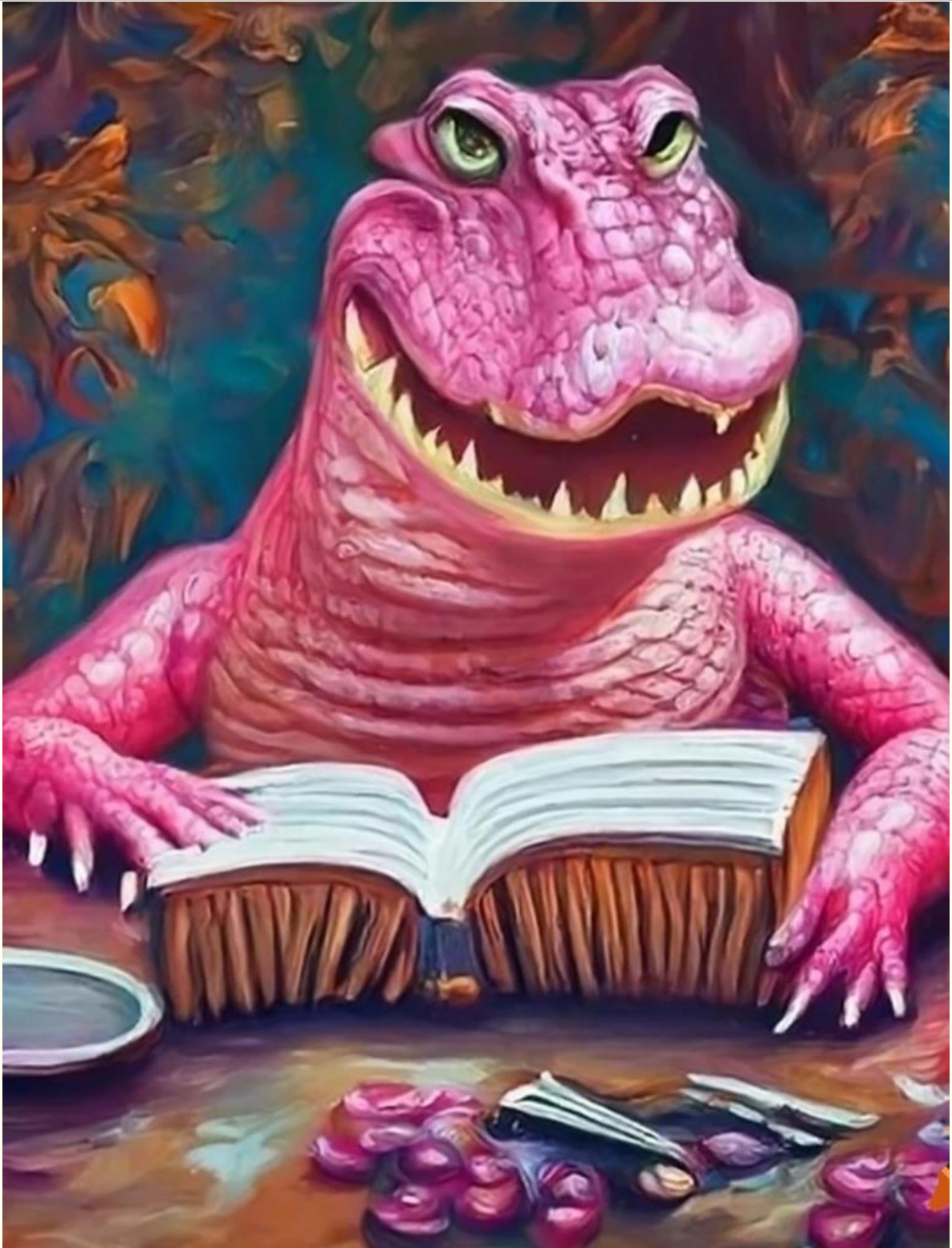


*Madame Blavatsky
enlightens her readers*



Blavatsky enlightens her readers on Yogis, Mahatmas, Rishis, Vegetarianism, and Theosophy.

First published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. IV, No. 9, June 1883, p. 235. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (PERTINENT QUESTIONS) IV pp. 542-44.

Will you or any of your readers enlighten me on the following points:

- 1 What is a Yogi?
- 2 Can he be classed with a Mahatma?
- 3 Can Viśvamisra, Valmiki, Vasishtha, and other Rishis be classed with the Yogis and the Mahatmas?
- 4 Or with the Mahatmas only?
- 5 Or with the Yogis only?
- 6 Did the Yogis know Occult Science?
- 7 Is vegetarianism necessary for the study and development of Occult Science?
- 8 Did our Rishis know Occult sciences?

By throwing some light on the above questions you will oblige.

Yours truly,

H. N. VAKIL

Bombay, April 30th, 1883
161, Malabar Hill [543]



Answers by Madame Blavatsky

- ① A Yogi in India is a very elastic word. It now serves generally to designate a very dirty, dung-covered, and naked individual, who never cuts nor combs his hair, covers himself from forehead to heels with wet ashes, performs *Pranayam*, without realizing its true meaning, and lives upon alms. It is only occasionally that the name is applied to one who is worthy of the appellation. The real meaning, however, of the word when analysed etymologically, will show that its root is “yug” — *to join* — and thus will yield its real significance. A real Yogi is a person who, having entirely divorced himself from the world, its attractions and pleasures, has succeeded after a more or less long period of training, to reunite his soul with the “universal Soul” or to “join” with Parabrahm. If by the word “Yogi” our correspondent means the latter individual, *viz.*, one who has linked his seventh and sixth principles, or Atman and Buddhi, and placed thereby his lower principles (Manas, the animal soul and the *personal ego*) *en rapport* with the Universal Principle, then:
 - ② He may be classed with the Mahatmas, since this word means simply a “great soul.” Therefore query ↓
 - ③ is an idle question to make. The Rishis — at any rate those who can be proved to have actually lived (since many of those who are mentioned under the above designation are more or less mythical), were of course “Mahatmas,” in the broad sense of the word. The three Rishis named by our questioner were historical personages and were very high adepts entitled to be called Mahatmas.
 - ④ They may be *Mahatmas* (whenever worthy of the appellation), and whether married or celibate, while they can be called ↓
 - ⑤ “Yogis” — only when remaining single, *viz.*, after devoting their lives to religious contemplation, asceticism, and celibacy. [544]
 - ⑥ Theoretically every *real* Yogi knows more or less the Occult sciences; that is to say, he must understand the secret and symbolical meaning of every prescribed rite, as the correct significance of the allegories contained in the *Vedas* and other sacred books. Practically, nowadays very few, if any, of those Yogis whom one meets with occasionally are familiar with occultism. It depends upon their degree of intellectual development and religious bigotry. A very saintly, sincere, yet ignorantly pious ascetic, who has not penetrated far beyond the husks of his philosophical doctrine would tell you that no one in *Kali-Yuga* is permitted to become a *practical* Occultist; while an initiated Yogi has to be an Occultist; at any rate, he has to be sufficiently powerful to produce all the *minor* phenomena (the ignorant would still call even such minor manifestation, “miracles”) of adeptship. The real Yogis, the heirs to the wisdom of the Aryan Rishis, are not to be met, however, in the world mixing with the profane and allowing themselves to be known as Yogis. Happy are they to whom the whole world is open, and who know it from their inaccessible *aśramas*, while the world (with the exception of a very few) knowing them not, denies their very existence. But, it really is not a matter of great concern with them whether people at large believe in, or know of them.

⑦ The exposition of “Occultism” in these columns has been clear enough to show that it is the Science by the study and practice of which the student can become a MAHATMA. The articles “The Elixir of Life,” and the *Hints on Esoteric Theosophy* are clear enough on this point. They also explain scientifically the necessity of being a vegetarian for the purposes of psychic development. Read and study, and you will find why Vegetarianism, Celibacy, and especially total abstinence from wine and spirituous drink are strictly necessary for “the development of Occult knowledge” — see *Hints on Esoteric Theosophy*, No. 2.¹ Question 8 being unnecessary in view of the aforesaid, we close the explanation.



¹ [Issued under the Authority of The Theosophical Society in 1882, Nos 1 and 2. Published anonymously but actually written by Allan O. Hume.]

Suggested reading for students.



She being dead, yet speaketh.

- BLAVATSKY ABOUT TO UNVEIL ISIS
- BLAVATSKY AGAINST ECCLESIASTICAL CHRISTIANITY
- BLAVATSKY AGAINST SPIRITUALISM
- BLAVATSKY CUTS DOWN TO SIZE A CARPING CRITIC OF HETERODOXY
- BLAVATSKY CUTS DOWN TO SIZE THE VENERABLE SWAMI OF ALMORA
- BLAVATSKY DEFENDS BUDDHISM IN CEYLON
- 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 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 IRISH TALISMANS
- 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 SPEAKS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- 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 CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES IN INDIA
- 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 SPEAKS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- BLAVATSKY ON THE SECRET DOCTRINE
- BLAVATSKY ON THE TEACHINGS OF ELIPHAS LEVI
- BLAVATSKY ON THE VISHISHTADVAITA PHILOSOPHY
- BLAVATSKY ON THEOSOPHY AND ASCETICISM
- BLAVATSKY ON WHETHER THE RISHIS EXIST TODAY
- BLAVATSKY REBUTS UNSPIRITUAL CONCEPTIONS ABOUT GOD
- BLAVATSKY UNMASKS THE TRINITY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
- BLAVATSKY'S LAST WORDS
- BLAVATSKY'S OPEN LETTER TO HER CORRESPONDENTS
- GEMS FROM THE EAST
- INDUCTIVE REASONING LEADS TO FAKE DEDUCTIONS
- MADAME BLAVATSKY ENLIGHTENS THE SCEPTICS OF HER MOTHERLAND
- MADAME BLAVATSKY ON THE PHILOSOPHICAL MIND OF THE CHINESE
- OBITUARY TO MIKHAIL NIKIFOROVICH KATKOV
- OBITUARY TO PUNDIT DAYANAND SARASWATI
- OCCULT PHILOSOPHY IS ANCIENT SPIRITUALISM
- OPEN LETTER TO THE AMERICAN SECTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
- OPEN LETTER TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY
- OPEN LETTERS TO THE AMERICAN CONVENTION
- PAGES FROM ISIS UNVEILED
- PAGES FROM THE CAVES AND JUNGLES OF HINDOSTAN
- PAGES FROM THE SECRET DOCTRINE 1 - ABRIDGED
- PAGES FROM THE SECRET DOCTRINE 2 - FULL TEXT
- PANTHEISTIC THEOSOPHY IS IRRECONCILABLE WITH ROMAN CATHOLICISM
- ROSICRUCIANISM WAS AN OFFSHOOT OF ORIENTAL OCCULTISM
- ROSICRUCIANS EMERGED AS AN ANTIDOTE TO THE MATERIAL SIDE OF ALCHEMY
- THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS FAR MORE DREADED BY THE DEVIL THAN BY GOD HIMSELF
- THE HERMETIC FIRE OF THE MIND IS THE KEY TO THE OCCULT SCIENCES
- THE REAL MEANING OF THE FIRST LINE OF GENESIS
- THE SECRET DOCTRINE (1888) VOL. 1 OF 2 ON COSMOGENESIS
- THE SECRET DOCTRINE (1888) VOL. 2 OF 2 ON ANTHROPOGENESIS

BLAVATSKY SPEAKS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- THOTH IS THE EQUIVALENT OF HERMES AND MOSES
- UNPOPULAR PHILOSOPHER ON CRITICISM AND AUTHORITIES
- UNPOPULAR PHILOSOPHER ON THE EIGHTH WONDER
- UNPOPULAR PHILOSOPHER ON THE MORNING STAR
- WE ARE MORE OFTEN VICTIMS OF WORDS RATHER THAN OF FACTS
- WITHOUT THE REVIVAL OF ARYAN PHILOSOPHY, THE WEST WILL FALL TO EVEN GROSSER MATERIALISM

