

*A Master of Wisdom on
the Divine Self seen by Self*



A Master of Wisdom commenting upon the speculations
advanced by Rhys Davids and Arthur Lillie.

Abstract and train of thoughts¹

In Esotericism there are two Avalokiteshvaras; the first and the second Logos, or Father and Son.

Rhys Davids is like the Cape Settlers who lived over diamond mines without suspecting it. He was an atheist and a materialist. 3

Avalokiteshvara is both the unmanifested Father and the manifested Son, the latter proceeding from, and identical with, the other; namely, the Parabrahm and Jivatman, the Universal and the individualized seventh Principle in man, the Passive and the Active. 5



¹ Frontispiece by Lady Yana Dhyana.

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From *Mahatma Letter 59* (111), pp. 337-39; 3rd Combined ed.

Now that you are at the centre of modern Buddhistic exegesis, in personal relations with some of the clever commentators (from whom the holy Devas deliver us!) I shall draw your attention to a few things which are really as discreditable to the perceptions of even *non*-initiates, as they are misleading to the general public. The more one reads such speculations as those of Messrs. Rhys Davids,¹ Lillie,² etc. — the less can one bring oneself to believe that the unregenerate Western mind can ever get at the core of our abstruse doctrines. Yet hopeless as their cases may be, it would appear well worth the trouble of testing the intuitions of your London members — of some of them, at any rate — by half expounding through you one or two mysteries and leaving them to complete the chain themselves.

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Shall we take Mr. Rhys Davids as our first subject, and show that, indirectly as he has done it yet it is himself who strengthened the absurd ideas of Mr. Lillie, who fancies to have proved belief in a personal God in ancient Buddhism. Mr. Rhys Davids' *Buddhism* is full of the sparkle of our most important esotericism; but always, as it would seem, beyond not only his reach but apparently even his powers of intellectual perception. To avoid "absurd metaphysics" and its *inventions*, he creates unnecessary difficulties and falls headlong into inextricable confusion. He is like the Cape Settlers who lived over diamond mines without suspecting it. I shall only instance the definition of "Avalokiteśvara" on pp. 202 and 203. There, we find the author saying that which to any occultist seems a palpable absurdity:

The name Avalokiteśvara, which means "the Lord who looks down from on high," is a purely metaphysical invention. The curious use of the past participle passive *avalokita* in an active sense is clearly evident from the translations into Tibetan and Chinese.

Now saying that it means "the Lord who looks down from on high," or, as he kindly explains further — "the Spirit of the Buddhas present in the church" — is to completely reverse the sense. It is equivalent to saying "Mr. Sinnett looks down from on high (his *Fragments of Occult Truth*) on the British Theos. Society," whereas it is the latter that looks up to Mr. Sinnett, or rather to his *Fragments* as the (in their case only *possible*) expression and culmination of the knowledge sought for. This is no

¹ [Thomas William Rhys Davids, 1843–1922, was a British scholar of the Pāli language and founder of the Pāli Text Society. He took an active part in founding the British Academy and London School for Oriental Studies. Authored *Buddhism: being a sketch of the life and teachings of Gautama, the Buddha*, London 1877.

Not to be confused with Caroline Augusta Rhys Davids (née Foley), 1857–1942, who married T.W. Rhys Davids in 1894. After making a contribution to economics Mrs Davids became widely known as an editor, translator, and interpreter of Buddhist texts in the Pāli language. She was honorary secretary from 1907 and president of the Pāli Text Society from 1923 until her death in 1942.]

² [Arthur Lillie, 1831–1911, christened as George Arthur Howard, was an officer in the British Indian Army. While in India, he became a Buddhist. He authored *Buddha and early Buddhism*, 1882. His books on religion were poorly received by scholars. Lillie appears to have written the original rule book for a Scottish croquet tournament, which, if so, continues to be his best-received work.]

idle simile and defines the exact situation. In short, *Avalokita Īśvar* literally interpreted means “the Lord that *is seen*,” “Īśvara” implying moreover, rather the adjective than the noun, *lordly*, self-existent *lordliness*, *not* Lord. It is, when correctly interpreted, in one sense “the *divine Self* perceived or seen by *Self*,” the *Ātman* or seventh principle ridded of its *māyāvic* distinction from its Universal Source — which *becomes the object of perception for, and by the individuality centred in* *Buddhi*, the sixth principle, something that happens only in the highest state of *Samadhi*. This is applying it to the microcosm. In the other sense *Avalokiteśvara* implies the seventh *Universal Principle*, as the object perceived by the Universal *Buddhi*, “Mind” or Intelligence which is the synthetic aggregation of all the *Dhyāni Chohans*, as of all other intelligences whether great or small, that ever were, are or will be. Nor is it the “Spirit of Buddhas present in the Church,” but the Omnipresent Universal Spirit in the temple of nature — in one case; and the seventh Principle — the *Ātman* in the temple — man — in the other. Mr. Rhys Davids might have at least remembered the (to him) familiar simile made by the Christian Adept, the Kabbalistic Paul:¹

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

— and thus avoided to have made a mess of the name. Though as a grammarian he detected the use of the “past particle passive,” yet he shows himself far from an inspired “Panini” in overlooking the true cause and saving his grammar by raising the hue and cry against metaphysics. And yet he quotes Beal’s *Catena*² as his authority for the invention when, in truth, this work is perhaps the only one in English that gives an *approximately* correct explanation of the word, at any rate, on page 374. “*Self-manifested*” — How? it is asked:

Speech or *Vāch* was regarded as the Son or the manifestation of the *Eternal Self*, and was adored under the name of *Avalokiteśvara*, the manifested God.



¹ [1 Corinthians iii, 16]

² [Samuel Beal, *A Catena of Buddhist Scriptures from the Chinese*, 1st ed., London 1871. Samuel Beal, 1825–1889, was an Oriental scholar, and the first Englishman to translate direct from the Chinese the early records of Buddhism.]

Avalokiteshvara is both the unmanifested Father and the manifested Son, the latter proceeding from, and identical with, the other; namely, the Parabrahm and Jivatman, the Universal and the individualized seventh Principle in man, the Passive and the Active.

This shows as clearly as can be that Avalokiteśvara is both the *un*-manifested *Father* and the manifested *Son*, the latter proceeding from, and identical with, the other; namely, the *Parabrahm* and *Jivātman*, the Universal and the individualized seventh Principle — the Passive and the Active, the latter the *Word*, Logos, the Verb. Call it by whatever name, only let these unfortunate, deluded Christians know that the real *Christ* of every Christian is the *Vāch*, the “mystical Voice,” while the man *Jeshu* was but a mortal like any of us, an adept more by his inherent purity and ignorance of real Evil than by what he had learned with his initiated Rabbis and the already (at that period) fast degenerating Egyptian Hierophants and priests. A great mistake is also made by Beal who says:

This name [Avalokiteśvara] in Chinese took the form of Kwan-shai-yin, and the divinity worshipped under that name [was] (generally regarded as a female).¹

Kwan-shai-yin — or the universally manifested voice is active — *male*; and must not be confounded with *Kwan-yin*, or *Buddhi* the Spiritual Soul (the sixth Principle) and the vehicle of its “Lord.” It is *Kwan-yin* that is the female principle or the manifested *passive*, manifesting itself,

. . . to every creature in the universe, in order to deliver all men from the consequences of sin.²

— as rendered by Beal, this once quite correctly, while *Kwan-shai-yin*, “the Son identical with his Father” is the *absolute activity*, hence — having no direct relation to objects of sense — is *Passivity*.³

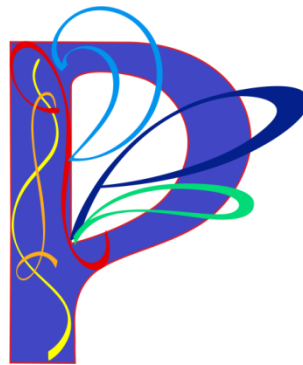
What a common *ruse* it is of your Aristotelians! With the sleuth hound’s persistence they track an idea to the very verge of the “impassable chasm,” and then, brought to bay, leave the metaphysicians to take up the trail if they can, or let it be lost. It is but natural that a Christian theologian, a missionary, should act upon this line, since — as easily perceived even in the little I gave out just now — a too correct rendering of our *Avalokiteśvara* and *Kwan-Shai-Yin* might have very disastrous effects. It would

¹ p. 374

² p. 383

³ [Cf. This divine power was finally anthropomorphized by the Chinese Buddhist ritualists into a distinct double-sexed deity with a thousand hands and a thousand eyes, and called Kwan-shai-yin Bodhisattwa, the Voice-Deity, but in reality meaning the voice of the ever-present latent divine consciousness in man; the voice of his real Self, which can be fully evoked and heard only through great moral purity. Hence Kwan-yin is said to be the son of Amitābha Buddha, who generated that Saviour, the merciful Bodhisattwa, the “Voice” or the “Word” that is universally diffused, the “Sound” which is eternal. It has the same mystical meaning as the *Vāch* of the Brāhmans. While the Brāhmans maintain the eternity of the Vedas from the eternity of “sound,” the Buddhists claim by synthesis the eternity of Amitābha, since he was the first to prove the eternity of the Self-born, Kwan-yin. Kwan-yin is the *Vāchīśvara* or Voice-Deity of the Brāhmans. Both proceed from the same origin as the Logos of the neo-platonic Greeks; the “manifested deity” and its “voice” being found in man’s Self, his conscience; Self being the unseen Father, and the “voice of Self” the Son; each being the relative and the correlative of the other. Both *Vāchīśvara* and Kwan-yin had, and still have, a prominent part in the Initiation Rites and Mysteries in the Brāhmanical and Buddhist esoteric doctrines. — *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (TIBETAN TEACHINGS), VI pp. 103-4]

simply amount to showing Christendom the true and undeniable origin of the “awful and *incomprehensible*” mysteries of its Trinity, Transubstantiation, Immaculate Conception, as also whence their ideas of the Father, Son, *Spiritus* and — Mother. It is less easy to shuffle *al piacere*¹ the cards of Buddhistic chronology than those of Chrishna and Christ. They *cannot* place — however much they would — the birth of our Lord Sangyas Buddha A.D. as they have contrived to place that of Chrishna. But why should an atheist and a materialist like Mr. Rhys Davids so avoid the correct rendering of our dogmas — even when he happens to understand them — which does not *happen* every day — is something surpassingly curious! In this instance the blind and guilty Rhys Davids leads the blind and innocent Mr. Lillie into the ditch; where the latter, catching at the proffered straw rejoices in the idea that Buddhism teaches in reality — a personal God!!



Compassion: the Spirit of Truth, (2009), the first of our Major Works, pp. 72, 190, 194, 208, 210, 216, 218, 224, 351, 353, 354, 355.

¹ [as you please]