

*Madame Blavatsky on the  
philosophical mind of the Chinese*



## *Abstract and train of thoughts*

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The mind of the Chinese is too philosophical to create for itself an Supreme Deity in his likeness.	4
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## The annals of Chinese dynasties date back to a period between 3,000 and 4,000 years B.C.

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[Andrew T. Sibbald contributes a long essay on the historical development of the Chinese Empire and the nature of its civilization, and beliefs. It is followed by some remarks from the pen of "Amaravella,"<sup>1</sup> taking exception to certain statements of Sibbald and giving a theosophical interpretation of various points. H.P. Blavatsky has appended a number of footnotes referring to specific passages and words throughout the essay. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

[Believing that we have in the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Book of *Genesis* some hints, not to be called in question]

Our contributors are entitled to their opinions and allowed a great latitude in the expression of their respective religions, or even sectarian views. Yet a line of demarcation must be drawn; and if we are told that the evolution of Races and their ethnological distribution as in the Bible are "not to be called in question," then, after Noah,<sup>2</sup> we may be next asked to accept Bible chronology, and the rib, and the apple *verbally*, to boot? This — we must decline. It is really a pity to spoil able articles by appealing to Biblical allegory for corroboration.

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[The arrival of the Chinese tribe had been anticipated by others]

And all this in less than 2,000 years B.C. (1998) if we accept Bible chronology? The Chinese race has been ethnologically and historically known to exhibit the same type as it does now, several thousand years B.C. A Chinese [15] emperor put to death two astronomers for failing to predict an eclipse, over 2,000 years B.C. What kind of an antediluvian animal was Noah, for that "Adamite" to beget all by himself three sons of the most widely separated types — namely an Aryan or Caucasian, a Mongolian, and an African Negro?

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[The accession of Yu, the first *sovereign* of the nation, was probably at some time in the nineteenth century before Christ]

The first *Emperor*, the grandson of Chow Siang, the founder of the Tsin dynasty, which gave its name to China, flourished in the VI<sup>th</sup> cent. B.C. but the series of Sovereigns in China is lost in the night of time. But even nineteen centuries carry the Chinese race beyond the Flood, and leave that race still historical.

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<sup>1</sup> [Nom de plume of Edward J. Coulomb, author of *Parabrahm*. Translated by G.R.S. Mead from *Le Lotus*, No. 14, 15, 16, and republished in London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1889; Vol. I (18) of *Theosophical Siftings* (1888-1889), with some additional notes by the author; pp. 2-31. Together with *The Secret Doctrine, Parabrahm* was one of fourteen English books prohibited in Russia during the first six months of 1889. Cf. *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, ("GOING TO AND FRO THE EARTH") XI p. 461. Also consult "Prometheus, the Light-bringer, hurled down to the bowels of the earth," in our Down to Earth Series. — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>2</sup> [Consult "Proposition 1 - Noah is Logos," in our Secret Doctrine's First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

**The mind of the Chinese is too philosophical to create for itself an Supreme Deity in his likeness.**

[To attempt to carry the early Chinese history to a higher antiquity than twenty centuries before Christ is without any historical justification]

The Chinese chronological annals have preserved to this day the names of numerous dynasties running back to a period 3,000 and 4,000 years B.C. Why should we, whose history beyond the year 1 of our era (even that year is now found untrustworthy!) is all guesswork, presume to correct the chronology of other nations far older than our own? With doubts thrown even upon Wilhelm Tell, as an historical personage, and King Arthur in an historical London fog, what right — except egregious conceit — have we, Europeans, to say we know Chinese or any pre-Christian chronology better than the nations who have kept and preserved their own records?

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[There may have been such men as . . . Chuen-heuh Hwang-te . . . if we should not rather place them in the land of phantasy]

Surely not any more so than the Patriarchs and *their* periods? [16]

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[to distinguish them from other descendants of Noah]

We believe there could not be found now one single anthropologist or ethnologist of any note (not even among those clergymen who care for their scientific reputation) who would take any concern in, or consider for one moment Noah as the root-stock of mankind. To use this personage as a buffer against the views of any man of science is, to say the least out of date. Mr. Gladstone alone could afford it.

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[the art of ideographic writing or engraving]

Bunsen calculates that 20,000 years, at least, were necessary for the development and formation of the Chinese language. Other philologists may disagree, but which of them traces the “celestials” from Noah?

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[As early as the beginning of the Shang dynasty, we find E Yin presenting a written memorial to his sovereign]

How can this be, when we find in Knight’s *Cyclopædia of Biography* that the work *Shan Hai Ching* is spoken of by the commentator Kwoh P’ch (A.D. 276-324) as having been compiled 3,000 years before his time, “seven dynasties back”? It was arranged by Kung Chai or Chung-Ku from engravings on nine urns made by the Emperor Yu, B.C. 2255.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [These data may be found in the Fourth Division of Charles Knight’s *The English Cyclopædia, Supplement on the Arts and Sciences*, London 1873, columns 524-34, and in the *Chan-Hai-King. Antique Géographie Chinoise*. Translated from the Chinese by Léon de Rosny, Paris 1891. →

[regarding the idea of personality in connection with the concept of God]

No Chinaman has ever believed in one *personal* God, but in Heaven in an abstract sense, whose [17] many “Rulers” were synthesized by that “Heaven.” Every philosophy and sect proves it; from Laotze and Confucius down to the latest sects and Buddhism. A “He” God is unknown in China.

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[the Chinese have never thought of fashioning a likeness of the Supreme]

Just so; because the mind of the Chinaman is too philosophical to create for itself an ABSOLUTE Supreme as a personality in his (the Chinaman’s) likeness.

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**There are seven manifestations of light but only six “days” of creation.**

[Who the “six-Honoured ones” . . . were, is not known]

“The six honoured ones” are those of every nation which had a cult based on astronomy. The “God” was the Sun. Ahura Mazda and his six Amshāspends of the Mazdeans are the later development of the twelve Zodiacal signs divided into six double houses, the Sun being the seventh and always made the representative (or synthesis) of the six.<sup>1</sup> As Proclus has it:

The Framers made the heavens six in number, and for the seventh he cast into the midst the fire of the Sun (*Timæus*),<sup>2</sup>

and this idea is pre-eminent in the Christian (especially the Roman Catholic) idea, *i.e.*, the Sun-Christ, who is also Michael, and his six and *seven* Eyes, or Spirit of the Planets. The “six–seven” are a movable and interchangeable number and are ever made to correlate in religious symbolism. As correctly shown by Mr. G. Massey there are seven circles to Meru and six parallel ridges across it, there are seven manifestations of light and only six days of creation, *etc.* The mystery of the “double heaven” is one of the oldest and most Kabbalistic and the six chambers, divisions, *etc.*, in most of the temples of antiquity with the officiating priest, representing the Sun, the seventh, left abundant witnesses behind them. [18]

[The spirits of the departed were supposed to have a knowledge of the circumstances of their descendants, and to be able to affect them] Christian countries are zealously imitating the Chinamen, in that more than one hundred millions, perhaps, are now Spiritualists, whether openly or otherwise.

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The same information occurs in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 54, *fn.* — Boris de Zirkoff.]

<sup>1</sup> [Consult “The Zodiac is a veil thrown over Cosmogony,” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>2</sup> [This passage is from Proclus’ *Commentary on the Timæus of Plato* (translated by Thos. Taylor); it is quoted here, however, from I.P. Cory, *Ancient Fragments*, p. 265, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London, Wm. Pickering, 1832. — Boris de Zirkoff. Full text of Cory’s *Ancient Fragments* in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series. — ED. PHIL.]

[the people of the Shang dynasty were very superstitious]

But why not take advantage of this opportunity to also bring out that other *worse* “superstition” — about Noah and the rest? Shall our “doxies”<sup>1</sup> remain forever the only orthodox, and those of all other people heterodoxies and “superstition”?

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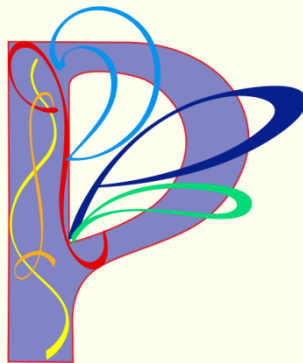
**Further proof of the philosophical mind of the Chinese.**

[There is a heaven in the classical books of the Chinese; but there is no hell and no purgatory]

This is an excellent proof of the philosophical mind of the Chinaman. They ought to send a few missionaries to Lambeth Palace.

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[King Woo . . . arranged the orders of nobility into five, from duke downwards]  
According to the five root-races which have so far appeared on earth.



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<sup>1</sup> [opinion or doctrine, especially concerning religious matters]