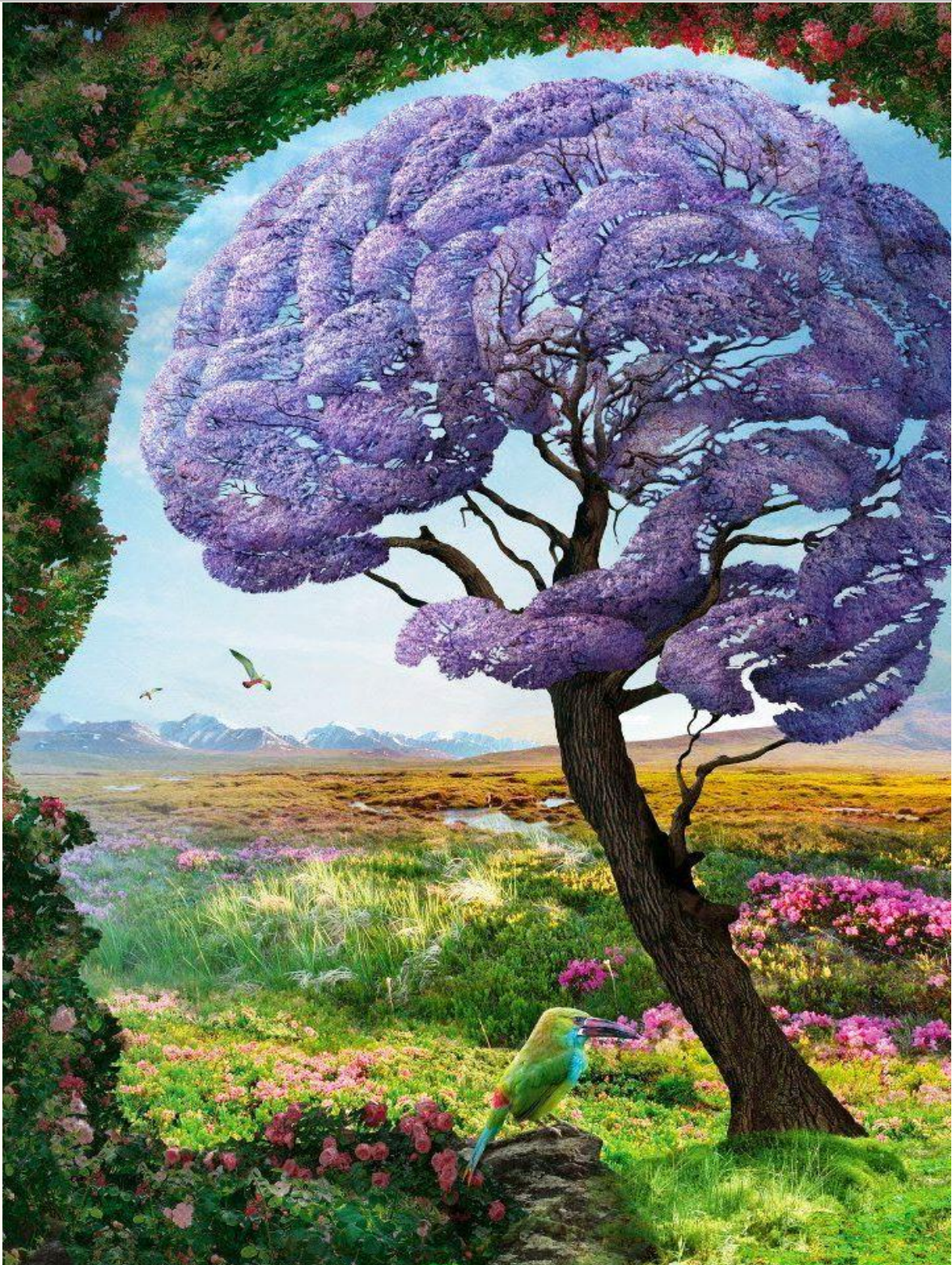


*Madame Blavatsky on
whether the Rishis exist today*



BLAVATSKY SPEAKS SERIES
ON WHETHER THE RISHIS EXIST TODAY

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Following the example of the Parsī Gentleman whose letter you published in *The Theosophist* of January, 1882, I am induced to inquire if there are Hindu Mahātmas among the Himalayan BROTHERS. By the term Hindu, I mean a believer in *Vedas* and the Gods they describe. If there are none, will any Brother of the 1st Section¹ be so kind as to enlighten the Hindu Community in general and the Hindu Theosophists in particular whether any Hindu Rishis of old still exist in flesh and blood? The adept Himalayan BROTHERS having explored the unseen universe must necessarily know the Rishis if they exist now. Tradition says that particularly the following seven are immortal, at least for the present kalpa.

Aśvatthama, Bali, Vyāsa, Hanuman, Vibhīshana, Kripa, Paraśurāma.

A HINDU THEOSOPHIST



¹ No chela need answer this, except the editor. — A.H.T.

IN REPLY TO THE FIRST QUESTION we are happy to inform our correspondent that there are Mahātmas among the Himalayan Brothers who are Hindus — *i.e.*, born of Hindu and Brahmin parents and who recognize the *esoteric* meaning of the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads*. They agree with Krishna, Buddha, Śuka, Gaudapāda, and Śamkarāchārya in considering that the *Karma-kanda* of the *Vedas* is of no importance whatsoever so far as man’s spiritual progress is concerned. Our questioner will do well to remember in this connection Krishna’s celebrated advice to Arjuna. “The subject-matter of the *Vedas* is related to the three Gunas; oh Arjuna, divest thyself of these gunas.” Śamkarāchārya’s uncompromising attitude towards *Pūrvamīmāṃsā* is too well known to require any special mention here.¹

Although the Himalayan Brothers admit the esoteric meaning of the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads*, they refuse to recognize as Gods the powers and other spiritual entities mentioned in the *Vedas*. The language used in the *Vedas* is allegorical and this fact has been fully recognized by some of the greatest Indian Philosophers. Our correspondent will have to prove that the *Vedas* really “describe Gods” as they exist, before he can fairly ask us to declare whether our Masters believe in such gods. We very much doubt if our correspondent is really prepared to contend seriously that *Agni* has four horns, three legs, two heads, five hands and seven tongues, as he is stated to possess in the *Vedas*; or that Indra committed adultery with Gautama’s wife. We beg to refer our learned correspondent to Kullūka-Bhatta’s² explanation of the latter myth (and it is a mere myth in his opinion) and Patañjali’s remarks on the profound esoteric significance of the four horns of *Agni*, in support of our assertion that the *Vedas* do not in reality describe any gods as our questioner has supposed.

In reply to the second question we are not prepared to say that “any Hindu Rishis of old still exist in flesh and blood” although we have our own reasons to believe that some of the great Hindu Adepts of ancient times have been and are reincarnating themselves occasionally in Tibet and Tartary; nor is it at all easy for us to understand how it can ever reasonably be expected that our Himalayan Brothers should discover Hindu Rishis “in flesh and blood” in their explorations in the “Unseen Universe,” since astral bodies are not usually made up of those earthly materials.

The tradition alluded to by our correspondent is not literally true; then, what connection is there between the seven personages named and the Hindu Rishis? Though we are not called upon to give an explanation of the tradition in question from our own standpoint, we shall give a few hints which may enable our readers to ascertain its real significance from what is contained in *Rāmāyana* and *Mahābhārata*.

¹ [Cf. “It is well-known to almost every Hindu that the followers of *Pūrvamīmāṃsā* (Kumārila commented on the *Sūtras*) were the greatest and the bitterest opponents of Śamkara and his doctrine, and Mr. Barth seems to be altogether ignorant of the nature of Kumārila’s views and *Pūrvamīmāṃsā* and the scope and aim of Śamkara’s Vedāntic philosophy. It is impossible to say what evidence the author has for asserting that the great reaction against the Buddhists commenced in the 7th and 8th centuries and that Śamkara was instrumental in originating it.” *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (ŚAMKARĀCHĀRYA’S DATE AND DOCTRINE) V, p. 181. See this remarkable excerpt into context, under the title “Shankara was a contemporary of Patanjali and his chela,” in our *Buddhas and Initiates Series*. — ED. PHIL.]

² [In the same volume of *The Theosophist*, p. 202, a correspondent points out that this is a printer’s error for Kumārila Bhatta who lived some centuries ago in Southern India. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

- *Aśvatthama* has gained an *immortality of infamy*.
- *Paraśurāma*'s cruelty made him immortal but he is not supposed to live in flesh and blood now; he is generally stated to have some sort of existence in fire though not necessarily in what a Christian would call "hell."
- *Bali* is not an individual properly speaking. The principle denoted by the name will be known when the esoteric meaning of *Trivikrama Avatāra* is better comprehended.
- *Vyāsa* is *immortal in his incarnations*. Let our respected Brother count how many *Vyāsas* there have been from first to last.
- *Hanuman* was neither a human being nor a monkey: it is one of the powers of the 7th principle of man (*Rāma*).
- *Vibhīshana*. Not a *Rākshasa* really but the personification of *Sattvaguna* which is immortal.
- *Kripa*'s association with *Aśvatthama* will explain the nature of his immortality.



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 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”
- “Blavatsky on the Vishishtadvaita Philosophy”
- “Blavatsky on Theosophy and Asceticism”
- “Blavatsky rebuts unspiritual conceptions about God”
- “Blavatsky's last words”
- “Blavatsky's open letter to her correspondents”

BLAVATSKY SPEAKS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- “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”
- “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 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 Cosmogogenesis”
- “The Secret Doctrine (1888) Vol. 2 of 2 on Anthropogenesis”
- “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”

