

Confusing Words Series

Vedanta and Theosophy

THE SEEMINGLY PARADOXICAL USE of the “Seventh Eternity,” thus dividing the indivisible, is sanctioned in esoteric philosophy. The latter divides boundless duration into unconditionally eternal and universal Time and a conditioned one (*Khandakāla*). One is the abstraction or noumenon of infinite time (Kāla); the other its phenomenon appearing periodically, as the effect of *Mahat* (the Universal Intelligence limited by Manvantaric duration). With some schools, Mahat is “the first-born” of Pradhāna (undifferentiated substance, or the periodical aspect of Mūlaprakriti, the root of Nature), which (Pradhāna) is called Māyā, the Illusion. In this respect, I believe, esoteric teaching differs from the Vedāntin doctrines of both the Advaita and the Viśishtādvaita schools. For it says that, while Mūlaprakriti, the noumenon, is self-existing and without any origin — is, in short, parentless, Anupādaka (as one with Brahman) — Prakriti, its phenomenon, is periodical and no better than a phantasm of the former, so Mahat — with the Occultists, the first-born of Jñāna (or *gnosis*) knowledge, wisdom or the Logos — is a phantasm reflected from the Absolute NIRGUNA (Parabrahman, the one reality, “devoid of attributes and qualities”; see *Upanishads*); while with some Vedāntins Mahat is a manifestation of Prakriti, or Matter.¹



¹ *Secret Doctrine* I, p. 62; [on Stanza III.1a, THE LAST VIBRATION OF THE SEVENTH ETERNITY THRILLS THROUGH INFINITUDE. Also refer to “Time was not” in our Secret Doctrine’s Proposition 1 Series.]