore, worshipped rather than Helios, orb of day. In the Mysteries were symbolized the pre-existent condition of the spirit and soul, and the lapse of the latter into earth-life and Hades, the miseries of that life, the purification of the soul, and its restoration to divine bliss, or reunion with spirit. Theon, of Smyrna, in *Mathematica*, aptly compares the philosophical discipline to the mystic rites:

The ultimate aim of initiation is friendship and communion with God.

Philosophy may be called the initiation into the true sacred ceremonies, and the instruction in the genuine Mysteries; for there are five parts of this initiation:¹

- 1 The first is the preliminary purification [probationary], because participation in the mysteries must not be indiscriminately given to all those who desire it, but there are some aspirants whom the harbinger of the path separates out, such as those of impure hands, or whose speech lacks prudence; but even those who are not rejected must be subjected to certain purifications.
- 2 After this purification comes the tradition of sacred things [which is initiation proper].
- 3 In the third place comes the ceremony which is called the full vision [epopteia, 2 the highest degree of initiation].
- 4 The fourth stage, which is the end and the goal of the full vision, is the binding of the head the placement of crowns, in order that he who has received the sacred things, becomes capable in his turn of transmitting the tradition to the others, either through the dadouchia [the torch-bearing ceremonies], or through hierophantism [interpretation of sacred things], or by some other priestly work.
- 5 Finally the fifth stage, which is the crowning of all that has preceded it, is to be a friend of the Deity, and to enjoy the felicity which consists of living in a familiar commerce with him.³

[Plato] denominates εἰσοπτεία [or the revealing], a contemplation of things which are apprehended intuitively, absolute truths and ideas. But he also considers the binding of the head and coronation, as analogous to the authority which anyone receives from his instructors, of leading others into the same contemplation. And the fifth gradation is the most perfect felicity arising from

¹ [Blavatsky quotes from the *Mathematica*, as translated by Thos. Taylor in his *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries* of 1791. Since the description of the second stage of initiation is not entirely clear, we here give an alternative translation of the five stages by Robert and Deborah Lawlor from their *Theon of Smyrna's Mathematics Useful for Understanding Plato* of 1892; Introduction, pp. 8-9. A facsimile of this edition has been published by Wizards Bookshelf: San Diego 1979, as part of their Secret Doctrine Reference Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² [Theon appears to regard the final apocalypse or epopteia, like E. Pococke* to whose views allusion is made elsewhere. This writer says: "The initiated were styled ebaptoi (εἰσοπτεῖται)," and adds in a footnote — "Avaptoi, literally obtaining or getting." According to this the *epopteia* would imply the final reception of the interior doctrines. — Alexander Wilder.

* Author of *India In Greece, or Truth in Mythology*, London, 1861. Full text in our Hellenic and Hellenistic Papers Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ [Alternative translation by Thos. Taylor: "But the fifth, which is produced from all these, is *friendship and interior communion with God*, and the enjoyment of that felicity which arises from intimate converse with divine beings.]

[xv] hence, and, according to Plato, *an assimilation to divinity* as far as is possible to mankind.¹

Such is Platonism. “Out of Plato,” says Ralph Waldo Emerson, “come all things that are still written and debated among men of thought.” He absorbed the learning of his times — of Greece from Philolaus to Socrates; then of Pythagoras in Italy; then what he could procure from Egypt and the East. He was so broad that all philosophy, European and Asiatic, was in his doctrines; and to culture and contemplation he added the nature and qualities of the poet.

The followers of Plato generally adhered strictly to his psychological theories. Several, however, like Xenocrates, ventured into bolder speculations. Speusippus, the nephew and successor of the great philosopher, was the author of the *Numerical Analysis*,² a treatise on the Pythagorean numbers. Some of his speculations are not found in the written *Dialogues*; but as he was a listener to the unwritten lectures of Plato, the judgment of Enfield is doubtless correct, that he did not differ from his master. He was evidently, though not named, the antagonist whom Aristotle criticised, when professing to cite the argument of Plato against the doctrine of Pythagoras, that all things were in themselves numbers, or rather, inseparable from the idea of numbers. He especially endeavoured to show that the Platonic doctrine of ideas differed essentially from the Pythagorean, in that it presupposed numbers and magnitudes to exist apart from things. He also asserted that Plato taught that there could be no *real* knowledge, if the object of that knowledge was not carried beyond or above the sensible.

Aristotle, who was not an initiate. He misrepresented Plato and mocked Pythagoras.

But Aristotle was no trustworthy witness. He misrepresented Plato, and he almost caricatured the doctrines of Pythagoras. There is a canon of interpretation, which should guide us in our examinations of every philosophical opinion:

The human mind has, under the necessary operation of its own laws, been compelled to entertain the same fundamental ideas, and the human heart to cherish the same feelings in all ages.

It is certain that Pythagoras awakened the deepest intellectual sympathy of his age, and that his doctrines exerted a powerful influence upon the mind of Plato. His cardinal idea was that there existed a permanent principle of unity beneath the forms, changes, and other phenomena of the universe. Aristotle asserted that he taught that “numbers are the first principles of all entities.” Ritter has expressed the opinion that the formula of Pythagoras should be taken symbolically, which is doubtless correct. Aristotle goes on to associate these *numbers* with the “forms” and “ideas” of Plato. He [xvi] even declares that Plato said: “forms are numbers,” and that “ideas are substan-

¹ See Thomas Taylor, *The Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*. New York: J.W. Bouton, 1875; 3rd ed., with introduction, notes, emendations, and glossary by Alexander Wilder. pp. 46-47 [A facsimile of this edition has been published by Wizards Bookshelf: San Diego 1997, as part of their Secret Doctrine Reference Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² [Attributed to Pseudo-Iamblichus, *Theologumena Arithmeticae*, a compilation from the writings of Anatolius, Nicomachus of Gerasa, and possibly Iamblichus himself.]

tial existences — real beings.”¹ Yet Plato did not so teach. He declared that the final cause was the Supreme Goodness — *το αγαθου*. “Ideas are objects of pure conception for the human reason, and they are attributes of the Divine Reason.”² Nor did he ever say that “forms are numbers.” What he did say may be found in the *Timæus*: “God formed things as they first arose according to forms and numbers.”³

Yet the world is a living arithmetic in its development, a realized geometry in its repose.

It is recognized by modern science that all the higher laws of nature assume the form of quantitative statement. This is perhaps a fuller elaboration or more explicit affirmation of the Pythagorean doctrine. Numbers were regarded as the best representations of the laws of harmony which pervade the cosmos. We know too that in chemistry the doctrine of atoms and the laws of combination are actually and, as it were, arbitrarily defined by numbers. As Mr. W. Archer Butler has expressed it: “The world is, then, through all its departments, a living arithmetic in its development, a realized geometry in its repose.”

The key to the Pythagorean dogmas is the general formula of unity in multiplicity, the one evolving the many and pervading the many. This is the ancient doctrine of emanation in few words. Even the apostle Paul accepted it as true. “*ὅτι ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ δι’ αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα . . .*” *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things.*⁴ This, as we can see by the following quotation, is purely Hindu and Brāhmanical:

When the dissolution [*Pralaya*] had arrived at its term, the great Being [*Paramātmān* or *Para-Purusha*], the Lord existing through himself, out of whom and through whom all things were, and are and will be . . . resolved to emanate from his own substance the various creatures.⁵

Number 10 is the symbol and expression of a celestial ray radiating from The One and emanating, through endless differentiations, in the abyss of the phenomenal world — a chaos to the sense, a cosmos to the reason.

The mystic Decad $1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10$ is a way of expressing this idea. The One is God, the Two, matter; the Three, combining Monad and Duad, and partaking of the nature of both, is the phenomenal world; the Tetrad, or form of perfection, expresses the emptiness of all; and the Decad, or sum of all, involves the entire cosmos. The universe is the combination of a thousand elements, and yet the expression of a single spirit — a chaos to the sense, a cosmos to the reason.⁶

¹ [*Metaphysics*, I, vi]

² [V. Cousin, *Cours de l’Histoire de la philosophie moderne*, Ser. 2, Paris, 1847; pp. 93-94]

³ [53B]

⁴ [*Romans* xi, 36]

⁵ *Mānava-Dharma-Śāstra*, Book I, ślokaś 6-8

⁶ [Consult “Proposition 1 - Chaos to sense, latent deity to reason,” from our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series, herein inserted on page 19. — ED. PHIL.]

The whole of this combination of the progression of numbers in the idea of creation is Hindu. The Being existing through himself, Svayambhū or Svāyambhuva,¹ as he is called by some, is *one*. He emanates from himself the *creative faculty*, Brahmā or Purusha (the divine male), and the one [xvii] becomes *Two*; out of this Duad, union of the purely intellectual principle with the principle of matter, evolves a third, which is Virāj, the phenomenal world. It is out of this invisible and incomprehensible trinity, the Brāhmanic Trimūrṭi, that evolves the second triad which represents the three faculties — the creative, the conservative, and the transforming. These are typified by Brahmā, Vishnu, and Śiva, but are again and ever blended into one. *Unity*, Brahmā, or as the *Vedas* called him, Tridandin, is the god triply manifested, which gave rise to the symbolical *Aum* or the abbreviated Trimūrṭi. It is but under this trinity, ever active and tangible to all our senses, that the invisible and unknown Monas can manifest itself to the world of mortals. When he becomes Śarīra, or he who puts on a visible form, he typifies all the principles of matter, all the germs of life, he is Purusha, the god of the three visages, or triple power, the essence of the Vedic triad.

Let the Brahmas know the sacred Syllable [Aum], the three words of the Sāvitrī, and read the *Vedas* daily.²

After having produced the universe, He whose power is incomprehensible vanished again, absorbed in the Supreme Soul. . . . Having retired into the primitive darkness, the great Soul remains within the unknown, and is void of all form. . . .

When having again reunited the subtile elementary principles, it introduces itself into either a vegetable or animal seed, it assumes at each a new form.

It is thus that, by an alternative waking and rest, the Immutable Being causes to revive and die eternally all the existing creatures, active and inert.³

He who has studied Pythagoras and his speculations on the Monad, which, after having emanated the Duad retires into silence and darkness, and thus creates the Triad can realize whence came the philosophy of the great Samian Sage, and after him that of Socrates and Plato.

Speusippus seems to have taught that the psychical or thymetic soul was immortal as well as the spirit or rational soul, and further on we will show his reasons. He also — like Philolaus and Aristotle, in his disquisitions upon the soul — makes of æther an element; so that there were five principal elements to correspond with the five regular figures in Geometry. This became also a doctrine of the Alexandrian school.⁴ Indeed, there was much in the doctrines of the *Philaletheians*, which did not appear in the works of the older Platonists, but was doubtless taught in substance by the philosopher himself, but with his usual reticence was not committed to writing as being too arcane for promiscuous publication. Speusippus and Xenocrates after him, held, like their great master, that the *anima* [xviii] *mundi*, or world-soul, was not the

¹ [Consult “Svabhāva and Svayambhū” in our Confusing Words Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² *Manu*, Book IV, śloka 125

³ *ibid.*, Book I, ślokas 51-57

⁴ Thomas Taylor, *Theoretic Arithmetic*, London 1816; “On Pythagorean Numbers,” p. 62

Deity, but a manifestation. Those philosophers never conceived of the One as an *animate nature*. The original One did not *exist*, as we understand the term.¹ Not till he had united with the many — emanated existence (the monad and duad) was a being produced. The *τιμων*, honoured — the something manifested, dwells in the centre as in the circumference, but it is only the reflection of the Deity — the World-Soul.² In this doctrine we find the spirit of esoteric Buddhism.

A man's idea of God is that image of blinding light that he sees reflected in the concave mirror of his own soul, and yet this is not, in very truth, God, but only His reflection. His glory is there, but, it is the light of his own Spirit that the man sees, and it is all he can bear to look upon. *The clearer the mirror, the brighter will be the divine image*. But the external world cannot be witnessed in it at the same moment. In the ecstatic Yogin, in the illuminated Seer, the spirit will shine like the noonday sun; in the debased victim of earthly attraction, the radiance has disappeared, for the mirror is obscured with the stains of matter. Such men deny their God, and would willingly deprive humanity of soul at one blow.

NO GOD, NO SOUL? Dreadful, annihilating thought! The maddening nightmare of a lunatic-Atheist; presenting before his fevered vision, a hideous, ceaseless procession of sparks of cosmic matter created by *no one*; self-appearing, self-existent, and self-developing; this Self [is] *no Self*, for it is *nothing* and *nobody*; floating onward from *nowhence*,³ it is propelled by no Cause, for there is none, and it rushes *nowhither*. And this in a circle of Eternity blind, inert, and — CAUSELESS. What is even the erroneous conception of the Buddhistic Nirvāna in comparison! The Nirvāna is preceded by numberless spiritual transformations and metempsychoses,⁴ during which the entity loses not for a second the sense of its own individuality, and which may last for millions of ages before the Final No-Thing is reached.

Though some have considered Speusippus as inferior to Aristotle, the world is nevertheless indebted to him for defining and expounding many things that Plato had left obscure in his doctrine of the Sensible and Ideal. His maxim was:

The Immaterial is known by means of scientific thought, the Material by scientific perception.⁵

Intelligence, Conscience, and Will, are the three degrees of inner knowledge of the Laws of Manu. They answer to the Thought, Perception, and Intuition of Xenocrates.

The scholar of the Platonic Academy utterly despised utterly everything worldly, except the highest divine virtue.

Xenocrates expounded many of the unwritten theories and teachings of his master. He too held the Pythagorean doctrine and his system of numerals and mathematics in the highest estimation. Recognizing but three degrees of knowledge — *Thought*,

¹ [i.e., First Logos] Plato, *Parmenides*, 141E

² Cf. Strobæus, *Eclogues* i, 862

³ [from nowhere]

⁴ [Consult "Transmigration, Reincarnation, Gilgulim" in our Confusing Words Series. — ED. PHIL.]

⁵ Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Mathematicos*, (probably incomplete), VII, 145

Perception, and *Envisagement* (or knowledge by *Intuition*), he made the former busy itself with all that [xix] which is *beyond* the heavens; Perception with things in the heavens; Intuition with the heavens themselves.

We find again these theories, and nearly in the same language in the *Mānava-Dharma-Śāstra*,¹ when speaking of the creation of man:

He [the Supreme] drew from his own essence the immortal breath which *perisheth not in the being*, and to this soul of the being he gave the Ahamkāra [conscience of the *ego*] sovereign guide.

Then he gave to that soul of the being (man) the intellect formed of *the three qualities*, and the five organs of the outward perception.

These three qualities are Intelligence, Conscience, and Will; answering to the Thought, Perception, and Envisagement of Xenocrates. The relation of numbers to Ideas was developed by him further than by Speusippus, and he surpassed Plato in his definition of the doctrine of Indivisible Magnitudes. Reducing them to their ideal primary elements, he demonstrated that every figure and form originated out of the smallest indivisible line. That Xenocrates held the same theories as Plato in relation to the human soul (supposed to be a number) is evident, though Aristotle contradicts this, like every other teaching of this philosopher.² This is conclusive evidence that many of Plato's doctrines were delivered orally, even were it shown that Xenocrates and not Plato was the first to originate the theory of indivisible magnitudes. He derives the Soul from the first Duad, and calls it a self-moved number.³ Theophrastus remarks that he entered and eliminated this Soul theory more than any other Platonist. He built upon it the cosmological doctrine, and proved the necessary existence in every part of the universal space of a successive and progressive series of animated and thinking though spiritual beings.⁴ The Human Soul with him is a compound of the most spiritual properties of the Monad and the Duad, possessing the highest principles of both. If, like Plato and Proclus, he refers to the Elements as to Divine Powers, and calls them gods, neither himself nor others connected any anthropomorphic idea with the appellation. Krische remarks that he called them gods only that these elementary powers should not be confounded with the daimōns of the nether world (the Elementary Spirits).⁵ As the Soul of the World permeates the whole Cosmos, even beasts must have in them something divine.⁶ This, also, is the doctrine of Buddhists and the Hermetists, and *Manu* endows with a living soul even the plants and the tiniest blade of grass.⁷

¹ [Book I, 14-15. Also known as *Manusmriti* or the *Laws of Manu*.]

² *Metaphysics* xiii

³ Thos. Taylor, Appendix to *Timæus*

⁴ Strobæus, *Eclogues* i, 62

⁵ Krische, *Forschungen*, pp. 332 et seq.

⁶ Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* V, xiii

⁷ *Ordinances of Manu* i, 14, 15, 56

The Daimonion of Socrates was his Divine Voice that guided him, guarded him, and inspired him all his life.

The daimōns, according to this theory, are intermediate beings [xx] between the divine perfection and human sinfulness,¹ and he divides them into classes, each subdivided in many others. But he states expressly that the individual or personal soul is the leading guardian daimōn of every man, and that no daimōn has more power over us than our own. Thus the *Daimōnion* of Socrates is the god or Divine Entity which inspired him all his life. It depends on man either to open or close his perceptions to the Divine voice. Like Speusippus he ascribed immortality to the *ψυχη*, psychical body, or irrational soul. But some Hermetic philosophers have taught that the soul has a separate continued existence only so long as in its passage through the spheres any material or earthly particles remain incorporated in it; and that when absolutely purified, the latter are *annihilated*, and the quintessence of the soul alone becomes blended with its *divine* spirit (the *Rational*), and the two are thenceforth one.

Zeller states that Xenocrates forbade the eating of animal food, not because he saw in beasts something akin to man, as he ascribed to them a dim consciousness of God, but, “for the opposite reason, lest the irrationality of animal souls might thereby obtain a certain influence over us.”² But we believe that it was rather because, like Pythagoras, he had had the Hindu sages for his masters and models. Cicero depicted Xenocrates utterly despising everything except the highest virtue;³ and describes the stainlessness and severe austerity of his character.⁴

To free ourselves from the subjection of sensuous existence, to conquer the Titanic elements in our terrestrial nature through the Divine one, is our problem.

Zeller makes him say:

Purity, even in the secret longings of our heart, is the greatest duty, and only philosophy and the initiation into the Mysteries help toward the attainment of this object.⁵

Crantor, another philosopher associated with the earliest days of Plato’s Academy, conceived the human soul as formed out of the primary substance of all things, the Monad or *One*, and the Duad or the *Two*. Plutarch speaks at length of this philosopher, who like his master believed in souls being distributed in earthly bodies as an exile and punishment.

Heraclitus, though some critics do not believe him to have strictly adhered to Plato’s primal philosophy,⁶ taught the same ethics. Zeller presents him to us imparting, like Hiketas and Ekphantos, the Pythagorean doctrine of the diurnal rotation of the earth and the immobility of the fixed stars, but adds that he was ignorant of the annual

¹ Plutarch, *De Iside*, § 25

² Zeller, *Plato and the Older Academy*, p. 597

³ *Tusculan Disputations* V, § xviii; [full text in our Down to Earth Series].

⁴ *ibid.*, § xxxii

⁵ Zeller, *op. cit.*, pp. 601-2

⁶ *ibid.*, ch. xvi

revolution of the earth around [xxi] the sun, and of the heliocentric system.¹ But we have good evidence that the latter system was taught in the Mysteries, and that Socrates died for *atheism*, *i.e.*, for divulging this sacred knowledge. Heraclitus adopted fully the Pythagorean and Platonic views of the human soul, its faculties and its capabilities. He describes it as a luminous, highly æthereal essence. He affirms that souls inhabit the Milky Way before descending “into generation” or sublunary existence. His daimōns or spirits are airy and vaporous bodies.

In the *Epinomis*² is fully stated the doctrine of the Pythagorean numbers in relation to created things. As a true Platonist, its author maintains that wisdom can only be attained by a thorough inquiry into the occult nature of the creation; it alone assures us an existence of bliss after death. The immortality of the soul is greatly speculated upon in this treatise; but its author adds that we can attain to this knowledge only through a complete comprehension of the numbers; for the man, unable to distinguish the straight line from a curved one will never have wisdom enough to secure a mathematical demonstration of the *invisible*, *i.e.*, we must assure ourselves of the objective existence of our soul (astral body) before we learn that we are in possession of a divine and immortal spirit. Iamblichus says the same thing; adding, moreover, that it is a secret belonging to the highest initiation. The Divine Power, he says, always felt indignant with those “who rendered manifest the composition of the *icosagonus*,” *viz.*, who delivered the method of inscribing in a sphere the dodecahedron.³

Every star, like our earth, has a soul of its own. And every atom of matter is impregnated with the divine influx of the soul of the world. It breathes and lives; it feels and suffers, as well as enjoying life in its way.

The idea that “numbers” possessing the greatest virtue, produce always what is good and never what is evil, refers to justice, equanimity of temper, and everything that is harmonious. When the author speaks of every star as an individual soul, he only means what the Hindu initiates and the Hermetists taught before and after him, *viz.*: that every star is an independent planet, which, like our earth, has a soul of its own, every atom of matter being impregnated with the divine influx of the soul of the world. It breathes and lives; it feels and suffers as well as enjoys life in its way. What naturalist is prepared to dispute it on good evidence? Therefore, we must consider the celestial bodies as the images of gods; as partaking of the divine powers in their substance; and though they are not immortal in their soul entity, their agency in the economy of the universe is entitled to divine honours, such as we pay to minor gods. The idea is plain, and one must be malevolent indeed to misrepresent it. If the author of *Epinomis* places these fiery gods higher than the animals, plants, and even mankind,⁴ all of which, as earthly creatures, are assigned by him [xxii] a lower place, who

¹ Zeller, *op. cit.*, p. 608

² [A dialogue attributed to Plato. Some sources in antiquity began attributing its authorship to Philip of Opus, and many modern scholars consider it spurious. The dialogue continues the discussion undertaken in Plato’s *Laws*.]

³ One of the five solid figures in Geometry.

⁴ [938D-E]

can prove him wholly wrong? One must needs go deep indeed into the profundity of the abstract metaphysics of the old philosophies, who would understand that their various embodiments of their conceptions are, after all, based upon an identical apprehension of the nature of the First Cause, its attributes and method.

Again when the author of *Epinomis* locates between these highest and lowest gods (embodied souls) three classes of daimōns, and peoples the universe with invisible beings, he is more rational than our modern scientists, who make between the two extremes one vast hiatus of being, the playground of blind forces. Of these three classes the first two are invisible; their bodies are pure æther and fire (*planetary spirits*); the dæmons of the third class are clothed with vapoury bodies; they are usually invisible, but sometimes making themselves concrete become visible for a few seconds. These are the earthly spirits, or our astral souls.¹

It is these doctrines, which, studied analogically, and on the principle of correspondence, led the ancient, and may now lead the modern Philaletheian step by step toward the solution of the greatest mysteries. On the brink of the dark chasm separating the spiritual from the physical world stands modern science, with eyes closed and head averted, pronouncing the gulf impassable and bottomless, though she holds in her hand a torch which she need only lower into the depths to show her her mistake. But across this chasm, the patient student of Hermetic philosophy has constructed a bridge.

In his *Fragments of Science*² Tyndall makes the following sad confession: “If you ask me whether science has solved, or is likely in our day to solve the problem of this universe, I must shake my head in doubt.” If moved by an afterthought, he corrects himself later, and assures his audience that experimental evidence has helped him to discover, in the opprobrium-covered matter, the “promise and potency of all terrestrial life,” he only jokes. It would be as difficult for Professor Tyndall to offer any ultimate and irrefutable proofs of what he asserts, as it was for Job to insert a hook into the nose of the Leviathan.³



Dawn of Chaos–Theos–Cosmos (Drawing).

There now follows a drawing accompanying “The Rope of the Angels,” from our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. Also consult “Chaos to sense, latent deity to reason,” in the same Series. — ED. PHIL.

¹ [*Epinomis* 985-86]

² [Lecture on “Matter and Force”]

³ [The sea monster of the Old Testament]

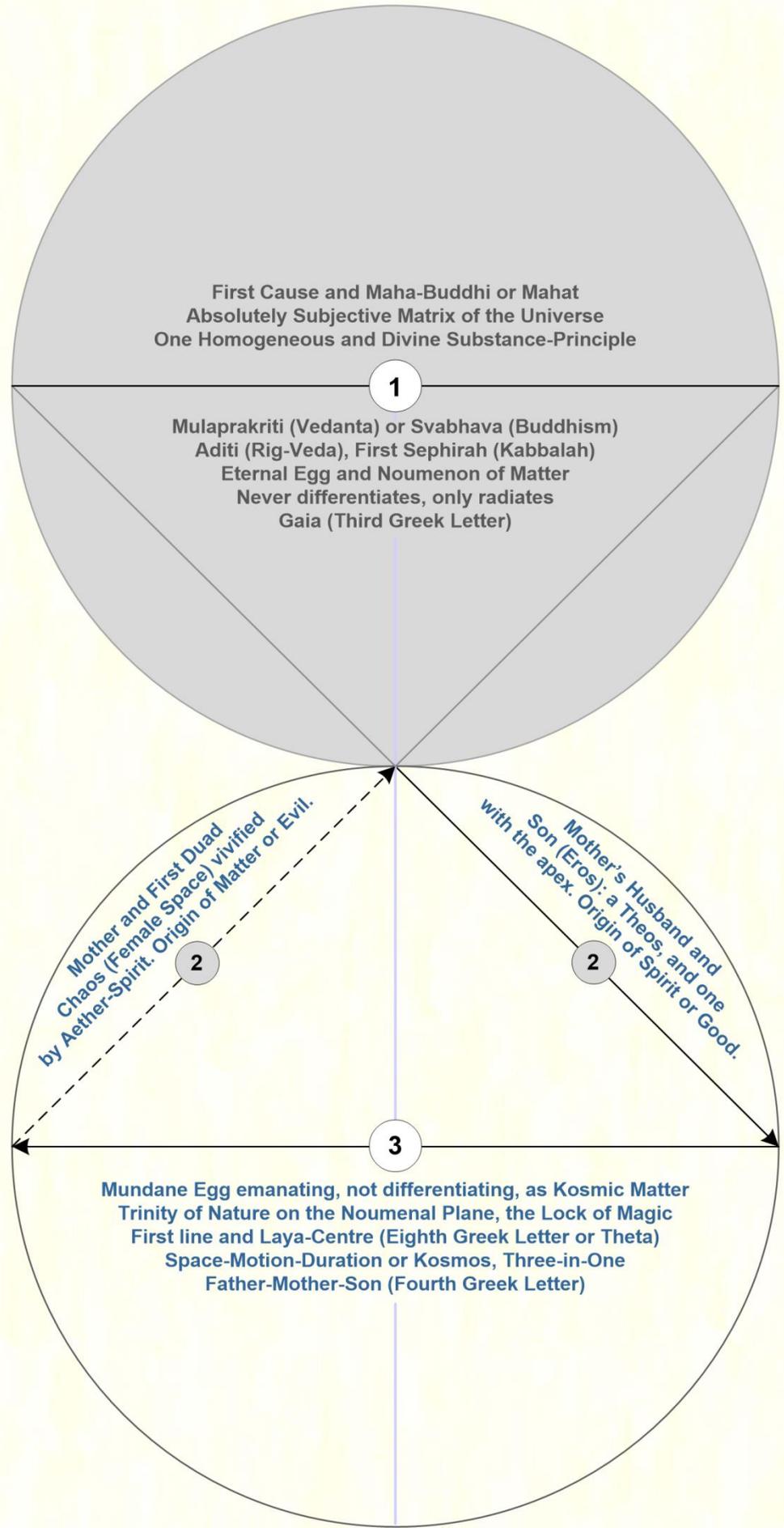
First Triangle in the Manifested World
Dawn of Chaos–Theos–Kosmos

“Father in Heaven” of the Churches
 A reflection of the Monad in
 the Universe of Illusion.
 Horus the Younger



“Father who is in Secret” of Matthew
 Uncreated Pythagorean Monad,
 a radiation of Parabrahman.
 Horus the Elder

Chaos–Theos–Kosmos in Pralaya
Unity of First Logos and Hidden Deity



DAWN OF CHAOS–THEOS–KOSMOS

Accompanying Proposition 1 – The Rope of the Angels

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Glossary of philosophical terms.

To avoid confusion that might easily arise by the frequent employment of certain terms in a sense different from that familiar to the reader, a few explanations will be timely. We desire to leave no pretext either for misunderstanding or misrepresentation. Magic may have one signification to one class of readers and another to another class. We shall give it the meaning which it has in the minds of its Oriental students and practitioners. And so with the words *Hermetic Science*, *Occultism*, *Hierophant*, *Adept*, *Sorcerer*, etc.; there has been little agreement of late as to their meaning. Though the distinctions between the terms are very often [xxiii] insignificant — merely ethnic — still, it may be useful to the general reader to know just what that is. We give a few alphabetically.

Æthrobasy, is the Greek name for walking or being lifted in the air; *levitation*, so-called, among modern spiritualists. It may be either conscious or unconscious; in the one case, it is magic; in the other, either disease or a power which requires a few words of elucidation.

A symbolical explanation of æthrobasy is given in an old Syriac manuscript which was translated in the fifteenth century by one Malchu, an alchemist.¹ In connection with the case of Simon Magus, one passage reads thus:

Simon, laying his face upon the ground, whispered in her ear,

“O mother Earth, give me, I pray thee, some of thy breath; and I will give thee mine; *let me loose*, O mother, that I may carry thy words to the stars, and I will return faithfully to thee after a while.”

And the Earth strengthening her status, none to her detriment, sent her genius to breathe of her *breath* on Simon, *while he breathed on her*; and the stars rejoiced to be visited by the mighty One.

The starting-point here is the recognized electro-chemical principle that bodies similarly electrified repel each other, while those differently electrified mutually attract. “The most elementary knowledge of chemistry,” says Professor Cooke, “shows that, while radicals of opposite natures combine most eagerly together, two metals, or two closely-allied metalloids, show but little affinity for each other.”²

The earth is a magnetic body; in fact, as some scientists have found, it is one vast magnet, as Paracelsus affirmed some 300 years ago. It is charged with one form of electricity — let us call it positive — which it evolves continuously by spontaneous

¹ [Endnote 3 by Boris de Zirkoff: According to J.H. Zedler’s Lexicon (in German), 1732–54, Salomo Malchu, Malcu or Malco was a Portuguese Jew born in 1483. One of his books, *Conciones*, concerns various passages in the Pentateuch. Another one is Kabbalistic in nature; it is called *Bestia Arundinis* and treats *Psalms* lxxvii, 31. It was printed at Amsterdam and Prague but without a date. It is most likely this work to which H.P. Blavatsky refers.]

² [The New Chemistry, p. 264]

action, in its interior or centre of motion. Human bodies, in common with all other forms of matter, are charged with the opposite form of electricity — negative. That is to say, organic or inorganic bodies, if left to themselves will constantly and involuntarily charge themselves with, and evolve the form of, electricity opposed to that of the earth itself. Now, what is weight? Simply the attraction of the earth. “Without the attractions of the earth you would have no weight,” says Professor Balfour Stewart; “and if you had an earth twice as heavy as this, you would have double the attraction.”¹ How then, can we get rid of this attraction? According to the electrical law above stated, there is an attraction between our planet and the organisms upon it, which holds them upon the surface of the ground. But the law of gravitation has been counteracted in many instances, by levitations of persons and inanimate objects; how account [xxiv] for this? The condition of our physical systems, say theurgic philosophers, is largely dependent upon the action of our will. If well-regulated, it can produce “miracles”; among others a change of this electrical polarity from negative to positive; the man’s relations with the earth-magnet would then become repellent, and “gravity” for him would have ceased to exist. It would then be as natural for him to rush into the air until the repellent force had exhausted itself, as before it had been for him to remain upon the ground. The altitude of his levitation would be measured by his ability, greater or less, to charge his body with positive electricity. This control over the physical forces once obtained, alteration of his levity or gravity would be as easy as breathing.

The study of nervous diseases has established that even in ordinary somnambulism, as well as in mesmerized somnambulists, the weight of the body seems to be diminished. Professor Perty² mentions a somnambulist, Koehler, who when in the water could not sink, but floated. The Seeress of Prévorst rose to the surface of the bath and could not be kept seated in it. He [Perty] speaks of Anna Fleisher, who being subject to epileptic fits, was often seen by the Superintendent to rise in the air; and was once, in the presence of two trustworthy witnesses (two deans) and others, raised two and a half yards from her bed in a horizontal position.³ The similar case of Margaret Rule is cited by Upham in his *History of Salem Witchcraft*. Adds Professor Perty:

In ecstatic subjects the rising in the air occurs much more frequently than with somnambulists. We are so accustomed to consider gravitation as being a something absolute and unalterable, that the idea of a complete or partial rising in opposition to it seems inadmissible; nevertheless, there are phenomena in which, by means of material forces, gravitation is overcome. In several diseases — as, for instance, nervous fever — the weight of the human body seems to be increased, but in all ecstatic conditions to be diminished. And there may, likewise, be other forces than material ones which can counteract this power.

A Madrid journal, *El Criterio Espiritista*, of a recent date, reports the case of a young peasant girl near Santiago, which possesses a peculiar interest in this connection.

¹ “The Sun and the Earth,” Manchester Lecture, 13th November 1872

² [Josef Anton Maximilian Perty, 1804–84, German naturalist, philosopher, and entomologist. He was a professor of zoology and comparative anatomy at the University of Bern.]

³ [*Die Mystischen Erscheinungen Der Menschlichen Natur*, Leipzig 1861]

“Two bars of magnetized iron held over her horizontally, half a metre distant, was sufficient to suspend her body in the air.”

Were our physicians to experiment on such levitated subjects, it would be found that they are strongly charged with a similar form of electricity to that of the spot, which, according to the law of gravitation, ought to *attract* them, or rather prevent their levitation. And, if some physical nervous disorder, as well as spiritual ecstasy produce [xxv] unconsciously to the subject the same effects, it proves that if this force in nature were properly studied, it could be regulated at will.¹

Alchemists — From the Arabic *al-kīmiyā*, possibly derived from *Kemet* of *Kem*, the name of Egypt. The Rosicrucians of the middle ages, such as Robertus de Fluctibus (Robert Fludd), Paracelsus, Thomas Vaughan (Eugenius Philalethes), Van Helmont, and others, were all alchemists, who sought for the *hidden spirit* in every inorganic matter. Some people — nay, the great majority — have accused alchemists of charlatanry and false pretending. Surely such men as Roger Bacon, Agrippa, Henry Khunrath, and the Arabian Geber (the first to introduce into Europe some of the secrets of chemistry), can hardly be treated as impostors — least of all as fools. Scientists who are reforming the science of physics upon the basis of the atomic theory of Democritus, as restated by John Dalton, conveniently forget that Democritus of Abdera was an alchemist, and that the mind that was capable of penetrating so far into the secret operations of nature in one direction must have had good reasons to study and become a Hermetic philosopher. Olaus Borrichius says that the cradle of alchemy is to be sought in the most distant times.²

Astral Light — The same as the *sidereal light* of Paracelsus and other Hermetic philosophers. Physically, it is the æther of modern science. Metaphysically, and in its spiritual, or occult sense, æther is a great deal more than is often imagined. In occult physics, and alchemy, it is well demonstrated to enclose within its shoreless waves not only Mr. Tyndall’s “*promise and potency of all terrestrial life,*” but also the *realization* of the potency of every quality of spirit. Alchemists and Hermetists believe that their astral, or sidereal æther, besides the above properties of sulphur, and white and red magnesia, or *magnes*, is the *anima mundi*, the workshop of Nature and of all the cosmos, spiritually, as well as physically. The “grand magisterium” asserts itself in the phenomenon of mesmerism, in the “levitation” of human and inert objects; and may be called the æther from its spiritual aspect.

The designation *astral* is ancient, and was used by some of the Neoplatonists. Porphyry describes the celestial body which is always joined with the soul as “immortal, luminous, and star-like.” The root of this word may be found, perhaps, in the

¹ [Endnote 4 by Boris de Zirkoff: Interesting and valuable information on the subject of æthrobasy or levitation, including a comprehensive list of Roman Catholic “saints,” who are supposed to have had this power, may be found in: *The Theosophist*, Vol. I, January 1880, pp. 84-86]

² [Endnote 5 by Boris de Zirkoff: Olaus Borrichius (Olaus Cl. von Borch) was a Danish chemist and philologist born at Borchen in Jutland, 26th April 1626, where his father was a preacher. He distinguished himself as a teacher at Copenhagen and engaged in the study of medicine. He spent a number of years in widespread journeys, while engaged in his studies, visiting and staying in Hamburg, in various parts of Holland and in Paris. After graduating as a physician at Angers, France, he travelled through Italy, staying for two years at Rome. He returned to his native country in 1666, and was appointed court-physician. During his travels, Borrichius became the friend of numerous scholars who held him in high esteem. He remained single and died 3rd October 1690. He willed his considerable estate for the benefit of poor students to help them in their studies. His many works deal with a great variety of subjects.]

Scythic *aist-ær* — which means star, or the Assyrian *Ishtar*, which, according to Burnouf has the same sense. As the Rosicrucians regarded the real, as the direct opposite of the apparent, and taught that what seems light to *matter*, is darkness to *spirit*, they searched for the latter in the astral ocean of invisible fire which encompasses the world; and claim to have traced the equally invisible divine spirit, which overshadows every man and is erroneously called *soul*, to the very throne of the Invisible and Unknown God. As the great cause must [xxvi] always remain invisible and imponderable, they could prove their assertions merely by demonstration of its effects in this world of matter, by calling them forth from the unknowable down into the knowable universe of effects. That this astral light permeates the whole cosmos, lurking in its latent state even in the minutest particle of rock, they demonstrate by the phenomenon of the spark from flint and from every other stone, whose spirit when forcibly disturbed springs to sight spark-like, and immediately disappears in the realms of the unknowable.

Paracelsus named it the *sidereal light*, taking the term from the Latin. He regarded the starry host (our earth included) as the *condensed* portions of the astral light which “fell down into generation and matter,” but whose magnetic or spiritual emanations kept constantly a never-ceasing intercommunication between themselves and the parent fount of all — the astral light. “The stars attract from us to themselves, and we again from them to us,” he says. The body is wood and the life is fire, which comes like the light from the stars and from heaven. “Magic is the philosophy of alchemy,” he says again.¹ Everything pertaining to the spiritual world must come to us through the stars, and if we are in friendship with them, we may attain the greatest *magical* effects.

“As fire passes through an iron stove, so do the stars pass through man with all their properties and go into him as the rain into the earth, which gives fruit out of that same rain. Now observe that the stars *surround* the whole earth, *as a shell does the egg*; through the shell comes the air, and penetrates to the centre of the world.”

The human body is subjected as well as the earth, and planets, and stars, to a double law; it attracts and repels, for it is saturated through with double magnetism, the influx of the astral light. Everything is double in nature; magnetism is positive and negative, active and passive, male and female. Night rests humanity from the day’s activity, and restores the equilibrium of human as well as of cosmic nature. When the mesmerizer will have learned the grand secret of polarizing the action and endowing his fluid with a bisexual force he will have become the greatest magician living. Thus the astral light is androgyne, for equilibrium is the resultant of two opposing forces eternally reacting upon each other. The result of this is LIFE. *When the two forces are expanded and remain so long inactive, as to equal one another and so come to a complete rest, the condition is DEATH.* A human being can blow either a hot or a cold breath; and can absorb either cold or hot air. Every child [xxvii] knows how to regulate the temperature of his breath; but how to protect one’s self from either hot or cold air, no physiologist has yet learned with certainty. The astral light alone, as

¹ *De ente spirituali*, lib. iv; *De ente astrorum*, lib. i; and *Opera omnia* (Geneva 1658), Vol. I, pp. 634, 698

the chief agent in magic, can discover to us all secrets of nature. The astral light is identical with the Hindu *ākāśa*, a word which we will now explain.

Akasha — Literally the word means in Sanskrit *sky*, but in its mystic sense it signifies the *invisible sky*; or, as the Brahmans term it in the Soma-sacrifice (the *Jyotishtoma*, *Agnishtoma*), the god *Ākāśa*, or god *Sky*. The language of the *Vedas* shows that the Hindus of fifty centuries ago ascribed to it the same properties as do the Tibetan lamas of the present day; that they regarded it as the source of life, the reservoir of all energy, and the propeller of every change of matter. In its latent state it tallies exactly with our idea of the universal æther; in its active state it became the *Ākāśa*, the all-directing and omnipotent god. In the Brāhmanical sacrificial mysteries it plays the part of *Sadasya*, or superintendent over the magical effects of the religious performance, and it had its own appointed Hotri (or priest), who took its name. In India, as in other countries in ancient times, the priests are the representatives on earth of different gods; each taking the name of the deity in whose name he acts.

The *Ākāśa* is the indispensable agent of every *Kriya* (magical performance) either religious or profane. The Brāhmanical expression “to stir up the *Brahmā*” — *Brahmā jinvati* — means to stir up the power which lies latent at the bottom of every such magical operation, for the Vedic sacrifices are but ceremonial magic.¹ This power is the *Ākāśa* or the *occult* electricity; the alkahest of the alchemists in one sense, or the universal solvent, the same *anima mundi* as the astral light. At the moment of the sacrifice, the latter becomes imbued with the spirit of *Brahmā*, and so for the time being is *Brahmā* himself. This is the evident origin of the Christian dogma of transubstantiation. As to the most general effects of the *Ākāśa*, the author of one of the most modern works on the occult philosophy, *Art-Magic*, gives for the first time to the world a most intelligible and interesting explanation of the *Ākāśa* in connection with the phenomena attributed to its influence by the fakirs and lamas.²

Anthropology — The science of man; embracing among other things:

Physiology, or that branch of natural science which discloses the mysteries of the organs and their functions in men, animals, and plants; and also, and especially,

Psychology, or the great, and in our days, so neglected science of the [xxviii] soul, both as an entity distinct from the spirit and in its relations with the spirit and body. In modern science, psychology relates only or principally to conditions of the nervous system, and almost absolutely ignores the psychical essence and nature. Physicians denominate the science of insanity *psychology*, and name the lunatic chair in medical colleges by that designation.

Chaldeans, or Kasdim. — At first a tribe, then a caste of learned Kabbalists. They were the savants, the magians of Babylonia, astrologers and diviners. The famous Hillel, the precursor of Jesus in philosophy and in ethics, was a Chaldean. Franck in

¹ [Cf. *Taittiriya-Brāhmana* i, 1]

² [Emma Hardinge-Britten, *Art Magic*, New York 1876, § xi]

his *Kabbale* points to the close resemblance of the “secret doctrine” found in the *Avesta* and the religious metaphysics of the Chaldees.¹

Dactyls (*daktylos*, a finger). — A name given to the priests attached to the worship of Κυβελή (*Cybelē*). Some archæologists derive the name from δακτυλος (*daktylos*), finger, because they were ten, the same in number as the fingers of the hand. But we do not believe the latter hypothesis is the correct one.

Daimōns — A name given by the ancient people, and especially the philosophers of the Alexandrian school, to all kinds of spirits, whether good or bad, human or otherwise. The appellation is often synonymous with that of gods or angels. But some philosophers tried, with good reason, to make a just distinction between the many classes.

Demiourgos, or Demiurge. — Artificer; the Supernal Power which built the universe. Freemasons derive from this word their phrase of “Supreme Architect.” The chief magistrates of certain Greek cities bore the title.

Dervishes, or the “whirling charmers,” as they are called. Apart from the austerities of life, prayer, and contemplation, the Mohammedan devotee presents but little similarity with the Hindu fakir. The latter may become a sannyāsin, or saint, and holy mendicant; the former will never reach beyond his second class of occult manifestations. The dervish may also be a strong mesmerizer, but he will never voluntarily submit to the abominable and almost incredible self-punishment which the fakir invents for himself with an ever-increasing avidity, until nature succumbs and he dies in slow and excruciating tortures. The most dreadful operations, such as flaying the limbs alive; cutting off the toes, feet, and legs; tearing out the eyes; and causing one’s self to be buried alive up to the chin in the earth, and passing whole months in this posture, seem child’s play to them. One of the most common tortures is that of Tshiddy-Parvādy.² It consists in suspending the fakir to one of the [xxix] mobile arms of a kind of gallows to be seen in the vicinity of many of the temples. At the end of each of these arms is fixed a pulley over which passes a rope terminated by an iron hook. This hook is inserted into the bare back of the fakir, who inundating the soil with blood is hoisted up in the air and then whirled round the gallows. From the first moment of this cruel operation until he is either unhooked or the flesh of his back tears out under the weight of the body and the fakir is hurled down on the heads of the crowd, not a muscle of his face will move. He remains calm and serious and as composed as if taking a refreshing bath. The fakir will laugh to scorn every imaginable torture, persuaded that the more his outer body is mortified, the brighter and holier becomes his *inner*, spiritual body. But the Dervish, neither in India, nor in other Mohammedan lands, will ever submit to such operations.

Druids — A sacerdotal caste which flourished in Britain and Gaul.

¹ [Part III, ch. v. For an in-depth analysis of this term, consult “Chaldeans, Hierophants of the Āryan Root-Race” in our Atlantean Realities Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² Or more commonly, *charak-pūjā*.

Elemental Spirits — The creatures evolved in the four kingdoms of earth, air, fire, and water, and called by the Kabbalists gnomes, sylphs, salamanders, and undines. They may be termed the forces of nature, and will either operate effects as the servile agents of general law, or may be employed by the disembodied spirits¹ — whether pure or impure — and by living adepts of magic and sorcery, to produce desired phenomenal results. Such beings never become men.²

Under the general designation of fairies, and fays, these spirits of the elements appear in the myth, fable, tradition, or poetry of all nations, ancient and modern. Their names are legion — peris, devs, jinn, sylvans, satyrs, fauns, elves, dwarfs, trolls, norns, nisses, kobolds, brownies, necks, strömkarls, undines, nixies, salamanders, goblins, ponkes, banshees, kelpies, pixies, moss people, good people, good neighbours, wild women, men of peace, white ladies — and many more. They have been seen, feared, blessed, banned, and invoked in every quarter of the globe and in every age. Shall we then concede that all who have met them were hallucinated?

These elementals are the principal agents of disembodied but *never visible* spirits at séances, and the producers of all the phenomena except the subjective.

Elementary Spirits — Properly, the disembodied *souls* of the depraved; these souls having at some time prior to death separated from themselves their divine spirits, and so lost their chance for immortality. Éliphas Lévi and some other Kabbalists make little distinction between elementary spirits who have been men, and those beings which people the elements, and are the blind forces of nature. Once divorced from their bodies, these souls (also called “astral bodies”) of purely materialistic persons, are irresistibly attracted to the earth, where they live a temporary and finite life amid elements congenial to their gross natures. From having never, during their natural lives, cultivated their spirituality, but subordinated it to the material and gross, they are now unfitted for the lofty career of the pure, disembodied being, for whom the atmosphere of earth is stifling and mephitic, and whose attractions are all away from it. After a more or less prolonged period of time these material souls will begin to disintegrate, and finally, like a column of mist, be dissolved, atom by atom, in the surrounding elements.

¹ [See “Elementary Spirits,” overleaf.]

² Persons who believe in the clairvoyant power, but are disposed to discredit the existence of any other spirits in nature than disembodied human spirits, will be interested in an account of certain clairvoyant observations which appeared in the London *Spiritualist* of 29th June 1877. A thunderstorm approaching, the seeress saw “a bright spirit emerge from a dark cloud and pass with lightning speed across the sky, and, a few minutes after, a diagonal line of dark spirits in the clouds.” These are the *Maruts* of the “Vedas.” (See Max Müller’s *Rig-Veda-Samhitā*)

The well-known and respected lecturer, author, and clairvoyant, Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, has published accounts of her frequent experiences with these elemental spirits.

Essenes — from *Asa*, a healer.¹ A sect of Jews said by Pliny² to have lived near the Dead Sea “*per sæculorum millia*” — for thousands of ages. Some have supposed them to be extreme Pharisees; and others — which may be the true theory — the descendants of the *benim nabim* of the Bible, and think they were “Kenites” and “Nazarites.” They had many Buddhistic ideas and practices; and it is noteworthy that the priests of the *Great Mother* at Ephesus, Diana-Bhavāni with many breasts, were also so denominated. Eusebius,³ and after him De Quincey, declared them to be the same as the early Christians, which is more than probable. The title “brother,” used in the early Church, was Essenean: they were a fraternity, or a *koinobion* or community like the early converts. It is noticeable that only the Sadducees, or Zadokites, the priest-caste and their partisans, persecuted the Christians; the Pharisees were generally scholastic and mild, and often sided with the latter. James the Just was a Pharisee till his death; but Paul or *Aher* was esteemed a schismatic.

Evolution — The development of higher orders of animals from the lower. Modern, or so-called *exact* science, holds but to a one-sided physical evolution, prudently avoiding and ignoring the higher or spiritual evolution, which would force our contemporaries to confess the superiority of the ancient philosophers and psychologists over themselves. The ancient sages, ascending to the UNKNOWABLE, made their starting-point from the first manifestation of the unseen, the unavoidable, and from a strict logical reasoning, the absolutely necessary creative Being, the [xxx] the Demiourgos of the universe. Evolution began with them from pure spirit, which descending lower and lower down, assumed at last a visible and comprehensible form, and became matter. Arrived at this point, they speculated in the Darwinian method, but on a far more large and comprehensive basis.

In the *Rig-Veda-Samhitā*, the oldest book of the World⁴ (to which even our most prudent Indologists and Sanskrit scholars assign an antiquity of between two and three thousand years B.C.), in the first book, “Hymns to the Maruts,” it is said:

Not-being and *Being* are in the highest heaven, in the birthplace of Daksha, in the lap of Aditi.

¹ [Endnote 6 by Boris de Zirkoff: The derivation of the term *Essenes* is by no means certain. Josephus uses the form *Essēnoi* (Ἐσσηνοί) ; Pliny has *Essēni* (Ἐσσηνί) ; and Philo Judæus speaks of the *Essaioi* (Ἐσσαῖοι). While the idea of “healer” may be inherent in the term, it has been derived by other scholars from roots which would imply the meaning of “the pious ones” and “the silent ones.”

Very considerable light has been thrown on the nature of this mystical community and their teachings by the discoveries at both Nag-Hammadi and Kumran. The vast literature that has appeared in the last few years on the so-called “Dead Sea Scrolls” and allied material has altered to a large extent the scant amount of information concerning the Essenes available in H.P. Blavatsky’s days, apart from the accounts of Classical writers which have been available through the years.

The similarity of the Essene teachings and precepts of life with those of Buddhism is now an established fact, even though it is not often mentioned. The presence of Buddhist missionaries in both Egypt and Asia Minor some two thousand years ago can hardly be denied. Scholars of the calibre of Schilling, Schopenhauer, Lassen, Higgins, King, and Milman, to name a few, have upheld this view. King in his *Gnostics and their Remains* (pp. 1, 6, 23) considers most of the mystical sects of Asia Minor as being derived from India and of having a Buddhist background. The same argument applies to the Therapeutai of Egypt.]

² [Natural History v, 152]

³ [Ecclesiastical History ii, 17; cf. Philo Judæus, *De vita contemplativa*]

⁴ Translated by Max Müller, Professor of Comparative Philology at the Oxford University, England.

In the first age of the gods, Being [the comprehensible Deity] was born from Not-being [whom no intellect can comprehend]; after it were born the Regions [the invisible], from them Uttānapāda.

From Uttānapāda the Earth was born, the Regions [those that are visible] were born from the Earth. Daksha was born of Aditi, and Aditi from Daksha.¹

Aditi is the Infinite, and Daksha is *dākska-pitarah*, literally meaning *the fathers of gods*, but understood by Max Müller and Roth to mean *the fathers of strength*, “preserving, possessing, granting faculties.” Therefore, it is easy to see that “Daksha, born of Aditi and Aditi from Daksha,” means what the moderns understand by “correlation of forces”; the more so as we find in this passage (translated by Prof. Müller): “I place Agni, the source of all beings, the father of strength,”² a clear and identical idea which prevailed so much in the doctrines of the Zoroastrians, the Magians, and the mediæval fire-philosophers. Agni is god of fire, of the Spiritual Æther, the very substance of the divine essence of the Invisible God present in every atom of His creation and called by the Rosicrucians the “Celestial Fire.” If we only carefully compare the verses from this Mandala, one of which runs thus:

The Sky is your father, the Earth your mother, Soma your brother, Aditi your sister.³

— with the inscription on the *Smaragdine Tablet* of Hermes, we will find the same substratum of metaphysical philosophy, the identical doctrines!

As all things were produced by the mediation of one being, so all things were produced from this one thing by adaptation: Its father is the sun; its mother is the moon . . . Separate the earth from the fire, [xxxii] the *subtile from the gross* . . . What I had to say about the operation of the *sun* is completed. (*Smaragdine Tablet*)⁴

Professor Max Müller sees in this *Mandala* “at last, something like a theogony, though full of contradictions.”⁵ The alchemists, Kabbalists, and students of mystic philosophy will find therein a perfectly defined system of Evolution in the Cosmogony of a people who lived a score of thousands of years before our era. They will find in it, moreover, a perfect identity of thought and even doctrine with the Hermetic philosophy, and also that of Pythagoras and Plato.

In Evolution, as it is now beginning to be understood, there is supposed to be in all matter an impulse to take on a higher form — a supposition clearly expressed by Manu and other Hindu philosophers of the highest antiquity. The philosopher’s tree illustrates it in the case of the zinc solution.⁶ The controversy between the followers

¹ *Mandala* i, sūkta 166

² *ibid.*, iii, 27.2

³ “*Dyaur hi vah pitā, prithivī mātā, somah bhrātā, aditih svasā.*” *ibid.*, i, 191.6

⁴ As the perfect identity of the philosophical and religious doctrines of antiquity will be fully treated upon in subsequent chapters, we limit our explanations for the present.

⁵ *Rig-Veda-Samhitā*, p. 234

⁶ [Endnote 7 by Boris de Zirkoff: The expression “philosopher’s tree” or *arbor Dianæ* (tree of Diana, or of silver) has been used, both in chemistry and alchemy, to designate the beautiful arborescent growth of silver amalgam, formed when mercury is placed in a silver-nitrate solution.]

of this school and the Emanationists may be briefly stated thus: The Evolutionist stops all inquiry at the borders of “the Unknowable”; the Emanationist believes that nothing can be evolved — or, as the word means, unwombed or born — except it has first been involved, thus indicating that life is from a spiritual potency above the whole.

Fakirs — Religious devotees in East India. They are generally attached to Brāhmanical pagodas and follow the laws of Manu. A strictly religious fakir will go absolutely naked, with the exception of a small piece of linen called *dhōti*, around his loins. They wear their hair long, and it serves them as a pocket, as they stick in it various objects — such as a pipe, a small flute called *vagudā*, the sounds of which throw the serpents into a cataleptic torpor, and sometimes their bamboo stick (about one foot long) with *the seven mystical knots* on it. This magical stick, or rather *rod*, the fakir receives from his guru on the day of his initiation, together with the three *mantrams*, which are communicated to him “mouth to ear.” No fakir will be seen without this powerful adjunct of his calling. It is, as they all claim, the divining rod, the cause of every occult phenomenon produced by them.¹ The Brāhmanical fakir is [xxxii] entirely distinct from the Mussulman mendicant of India, also called fakirs in some parts of the British territory.²

Hermetist — From Hermes, the god of Wisdom, known in Egypt, Syria, and Phœnicia as Thoth, Tat, Adad, Seth, and Sat-an (the latter *not to be taken* in the sense applied to it by Moslems and Christians), and in Greece as Kadmos. The Kabbalists identify him with Adam-*Kadmon*, the first manifestation of the Divine Power, and with Enoch. There were two Hermes: the elder was the Trismegistus, and the second an emanation, or “permutation” of himself; the friend and instructor of Isis and Osiris. Hermes is the god of the priestly wisdom, like Muzæus.

Hierophant — Discloser of sacred learning. The Old Man, the Chief of the Adepts at the initiations, who explained the arcane knowledge to the neophytes, bore this title. In Hebrew and Chaldaic the term was *Pether*, or opener, discloser; hence, the Pope, as the successor of the hierophant of the ancient Mysteries, sits in the Pagan chair of “St. Peter.” The vindictiveness of the Catholic Church toward the alchemists, and to arcane and astronomical science, is explained by the fact that such knowledge was the ancient prerogative of the hierophant, or representative of Peter, who kept the mysteries of life and death. Men like Bruno, Galileo, and Kepler, therefore, and even Cagliostro, trespassed on the preserves of the Church, and were accordingly murdered.

¹ Philostratus assures us that the Brahmans were able, in his time, to perform the most wonderful cures by merely pronouncing certain magical words. “The Indian Brahmans carry a staff and a ring, by means of which they are able to do almost anything.” [*Vita Apollonii* iii, 15] Origenes states the same (*Contra Celsum* i, 68). But if a strong mesmeric fluid — say, projected from the eye, and without any other contact — is not added, no magical words would be efficacious.

² [Endnote 8 by Boris de Zirkoff: The word *fakir* comes from the Arabic *faqīr*, meaning poor. A fakir may be a member of any sect or fraternity of Moslems taking a vow of poverty; also a member of any of the religious orders of Islam, hence a Moslem religious mendicant. Only Moslem ascetics and itinerant wonder-workers should be called by that name. H.P. Blavatsky apparently realized how erroneous the definition in *Isis Unveiled* was, and stated in *The Theosophical Glossary* that “this loose way of calling things by general names was adopted in *Isis Unveiled* but is now altered.”]

Every nation had its Mysteries and hierophants. Even the Jews had their Pether — Tannaïm or Rabbis, like Hillel, Akiba,¹ and other famous Kabbalists, who alone could impart the awful knowledge contained in the *Merkābāh*. In India, there was in ancient times one, and now there are several hierophants scattered about the country, attached to the principal pagodas, who are known as the Brahmātmas. In Tibet the chief hierophant is the Dalai, or Taley-Lama of Lhasa.² Among Christian nations, the Catholics alone have preserved this “heathen” custom, in the person of their Pope, albeit they have sadly disfigured its majesty and the dignity of the sacred office.

Initiates — In times of antiquity, those who had been initiated into the arcane knowledge taught by the hierophants of the Mysteries; and in our modern days those who have been initiated by the adepts of mystic lore into the mysterious knowledge, which, notwithstanding the lapse of ages, has yet a few real votaries on earth. [xxxiv]

Kabbalist — From קַבָּלָה, Qabbalah; an unwritten or oral tradition. The Kabbalist is a student of “secret science,” one who interprets the hidden meaning of the Scriptures with the help of the symbolical *Kabbalah*, and explains the real one by these means. The Tannaïm were the first Kabbalists among the Jews; they appeared at Jerusalem about the beginning of the third century before the Christian era. The Books of *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, *Enoch*, and the *Revelation* of St. John, are purely Kabbalistical. This secret doctrine is identical with that of the Chaldeans, and includes at the same time much of the Persian wisdom, or “magic.”

Lamas — Buddhist monks belonging to the Lamaic religion of Tibet, as, for instance, friars are the monks belonging to the Popish or Roman Catholic religion. Every lama is subject to the grand Taley-Lama, the Buddhist pope of Tibet, who holds his residence at Lhasa, and is a reincarnation of Buddha.³

Mage — or *Magian*; from *Mogh* or *Mahā*. The word is the root of the word magician. The Mahā-ātman (the great Soul or Spirit) in India had its priests in the pre-Vedic times. The Magians were priests of the fire-god; we find them among the Assyrians and Babylonians, as well as among the Persian fire-worshippers. The three magi, also denominated kings, that are said to have made gifts of gold, incense, and myrrh to the infant Jesus, were fire-worshippers like the rest, and astrologers; for they saw his

¹ A’kiba was a friend of Aher, said to have been the Apostle Paul of Christian story. Both are depicted as having visited Paradise. Aher took branches from the Tree of Knowledge, and so fell from the true (Jewish) religion. A’kiba came away in peace. See 2nd *Epistle to the Corinthians*, chapter xii. [Cf. Vol. II, p. 119 of present work]

² *Taley* means ocean or sea.

³ [Endnote 9 by Boris de Zirkoff: Whoever wrote this paragraph on Lamas, it could not have been H.P. Blavatsky, as it is quite misleading and inadequate. This fact must have been recognized even in her own time, as the definition to be found in *The Theosophical Glossary*, obviously bearing the marks of H.P. Blavatsky’s own style, corrects this early definition and enlarges upon it.

The ranks in the Tibetan Buddhist Order (*Gendun*) are, first, a *trapa*, which means a monk of any rank. The novice, equivalent to the Theravāda Sāmanera, is a *getsul*. The fully ordained monk is a *gelong*. A *lama* is of senior standing, in years of prestige, and is at least of the rank of a Thera. A *geshe* is literally a spiritual teacher, but has the rank equivalent to a doctor of divinity, a man learned in ecclesiastical law and practice. Finally, a *tulku* (Mongolian equivalent: *Hutukhtu* or *Qutugtu*, and *Khubilhan* or *Qubilgan*) is one who at certain times embodies the spiritual consciousness of a high Initiate, or a ray therefrom, and acts as its Mediator. A *tulku* would be called a lama, but also bear the title of *Rinpoche*, “the Great Precious One.”

It follows therefore that the term *lama* is a specific title reserved for a few learned among the large number of ordinary monks in a monastery. It is therefore quite improper to refer to a Tibetan Buddhist monastery as a *lamasery*. It is no more correct than to refer to a Catholic monastery as a *Cardinalsery*, just because it may have a Cardinal in residence.]

star. The high priest of the Parsīs, at Surat, is called *Mobed*. Others derived the word from Megh; Meh-ab signifying something grand and noble. Zoroaster's disciples were called *Meghestom*, according to Kleucker.

Magician — This term, once a title of renown and distinction, has come to be wholly perverted from its true meaning. Once the synonym of all that was honourable and reverent, of a possessor of learning and wisdom, it has become degraded into an epithet to designate one who is a pretender and a juggler; a charlatan, in short, or one who has “sold his soul to the Evil One”; who misuses his knowledge, and employs it for low and dangerous uses, according to the teachings of the clergy, and a mass of superstitious fools who believe the magician a sorcerer and an enchanter. But Christians forget, apparently, that Moses was also a magician, and Daniel, “*Master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers.*”¹

The word magician then, scientifically speaking, is derived from *Mogh* (Persian), *Magao* (Zend), or *Mahā* (Sanskrit) — great; a man well versed in the secret or esoteric knowledge; properly a sacerdote.

Manticism — or mantic frenzy. During this state was developed the gift of prophecy. The two words are nearly synonymous. One was as honoured as the other. Pythagoras and Plato held it in high esteem, and Socrates [xxxv] advised his disciples to study Manticism. The Church Fathers, who condemned so severely the *mantic frenzy* in Pagan priests and Pythiæ, were not above applying it to their own uses. The Montanists, who took their name from Montanus, a bishop of Phrygia, who was considered divinely inspired, rivalled with the μαντις (*manteis*) or prophets. “Tertullian, Augustine, and the martyrs of Carthage, were of the number,” says the author of *Prophecy, Ancient and Modern*.² “The Montanists seem to have resembled the *Bacchantes* in the wild enthusiasm that characterized their orgies,” he adds. There is a diversity of opinion as to the origin of the word *Manticism*. There was the famous Mantius the Seer, in the days of Melampus and Proetus, King of Argos; and there was Manto, the daughter of the prophet of Thebes, herself a prophetess. Cicero describes prophecy and mantic frenzy by saying that “in the inner recesses of the mind is divine prophecy hidden and confined, a divine impulse, which when it burns more vividly is called *furor*” (frenzy, madness).

But there is still another etymology possible for the word *mantis*, and to which we doubt if the attention of the philologists was ever drawn. The mantic frenzy may, perchance, have a still earlier origin. The two sacrificial cups of the Soma-mystery used during the religious rites, and generally known as *grahas*, are respectively called *Śukra* and *Manthi*.³

It is in the latter *manti* or *manthi* cup that Brahmā is said to be “stirred up.” While the initiate drinks (albeit sparingly) of this sacred soma juice, the Brahmā, or rather

¹ *Daniel* v, 11

² [Dr. Alexander Wilder]

³ M. Haug, *The Aitareya-Brāhmanam*, etc., Book III, i, 1. [Cf. says that “the word *manthāmi* passed into the Greek language and became the word *manthanō* [μανθάνω], to learn; that is to say, to appropriate knowledge; whence *prometheia* [προμηθεια], fore-knowledge, forethought”; (*Secret Doctrine*, II p. 413 *fn.*) Sanskrit *manthi* is μoθος in Greek; also cf. *μανθάνω, μανια, μαντια, μαντις, μουσα*. — ED. PHIL.]

his “spirit,” personified by the god Soma, enters into the man and takes *possession* of him. Hence, ecstatic vision, clairvoyance, and the gift of prophecy. Both kinds of divination — the natural and the artificial — are aroused by the Soma. The *Śukra*-cup awakens that which is given to every man by nature. It unites both spirit and soul, and these, from their own nature and essence, which are divine, have a fore-knowledge of future things, as dreams, unexpected visions, and presentiments, well prove. The contents of the other cup, the *manthi*, which “stirs the Brahmā,” put thereby the soul in communication not only with the minor gods — the well-informed but not omniscient spirits — but actually with the highest divine essence itself. The soul receives a direct illumination from the presence of its “god”; but as it is not allowed to remember certain things, well known only in heaven, the initiated person is generally seized with a kind of sacred frenzy, and upon recovering from it, only remembers that which is allowed to him. As to the other kind of seers and diviners — those who make a [xxxvi] profession of and a living by it — they are usually held to be possessed by a *gandharva*, a deity which is nowhere so little honoured as in India.

Mantra — A *Sanskrit* word conveying the same idea as the “Ineffable Name.” Some mantras, when pronounced according to magical formulæ taught in the *Atharva-Veda*, produce an instantaneous and wonderful effect. In its general sense, though, a mantra is either simply a prayer to the gods and powers of heaven, as taught by the Brāhmanical books, and especially *Manu*, or else a magical charm. In its esoteric sense, the “word” of the mantra, or mystic speech, is called by the Brahmans *Vāch*. It resides in the mantra, which literally means those parts of the sacred books which are considered as the *Śruti*, or direct divine revelation.

Marabout — A Mohammedan pilgrim who has been to Mecca; a saint, after whose death his body is placed in an open sepulchre built on the surface, like other buildings, but in the middle of the streets and public places of populated cities. Placed inside the small and only room of the tomb (and several such public sarcophagi of brick and mortar may be seen to this day in the streets and squares of Cairo), the devotion of the wayfarers keeps a lamp ever burning at his head. The tombs of some of these marabouts have a great fame for the miracles they are alleged to perform.

Materialization — A word employed by spiritualists to indicate the phenomenon of “a spirit clothing himself with a material form.” The far less objectionable term, “form-manifestation,” has been recently suggested by Mr. Stainton-Moses, of London. When the real nature of these apparitions is better comprehended, a still more appropriate name will doubtless be adopted. To call them materialized spirits is inadmissible, for they are not spirits but animated portrait-statues.

Mazdeans — From (Ahura) Mazda.¹ They were the ancient Persian nobles who worshipped Ormazd, and, rejecting images, inspired the Jews with the same horror for every concrete representation of the Deity. “They seem in Herodotus’s time to have been superseded by the Magian religionists. The Parsis and Ghebers (גִּבּוֹרִים, *Gibbōrim*, mighty men, of *Genesis* vi, 4 and x, 8) appear to be Magian religionists . . . By a curious muddling of ideas, Zoro-Aster (*Zero*, a circle, a son or priest, Aster, Ishtar, or Astarte — in Āryan dialect, a star), the title of the head of the Magians and fire-

¹ See F. Spiegel, *Yaçna* i, 65; xiii, 21-22.

worshippers, or Sūrya-ishtara, the sun-worshipper, is often confounded in modern times with Zara-thustra, the reputed Mazdean apostle” (Zoroaster).

Metempsychosis — The progress of the soul from one stage of existence to another. Symbolized and vulgarly believed to be rebirths in animal bodies. A term generally misunderstood by every class of European and [xxxvii] American society, including many scientists. The Kabbalistic axiom, “A stone becomes a plant, a plant an animal, an animal a man, a man a spirit, and a spirit a god,” receives an explanation in the *Mānava-Dharma-Śāstra*, and other Brāhmanical books.

Mysterics — Greek *teletai*, or finishings, as analogous to *teletē* or death. They were observances, generally kept secret from the profane and uninitiated, in which were taught by dramatic representation and other methods, the origin of things, the nature of the human spirit, its relations to the body, and the method of its purification and restoration to higher life. Physical science, medicine, the laws of music, divination, were all taught in the same manner. The Hippocratic oath was but a mystic obligation. Hippocrates was a priest of Asklēpios, some of whose writings chanced to become public. But the Asklēpiadæ were initiates of the Æsculapian serpent-worship, as the Bacchantes were of the Dionysia; and both rites were eventually incorporated with the Eleusinia. We will treat of the Mysteries fully in the subsequent chapters.

Mystics — Those initiated. But in the mediæval and later periods the term was applied to men like Böhme the Theosophist, Molinos the Quietist, Nicholas of Basle, and others who believed in a direct interior communion with God, analogous to the inspiration of the prophets.

Nebuah — Seership, soothsaying. This oldest and most respected of mystic phenomena, is the name given to prophecy in the Bible, and is correctly included among the spiritual powers, such as divination, clairvoyant visions, trance conditions, and oracles. But while enchanters, diviners, and even astrologers are strictly condemned in the Mosaic books, prophecy, seership, and *nebuah* appear as the special gifts of heaven. In early ages they were all termed *Epoptai*, the Greek word for seers, clairvoyants; after which they were designated as *Nebim*, “the plural of Nebo, the Babylonian god of wisdom.” The Kabbalist distinguishes between the *seer* and the *magician*; one is passive, the other active; *Nebiah*, is one who looks into futurity and a clairvoyant; *Nebi-poel*, he who possesses *magic powers*. We notice that Elijah and Apollonius resorted to the same means to isolate themselves from the disturbing influences of the outer world, viz.: wrapping their heads entirely in a woollen mantle; from its being an electric non-conductor we must suppose.

Occultist — One who studies the various branches of occult science. The term is used by the French Kabbalists.¹ Occultism embraces the whole range of psychological, physiological, cosmical, physical, and spiritual phenomena. From the word *occult*, hidden or secret; applying therefore to the study of the *Kabbalah*, astrology, alchemy, and all arcane sciences. [xxxviii]

¹ See Éliphas Lévi's works.

Pagan Gods — This term gods is erroneously understood by most of the reading public, to mean idols. The idea attached to them is *not* that of something objective or anthropomorphical. With the exception of occasions when “gods” mean either divine planetary entities (angels), or disembodied spirits of pure men, the term simply conveys to the mind of the mystic — whether Hindu Hotri, Mazdean Mage, Egyptian hierophant, or disciple of the Greek philosophers — the idea of a visible or cognized manifestation of an invisible potency of nature. And such occult potencies are invoked under the appellation of various gods, who, for the time being, are personating these powers. Thus every one of the numberless deities of the Hindu, Greek, and Egyptian Pantheons, are simply Powers of the “Unseen Universe.” When the officiating Brahman invokes Āditya — who, in her cosmic character, is the goddess-sun — he simply *commands* that potency (personified in some god), which, as he asserts, “resides in the Mantra, as the sacred *Vāch*.” These god-powers are allegorically regarded as the divine *Hotris* of the Supreme One; while the priest (Brahman) is the human Hotri who officiates on earth, and representing that particular Power becomes, ambassador-like, invested with the very potency which he personates.

Pitris — It is generally believed that the Hindu term *Pitris* means the spirits of our direct ancestors; of disembodied people. Hence the argument of some spiritualists that fakirs, and other Eastern wonder-workers, are *mediums*; that they themselves confess to being unable to produce anything without the help of the *Pitris*, of whom they are the obedient instruments. This is in more than one sense erroneous. The *Pitris* are not the ancestors of the present living men, but those of the human kind or Adamic race; the spirits of *human* races which, on the great scale of descending evolution, preceded our races of men, and were physically, as well as spiritually, far superior to our modern pigmies. In *Mānava-Dharma-Śāstra* they are called the *Lunar* ancestors.

Pythia — or Pythoness. Webster dismisses the word very briefly by saying that it was the name of one who delivered the oracles at the Temple of Delphi, and “any female supposed to have the spirit of divination in her — *a witch*,” which is neither complimentary, exact, nor just. A Pythia, upon the authority of Plutarch, Iamblichus, Lamprias, and others, was a nervous sensitive; she was chosen from among the poorest class, young and pure. Attached to the temple, within whose precincts she had a room, secluded from every other, and to which no one but the priest, or seer, had admittance, she had no communications with the outside world, and her life was more strict and ascetic than that of a Catholic nun. Sitting on a tripod of brass placed over a fissure in the ground, through which arose intoxicating vapours, these subterranean exhalations penetrating her whole system produced the prophetic mania. [xxxix] In this abnormal state she delivered oracles.¹ She was sometimes called *ventriloqua vates*, the ventriloquist-prophetess.

The ancients placed the astral soul of man, ψυχή, or his self-consciousness, in the pit of the stomach. The Brahmans shared this belief with Plato and other philosophers. Thus we find in the fourth verse of the second *Nābhānedishtha* Hymn it is said:

¹ Edward Baldwin, *The Pantheon*, etc., 3rd ed., 1810; pp. 49-50

Hear, O sons of the gods [spirits] one who speaks through his navel [nābha] for he hails you in your dwellings!

Many of the Sanskrit scholars agree that this belief is one of the most ancient among the Hindus. The modern fakirs, as well as the ancient Gymnosophists, unite themselves with their Ātman and the Deity by remaining motionless in contemplation and concentrating their whole thought on their navel. As in modern somnambulatory phenomena, the navel was regarded as “the circle of the sun,” the seat of internal divine light.¹ Is the fact of a number of modern somnambulists being enabled to read letters, hear, smell, and see, through that part of their body to be regarded again as a simple “coincidence,” or shall we admit at last that the old sages knew something more of physiological and psychological mysteries than our modern Academicians? In modern Persia, when a “magician” (often simply a mesmerizer) is consulted upon occasions of theft and other puzzling occurrences, he makes his manipulations over the pit of his stomach, and so brings himself into a state of clairvoyance. Among the modern Parsīs, remarks a translator of the *Rig-Veda*, there exists a belief up to the present day that their adepts have a flame in their navel, which enlightens to them all darkness and discloses the spiritual world, as well as all things unseen, or at a distance. They call it the lamp of *the Deshtur*, or high priest; the light of the *Dīkshita* (the initiate), and otherwise designate it by many other names.

Samothraces — A designation of the Fane-gods worshipped at Samothrace in the Mysteries. They are considered as identical with the Kabeiroi, Dioscouroi, and Corybantes. Their names were mystical — denoting Pluto, Ceres or Proserpine, Bacchus, and Æsculapius or Hermes.

Shamans — or Samaneans. An order of Buddhists among the Tartars, especially those of Siberia. They are possibly akin to the philosophers [xl] anciently known as *Brāchmanes*, mistaken sometimes for Brahmins.² They are all *magicians*, or rather sensitives or mediums artificially developed. At present those who act as priests among the Tatars are generally very ignorant, and far below the fakirs in knowledge and education. Both men and women may be Shamans.³

Soma — This Hindu sacred beverage answers to the Greek ambrosia or nectar, drunk by the gods of Olympus. A cup of kykeōn was also quaffed by the mystēs at the Eleusinian initiation. He who drinks it easily reaches *Bradhna*, or place of splen-

¹ The oracle of Apollo was at Delphos, the city of the δελφοῦς, womb or abdomen; the place of the temple was denominated the *omphalos* or navel. The symbols are female and lunar; reminding us that the Arcadians were called Proselēnoi, pre-Selenic or more ancient than the period when Ionian and Olympian lunar worship was introduced.

² From the accounts of Strabo and Megasthenes, who visited Palibothras, it would seem that the persons termed by him Samanean, or Brachmane priests, were simply Buddhists. [Strabo, *Geographical* xv, 1, § 59-66] “The singularly subtle replies of the Samanean or Brahman philosophers, in their interview with the conqueror, will be found to contain the spirit of the Buddhist doctrine,” remarks Upham. (*The History and Doctrine of Buddhism*, Introduction, p. 12; and Hale’s *New Analysis of Chronology*, Vol. III, p. 238)

³ [Endnote 10 by Boris de Zirkoff: The term *Shamanism* is applied primarily to the primitive religion of the Ural-Altai peoples of Northern Asia, in which the unseen world of gods, daimōns and ancestral spirits is conceived to be responsive only to the *shamans* (Tungusic, *samān*; Altaic-Turk, *kama*; Russian, *kamlat*, “to divine”). It is possible that this term may have originated from the Sanskrit *śramana*, and the Pāli *samana* — an ascetic, a mendicant, a monk or hermit. Some supernatural gift is a necessary qualification to become a *shaman*, and in some cases the office is hereditary, if a descendant shows a disposition for the calling. Though some of the beliefs of the Ural-Altai peoples have been tinged with Buddhism, it would be an error to consider *shamans* as Buddhists.]

dour (Heaven). The soma-drink known to Europeans is not the *genuine* beverage, but its substitute; for the initiated priests alone can taste of the real soma; and even kings and rājās, when sacrificing, receive the substitute. Haug shows by his own confession, in his *Aitareya Brāhmanam*,¹ that it was not the soma that he tasted and found nasty, but the juice from the roots of the Nyagrodha, a plant or bush which grows on the hills of Poona. We were positively informed that the majority of the sacrificial priests of the Dekkan have lost the secret of the true soma. It can be found neither in the ritual books nor through oral information. The true followers of the primitive Vedic religion are very few; these are the alleged descendants from the *Rishis*, the real Agnihotris, the initiates of the great Mysteries. The soma-drink is also commemorated in the Hindu Pantheon, for it is called the King-Soma. He who drinks of it is made to participate in the heavenly king, because he becomes filled with it, as the Christian apostles and their converts became filled with the Holy Ghost, and purified of their sins. The soma makes a new man of the initiate; he is reborn and transformed, and his spiritual nature overcomes the physical; it gives the divine power of inspiration, and develops the clairvoyant faculty to the utmost. According to the exoteric explanation the soma is a plant, but, at the same time it is an angel. It forcibly connects the *inner*, highest “spirit” of man, which spirit is an angel like the mystical soma, with his “irrational soul,” or astral body, and thus united by the power of the magic drink, they soar together above physical nature, and participate during life in the beatitude and ineffable glories of Heaven.

Thus the Hindu soma is mystically, and in all respects, the same that the Eucharistic supper is to the Christian. The idea is similar. By means [xli] of the sacrificial prayers — the mantram — this liquor is supposed to be transformed on the spot into real soma — or the angel, and even into Brahmā himself. Some missionaries have expressed themselves very indignantly about this ceremony, the more so, that, generally speaking, the Brahmans use a *kind of spirituous liquor* as a substitute. But do the Christians believe less fervently in the transubstantiation of the communion wine into the blood of Christ, because this wine happens to be more or less spirituous? Is not the idea of the symbol attached to it the same? But the missionaries say that this hour of soma-drinking is the golden hour of Satan, who lurks at the bottom of the Hindu sacrificial cup.²

Spirit — The lack of any mutual agreement between writers in the use of this word has resulted in dire confusion. It is commonly made synonymous with *soul*; and the lexicographers countenance the usage. This is the natural result of our ignorance of the other word, and repudiation of the classification adopted by the ancients. Elsewhere we attempt to make clear the distinction between the terms “spirit” and “soul.” There are no more important passages in this work. Meanwhile, we will only add that “spirit” is the *νοῦς* of Plato, the immortal, immaterial, and purely *divine* principle in man — the crown of the human *Triad*; whereas →

¹ [Vol. II, p. 489]

² In their turn, the heathen may well ask the missionaries what sort of a spirit lurks at the bottom of the sacrificial beer bottle. That evangelical New York journal, *The Independent*, says: “A late English traveller found a simple-minded Baptist mission church, in far-off Burma, using for the communion service, and we doubt not with God’s blessing, Bass’s pale ale instead of wine.” Circumstances alter cases, it seems!

Soul is the ψυχή, or the *nephesh* of the Bible; the vital principle, or the breath of life, which every animal, down to the infusoria, shares with man. In the translated Bible it stands indifferently for *life*, blood, and soul. “Let us *not kill* his nephesh,” says the original text: “let us not kill *him*,” translate the Christians,¹ and so on.²

Theosophists — In the mediæval ages it was the name by which were known the disciples of Paracelsus of the sixteenth century, the so-called fire-philosophers or *Philosophi per ignem*. As well as the Platonists they regarded the soul [ψυχή] and the divine spirit, *nous* (νοῦς), as a particle of the great Archos — a fire taken from the eternal ocean of light.

The Theosophical Society, to which these volumes are dedicated by the author as a mark of affectionate regard, was organized at New York in 1875. The object of its founders was to experiment practically in the occult powers of Nature, and to collect and disseminate among Christians information about the Oriental religious philosophies. Later, it was determined to spread among the “poor benighted heathen” such evidence [xlii] as to the practical results of Christianity as will at least give both sides of the story to the communities among which missionaries are at work. With this view it has established relations with associations and individuals throughout the East, to whom it furnishes authenticated reports of the ecclesiastical crimes and misdemeanours, schisms and heresies, controversies and litigations, doctrinal differences and biblical criticisms and revisions, with which the press of Christian Europe and America constantly teems. Christendom has been long and minutely informed of the degradation and brutishness into which Buddhism, Brahmanism, and Confucianism have plunged their deluded votaries, and many millions have been lavished upon foreign missions under such false representations. The Theosophical Society, seeing daily exemplifications of this very state of things as the sequence of Christian teaching and example — the latter especially — thought it simple justice to make the facts known in Palestine, India, Ceylon, Cashmere, Tartary, Tibet, China, and Japan, in all which countries it has influential correspondents. It may also in time have much to say about the conduct of the missionaries to those who contribute to their support.

Theurgist — From *θεός*, god, and *εργον*, work. The first school of practical theurgy in the Christian period was founded by Iamblichus among the Alexandrian Platonists; but the priests attached to the temples of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia, and who took an active part in the evocations of the gods during the Sacred Mysteries, were known by this name from the earliest archaic period. The purpose of it was to make spirits visible to the eyes of mortals. A theurgist was one expert in the esoteric learning of the Sanctuaries of all the great countries. The Neoplatonists of the school

¹ *Genesis xxxvii, 21*

² [Endnote 11 by Boris de Zirkoff: The Greek word ψυχή, *psychē*, is derived from the Greek root ψυχω, *psychō*, which means to grow chilled or cold. The Stoics of both Greece and Rome hinted at one of the early doctrines taught in the Greek Mysteries to the effect that the human soul, the *psychē*, was so called because through wrongdoing, through following and becoming servile to base attractions, the lower part of the human “soul” sank into the deeps of cold matter and thus lost its intrinsic and inherent spiritual fire or fervour. It became “chilled” and its wandering in the lower realms of matter took it ever farther away from the Central Fire, and the divine spark which is the core of the spiritual portion of man. In proportion, however, as we succeed in going within and behind this intermediate psychological veil of consciousness, do we become nobler and greater, and rise again to the “warmth” of the inner Flame which is our true home.]

of Iamblichus were called theurgists, for they performed the so-called “ceremonial magic,” and evoked the “spirits” of the departed heroes, “gods,” and Daimōnia (*δαίμονια*, divine, spiritual entities). In the rare cases when the presence of a *tangible* and *visible* spirit was required, the theurgist had to furnish the weird apparition with a portion of his own flesh and blood — he had to perform the *theopoiia* [θεοποια], or the “creation of gods,” by a mysterious process well known to the modern fakirs and initiated Brahmans of India. This is what is said in the *Book of Evocations* of the pagodas. It shows the perfect identity of rites and ceremonial between the oldest Brāhmanic theurgy and that of the Alexandrian Platonists:

The Brāhmana-Grihastha [the evocator] must be in a state of complete purity before he ventures to call forth the Pitris.

After having prepared a lamp, some sandalwood incense, etc., and having traced the magic circles taught to him by the superior guru, in order to keep away *bad* spirits, he “ceases to breathe, and calls *the fire* to his help to disperse his body.” He pronounces a certain number of times [xlili] the sacred word, and “his soul escapes from his body, and his body disappears, and the soul of the evoked spirit descends into the *double* body and animates it.” Then “His [Grihastha’s] soul re-enters into his body, whose subtile particles have again been aggregating, after having formed of their emanations an aërial body to the spirit he evoked.”

And now, that he has formed for the Pitri a body with the particles the most essential and pure of his own, the grihastha is allowed, after the ceremonial sacrifice is over, to “converse with the souls of the ancestors and the Pitris, and offer them questions on the mysteries of the *Being* and the transformations of the *imperishable*.”

“Then after having blown out his lamp he must light it again, and set at liberty the bad spirits shut out from the place by the magical circles, and leave the sanctuary of the Pitris.”¹

The school of Iamblichus was distinct from that of Plotinus and Porphyry, who were strongly against ceremonial magic and practical theurgy as dangerous, though these two eminent men firmly believed in both. “The *theurgic* or *benevolent* magic, the Goëtic or dark and evil necromancy, were alike in preeminent repute *during the first century* of the Christian era.”² But never have any of the highly moral and pious philosophers, whose fame has descended to us spotless of any evil deed, practiced any other kind of magic than the theurgic, or *benevolent*, as Bulwer-Lytton terms it. “Whoever is acquainted with the nature of *divinely luminous appearances* (φασματα) knows also on what account it is requisite to abstain from all birds (animal food), and especially for him who hastens to be liberated from terrestrial concerns and to be established with the celestial gods,” says Porphyry.³

Though he refused to practice theurgy himself, Porphyry, in his *Life of Plotinus*, mentions a priest of Egypt, who, “at the request of a certain friend of Plotinus (which

¹ *Book of Brāhmanical Evocations*, Part III

² Bulwer-Lytton, *Last Days of Pompeii*, Book II, ch. viii

³ *De abstinentia* iv, §16; [in Thos. Taylor’s *Select Works of Porphyry*, London 1823, p. 157. Consult “Taylor’s Vindication of the Rights of Brutes” in our Down to Earth Series. — ED. PHIL.]

friend was perhaps Porphyry himself, remarks T. Taylor), exhibited to Plotinus, in the temple of Isis at Rome, the familiar daimōn, or, in modern language, the *guardian angel* of that philosopher.”¹

The popular, prevailing idea was that the theurgists, as well as the magicians, worked wonders, such as evoking the souls or shadows of the heroes and gods, and doing other thaumaturgic works by supernatural powers.

Yajna — The Yajna, say the Brahmans, exists from eternity, for it [xliv] proceeded forth from the Supreme One, the *Brahmā-Prajāpati*, in whom it lay dormant from “no beginning.” It is the key to the TRIVIDYĀ, the thrice sacred science contained in the *Rig* verses, which teaches the Yajus or sacrificial mysteries. “The Yajna exists as an invisible thing at all times; it is like the latent power of electricity in an electrifying machine, requiring only the operation of a suitable apparatus in order to be elicited. It is supposed to extend, when unrolled, from the *Āhavanīya* or sacrificial fire into which all oblations are thrown, to heaven, forming thus a bridge or ladder, by means of which the sacrificer can communicate with the world of gods and spirits, and even ascend when alive to their abodes.”²

This *Yajna* is again one of the forms of the Ākāśa, and the mystic word calling it into existence and pronounced mentally by the initiated Priest is the *Lost Word* receiving impulse through WILL-POWER.

To complete the list, we will now add that in the course of the following chapters,

whenever we use the term *Archaic*, we mean before the time of Pythagoras;

when *Ancient*, before the time of Mohammed; and

when *Mediæval*, the period between Mohammed and Martin Luther.

It will only be necessary to infringe the rule when from time to time we may have to speak of nations of a pre-Pythagorean antiquity, and will adopt the common custom of calling them “ancient.”

No man worthy of the name of philosopher would care to wear honours that rightfully belong to another.

Before closing this initial chapter, we venture to say a few words in explanation of the plan of this work. Its object is not to force upon the public the personal views or theories of its author; nor has it the pretensions of a scientific work, which aims at creating a revolution in some department of thought. It is rather a brief summary of the religions, philosophies, and universal traditions of human kind, and the exegesis of the same, in the spirit of those secret doctrines, of which none — thanks to prejudice and bigotry — have reached Christendom in so un mutilated a form, as to secure it a fair judgment. Since the days of the unlucky mediæval philosophers, the last to write upon these secret doctrines of which they were the depositaries, few men have dared to brave persecution and prejudice by placing their knowledge upon record.

¹ Thos. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 92 *fn.*

² M. Haug, *The Aitareya-Brahmanam*, etc., Introduction, pp. 73-74

And these few have never, as a rule, written for the public, but only for those of their own and succeeding times who possessed the key to their jargon. The multitude, not understanding them or their doctrines, have been accustomed to regard them *en masse* as either charlatans or dreamers. Hence the unmerited contempt into which the study of the noblest of sciences — that of the spiritual man — has gradually fallen. [xlv]

In undertaking to inquire into the assumed infallibility of Modern Science and Theology, the author has been forced, even at the risk of being thought discursive, to make constant comparison of the ideas, achievements, and pretensions of their representatives, with those of the ancient philosophers and religious teachers. Things the most widely separated as to time, have thus been brought into immediate juxtaposition, for only thus could the priority and parentage of discoveries and dogmas be determined. In discussing the merits of our scientific contemporaries, their own confessions of failure in experimental research, of baffling mysteries, of missing links in their chains of theory, of inability to comprehend natural phenomena, of ignorance of the laws of the causal world, have furnished the basis for the present study. Especially (since Psychology has been so much neglected, and the East is so far away that few of our investigators will ever get there to study that science where alone it is understood), we will review the speculations and policy of noted authorities in connection with those modern psychological phenomena which began at Rochester and have now overspread the world. *We wish to show how inevitable were their innumerable failures, and how they must continue until these pretended authorities of the West go to the Brahmans and Lamaists of the far Orient, and respectfully ask them to impart the alphabet of true science.* We have laid no charge against scientists that is not supported by their own published admissions, and if our citations from the records of antiquity rob some of what they have hitherto viewed as well-earned laurels, the fault is not ours but Truth's. No man worthy of the name of philosopher would care to wear honours that rightfully belong to another.

The materialism of today is born of the brutal yesterday.

Deeply sensible of the Titanic struggle that is now in progress between materialism and the spiritual aspirations of mankind, our constant endeavour has been to gather into our several chapters, like weapons into armouries, every fact and argument that can be used to aid the latter in defeating the former. Sickly and deformed child as it now is, the materialism of Today is born of the brutal Yesterday. Unless its growth is arrested, it may become our master. It is the bastard progeny of the French Revolution and its reaction against ages of religious bigotry and repression. To prevent the crushing of these spiritual aspirations, the blighting of these hopes, and the deadening of that intuition which teaches us of a God and a hereafter, we must show our false theologies in their naked deformity, and distinguish between divine religion and human dogmas. Our voice is raised for spiritual freedom, and our plea made for enfranchisement from all tyranny, whether of SCIENCE or THEOLOGY.¹

¹ *Isis Unveiled*, I pp. ix-xlv

Suggested reading for students.



She being dead, yet speaketh.

- “Blavatsky against Ecclesiastical Christianity”
- “Blavatsky against Spiritualism”
- “Blavatsky cuts down to size a carping critic of heterodoxy”
- “Blavatsky defends Isis Unveiled”
- “Blavatsky enlightens the sceptics of her Motherland”
- “Blavatsky expels a friend of Communists”
- “Blavatsky hated balls”
- “Blavatsky on a Case of Obsession”
- “Blavatsky on a Heavy Curse”
- “Blavatsky on an Intro- and retrospective dream”
- “Blavatsky on Animal Souls”
- “Blavatsky on Bulgarian Sun Worship”
- “Blavatsky on Christmas and the Christmas Tree”
- “Blavatsky on Elementals and Elementaries”
- “Blavatsky on foeticide being a crime against nature”
- “Blavatsky on Hindu widow-burning”
- “Blavatsky on Jesuitry in Masonry”
- “Blavatsky on Marriage, Divorce, and Celibacy”
- “Blavatsky on Nebo of Birs-Nimrud”
- “Blavatsky on Occult Alphabets and Numerals”
- “Blavatsky on Occult Vibrations”
- “Blavatsky on Old Age”
- “Blavatsky on old doctrines vindicated by new prophets”
- “Blavatsky on Plato’s Timæus”
- “Blavatsky on Progress and Culture”
- “Blavatsky on Religious deformities”

- “Blavatsky on Ritualism in Church and Masonry”
- “Blavatsky on Shambhala, the Happy Land”
- “Blavatsky on Spinoza and Western Philosophers”
- “Blavatsky on Sunday devotion to pleasure”
- “Blavatsky on Teachings of Eliphas Levi”
- “Blavatsky on the Boogeymen of Science”
- “Blavatsky on the Book of Enoch”
- “Blavatsky on the doomed destiny of the Romanovs”
- “Blavatsky on the elucidation of long-standing enigmas”
- “Blavatsky on the Harmonics of Smell”
- “Blavatsky on the hidden Esotericism of the Bible”
- “Blavatsky on the history and tribulations of the Zohar”
- “Blavatsky on the introversion of mental vision”
- “Blavatsky on the Key to Spiritual Progress”
- “Blavatsky on the knighted Oxford Sanskritist who could speak no Sanskrit”
- “Blavatsky on the Letters of Lavater”
- “Blavatsky on the Luminous Circle”
- “Blavatsky on the modern negators of Ancient Science”
- “Blavatsky on the Monsoon”
- “Blavatsky on the New Year and false noses”
- “Blavatsky on the New Year’s Morrow”
- “Blavatsky on the Qabbalah by Isaac Myer”
- “Blavatsky on the quenchless Lamps of Alchemy”
- “Blavatsky on the Rationale of Fasts”
- “Blavatsky on the Roots of Zoroastrianism”
- “Blavatsky on the Secret Doctrine”
- “Blavatsky on the Teachings of Eliphas Levi”
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