

Madame Blavatsky on the trials and triumph of Initiation



Abstract and train of thoughts

1. The Origin of the Mysteries

The last incarnation of one of seven “Lords of the Flame” was Baladeva, Krishna’s brother. Hercules is none other than Baladeva in Greek dress. 5

In the Golden Age, Esoteric Knowledge was common property. Initiation arose later on from the necessity to limit the number of those who knew. 8

The Initiate’s maxim was “All for the people and with the people.” 9

The old Initiates were real philosophers, priests, and healers.

They commemorated the secrets of their Mysteries in hieroglyphics. 12

Only those, whose purity allowed them to look at the great Isis unveiled, were admitted to the secrets of Nature and Man. 12

But what Gods and Angels had revealed, Moses revealed and hid from the sight of the world. 13

2. The Trial of the Sun-Initiate.

Vishvakarman (Hierophant or Logos Demiourgos) cut off seven locks of the neophyte’s long hair (Second Sun’s rays) and replaced them with a crown of brambles — thus making him Vikartana, “shorn of his rays.” 17

The neophyte who can overcome the dreadful trials of Initiation (on the cross of his worldly passions) dies in the Chrēstos condition (is freed from the clutches of matter) before his second and triumphant birth in Spirit as Christos. 18

The origin and meaning of the doctrine of atonement are now revealed and explained. 19

The Masonic rite of Initiation is based upon the construction of the Temple of Solomon, a narrative modelled upon Egyptian and still earlier symbolisms. 20

Yet, there never was an Occult Society, however open and sincere, that has not felt the hand of the Jesuit trying to pull it down by every secret means. 21

The Jesuits infected mankind with passivity, ignorance, and superstition in order to impose their Universal Despotism unopposed. 22

3. The Mystery of the “Sun of Initiation”

In the days of Aristotle, few were the true Adepts left in Europe and even in Egypt. 24

Solus-Sol-Sun is “The One” and the Greek name for Helios, the Most High. But there is a great difference between our sun and its prototype, the Central Spiritual Sun. 26

4. The Objects of the Mysteries

Whether lesser or greater, Mysteries have always been graded. 29

Theophany is the appearance of God to man; Theopathy, man's assimilation of his divine nature; Theopneusty, inspiration or rather the power to hear the Voice of God. The last two are experienced when the neophyte passes through the crucifixion of flesh or matter. 30

The Grecian Mysteries were identical with the Initiations of Buddhist and Hindu Adepts. 31

In India, the candidate of the third degree of Initiation had two Gurus. 31

Whether Eastern or Western, the Initiate dares all and keeps silent.

Masonic Initiation was modelled on that of the Lesser Mysteries and remains an authority upon the three fundamental degrees. The triple duty of a Mason is to study whence he comes, what he is, and whither he goes. 32

5. Traces of the Mysteries

The Round Towers in Ireland and Asia were connected with the Vishvakarman and Vikartana rites. In later ages, the Initiates of the Left Path and the anthropomorphists turned them into phallic monuments. 34

The key to the mystery of Initiation and to the real Christ (not the blasphemous caricature of the Churches), lies on the difference between the terms Chrēstos and Christos.

There were two Messiahs, Chrēst and Christ. Jesus was an Initiate of the Egyptian Mysteries, where the rite of the suffering Chrēstos on his trial, and second birth as Christos (by regeneration), were enacted. 37

Nagarjuna, one of the founders of the Mahayana School, had received his teachings from the Secret School of Adepts. 38

Narada is the Deva Rishi of Occultism who impelled animal man towards intellectual freedom. 38

It was on the seventh day, the third of his ultimate trial, that the Eastern neophyte arose as a regenerated man and returned to earth as triumphant conqueror of death, a Hierophant. 39

Initiates are said to have "crushed the serpent's head," i.e., conquered their sensual nature. 42

Four out of seven degrees of Initiation at Thebes will be now described. 42

Once unravelled and understood, the Mystery of the Hermaphrodite will demolish sexual worship with the hammer of Truth. 43

For the truths of science have always been the arcana of the Priests. 44

The Egyptian Initiates held the Rose as symbol of Nature, the mother and nourisher of man, represented as a virgin woman. The Brothers of the Rosy Cross, as a symbol of sexual procreation! 45

The old Indian Mysteries of Initiation were brought to Greece by Orpheus, nine millennia before Homer and Hesiod. 46

6. The Last of the Mysteries in Europe

Alesia, Arles, and Bibractis, the last bastions of the Ancient Mysteries in Europe, are no more. 47

Occult Wisdom is now replaced by absolute theocracy that displays its crowned priests to the ignorant masses. 50

Whatever else Cheops might have done, he has not built the pyramid bearing his name. Neither Solomon his temple, nor Noah his arc, for that matter. 50

The strict silence of the Initiates and the total loss of all written memorials of Secret Knowledge may explain why so little is known of the Ancient Mysteries. 51

Yet, there is spiritual Alchemy and physical Transmutation: their cradle is to be sought in the most distant times. 51

7. The Post-Christian Successors to the Mysteries

The Neo-Platonic School of Ammonius Saccas became the successor of the Eleusinian Mysteries and herald of the Eastern Secret Teachings. 53

Unveiling the long and laborious descent and re-ascent of the Divine Monad or Soul. 54

Each of us have to pass through the “Valley of Thorns” before we emerge into the plains of divine light and rest. 54

The Eclectic doctrines are strongly reflected in the Epistles of Paul and John the Evangelist.

For it is not Judaism and Christianity that remodelled the ancient Pagan Wisdom, but rather the latter that put its heathen curb on the new “faith” and was further influenced by the Eclectic Theosophical system, the direct emanation of the Wisdom-Religion. 56

Ammonius, Plotinus, Iamblichus, Proclus, were prominent Theosophists — though they never claimed the title. 56

All that is grand and noble in Christian theology comes from Neo-Platonism. 56

Ammonius was a true Philaletheian, one of us. 57

His Eclectic Theosophical School, a precursor and prototype of the modern Theosophical Movement, was made of the crumbs permitted to be gathered from the antediluvian lore. 58

Woe to those who mock Divine Knowledge and betray Her secrets.

But those who are pure in thought and deed, and have trust and confidence in their Immortal Spirit, have nothing to fear. 60

The aim of Initiation is reunion of the part with the All, the dewdrop with the Ocean of Life. 60

The last of the Druids may have perished at Alesia and Bibractis but the Neo-Platonic School was for a long time successful. 61

Until the Vatican erased and blotted out whole passages in the most rare and precious treatises of Archaic Wisdom, and even destroyed over thirty-six volumes written by Porphyry. 62

Suggested reading for students.



1. The Origin of the Mysteries

Eclipses of the sun and the moon are intimately connected with the circulations of the Cosmos, the movement to and fro of electromagnetic energies as between the various planetary bodies, and are especially related to the transference of various types of life-energies from one celestial body to another. They also stand in direct relationship to Initiations.

— BORIS DE ZIRKOFF ¹

This is a major compilation of seven articles from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, XIV pp. 246-313; Perhaps intended to be included in a third volume of *The Secret Doctrine*. — ED. PHIL.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (ORIGIN OF THE MYSTERIES) XIV pp. 246-59.

aLL THAT IS EXPLAINED IN THE PRECEDING SECTIONS and a hundredfold more was taught in the Mysteries from time immemorial. If the first appearance of those institutions is a matter of historical tradition with regard to some of the later nations, their origin must certainly be assigned to the time of the Fourth Root-Race. The Mysteries were imparted to the elect of that Race when the average Atlantean had begun to fall too deeply into sin to be trusted with the secrets of Nature. Their establishment is attributed in the Secret Works to the King-Initiates of the divine dynasties, when the “Sons of God” had gradually allowed their country to become *Kukarmadeśa* (the land of vice).

The antiquity of the Mysteries may be inferred from the history of the worship of Hercules in Egypt. This Hercules, according to what the priests told Herodotus, was not Grecian, for he says:

Of the Grecian Hercules I could in no part of Egypt procure any knowledge: . . . the name was never borrowed by Egypt from Greece. . . . Hercules, . . . as they [the priests] affirm, is one of the twelve (great Gods), who were reproduced from the earlier eight Gods 17,000 years before the year of Amasis.

The last incarnation of one of seven “Lords of the Flame” was Baladeva, Krishna’s brother. Hercules is none other than Baladeva in Greek dress.

Hercules is of Indian origin, and — his biblical chronology put aside — Colonel Tod was quite right in his suggestion that he was Balarāma or Baladeva. Now one must read the *Purānas* with the Esoteric key in one’s hand in order to find out how on almost every page they corroborate the Secret Doctrine. The ancient classical writers so well understood this truth that they unanimously attributed to Asia the origin of Hercules.

¹ W. Emmett Small. (Comp. & Ed.) *The Dream That Never Dies: Boris de Zirkoff speaks out on Theosophy*. San Diego: Point Loma Publications, Inc., 1983; [FAREWELL TO MATTER, “A Day to Remember,” p. 202].

A section of the *Mahābhārata* is devoted to the history of the Hercūla, of which race was Vyāsa. . . . Diodorus has the same legend with some variety. He says: “Hercules was born amongst the Indians and, like the Greeks, they furnish him with a club and lion’s hide.” Both [Krishna and Baladeva] are (lords) of the race (cūla) of Heri (Heri-cul-es) of which the Greeks might have made the compound Hercules.¹

The Occult Doctrine explains that Hercules was the last incarnation of one of the seven “Lords of the Flame,” as Krishna’s brother, Baladeva; that his incarnations occurred during the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Root-Races, and that his worship was brought into Egypt from Lankā and India by the later immigrants. That he was borrowed by the Greeks from the Egyptians is certain, the more so as the Greeks place his birth at Thebes, and only his twelve labours at Argos. Now we find in the *Vishnu-Purāna* a complete corroboration of the statement made in the Secret Teachings, of which Purānic allegory the following is a short summary:

Raivata, a grandson of Śaryāti, Manu’s fourth son, finding no man worthy of his lovely daughter, repaired with her to Brahmā’s region to consult the God in this emergency. Upon his arrival, Hahā, Huhū, and other Gandharvas were singing before the throne, and Raivata, waiting till they had done, imagined that but one Muhūrta (instant) had passed, whereas long ages had elapsed. When they had finished, Raivata prostrated himself and explained his perplexity. Then Brahmā asked him whom he wished for a son-in-law, and upon hearing a few personages named, the Father of the World smiled and said:

Of those whom you have named the third and fourth generation [Root-Races] no longer survive, for many successions of ages [Chatur-Yuga, or the four Yuga cycles] have passed away while you were listening to our songsters. Now on earth the twenty-eighth great age of the present Manu is nearly finished and the Kali period is at hand. You must therefore bestow this virgin-gem upon some other husband. For you are now alone.

Then the Rajā Raivata is told to proceed to Kuśasthalī, his ancient capital, which was now called Dvārakā, and where reigned in his stead a portion of the divine being (Vishnu) in the person of Baladeva, the brother of Krishna, regarded as the seventh incarnation of Vishnu whenever Krishna is taken as a full divinity.

“Being thus instructed by the Lotus-born [Brahmā], Raivata returned (with his daughter) to earth, where he found the race of men dwindled in stature [see what is said in the Stanzas and Commentaries of the races of mankind gradually decreasing in stature],² reduced in vigour, and enfeebled in intellect. Repairing to the city of Kuśasthalī, he found it much altered,” because, according to the allegorical explanation of the commentator, “Krishna had reclaimed from the sea a portion of the country,” which means in plain language that the continents had all been changed meanwhile — and “had renovated the city” — or rather built a new one, Dvārakā; for one reads in the *Bhāgavata-Purāna*³ that

¹ Tod’s *Annals of Rājāsthān*, Vol. I, pp. 32-33

² [Consult *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 609; Vol. II, pp. 329-32, 733]

³ *op. cit.*, IX, III, 28; [in Wilson’s ed. III, p. 249 *fn.*]

Kuśasthalī was founded and built by Raivata within the sea; and subsequent discoveries showed that it was the same, or on the same spot, as Dvārakā. Therefore it was on an island before. The allegory in *Vishnu-Purāna* shows King Raivata giving his daughter to “the wielder of the ploughshare” — or rather “the plough-bannered” — Baladeva, who “beholding the damsel of excessively lofty height, . . . shortened her with the end of his ploughshare, and she became his wife.”¹



Krishna and Baladeva, Lords of the Race (cūla) of Heri (Heri-cul-es)

¹ *Vishnu-Purāna*, Bk. IV, ch. 1, Wilson, Vol. III, pp. 248-54

This is a plain allusion to the Third and Fourth Races — to the Atlantean giants and the successive incarnations of the “Sons of the Flame” and other orders of Dhyāni-Chohans in the heroes and kings of mankind, down to the Kali-Yuga, or Black Age, the beginning of which is within historical times. Another *coincidence*: Thebes is the city of a hundred gates, and Dvārakā is so called from its many gateways or doors, from the word “Dvāra,” “gateway.” Both Hercules and Baladeva are of a passionate, hot temper, and both are renowned for the fairness of their white skins. There is not the slightest doubt that Hercules is Baladeva in Greek dress. Arrian notices the great similarity between the Theban and the Hindu Hercules, the latter being worshipped by the Suraseni who built Methorea, or Mathūrā, Krishna’s birthplace. The same writer places Sandracottus (Chandragupta, the grandfather of King Aśoka, of the clan of Morya) in the direct line of the descendants of Baladeva.

In the Golden Age, Esoteric Knowledge was common property. Initiation arose later on from the necessity to limit the number of those who knew.

There were no Mysteries in the beginning, we are taught. Knowledge (Vidyā) was common property, and it reigned universally throughout the Golden Age (Satya-Yuga). As says the Commentary:

Men had not created evil yet in those days of bliss and purity, for they were of God-like more than of human nature.

But when mankind, rapidly increasing in numbers, increased also in variety of idiosyncrasies of body and mind, then incarnated Spirit showed its weakness. Natural exaggerations, and along with these superstitions, arose in the less cultured and healthy minds. Selfishness was born out of desires and passions hitherto unknown, and but too often knowledge and power were abused, until finally it became necessary to limit the number of those *who knew*. Thus arose Initiation.

Every separate nation now arranged for itself a religious system, according to its enlightenment and spiritual wants. Worship of mere form being discarded by the wise men, these confined true knowledge to the very few. The need of veiling truth to protect it from desecration becoming more apparent with every generation, a thin veil was used at first, which had to be gradually thickened according to the spread of personality and selfishness, and this led to the Mysteries. They came to be established in every country and among every people, while to avoid strife and misunderstanding exoteric beliefs were allowed to grow up in the minds of the profane masses. Inoffensive and innocent in their incipient stage — like a historical event arranged in the form of a fairy tale, adapted for and comprehensible to the child’s mind — in those distant ages such beliefs could be allowed to grow and make the popular faith without any danger to the more philosophical and abstruse truths taught in the sanctuaries. Logical and scientific observation of the phenomena in Nature, which alone leads man to the knowledge of eternal truths — provided he approaches the threshold of observation unbiased by preconception and sees with his spiritual eye before he looks at things from their physical aspect — does not lie within the province of the masses. The marvels of the One Spirit of Truth, the ever-concealed and inaccessible Deity, can be unravelled and assimilated only through Its manifestations by the secondary “Gods,” Its acting powers. While the One and Universal Cause has

to remain forever *in abscondito*, Its manifold action may be traced through the effects in Nature. The latter alone being comprehensible and manifest to average mankind, the Powers causing those effects were allowed to grow in the imagination of the populace. Ages later in the Fifth, the Āryan Race, some unscrupulous priests began to take advantage of the too easy beliefs of the people in every country, and finally raised those secondary Powers to the rank of God and Gods, thus succeeding in isolating them altogether from the One Universal Cause of all causes.¹

Henceforward the knowledge of the primeval truths remained entirely in the hands of the Initiates.

The Mysteries had their weak points and their defects, as every institution welded with the human element must necessarily have. Yet Voltaire has characterised their benefits in a few words:

In the chaos of popular superstitions there existed an institution which has ever prevented man from falling into absolute brutality: it was that of the Mysteries.²

Verily, as Jean Marie Ragon puts it of Masonry:

Its temple has Time for duration, the Universe for space. . . . “Let us divide that we may rule,” have said the crafty; “Let us unite to resist,” have said the first Masons.³

Or rather, the Initiates whom the Masons have never ceased to claim as their primitive and direct Masters. The first and fundamental principle of moral strength and power is association and solidarity of thought and purpose. “The Sons of Will and Yoga” united in the beginning to resist the terrible and ever-growing iniquities of the left-hand Adepts, the Atlanteans. This led to the foundation of still more Secret Schools, temples of learning, and of Mysteries inaccessible to all except after the most terrible trials and probation.

The Initiate’s maxim was “All for the people and with the people.”

Anything that might be said of the earliest Adepts and their divine Masters would be regarded as fiction. It is necessary, therefore, if we would know something of the primitive Initiates to judge of the tree by its fruits; to examine the bearing and the work of their successors in the Fifth Race as reflected in the works of the classic writers and the great philosophers. How were Initiation and the Initiates regarded during some 2,000 years by the Greek and Roman writers? Cicero informs his readers in very clear terms. He says:

¹ There were no Brāhmins as a hereditary caste in days of old. In those long-departed ages a man became a Brāhman through personal merit and Initiation. Gradually, however, despotism crept in, and the son of a Brāhman was created a Brāhman by right of protection first, then by that of heredity. The rights of blood replaced those of real merit, and thus arose the body of Brāhmins, which was soon changed into a powerful caste.

² [See under *Idolatry* (Section III) and under term *Initiation* (Ancient Mysteries) in *A Philosophical Dictionary* (many editions) which H.P. Blavatsky probably translated directly from Voltaire’s French. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

³ *Des Initiations Anciennes et Modernes*, [Nancy, France, F. Guérard, 2nd ed., 1842, pp. 17-18] “The mysteries,” says Ragon, “were the gift of India.” In this he is mistaken, for the Āryan race had brought the mysteries of Initiation from Atlantis. Nevertheless he is right in saying that the mysteries preceded all civilizations, and that by polishing the mind and morals of the peoples, they served as a base for all the laws — civil, political, and religious.

An Initiate must practise all the virtues in his power: justice, fidelity, liberality, modesty, temperance; these virtues cause men to forget the talents that he may lack:¹

Ragon says:

When the Egyptian priests said: “All for the people, nothing through the people,” they were right: in an ignorant nation truth must be revealed only to trustworthy persons. . . . We have seen in our days, “all through the people, nothing for the people,” a false and dangerous system. The real axiom ought to be: “All for the people and *with* the people.”²

But in order to achieve this reform the masses have to pass through a dual transformation:

(a) to become divorced from every element of exoteric superstition and priest-craft, and

(b) to become educated men, free from every danger of being enslaved whether by a man or an idea.

The old Initiates were real philosophers, priests, and healers.

This, in view of the preceding, may seem paradoxical. The Initiates were “priests,” we may be told — at any rate, all the Hindu, Egyptian, Chaldæan, Greek, Phœnician, and other Hierophants and Adepts were priests in the temples, and it was they who invented their respective exoteric creeds. To this the answer is possible: “The cowl does not make the friar.” If one may believe tradition and the unanimous opinion of ancient writers, added to the examples we have in the “priests” of India, the most conservative nation in the world, it becomes quite certain that the Egyptian priests were no more priests in the sense we give to the word than are the temple Brāhmans. They could never be regarded as such if we take as our standard the European clergy. Laurens observes very correctly that:

The priests of Egypt were not, strictly speaking ministers of religion. The word “priest,” which translation has been badly interpreted, had an acceptation very different from the one that is applied to it among us. In the language of antiquity, and especially in the sense of the initiation of the priests of ancient Egypt, the word “priest” is synonymous with that of “philosopher.” . . . The institution of the Egyptian priests seems to have been really a confederation of sages gathered to study the art of ruling men, to centre the domain of truth, modulate its propagation, and arrest its too dangerous dispersion.³

The Egyptian Priests, like the Brāhmans of old, held the reins of the governing powers, a system that descended to them by direct inheritance from the Initiates of the

¹ *De Officiis*, I, 33

² *Des Initiations*, etc., pp. 21-22

³ *Essais Historiques et critiques sur la Franche Maçonnerie*, pp. 142-43. [2nd ed., Paris, Chomel, 1806]

great Atlantis. The pure cult of Nature in the earliest patriarchal days — the word “patriarch” applying in its first original sense to the Progenitors of the human race,¹ the Fathers, Chiefs, and Instructors of primitive men — became the heirloom of those alone who could discern the noumenon beneath the phenomenon. Later, the Initiates transmitted their knowledge to the human kings, as their divine Masters had passed it to their forefathers. It was their prerogative and duty to reveal the secrets of Nature that were useful to mankind — the hidden virtues of plants, the art of healing the sick, and of bringing about brotherly love and mutual help among mankind. No Initiate was one if he could not heal — aye, recall to life from apparent death (coma) those who, too long neglected, would have indeed died during their lethargy.² Those who showed such powers were forthwith set above the crowds, and were regarded as Kings and Initiates. Gautama Buddha was a King-Initiate, a healer, and recalled to life those who were in the hands of death. Jesus and Apollonius were healers, and were both addressed as Kings by their followers. Had they failed to raise those who were to all intents and purposes the dead, none of their names would have passed down to posterity; for this was the first and crucial test, the certain sign that the Adept had upon Him the invisible hand of a primordial divine Master, or was an incarnation of one of the “Gods.”

The later royal privilege descended to our Fifth Race kings through the kings of Egypt. The latter were all initiated into the mysteries of medicine, and they healed the sick, even when, owing to the terrible trials and labours of final Initiation, they were unable to become full Hierophants. They were healers by privilege and by tradition, and were assisted in the healing art by the Hierophants of the temples, when they themselves were ignorant of Occult curative Science. So also in far later historical times we find Pyrrhus curing the sick by simply touching them with his foot; Vespasian and Hadrian needed only to pronounce a few words taught to them by their Hierophants, in order to restore sight to the blind and health to the cripple. From that time onward history has recorded cases of the same privilege conferred on the emperors and kings of almost every nation.³

That which is known of the Priests of Egypt and of the ancient Brāhmans, corroborated as it is by all the ancient classics and historical writers, gives us the right to believe in that which is only traditional in the opinion of sceptics. Whence the wonderful knowledge of the Egyptian Priests in every department of Science, unless they had it from a still more ancient source? The famous “Four,” the seats of learning in old Egypt, are more historically certain than the beginnings of modern England. It was in the great Theban sanctuary that Pythagoras upon his arrival from India studied the Science of Occult numbers. It was in Memphis that Orpheus popularized his too-abstruse Indian metaphysics for the use of *Magna Græcia*; and thence Thales,

¹ The word “patriarch” is composed of the Greek word “Patria” (“family,” “tribe,” or “nation”) and “Archos” (a “chief”), the paternal principle. The Jewish Patriarchs who were pastors, passed their name to the Christian Patriarchs, yet they were no priests, but were simply the heads of their tribes, like the Indian Rishis.

² There is no need to observe here that the resurrection of a really dead body is an impossibility in Nature.

³ The kings of Hungary claimed that they could cure the jaundice; the Dukes of Burgundy were credited with preserving people from the plague; the kings of Spain delivered those possessed by the devil. The prerogative of curing the king’s evil was given to the kings of France, in reward for the virtues of good King Robert. Francis the First, during a short stay at Marseilles for his son’s wedding, touched and cured of that disease upwards of 500 persons. The kings of England had the same privilege.

and ages later Democritus, obtained all they knew. It is to Saïs that all the honour must be given of the wonderful legislation and the art of ruling people, imparted by its Priests to Lycurgus and Solon, who will both remain objects of admiration for generations to come. And had Plato and Eudoxus never gone to worship at the shrine of Heliopolis, most probably the one would have never astonished future generations with his ethics, nor the other with his wonderful knowledge of mathematics.¹

The great modern writer on the Mysteries of Egyptian Initiation — one, however, who knew nothing of those in India — the late Ragon, has not exaggerated in maintaining that:

All the notions possessed by Hindustan, Persia, Syria, Arabia, Chaldæa, Sydonia, and the priests of Babylonia [on the secrets of Nature], were known to the Egyptian priests. It is thus Indian philosophy, without mysteries, which, having penetrated into Chaldæa and ancient Persia, gave rise to the doctrine of Egyptian Mysteries.²

They commemorated the secrets of their Mysteries in hieroglyphics.

The Mysteries preceded the hieroglyphics.³ They gave birth to the latter, as permanent records were needed to preserve and commemorate their secrets. It is primitive Philosophy⁴ that has served as the foundation-stone for modern Philosophy; only the progeny, while perpetuating the features of the external body, has lost on its way the Soul and Spirit of its parent.

Only those, whose purity allowed them to look at the great Isis unveiled, were admitted to the secrets of Nature and Man.

Initiation, though it contained neither rules and principles, nor any special teaching of Science — as now understood — was nevertheless Science, and the Science of sciences. And though devoid of dogma, of physical discipline, and of exclusive ritual, it was yet the one true Religion — that of eternal truth. Outwardly it was a school, a college, wherein were taught sciences, arts, ethics, legislation, philanthropy, the cult of the true and real nature of cosmic phenomena; secretly, during the Mysteries, practical proofs of the latter were given. Those who could learn truth on all things —

¹ See Laurens' *Essais Historiques* . . . for further information as to the worldwide, universal knowledge of the Egyptian Priests.

² *Des Initiations*, etc., p. 25 [2nd ed., 1842]

³ The word comes from the Greek "hieros" ("sacred") and "glypho" ("I grave"). The Egyptian characters were sacred to the Gods, as the Indian Devanāgarī is the language of the Gods.

⁴ The same author had (as Occultists have) a very reasonable objection to the modern etymology of the word "philosophy," which is interpreted "love of wisdom," and is nothing of the kind. The philosophers were scientists, and philosophy was a real science — not simply verbiage, as it is in our day. The term is composed of two Greek words whose meaning is intended to convey its secret sense, and ought to be interpreted as "wisdom of love." Now it is in the last word, "love," that lies hidden the esoteric significance: for "love" does not stand here as a noun, nor does it mean "affection" or "fondness," but is the term used for Eros, that primordial principle in divine creation, synonymous with *πόθος*, the abstract desire in Nature for procreation, resulting in an everlasting series of phenomena. It means "divine love," that universal element of divine omnipresence spread throughout Nature and which is at once the chief cause and effect. The "wisdom of love" (or "philosophia") meant attraction to and love of everything hidden beneath objective phenomena and the knowledge thereof. Philosophy meant the highest Adeptship — love of and assimilation with Deity. In his modesty Pythagoras even refused to be called a Philosopher (or one who knows every hidden thing in things visible; cause and effect, or absolute truth), and called himself simply a Sage, an aspirant to philosophy, or to Wisdom of Love — love in its exoteric meaning being as degraded by men then as it is now by its purely terrestrial application.

i.e., those who could look the great Isis in her unveiled face and bear the awful majesty of the Goddess — became Initiates. But the children of the Fifth Race had fallen too deeply into matter always to do so with impunity. Those who failed disappeared from the world, without leaving a trace behind. Which of the highest kings would have dared to claim any individual, however high his social standing, from the stern priests, once that the victim had crossed the threshold of their sacred Adytum?

The noble precepts taught by the Initiates of the early races passed to India, Egypt, and Greece, to China and Chaldæa, and thus spread all over the world. All that is good, noble, and grand in human nature, every divine faculty and aspiration, were cultured by the Priest-Philosophers who sought to develop them in their Initiates. Their code of ethics, based on altruism, has become universal. It is found in Confucius, the “atheist,” who taught that “he who loves not his brother has no virtue in him,” and in the Old Testament precept,

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.¹

The greater Initiates became like unto Gods, and Socrates, in Plato’s *Phædo*, is represented as saying:

The Initiates are sure to come into the company of the Gods.

In the same work the great Athenian Sage is made to say:

It is quite apparent that those who have established the Mysteries, or the secret assemblies of the Initiates, were no mean persons, but powerful genii, who from the first ages had endeavoured to make us understand under those enigmas that he who will reach the invisible regions unpurified will be hurled into the abyss [the Eighth Sphere of the Occult Doctrine; that is, he will lose his personality for ever], while he who will attain them purged of the maculations of this world, and accomplished in virtues will be received in the abode of the Gods.²

Said Clemens Alexandrinus, referring to the Mysteries:

Here ends all teaching. One sees Nature and all things.

But what Gods and Angels had revealed, Moses revealed and hid from the sight of the world.

A Christian Father of the Church speaks then as did the Pagan Pretextatus, the proconsul of Achaia (fourth century A.D.), “a man of eminent virtues,” who remarked that to deprive the Greeks of “the sacred Mysteries which bind in one the whole of mankind,” was to render their very lives worthless to them. Would the Mysteries have ever obtained the highest praise from the noblest men of antiquity had they not been of more than human origin? Read all that is said of this unparalleled institution, as much by those who had never been initiated, as by the Initiates themselves. Consult Plato, Euripides, Socrates, Aristophanes, Pindar, Plutarch, Isocrates, Diodorus, Cicero, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, not to name dozens of other famous Sages and writers. That which the Gods and Angels had *revealed*, exoteric religions, beginning with

¹ *Leviticus* xix, 18

² *Phædo*, ¶ 69

that of Moses, *reveiled* and hid for ages from the sight of the world. Joseph, the son of Jacob, was an Initiate, otherwise he would not have married Aseneth, the daughter of Petephre (“Potiphar” — “he who belongs to Phre,” the Sun-God), priest of Heliopolis and governor of On.¹ Every truth *reveiled* by Jesus, and which even the Jews and early Christians understood, was *reveiled* by the Church that pretends to serve Him. Read what Seneca says,² as quoted by Dr. E.V.H. Kenealy:

“The world being melted and having reëntered the bosom of Jupiter [or Parabrahman], this God continues for some time totally concentrated in himself and remains concealed, as it were, wholly immersed in the contemplation of his own ideas. Afterwards we see a new world spring from him. . . . An innocent race of men is formed. . . .” And again, speaking of a mundane dissolution as involving the destruction or death of all, he [Seneca] teaches us that when the laws of Nature shall be buried in ruin and the last day of the world shall come, the Southern Pole shall crush, as it falls, all the regions of Africa; and the North Pole shall overwhelm all the countries beneath its axis. *The affrighted sun shall be deprived of its light*; the palace of heaven, falling to decay, shall produce at once both life and death, and some kind of dissolution shall equally seize upon all the deities, who thus shall return to their original chaos.³

One might fancy oneself reading the Purānic account by Parāśara of the great Pralaya. It is nearly the same thing, idea for idea. Has Christianity nothing of the kind? Let the reader open any English *Bible* and read chapter iii (3-13) of the *Second Epistle of Peter*, and he will find there the same ideas.

There shall come in the last days scoffers . . . saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are . . . reserved unto fire, . . . in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. . . . Nevertheless we . . . look for new heavens and a new earth.

If the interpreters chose to see in this a reference to a creation, a deluge, and a promised coming of Christ, when they will live in a New Jerusalem in heaven, that is no fault of Peter. What he meant was the destruction of the Fifth Race and the appearance of a new continent for the Sixth Race.

The Druids understood the meaning of the Sun in Taurus, therefore when all the fires were extinguished on the 1st of November their sacred and inextinguishable fire remained alone to illumine the horizon like those of the Magi and the modern Zoroastrian. And like the early Fifth Race and the later Chaldæans and Greeks, and again like the Christians (who do it to this day without suspecting the real meaning), they

¹ “On,” the “Sun,” the Egyptian name of Heliopolis (the “City of the Sun”).

² [*Hercules Cætæus*, 1102]

³ *Book of God*, p. 160

greeted the “Morning-Star,” the beautiful Venus-Lucifer.¹ Strabo speaks of an island near Britannia where Ceres and Persephone were worshipped with the same rites as in Samothrace, and this was the sacred Ierne, where a perpetual fire was lit.² The Druids believed in the rebirth of man, not, as Lucanus explains,

That the same *Spirit* shall animate a new body, not here, but in a different world,³

but in a series of reincarnations in this same world; for as Diodorus says, they declared that the souls of men after a determinate period would pass into other bodies.⁴

These tenets came to the Fifth Race Āryans from their ancestors of the Fourth Race, the Atlanteans. They piously preserved the teachings, while their parent Root-Race, becoming with every generation more arrogant, owing to the acquisition of superhuman powers, was gradually approaching its end.⁵



¹ Mr. Kenealy quotes, in his *Book of God*, Vallancey, who says: “I had not been a week landed in Ireland from Gibraltar, where I had studied Hebrew and Chaldaic under Jews of various countries and denominations, when I heard a peasant girl say to a boor standing by her “*Feach an Maddin Nag*” [Behold the morning star], pointing to the planet Venus, the Maddina Nag of the Chaldeans.

² [*Geography*, Bl. IV, iv, 6 & v, 4]

³ [*Pharsalia*, I, 452-63]

⁴ There was a time when the whole world, the totality of mankind, had one religion as they were of “one lip.”
“All the religions of the earth were at first one, and emanated from one centre,”
says G.S. Faber. [in his *Dissertation on the Mysteries of the Cabiri*.]

⁵ Article excerpted from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (ORIGIN OF THE MYSTERIES) XIV pp. 246-59

2. The Trial of the Sun-Initiate.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (TRIAL OF THE SUN INITIATE) XIV pp. 259-68.¹

WE WILL BEGIN WITH THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES — those received from the Atlanteans by the primitive Aryans — whose mental and intellectual state Professor Max Müller has described with such a masterly hand, yet left so incomplete withal. He says:

We have in it [the *Rig-Veda*] a period of the intellectual life of man to which there is no parallel in any other part of the world. In the hymns of the *Veda* we see man left to himself to solve the riddle of this world. . . . He invokes the gods around him, he praises, he worships them. But still with all these gods . . . beneath him, and above him, the early poet seems ill at rest within himself. There, too, in his own breast, he has discovered a power that is never mute when he prays, never absent when he fears and trembles. It seems to inspire his prayers and yet to listen to them; it seems to live in him, and yet to support him and all around him. The only name he can find for this mysterious power is “Brahman”; for brahman meant originally force, will, wish, and the propulsive power of creation. But this impersonal brahman too, as soon as it is named, grows into something strange and divine. It ends by being one of many gods, one of the great triad, worshipped to the present day. And still the thought within him has no real name; that power which is nothing but itself, which supports the gods, the heavens, and every living being, floats before his mind, conceived but not expressed. At last he calls it “Ātman,” for ātman, originally breath or spirit, comes to mean Self and Self alone, Self, whether divine or human; Self, whether creating or suffering; Self, whether One or All; but always Self, independent and free. “Who has seen the first-born?” says the poet, “when he who had no bones (*i.e.*, form) bore him that had bones? Where was the life, the blood, the Self of the world? Who went to ask this from anyone who knew it?” (*Rig-Veda* I, 164, 4) This idea of a divine Self once expressed, everything else must acknowledge its supremacy; “*Self* is the Lord of all things; it is the King of all things; as all the spokes of a wheel are contained in the nave and circumference, all things are contained in this Self; all selves are contained in this *Self*.”

(*Bṛihadāranyaka* II, v. 15)²

¹ [In Part 2 of this compilation excerpts from the WMS have been highlighted. WMS stands for the “Würzburg Manuscript,” Madame Blavatsky’s original and unedited draft of *The Secret Doctrine* (1888). It was named after Würzburg in Bavaria, where she began writing in self-imposed solitude, in August 1885 — as confirmed by Dr. William Hübbe-Schleiden, two months later. In December that year Countess Constance Wachtmeister was “sent” to help out. — ED. PHIL.]

² *Chips from a German Workshop*, i, 69-70 [London, Longman’s, Green & Co., 1867-75, 5-vols.]

Vishvakarman (Hierophant or Logos Demiourgos) cut off seven locks of the neophyte's long hair (Second Sun's rays) and replaced them with a crown of brambles — thus making him Vikartana, “shorn of his rays.”

This Self, the highest, the one, and the universal, was symbolised on the plane of mortals by the Sun, its life-giving effulgence being in its turn the emblem of the Soul — killing the terrestrial passions which have ever been an impediment to the re-union of the Unit Self (the Spirit) with the All-Self. Hence the allegorical mystery, only the broad features of which may be given here. It was enacted by the “Sons of the Fire-Mist” and of “Light.” The second Sun (the “second hypostasis” of Rabbi Drach) appeared as put on his trial, Viśvakarman, the Hierophant, cutting off seven of his beams, and replacing them with a crown of brambles, when the “Sun” became Vikartana, shorn of his beams or rays. After that, the Sun — enacted by a neophyte ready to be initiated — was made to descend into Pātāla, the nether regions, on a trial of Tantalus. Coming out of it triumphant, he emerged from this region of lust and iniquity, to re-become Karmasākshin, witness of the Karma of men,¹ and arose once more triumphant in all the glory of his regeneration, as the Graha-Rāja, King of the Constellations, and was addressed as Gabhastiman, “re-possessed of his rays.”

The “fable” in the popular Pantheon of India, founded upon, and born out of the poetical mysticism of the *Rig-Veda* — the sayings of which were mostly all dramatized during the religious Mysteries — grew in the course of its exoteric evolution into the following allegory. It may be found now in several of the *Purānas* and in other Scriptures. In the *Rig-Veda* and its Hymns, Viśvakarman, a Mystery-God, is the Logos, the Demiourgos, one of the greatest Gods, and spoken of in two of the hymns as the highest. He is the Omnificent (Viśvakarman), called the “Great Architect of the Universe,” the

All seeing God, . . . the father, the generator, the disposer, who gives the gods their names, and is beyond the comprehension of mortals,

as is every Mystery-God. Esoterically, He is the personification of the creative manifested Power; and mystically He is the seventh principle in man, in its collectivity. For He is the son of Bhuvana, the self-created, luminous Essence, and of the virtuous, chaste and lovely Yoga-Siddhā, the virgin Goddess, whose name speaks for itself, since it personified Yoga-power, the “chaste mother” that creates the Adepts. In the Rig-Vaidic Hymns, Viśvakarman performs the “great sacrifice” *i.e.*, sacrifices himself for the world; or, as the *Nirukta* is made to say, translated by the Orientalists:

Viśvakarman first of all offers up all the world in a sacrifice, and then ends by sacrificing himself.

In the mystical representations of his character, Viśvakarman is often called Vithobā, and is pictured as the “Victim,” the “Man-God,” or the Avatāra crucified in space:²

¹ Sūrya, the Sun, is one of the nine divinities that witness all human actions.

² [Look up drawings, *pp.* 41-41]

[At this point the WMS, pp. 207-9, reads as follows:

In the secret work upon the Mysteries and rites of initiation, in which very rough but correct points are given in the sacramental postures and trials to which the postulant was subjected — together with the test, the following details are found. (1) The neophyte representing the sun as Sahasra-Kirana — “he of the thousand rays” — is shown kneeling before the hierophant. The latter is in the act of cutting off *seven locks* of the neophyte’s long hair,¹ and, in the following (2) illustration, the postulant’s bright crown of golden beams is thrown off and replaced by a wreath of sharp ligneous spines, symbolizing the loss.² This was enacted in India.

In trans-Himalayan regions it was the same.

The neophyte who can overcome the dreadful trials of Initiation (on the cross of his worldly passions) dies in the Chrēstos condition (is freed from the clutches of matter) before his second and triumphant birth in Spirit as Christos.³

In order to become a “Perfect” one the sakridāgāmin (“he who will receive new birth,” *lit.*) had, among other trials to descend into pātāla, the “nether world,”

¹ See *Judges*, Ch. xvi, 19, where Samson, also a symbolic personification of the sun, as Hercules speaks of hair, which, if cut off, will deprive him of his strength, of “seven green withes,” etc.

² No need of explaining that Sañjñā, pure spiritual *conscience* is the *inner* perception of the neophyte (or chela) and initiate; the scorching of it by the most ardent beams of the sun being symbolical of the terrestrial passions. Hence the *seven locks* symbolical of the seven cardinal sins. As to the seven cardinal virtues, in order to be regained by the sakridāgāmin (the candidate “for new birth”) they could be attained by him only through severe trials and suffering.

³ [Let us for a moment examine the drama of the Sun-Initiate in the terms of the Theosophical Constitution of Man. The key to the hitherto unfathomable mystery of Jesus is hidden in the paronomasia of Chrēst(os) and Christ(os). *Cf.*

He who will not ponder over and master the great difference between the meaning of the two Greek words, Χρηστός and Χριστός, must remain blind for ever to the true esoteric meaning of the Gospels; that is to say, to the living Spirit entombed in the sterile dead-letter of the texts, the very Dead Sea fruit of *lip*-Christianity.

Blavatsky Collected Writings, (THE ESOTERIC CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS – I) VIII p. 172 *fn.*

There are two “crucifixions,” astronomically connected:

(1) The crucifixion of the Serpent or Dragon of Wisdom falling from on high to illumine the hearts and minds of men.

Anointed by the Great Breath, a Ray of Universal Consciousness (Christos or Logos) forms man’s individualised Higher Triad by sacrificing herself for an eternity in an earthy prison — a willing candidate for a long series of tortures, mental and physical. In the allegorical language of the *Commentaries*, that Ray becomes “crucified between two thieves”: the lower, impure tendencies that after death dissipate in Kama-Loka, and the higher aspirations that survive death and reascend the cyclic arc.

(2) The commonly known “crucifixion,” that of Jesus, has been fabricated by the Churches. Jesus-Chrēst is Chrēstos, the virtuous man,

... who strives to resurrect the Spirit *crucified in him by his own terrestrial passions*, and buried deep in the “sepulchre” of his sinful flesh (*ibid.*, p. 173),

and who manages to overcome his lower nature and to reclaim his former spiritual status,

i.e., a purely allegorical “crucifixion.”

Humanity at large is the only Deity on Earth, whose body is the cross of flesh, on, through, and in which we are ever “crucifying” and putting to death Christ, the Divine Logos — our benefactor and best friend. Jesus the man was crucified by his own Church, not by Scripture.

Initiation aims at restoring man’s lower mortal quaternary to its pristine *status quo ante*, *i.e.*, Higher Tetractys, Turiya State, the Fourth Path of *The Voice of the Silence*. Or, in other words, to roll back the stone of matter from the door of the inner sanctuary so that man of matter can become Man of Spirit, Absolute Life and Light, here on earth. Thus the mystery of the “Golden Ass,” or animal man made divine, is no more.

For an in-depth analysis of who is crucifying whom, look up “Crucified between to thieves” in the same series. — ED. PHIL.]

after which process only he could hope to become an anāgāmin — “one who will be reborn no more.” The full initiate had the option of either entering this (second) Path by appearing at will in the world of men under a human form, or he could choose to first rest in the *World of Gods* (the Devachan of the initiate), and then only to be reborn on this our earth. Thus the next stage shows the postulant preparing for this journey (3).

Every kind of temptation (we have no right to enumerate these or speak of them) was being placed in his way. If he came out victorious from these, then one more initiation was proceeded with; if he fell — *it was delayed*, and often entirely lost for him. These rules lasted *seven* days. During the first three, as said, he was tried and examined as to his proficiency in Occult learning. On the fourth day (4) he was tied, extended full length, and with his arms stretched out on a *wooden lathe*, symbolical of purification, his impurities having to be smoothed off, like a piece of rough, unfashioned wood. After this he was left alone in a subterranean crypt, in utter darkness, for two days and two nights.]¹

The origin and meaning of the doctrine of atonement are now revealed and explained.

In Egypt, the entranced neophyte was placed in an empty sarcophagus in the Pyramid, where the initiatory rites took place. In India and Central Asia, he was bound on a lathe, and when his body had become like that of one dead (entranced), he was carried into the crypt. Then the Hierophant kept watch over him “guiding the apparitional soul (astral body) from this world of Samsāra (or delusion) to the *nether* kingdoms, from which, if successful, he had the right of releasing *seven suffering souls*” (Elementaries). Clothed with his Anandamayakośa, the body of bliss — the Srotāpanna remained there where we have no right to follow him, and upon returning — received the *Word*, with or without the “heart’s blood” of the Hierophant.²

¹ [For a comparison of two versions of this ancient rite of Initiation, consult “Born from the pores of the skin” in our Secret Doctrine’s Third Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² In *Isis Unveiled*, II pp. 41-42, a portion of this rite is referred to. Speaking of the dogma of Atonement, it is traced to ancient “heathendom” again. We say:

This cornerstone of a church which had believed herself built on a firm rock for long centuries, is now excavated by science and proved to come from the Gnostics. Professor Draper shows it as hardly known in the days of Tertullian, and as having “*originated* among the Gnostic heretics.” (Consult *The History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science*, p. 224) . . . [But there are sufficient proofs to show] that it *originated* among them no more than did their “anointed” Christos and Sophia. The former they modelled on the original of the “King Messiah,” the male principle of wisdom, and the latter on the third Sephirōth, from the Chaldean *Kabbalah*, and even from the Hindu Brahmā and Sarasvatī, and the Pagan Dionysus and Demeter. And here we are on firm ground, if it were only because it is now proved that the New Testament never appeared in its complete form, such as we find it now, till 300 years after the period of the apostles, and the *Zohar* and other Kabbalistic books are found to belong to the first century before our era, if not to be far older still.

The Gnostics entertained many of the Essenean ideas; and the Essenes had their greater and minor Mysteries at least two centuries before our era. They were the *Ozarim* or *Initiates*, the descendants of the Egyptian hierophants, in whose country they had been settled for several centuries before they were converted to Buddhistic monasticism by the missionaries of King Aśoka, and amalgamated later with the earliest Christians; and they existed, probably, before the old Egyptian temples were desecrated and ruined in the incessant invasions of Persians, Greeks, and other conquering hordes. The hierophants had their *atonement* enacted in the Mystery of Initiation ages before the Gnostics, or even the Essenes, had appeared. It was known among hierophants as the BAPTISM OF BLOOD, and was considered not as an atonement for the “fall of man” in Eden, but simply as an expiation for the past, present, and future sins of ignorant, but nevertheless polluted mankind. The hierophant had the option of either offering his pure and sinless life as a sacrifice for his race to the gods whom he hoped to rejoin, or an animal victim. The former depended entirely on their own will. At the last moment of the solemn “new birth,” the Initiator

Only in truth the Hierophant was never killed — neither in India nor elsewhere, the murder being simply feigned — unless the Initiator had chosen the Initiate for his successor and had decided to pass to him the last and supreme WORD,¹ after which he had to die — only one man in a nation having the right to know that word. Many are those grand Initiates who have thus passed out of the world's sight, disappearing

As mysteriously from the sight of men as Moses from the top of Mount Pisgah (*Nebo*,² oracular Wisdom), after he had laid his hands upon Joshua, who thus became “full of the spirit of wisdom,” *i.e.*, initiated.

But he died, he was not killed. For killing, if really done, would belong to black, not to divine Magic. It is the transmission of light, rather than a transfer of life, of life spiritual and divine, and it is the shedding of Wisdom, not of blood. But the uninitiated inventors of theological Christianity took the allegorical language *à la lettre*; and instituted a dogma, the crude, misunderstood expression of which horrifies and repels the spiritual “heathen.”

The Masonic rite of Initiation is based upon the construction of the Temple of Solomon, a narrative modelled upon Egyptian and still earlier symbolisms.

All these Hierophants and Initiates were types of the Sun and of the Creative Principle (spiritual potency) as were Viśvakarman and Vikartana, from the origin of the Mysteries. Ragon, the famous Mason, gives curious details and explanations with regard to the Sun rites. He shows that the biblical Hiram, the great hero of Masonry (the “widow's son”), a type taken from Osiris, is the Sun-God, the inventor of arts, and the “architect,” the name Hiram, meaning the “*elevated*,” a title belonging to the Sun. Every Occultist knows how closely related to Osiris and the Pyramids are the narratives in *Kings* concerning Solomon, his Temple and its construction; he knows also that the whole of the Masonic rite of Initiation is based upon the biblical allegory of the construction of that Temple, Masons conveniently forgetting, or perhaps ignoring, the fact that the latter narrative is modelled upon Egyptian and still earlier symbolisms. Ragon explains it by showing that the three companions of Hiram, the “three murderers,” typify the three last months of the year; and that Hiram stands for the Sun — from its summer solstice downwards, when it begins decreasing — the whole rite being an astronomical allegory.

During the summer solstice, the Sun provokes songs of gratitude from all that breathes; hence Hiram, who represents it, can give to whomsoever has the right to it, the sacred Word, that is to say life. When the Sun descends to the inferior signs all Nature becomes mute, and Hiram can no longer give the sacred Word

passed “the word” to the initiated, and immediately after that the latter had a weapon placed in his right hand, and was ordered to *strike*. This is the true origin of the Christian dogma of atonement.

As Ballanche says, quoted by Ragon: “Destruction is the great God of the World,” justifying therefore the philosophical conception of the Hindu Śiva. According to this immutable and sacred law, the Initiate was compelled to kill the Initiator: otherwise initiation remained incomplete. . . . It is death that generates life.” *Orthodoxie maçonnique*, p. 104. All that, however, was emblematic and exoteric. Weapon and killing must be understood in their allegorical sense.

¹ [Note to Students: The Supreme Word figures prominently in our study of the Secret Doctrine's First Proposition, and has been explained in different words. Read and reflect! — ED. PHIL.]

² [Consult “Blavatsky on Nebo of Birs-Nimrud,” in our Blavatsky Speaks Series. — ED. PHIL.]

to the companions, who represent the three inert months of the year. The first companion strikes Hiram feebly with a rule twenty-four inches long, symbol of the twenty-four hours which make up each diurnal revolution; it is the first distribution of time, which after the exaltation of the mighty star, feebly assails his existence, giving him the first blow. The second companion strikes him with an *iron square*, symbol of the last season, figured by the intersections of two right lines, which would divide into four equal parts the Zodiacal circle, whose centre symbolises Hiram's heart, where it touches the point of the four squares representing the four seasons; second distribution of time, which at that period strikes a heavier blow at the solar existence. The third companion strikes him mortally on his forehead with a heavy blow of his mallet, whose cylindrical form symbolises the year, the ring or circle; third distribution of time, the accomplishment of which deals the last blow to the existence of the *expiring Sun*. From this interpretation it has been inferred that *Hiram*, a founder of metals, the hero of the new legend with the title of *architect*, is Osiris (the Sun) of modern initiation; that *Isis*, his widow, is the *Lodge*, the emblem of the Earth (*loka* in Sanskrit, the world) and that *Horus*, son of Osiris (or of light) and the widow's son, is the *free Mason*, that is to say, the *Initiate* who inhabits the terrestrial lodge (*the child of the Widow, and of Light*).¹

Yet, there never was an Occult Society, however open and sincere, that has not felt the hand of the Jesuit trying to pull it down by every secret means.

And here again, our friends the Jesuits have to be mentioned, for the above rite is of their making. To give one instance of their success in throwing dust into the eyes of ordinary individuals to prevent their seeing the truths of Occultism, we will point out what they did in what is now called Freemasonry.

This Brotherhood does possess a considerable portion of the symbolism, formulæ, and ritual of Occultism, handed down from time immemorial from the primeval Initiations. To render this Brotherhood a mere harmless negation, the Jesuits sent some of their most able emissaries into the Order, who first made the simple brethren believe that the true secret was lost with Hiram Abiff; and then induced them to put this belief into their formularies. They then invented specious but spurious higher degrees, pretending to give further light upon this lost secret, to lead the candidate on and amuse him with forms borrowed from the real thing but containing no substance, and all artfully contrived to lead the aspiring Neophyte to nowhere. And yet men of good sense and abilities, in other respects, will meet at intervals, and with solemn face, zeal and earnestness, go through the mockery of revealing "substituted secrets" instead of the real things.

If the reader turns to a very remarkable and very useful work called *The Royal Masonic Cyclopædia*, art. "Rosicrucianism," he will find its author, a high and learned Mason, showing what the Jesuits have done to destroy Masonry. Speaking of the period when the existence of this mysterious Brotherhood (of which many pretend to

¹ *Orthodoxie Maçonnique*, etc., pp. 102-4

know “something” if not a good deal, and know in fact nothing) was first made known, he says:

There was a dread among the great masses of society in bygone days of the unseen — a dread, as recent events and phenomena show very clearly, not yet overcome in its entirety. Hence students of Nature and mind were forced into an obscurity not altogether unwelcome. . . . The Kabbalistic reveries of a Johann Reuchlin led to the fiery action of a Luther, and the patient labours of Tritenheim produced the modern system of diplomatic cipher writing. . . . It is very worthy of remark, that one particular century, and that in which the Rosicrucians first showed themselves, is distinguished in history as the era in which most of these efforts at throwing off the trammels of the past [Popery and Ecclesiasticism] occurred. Hence the opposition of the losing party, and their virulence against anything mysterious or unknown. They freely organised pseudo-Rosicrucian and Masonic societies in return, . . . and these societies were instructed to irregularly entrap the weaker brethren of the True and Invisible Order, and then triumphantly betray anything they might be so inconsiderate as to communicate to the superiors of these transitory and unmeaning associations. Every wile was adopted by the authorities fighting in self-defence against the progress of truth, to engage, by persuasion, interest or terror, such as might be cajoled into receiving the Pope as Master — when gained, as many converts to that faith know, but dare not own, they are treated with neglect, and left to fight the battle of life as best they may, not even being admitted to the knowledge of such miserable aporrhēta as the Romish faith considers itself entitled to withhold.

The Jesuits infected mankind with passivity, ignorance, and superstition in order to impose their Universal Despotism unopposed.

[. . . It would be well perhaps, if the Jesuits contented themselves with making dupes of Freemasons, and converting that order into a mere convivial Benefit-Club, which allures members by the prospect of refined Banquets in the Societies of Princes, statesman and eloquent orators in speech and song. Their lethal plottings, however, have a much wider scope, and embrace a minuteness of detail and care of which the world in general has no idea. Everything must be done by them to bring the mass of mankind again to the state of passive ignorance and superstition which, they well know is the only one which can help them to the consummation of their purpose of Universal Despotism. Little the Protestant Missionaries know that they have been made more than once to serve their hereditary enemy the Roman Catholic Padre as the “cats’ paw” to draw the chestnuts for them out of the fire, especially in India and China. The proofs of it are at hand and they are carefully preserved to be made public when the day of squaring the account between the Occultists and their Roman Catholic and Protestant detractors, their mortal enemies, arrives at last.

The greatest statesman in Europe, the illustrious Prince Bismarck, knows accurately all their secret plottings, and that it has ever been the aim of the Jesuit priestcraft to stir up disaffection and rebellion in all countries with the view to the advancement of its own interest. That greatest and most far-seeing of men in addressing the German

Parliament on the 5th December, 1874, stated that in a conversation which passed between the Württemberg Envoy and the Nuncio, the latter insolently and arrogantly said, “The Roman Church had to look to revolution as the sole means of securing her rightful position.” (*Times*, December 7th, 1874) Several historians of the so-called “Indian Mutiny” have accused the Protestant Missionaries of having been the direct and indirect means of breeding discontent and leading to the outburst of national feeling. We do not write political history. Therefore, it will suffice to say that in this case as in many others the reformed Church and its members had been made a stepping stone and a convenient because unconscious agent. There never was an Occult Society, however open and sincere, that has not felt the hand of the Jesuit trying to pull it down by every secret means. If the reader interested in the question takes the trouble of recapitulating such Societies, in England alone, and thinks of their fate, he will recognize the truth of the assertion. Protestantism is losing ground among the richest and the most illustrious of the land. A few years more, and the greatest of Protestant nations will stand face to face with WHITE and BLACK MAGIC. Which will the English choose?

But all efforts of the greatest craft are doomed to failure on the day they are discovered.]¹

But if Masonry has been spoiled, none is able to crush the real, invisible Rosicrucian and the Eastern Initiate. The symbolism of Viśvakarman and Sūrya-Vikartana has survived, where Hiram Abiff was indeed murdered, and we will now return to it. It is not simply an astronomical, but is the most solemn rite, an inheritance from the Archaic Mysteries that has crossed the ages and is used to this day. It typifies a whole drama of the Cycle of Life, of progressive incarnations, and of psychic as well as of physiological secrets, of which neither the Church nor Science knows anything, though it is this rite that has led the former to the greatest of its Christian Mysteries.

[. . . the *newest* Initiate, the proud Rome of the Catacombs, has given the death-blow to her HIEROPHANT-INITIATOR, indeed — but only in Europe. Only, she has done it so *too hastily!* The Hierophant died, before he had been given the time to pass his *would-be* Successor the WORD. The sacrifice has thus proved useless and the initiation but too “incomplete.” The Hierophant of the *Sapta Śindham* (seven rivers) and of the SAPTARSHI (the seven great Rishis) is not killed and may have something to say to the modern Initiates of the “Seven Hills.” It is only a question of time and patience; more details will be found in “Some Reasons for Secrecy.” (pp. 47-59)]²



¹ [The above bracketed section and the section closing this chapter have been added from pp. 219-23 of the original Würzburg manuscript. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

² Article excerpted from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (TRIAL OF THE SUN INITIATE) XIV pp. 259-68.

3. The Mystery of the “Sun of Initiation”

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (MYSTERY OF “SUN OF INITIATION”) XIV pp. 269-73.

THE ANTIQUITY OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE may be better realised when it is shown at what point of history its Mysteries had already been desecrated, by being made subservient to the personal ambition of despot-ruler and crafty priest. These profoundly philosophical and scientifically composed religious dramas, in which were enacted the grandest truths of the Occult or Spiritual Universe and the hidden lore of learning, had become subject to persecution long before the days when Plato and even Pythagoras flourished. Withal, primal revelations given to Mankind have not died with the Mysteries; they are still preserved as heirlooms for future and more spiritual generations.

In the days of Aristotle,¹ few were the true Adepts left in Europe and even in Egypt.

It has been already stated in *Isis Unveiled*,² that so far back as in the days of Aristotle, the great Mysteries had already lost their primitive grandeur and solemnity. Their rites had fallen into desuetude, and they had to a great degree degenerated into mere priestly speculations and had become religious shams. It is useless to state when they first appeared in Europe and Greece, since recognised history may almost be said to begin with Aristotle, everything before him appearing to be in an inextricable chronological confusion. Suffice it to say, that in Egypt the Mysteries had been known since the days of Menes, and that the Greeks received them only when Orpheus introduced them from India. In an article “Was writing known before Pānini?”³ it is stated that the Pāndus had acquired universal dominion and had taught the “sacrificial” Mysteries to other races as far back as 3,300 B.C. Indeed, when Orpheus,⁴ the son of Apollo or Helios, received from his father the *phorminx* — the seven-stringed lyre, symbolical of the sevenfold mystery of Initiation — these Mysteries were already hoary with age in Central Asia and India. According to Herodotus it was Orpheus who brought them from India, and Orpheus is far anterior to Homer and Hesiod. Thus even in the days of Aristotle few were the true Adepts left in Europe and even in Egypt. The heirs of those who had been dispersed by the conquering swords of various invaders of old Egypt had been dispersed in their turn. As 8,000 or 9,000 years earlier the stream of knowledge had been slowly running down from the table-

¹ 384–322 BCE

² *op. cit.*, I, 15

³ A curious question to start and to deny, when it is well-known even to the Orientalists that, to take but one case, there is Yaska, who was a predecessor of Pānini and his work still exists; there are seventeen writers of *Nirukta* (glossary) known to have preceded Yaska. [For this article see *Five Years of Theosophy* or *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. V, pp. 294–310. — Boris de Zirkoff.]

⁴ [Consult “Orpheus’ legend and works” in our Hellenic and Hellenistic Papers Series. — ED. PHIL.]

lands of Central Asia into India and towards Europe and Northern Africa, so about 500 years B.C. it had begun to flow backward to its old home and birthplace. During the two thousand subsequent years the knowledge of the existence of great Adepts nearly died out in Europe. Nevertheless, in some secret places the Mysteries were still enacted in all their primitive purity. The “Sun of Righteousness” still blazed high on *the midnight sky*; and, while darkness was upon the face of the profane world, there was the eternal light in the Adyta on the nights of Initiation. The *true* Mysteries were never made public. Eleusinia and Agrai for the multitudes; the God *Ευβουλή*, “of the good counsel,” the great Orphic Deity for the neophyte.

This mystery God — mistaken by our Symbologists for the Sun — who was He? Everyone who has any idea of the ancient Egyptian exoteric faith is quite aware that for the multitudes Osiris was the Sun in Heaven, “the Heavenly King,” Ro-Imphab; that by the Greeks the Sun was called the “Eye of Jupiter,” as for the modern orthodox Parsī he is “the Eye of Ormuzd”; that the Sun, moreover, was addressed as the “All-seeing God” (*πολυόφθαλμος*), as the “God Saviour,” and the “saving God” (*αίτιον της σωτηρίας*). Read the papyrus of Papheronmes at Berlin, and the stela as rendered by [Auguste] Mariette-Bey,¹ and see what they say:

Glory to thee, O Sun, divine child! . . . thy rays carry life to the pure and to those ready. . . . The Gods [the “sons of God”] who approach thee tremble with delight and awe. . . . Thou art the first born, the Son of God, the Word.²

The Church has now seized upon these terms and sees presentiments of the coming Christ in these expressions in the initiatory rites and prophetic utterances of the Pagan Oracles. They are nothing of the kind, for they were applied to every worthy Initiate. If the expressions that were used in hieratic writings and glyphs thousands of years before our era are now found in the laudatory hymns and prayers of Christian Churches, it is simply because they have been unblushingly appropriated by the Latin Christians, in the full hope of never being detected by posterity. Everything that could be done had been done to destroy the original Pagan manuscripts and the Church felt secure. Christianity has undeniably had her great Seers and Prophets, like every other religion; but their claims are not strengthened by denying their predecessors.

¹ [*Mémoire sur la mère d'Apis*, p. 47, pt. 4 of *Mémoire sur cette représentation . . . gravée en tête de quelques proscynèmes du Sérapéum où l'on établit*. Paris, Gide et J. Baudry, 1856]

² One just initiated is called the “first-born,” and in India he becomes *dwija*, “twice born,” only after his final and supreme Initiation. Every Adept is a “Son of God” and a “Son of Light” after receiving the “Word,” when he becomes the “Word” himself, after receiving the seven divine attributes or the “lyre of Apollo.”

Listen to Plato:

Know then, Glaucus, that when I speak of the production of good, it is the Sun I mean. The Son has a perfect analogy with his Father.

Solus-Sol-Sun is “The One” and the Greek name for Helios, the Most High. But there is a great difference between our sun and its prototype, the Central Spiritual Sun.

Iamblichus calls the Sun “the image of divine intelligence or Wisdom.” Eusebius, repeating the words of Philo, calls the rising Sun (*ανατολή*) the chief Angel, the most ancient, adding that the Archangel who is *polyonymous* (of many names) is the Verbum or Christ.¹ The word Sol (Sun) being derived from *solus*, the One, or the “He alone,” and its Greek name Helios meaning the “Most High,” the emblem becomes comprehensible. Nevertheless, the Ancients made a difference between the Sun and its prototype.

Socrates saluted the rising Sun as does a true Parsī or Zoroastrian in our own day;² and Homer and Euripides, as Plato did after them several times, mention the Jupiter-Logos, the “Word” or the Sun. Nevertheless, the Christians maintain that since the oracle consulted on the God Iaō answered: “It is the Sun,” therefore,

The Jehovah of the Jews was well known to the Pagans and Greeks;³

and “Iaō is our Jehovah.” The first part of the proposition has nothing, it seems, to do with the second part, and least of all can the conclusion be regarded as correct. But if the Christians are so anxious to prove the identity, Occultists have nothing against it. Only, in such case, Jehovah is also Bacchus. It is very strange that the people of civilised Christendom should until now hold on so desperately to the skirts of the idolatrous Jews — Sabæans and Sun worshippers as they were,⁴ like the rabble of Chaldæa — and that they should fail to see that the later Jehovah is but a Jewish development of the Ya-va, or the Iaō, of the Phœnicians; that this name, in short, was the secret name of a Mystery-God, one of the many Kabeiroi. “Highest God” as He was for one little nation, he never was so regarded by the Initiates who conducted the Mysteries; for them he was but a Planetary Spirit attached to the visible Sun; and the visible Sun is only the central Star, not the central spiritual Sun.

And the Angel of the Lord said unto him [Manoah] “Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret.”⁵

¹ *Præparatio evangelica*, II, p. 157

² [So does every rooster on earth: consult “Cock, a very occult bird” in our Down to Earth Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ De Mirville, *Des Esprits*, IV, 15

⁴ *2 Kings* xxiii, 4-13

⁵ *Judges* xiii, 18. Samson, Manoah’s son, was an Initiate of that “Mystery” Lord, Ya-va; he was consecrated before his birth to become a “Nazarite” (a chela), an Adept. His sin with Delilah, and the cropping of his long hair that “no razor was to touch” shows how well he kept his sacred vow. The allegory of Samson proves the Esotericism of the *Bible*, as also the character of the “Mystery Gods” of the Jews. True, Movers gives a definition of the Phœnician idea of the ideal sunlight as a spiritual influence issuing from the highest God, Iaō, “the light conceivable only by intellect — the physical and spiritual Principle of all things; out of which the soul emanates.” It was the male Essence, or Wisdom, while the primitive matter or *Chaos* was the female. Thus the first two principles, co-eternal and infinite, were already with the primitive Phœnicians, spirit and matter. But this is the echo of Jewish thought, not the opinion of Pagan Philosophers.

However this may be, the identity of the Jehovah of Mount Sinai with the God Bacchus is hardly disputable, and he is surely — as already shown in *Isis Unveiled* — Dionysos.¹ Wherever Bacchus was worshipped there was a tradition of Nysa,² and a cave where he was reared. Outside Greece, Bacchus was the all-powerful “Zagreus, the highest of Gods,” in whose service was Orpheus, the founder of the Mysteries. Now, unless it be conceded that Moses was an initiated priest, an Adept, whose actions are all narrated allegorically, then it must be admitted that he personally, together with his hosts of Israelites, worshipped Bacchus.

And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it *Jehovah Nissi* [or, Iaō-nisi, or again Dionisi].³

To strengthen the statement we have further to remember that the place where Osiris, the Egyptian Zagreus or Bacchus, was born, was Mount Sinai, which is called by the Egyptians Mount Nissa. The brazen serpent was a *nahash*, נחש, and the month of the Jewish Passover is Nisan.⁴



Pythagoreans celebrate the Sunrise (1869) Fyodor Bronnikov

¹ Consult *Isis Unveiled*, II p. 526

² Beth-San or Scythopolis in Palestine had that designation; so had a spot on Mount Parnassus. But Diodorus declares that Nysa was between Phœnicia and Egypt; Euripides states that Dionysos came to Greece from India; and Diodorus adds his testimony: “Osiris was brought up in Nysa, in Arabia the Happy; he was the son of Zeus, and was named from his father (nominative Zeus, genitive *Dios*) and the place *Dio-Nysos*” — the Zeus or Jove of Nysa. This identity of name or title is very significant. In Greece Dionysos was second only to Zeus, and Pindar says: “So Father Zeus governs all things, and Bacchus he governs also.” [*Isis Unveiled*, II p. 165]

³ *Exodus* xvii, 15

⁴ Article excerpted from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (MYSTERY OF “SUN OF INITIATION”) XIV pp. 269-73

4. The Objects of the Mysteries

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE OBJECTS OF THE MYSTERIES) XIV pp. 274-80.

THE EARLIEST MYSTERIES RECORDED IN HISTORY are those of Samothrace. After the distribution of pure Fire, a new life began. This was the new birth of the Initiate, after which, like the Brāhmans of old in India, he became a *dvija* — a “twice born,”

Initiated into that which may be rightly called the most blessed of all Mysteries . . . being ourselves pure,¹

says Plato. Diodorus Siculus, Herodotus and Sanchoniathon the Phœnician — the oldest of Historians — say that these Mysteries originated in the night of time, thousands of years probably before the historical period. Iamblichus informs us that Pythagoras

Was initiated in all the mysteries of Byblus and Tyre, in the sacred operations of the Syrians, and in the mysteries of the Phœnicians.²

As was said in *Isis Unveiled*:

When men like Pythagoras, Plato and Iamblichus, renowned for their severe morality, took part in the Mysteries, and spoke of them with veneration, it ill behoves our modern critics to judge them [and their Initiates] so rashly upon their merely external aspect.³

Yet this is what has been done until now, especially by the Christian Fathers. Clement of Alexandria stigmatises the Mysteries as “indecent and diabolical” though his words, showing that the Eleusinian Mysteries were identical with, and even, as he would allege, borrowed from, those of the Jews, are quoted elsewhere in this work. The Mysteries were composed of two parts, of which the Lesser were performed at Agrai, and the Greater at Eleusis, and Clement had been himself initiated. But the Katharsis, or trials of purification, have ever been misunderstood. Iamblichus explains the worst; and his explanation ought to be perfectly satisfactory, at any rate for every unprejudiced mind.

¹ *Phædrus*, Cary's translation, p. 326

² *Life of Pythagoras*, p. 297. “Since Pythagoras,” he adds, “also spent two and twenty years in the adyta of the temples in Egypt, associated with the Magi in Babylon, and was instructed by them in their venerable knowledge; — it is not at all wonderful that he was skilled in magic or theurgy, and was therefore able to perform things which surpass *merely human power*, and which appear to be perfectly incredible to the vulgar.” (p. 298)

³ Vol. II, p. 100

[Says Iamblichus:]

Exhibitions of this kind in the Mysteries were designed to free us from licentious passions, by gratifying the sight, and at the same time vanquishing all evil thought, through the awful sanctity with which these rites were accompanied.¹

Dr. Wm. Warburton remarks:

The wisest and best men in the Pagan world are unanimous in this, that the Mysteries were instituted pure, and proposed the noblest ends by the worthiest means.²

Whether lesser or greater, Mysteries have always been graded.

Although persons of both sexes and all classes were allowed to take part in the Mysteries, and a participation in them was even obligatory, very few indeed attained the higher and final Initiation in these celebrated rites. The gradation of the Mysteries is given us by Proclus in the fourth book of his *Theology of Plato*.³

The *perfective* rite, [τελετή, teletē] precedes in order the *initiation* [μύησις, muesis], and *initiation*, the final apocalypse, *epopteia* [εποπτεία].⁴

Theon of Smyrna, in *Mathematica*, also divides the mystic rites into five parts:

The first of which is the previous purification; for neither are the Mysteries communicated to all who are willing to receive them; but there are certain persons who are prevented by the voice of the crier . . . since it is necessary that such as are not expelled from the Mysteries should first be refined by certain purifications; but after purification, the reception of the sacred rites succeeds. The third part is denominated *epopteia*, or reception. And the fourth, which is the end and design of the revelation, is [the investiture] the binding of the head and fixing of the crowns⁵ . . . whether after this he [the initiated person] becomes a torchbearer, or an hierophant of the Mysteries, or sustains some other part of the sacerdotal office. But the fifth, which is produced from all these, is *friendship and interior communion with God*.⁶

And this was the last and most awful of all the Mysteries.

¹ [De Mysteriis, etc., I, ch. xi]

² [Divine Legation of Moses, etc., II, p. 172]

³ [Taylor's ed. London, 1816, p. 220]

⁴ [Cf. "The word τελετη or initiation, says Hermeas, was so denominated from rendering the soul perfect, παρα το τελεαν ψυχην αποτελειν. The soul, therefore, was once perfect. But here it is divided, and is not able to energize wholly by itself. But it is necessary to know, says Hermeas, that telete, muesis, and epopteia, τελετη, μυησις and εποπτεια differ from each other. Telete, therefore, is analogous to that which is preparatory to purifications. But muesis, which is so called from closing the eyes, is more divine. For to close the eyes in initiation is no longer to receive by sense those divine mysteries, but with the pure soul itself. And epopteia is to be established in, and become a spectator of the mysteries." Taylor T. (Tr. & Annot.). *The Works of Plato*. (Vol. III of a set of five volumes & Vol. XI of "The Thomas Taylor Series") From: The Prometheus Trust, 1996. Endnote 17, p. 414, being Taylor's Additional Notes on Plato's *Phædrus*. Westerink line 250c, p. 363]

⁵ This expression must not be understood simply literally; for, as in the initiation of certain Brotherhoods, it has a secret meaning that we have just explained; it was hinted at by Pythagoras, when he describes his feelings after the Initiation, and says that he was crowned by the Gods in whose presence he had drunk "the waters of life" — in the Hindu Mysteries there was the fount of life, and *soma*, the sacred drink.

⁶ *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, T. Taylor, p. 46, 47; [consult our analysis in the same series. — ED. PHIL.]

Theophany is the appearance of God to man; Theopathy, man's assimilation of his divine nature; Theopneusty, inspiration or rather the power to hear the Voice of God.¹ The last two are experienced when the neophyte passes through the crucifixion of flesh or matter.²

The chief objects of the Mysteries, represented as diabolical by the Christian Fathers and ridiculed by modern writers, were instituted with the highest and the most moral purpose in view. There is no need to repeat here that which has been already described in *Isis Unveiled*³ that whether through temple Initiation or the private study of Theurgy, every student obtained the proof of the immortality of his Spirit, and the survival of his Soul. What the last *epopteia* was is alluded to by Plato in *Phædrus* [250 B.C.]:

Being *initiated* in those *Mysteries*, which it is lawful to call the most blessed of all Mysteries . . . we were freed from the molestations of evils which otherwise await us in a future period of time. Likewise, in consequence of this divine *initiation*, we become *spectators* of entire, simple, immovable, and *blessed visions*, resident in a pure light.⁴

This veiled confession shows that the Initiates enjoyed Theophany⁵ — saw visions of Gods and of real immortal Spirits. As Taylor correctly infers:

The most sublime part of the *εποπτεία* [epopteia] or final revealing, consisted in beholding the gods [the high Planetary Spirits] themselves invested with a resplendent light.⁶

The statement of Proclus upon the subject is unequivocal:

In all the initiations and Mysteries, the gods exhibit many forms of themselves, and appear in a variety of shapes; and sometimes, indeed, a formless light of themselves is held forth to the view; sometimes this light is according to a *human form* and sometimes it proceeds into a different shape.⁷

¹ Cf. *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (SOME REASONS FOR SECRECY) XIV p. 49 *fn.* [based on *New Platonism and Alchemy*, p. 13; full text in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² Cf. *ibid.* (THE ESOTERIC CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS – II) VIII p. 191; [on the “blessed condition of inner (or subjective) theophany and theopneusty.”]

³ II, 111; 113

⁴ *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, p. 63

⁵ [Cf. “. . . the Greek, rarely-used word, ‘Theophania,’ meant more with the Neo-Platonists than it does with the modern maker of dictionaries. The compound word, *Theophania* (from *theos*, ‘God,’ and *phainesthai*, ‘to appear,’) does not simply mean ‘a manifestation of God to man by *actual* appearance’ — an absurdity, by the way — but the actual presence of a God in man, a *divine* incarnation. When Simon the Magician claimed to be ‘God the Father,’ what he wanted to convey was just that which has been explained, namely, that he was a *divine* incarnation of his own Father, whether we see in the latter an Angel, a God, or a Spirit; therefore he was called ‘that power of God which is called great,’ [Acts viii, 10; Revised Version] or that power which causes the Divine Self to enshrine itself in its lower self — man.” *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (SOME REASONS FOR SECRECY) XIV pp. 52-53

⁶ *op. cit.*, p. 65

⁷ On Plato's *Republic*, p. 380; quoted by Taylor, p. 66

Again we have:

Whatever is on earth is the resemblance and shadow of something that is in the Sphere. While that resplendent thing [the prototype of the Soul-Spirit] remaineth in *unchangeable* condition, it is well also with its shadow. When that resplendent one removeth far from its shadow, life removeth [from the latter] to a distance. Again, that light is the shadow of something more resplendent than itself.¹

Thus speaks the *Desātīr*, in the *Book of Shet the Prophet Zirtūsht*, thereby showing the identity of its Esoteric doctrines with those of the Greek Philosophers.

The Grecian Mysteries were identical with the Initiations of Buddhist and Hindu Adepts.

The second statement of Plato confirms the view that the Mysteries of the Ancients were identical with the Initiations practised even now among the Buddhist and the Hindu Adepts. The higher visions, the most truthful, were produced through a regular discipline of gradual Initiations, and the development of psychical powers. In Europe and Egypt the Mystai were brought into close union with those whom Proclus calls “mystical natures,” “resplendent Gods,” because, as Plato says:

[We] were ourselves pure and immaculate, being liberated from this surrounding vestment, which we denominate body, and to which we are now bound like an oyster to its shell.²

As to the East,

The doctrine of planetary and terrestrial Pitris was revealed *entirely* in ancient India, as well as now, only at the last moment of initiation, and to the adepts of superior degrees.³

In India, the candidate of the third degree of Initiation had two Gurus.

The word *Pitris* may now be explained and something else added. In India the chela of the third degree of Initiation has two Gurus: One, the living Adept; the other the disembodied and glorified Mahātma, who remains the adviser or instructor of even the high Adepts. Few are the accepted chelas who even see their living Master, their Guru, till the day and hour of their final and for ever binding vow. It is this that was meant in *Isis Unveiled*, when it was stated that few of the *fakirs* (the word *chela* being unknown to Europe and America in those days), however

. . . pure, and honest, and self-devoted, have yet ever seen the astral form of a purely *human pitri* (an ancestor or father), otherwise than at the solemn moment of their first and last initiation. It is in the presence of his instructor, the Guru, and just before the *vatu-fakir* [the just initiated chela] is despatched into

¹ Verses 35-38. [Consult *The Desātīr or the Sacred Writings of the Ancient Prophets*, tr. by Mulla Firuz Bin Kaus, Bombay, 1818, 2 Vols.; with additional notes by Dhunjeebhoy Jamsetjee Medhora, Bombay, 1888; rpr. by Wizard's Bookshelf, Minneapolis, 1975, 1979. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

² *Phædrus*, ¶ 250c, quoted by Taylor, p. 64

³ *Isis Unveiled*, II p. 114

the world of the living, with his seven-knotted bamboo wand for all protection, that he is suddenly placed face to face with the unknown PRESENCE [of his Pitri or Father, the glorified invisible Master, or disembodied Mahātma]. He sees it, and falls prostrate at the feet of the evanescent form, but is not entrusted with the great secret of its evocation, for it is the supreme mystery of the holy syllable.¹

Whether Eastern or Western, the Initiate dares all and keeps silent.

The Initiate, says Éliphas Lévi, *knows*; therefore, “he dares all and keeps silent.” Says the great French Kabbalist:

You may see him often sad, never discouraged or desperate; often poor, never humbled or wretched; often persecuted, never cowed down or vanquished. For he remembers the widowhood and the murder of Orpheus, the exile and solitary death of Moses, the martyrdom of the prophets, the tortures of Apollonius, the Cross of the saviour. He knows in what forlorn state died Agrippa, whose memory is slandered to this day; he knows the trials that broke down the great Paracelsus, and all that Raymond Lully had to suffer before he arrived at a bloody death. He remembers Swedenborg having to feign insanity, and losing even his reason before his knowledge was forgiven to him; St. Martin, who had to hide himself all his life; Cagliostro, who died forsaken in the cells of the Inquisition;² Cazotte, who perished on the guillotine. Successor of so many victims, he dares, nevertheless, but understands the more the necessity to keep silent.³

Masonic Initiation was modelled on that of the Lesser Mysteries and remains an authority upon the three fundamental degrees. The triple duty of a Mason is to study whence he comes, what he is, and whither he goes.

Masonry — not the political institution known as the Scottish Lodge, but real Masonry, some rites of which are still preserved in the Grand Orient of France, and that Elias Ashmole, a celebrated English Occult Philosopher of the XVIIth century, tried in vain to remodel, after the manner of the Indian and Egyptian Mysteries — Masonry rests, according to Ragon, the great authority upon the subject, upon three fundamental degrees: the triple duty of a Mason is to study *whence he comes, what he is, and whither he goes*; the study that is, of God, of himself, and of the future transformation.⁴ Masonic Initiation was modelled on that in the lesser Mysteries. The third degree was one used in both Egypt and India from time immemorial, and the remembrance of it lingers to this day in every Lodge, under the name of the death

¹ *loc. cit.*

² This is false, and the Abbé Constant (Éliphas Lévi) *knew* it was so. Why did he promulgate the untruth? [Consult *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. XII, pp. 88; 727-30.]

³ *Dogme et Rituel de la haute magie*, I, pp. 219-20. (Paris, G. Baillière, 1861) [Consult p. 90 of English *tr.* by Waite — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

⁴ *Orthodoxie Maçonnique*, p. 99, Paris, E. Dentu, 1853

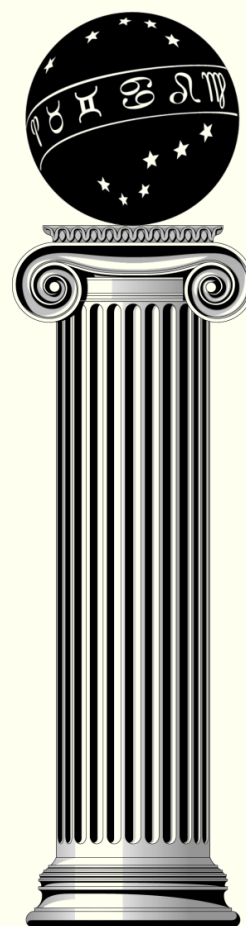
and resurrection of Hiram Abiff, the “Widow’s Son.” In Egypt the latter was called “Osiris”; in India “Loka-chakshu” (Eye of the World), and “Dinakara” (day-maker) or the Sun — and the rite itself was everywhere named the “gate of death.” The coffin, or sarcophagus, of Osiris, killed by Typhon, was brought in and placed in the middle of the Hall of the Dead, with the Initiates all around it and the candidate nearby. The latter was asked whether he had participated in the murder, and not withstanding his denial, and after sundry and very hard trials, the Initiator feigned to strike him on the head with a hatchet; he was thrown down, swathed in bandages like a mummy, and wept over. Then came lightning and thunder, the supposed corpse was surrounded with fire, and was finally raised.

Ragon speaks of a rumour that charged the Emperor Commodus — when he was at one time enacting the part of the Initiator — with having played this part in the initiatory drama so seriously that he actually killed the postulant when dealing him the blow with the hatchet. This shows that the *lesser* Mysteries had not quite died out in the second century A.D.

The Mysteries were carried into South and Central America, Northern Mexico and Peru by the Atlanteans in those days when

A pedestrian from the North [of what was once upon a time also India] might have reached — hardly wetting his feet — the Alaskan Peninsula, through Manchooria, across the *future* Gulf of Tartary, the Kurile and Aleutian Islands; while another traveller furnished with a canoe and starting from the South, could have walked over from Siam, crossed the Polynesian Islands and trudged into any part of the continent of South America.¹

They continued to exist down to the day of the Spanish invaders. These destroyed the Mexican and Peruvian records, but were prevented from laying their desecrating hands upon the many Pyramids — the lodges of an ancient Initiation — whose ruins are scattered over Puente Nacional, Cholula, and Teotihuacan. The ruins of Palenque, of Ocozingo in Chiapas, and others in Central America are known to all. If the pyramids and temples of Guiengola and Mitla ever betray their secrets, the present Doctrine will then be shown to have been a forerunner of the grandest truths in Nature. Meanwhile they have all a claim to be called Mitla, “the place of sadness” and “the abode of the (desecrated) dead.”²



¹ [Five Years of Theosophy, 1885, p. 340. Cf. Blavatsky Collected Writings, Vol. V, p. 222]

² Article excerpted from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE OBJECTS OF THE MYSTERIES) XIV pp. 274-80

5. Traces of the Mysteries

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (TRACES OF THE MYSTERIES) XIV pp. 281-93.

SAYS THE ROYAL MASONIC CYCLOPÆDIA, art. "Sun":
In all times, the sun has necessarily played an important part as a symbol, and especially in Freemasonry. The W.M. represents the rising sun, the J.W. the sun at the meridian, and the S.W. the setting sun. In the Druidical rites, the Arch-Druid represented the sun, and was aided by two other officers, one representing the moon in the West, and the other the sun at the South in its meridian. It is quite unnecessary to enter into any lengthened discussion on this symbol.

It is the more "unnecessary" since J.M. Ragon has discussed it very fully, as one may find at the end of [the article] "Trial of the Sun Initiate," where part of his explanations have been quoted. Freemasonry derived her rites from the East, as we have said. And if it be true to say of the modern Rosicrucians that "they are invested with a knowledge of chaos, not perhaps a very desirable acquisition," the remark is still more true when applied to all the other branches of Masonry, since the knowledge of their members about the full signification of their symbols is *nil*.

The Round Towers in Ireland and Asia were connected with the Vishvakarman and Vikartana rites. In later ages, the Initiates of the Left Path and the anthropomorphists turned them into phallic monuments.

Dozens of hypotheses are resorted to, one more unlikely than the other, as to the "Round Towers" of Ireland; one fact is enough to show the ignorance of the Masons, namely, that, according to the *Royal Masonic Cyclopædia*, the idea that they are connected with Masonic Initiation, may be at once dismissed as unworthy of notice. The "Towers," which are found throughout the East in Asia, were connected with the Mystery-Initiations, namely, with the Viśvakarman and the Vikartana rites. The candidates for Initiation were placed in them for three days and three nights, wherever there was no temple with a subterranean crypt close at hand. These round towers were built for no other purposes. Discredited as are all such monuments of Pagan origin by the Christian clergy, who thus "soil their own nest," they are still the living and indestructible relics of the Wisdom of old. Nothing exists in this objective and illusive world of ours that cannot be made to serve two purposes — a good and a bad one. Thus in later ages, the Initiates of the *Left Path* and the anthropomorphists took in hand most of those venerable ruins, then silent and deserted by their first wise inmates, and turned them indeed into phallic monuments. But this was a deliberate, wilful, and vicious misinterpretation of their real meaning, a deflection from their first use.



Glendalough Round Tower (height 30.5 m) Wicklow Mountains, Ireland

The Sun — though ever, even for the multitudes, *μόνος ουρανού θεός*, “the only and one King and God in Heaven,” and the *Ευβουλή*, “the God of Good Counsel” of Orpheus-had in every exoteric popular religion a dual aspect which was anthropomorphised by the profane. Thus the Sun was Osiris-*Typhon*, Ormazd-*Ahriman*, Bel-Jupiter and *Baal*, the life-giving and the *death*-giving luminary. And thus one and the same monolith, pillar, pyramid, tower or temple, originally built to glorify the first principle or aspect, might become in time an idol-fane, or worse, a phallic emblem in its crude and brutal form. The Linga of the Hindus has a spiritual and highly philosophical meaning, while the missionaries see in it but an “indecent emblem”; it has

just the meaning which is to be found in all those baalim, chammanim, and the bamoth with the pillars of unhewn stone of the *Bible*, set up for the glorification of the male Jehovah. But this does not alter the fact that the pureia of the Greeks, the nuraghes of Sardinia, the teocalli of Mexico, etc., were all in the beginning of the same character as the “Round Towers” of Ireland. They were sacred places of Initiation.¹

The key to the mystery of Initiation and to the real Christ (not the blasphemous caricature of the Churches), lies on the difference between the terms Chrēstos and Christos.

In 1877, the writer, quoting the authority and opinions of some most eminent scholars, ventured to assert that there was a great difference between the terms *Chrēstos* and *Christos*, a difference having a profound and Esoteric meaning. Also that while *Christos* means “to live” and “to be born into a new life,” *Chrēstos*, in “Initiation” phraseology, signified the death of the inner, lower, or personal nature in man; thus is given the key to the Brāhmanical title, the twice-born; and finally,

. . . if there were no *Christians*, there were *Chrēstians* long before the era of Christianity; and the Essenes belonged to the latter.²

For this, epithets sufficiently opprobrious to characterise the writer could hardly be found. And yet then as well as now, the author never attempted a statement of such a serious nature without showing as many learned authorities for it as could be mustered. Thus on the next page it was said:

Lepsius shows that the word *Nofre* means *Chrēstos*, “good,” and that one of the titles of Osiris, “Onnofer” [*Un-nefer*], must be translated “the goodness of God made manifest.”³ “The worship of Christ was not universal at this early date” explains MacKenzie, “by which I mean that Christolatry had not been introduced; but the worship of *Chrēstos* — the Good Principle — had preceded it by many centuries, and even survived the general adoption of Christianity, as shown on monuments still in existence . . . Again, we have an inscription which is pre-Christian on an epitaphial tablet. (Spon, *Miscell. erud. antiq.*, x, xvii, 2) *Υάκυυθε Λαρισσαίων Δημόσιε, Ηρωσ Χρηστέ, Χάϊρε*, and de Rossi (*Roma Sotterranea*, 1864, tome i, tav. xxi, p. 335), gives us another example from the catacombs — *Aelia Chrēste*, in Pace.”^{4, 5}

¹ [Cf. *A Curious Tale* by W.Q. Judge, on the Eternal Fire that is never yet known to have gone out. First published in *The Path*, Vol. III, December 1888, pp. 284-7. Full text in “Occult Tales by Judge,” *Living the Life Series*. — ED. PHIL.]

² *Isis Unveiled*, II p. 323. In *1 Peter* ii, 3, Jesus is called “the Lord Chrēstos.” [Greek version: *εἰ ἐγενήσαθε οὐτὴν χρησῶς ὁ κύριος*.]

³ Lepsius, *Königsbuch*, b. 11, tal. i. dyn. 5, h.p.

⁴ [*Christna*, etc., p. 357]

⁵ *Isis Unveiled*, II p. 324, quoting *Royal Masonic Cyclopædia*, pp. 206-7

There were two Messiahs, Chrēst and Christ. Jesus was an Initiate of the Egyptian Mysteries, where the rite of the suffering Chrēstos on his trial, and second birth as Christos (by regeneration), were enacted.

Today the writer is able to add to all those testimonies the corroboration of an erudite author, who proves whatever he undertakes to show on the authority of geometrical demonstration. There is a most curious passage with remarks and explanations in *The Source of Measures*, whose author [J. Ralston Skinner] has probably never heard of the “Mystery-God” Viśvakarman of the early Āryans. Treating on the difference between the terms Chrēst and Christ, he ends by saying that:

. . . there were *two Messiahs*: One, as causing himself to go down into the pit, for the salvation of the world; this was the sun shorn of his *golden rays*, and *crowned with blackened ones* (symbolising this loss), as the thorns: *the other* was the triumphant *Messiah*, mounted up to the *summit of the arch of heaven*, personated as the *Lion of the tribe of Judah*. In both instances he had the cross; once in humiliation (or the son of copulation), and once holding it in his control, as the law of creation, He being Jehovah.¹

And then the author proceeds to give “the fact” that “there were two Messiahs,” etc., as quoted above. And this — leaving the divine and mystic character and claim for Jesus entirely independent of this event of His mortal life — shows Him, beyond any doubt, as an Initiate of the Egyptian Mysteries, where the same rite of Death and of spiritual Resurrection for the neophyte, or the suffering *Chrēstos* on his trial and new birth by Regeneration, was enacted — for this was a universally adopted rite.

The “pit” into which the Eastern Initiate was made to descend was, as shown before, Pātāla, one of the seven regions of the nether world, over which ruled Vāsuki, the great “snake God.” This pit, Pātāla, has in the Eastern Symbolism precisely the same manifold meaning as is found by Mr. J. Ralston Skinner in the Hebrew word *shiac* in its application to the case in hand. For it was the synonym of Scorpio — Pātāla’s depths being “impregnated with the brightness of the new Sun” — represented by the “newly born” into the glory; and Pātāla was and is in a sense, “a pit, a grave, the place of death, and the door of Hadēs or Sheol” — as, in the partially exoteric Initiations in India, the candidate had to pass through the matrix of the heifer before proceeding to Pātāla. In its non-mystic sense it is the Antipodes — America being referred to in India as Pātāla. But in its symbolism it meant all that, and much more. The fact alone that Vāsuki, the ruling Deity of Pātāla, is represented in the Hindu Pantheon as the great Naga (Serpent) — who was used by the Gods and Asuras as a rope round the mountain Mandara, at the churning of the ocean for Amrita, the water of immortality — connects him directly with Initiation.

For he is Śesha-Nāga also, serving as a couch for Vishnu, and upholding the seven worlds; and he is also Ananta, “the endless,” and the symbol of eternity — hence the

¹ *The Source of Measures*, p. 256; [James Ralston Skinner, *Key to the Hebrew-Egyptian mystery: in The Source of Measures originating the British inch and the ancient cubit by which was built the great pyramid of Egypt and the temple of Solomon; and through the possession and use of which, man, assuming to realize the creative law of the deity, set it forth in a mystery, among the Hebrews called kabbala*. Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1875; 324pp. A searchable PDF of this masterpiece on the mathematics of the cosmic mind can be downloaded from our Planetary Rounds and Globes Series. — ED. PHIL.]

“God of Secret Wisdom,” degraded by the Church to the *rôle* of the tempting Serpent, of Satan. That what is now said is correct may be verified by the evidence of even the exoteric rendering of the attributes of various Gods and Sages both in the Hindu and the Buddhist Pantheons. Two instances will suffice to show how little our best and most erudite Orientalists are capable of dealing correctly and fairly with the symbolism of Eastern nations, while remaining ignorant of the corresponding points to be found only in Occultism and the Secret Doctrine.

Nagarjuna, one of the founders of the Mahayana School, had received his teachings from the Secret School of Adepts.

① The learned Orientalist and Tibetan traveller, Professor Emil Schlagintweit, mentions in one of his works on Tibet, a national legend to the effect that . . .

Nāgārjuna [a “mythological” personage “without any real existence,” the learned German scholar thinks] received the book *Paramārtha*, or according to others, the book *Avatamsaka*, from the Nāgas, fabulous creatures of the nature of serpents, who occupy a place among the beings superior to man, and are regarded as protectors of the law of the Buddha. To these spiritual beings Śākyamuni is said to have taught a more philosophical religious system than to men, who were not sufficiently advanced to understand it at the time of his appearance.¹

Nor are men sufficiently advanced for it now; for “the more philosophical religious system” is the Secret Doctrine, the Occult Eastern Philosophy, which is the cornerstone of all sciences rejected by the unwise builders even at this day, and more today perhaps than ever before, in the great conceit of our age. The allegory means simply that Nāgārjuna having been initiated by the “Serpents” — the Adepts, “the wise ones” — and driven out from India by the Brāhmans, who dreaded to have their Mysteries and sacerdotal Science divulged (the real cause of their hatred of Buddhism), went away to China and Tibet, where he initiated many into the truths of the hidden Mysteries taught by Gautama Buddha.

Narada is the Deva Rishi of Occultism who impelled animal man towards intellectual freedom.

② The hidden symbolism of Nārada — the great Rishi and the author of some of the Rig-Vaidic hymns, who incarnated again later on during Krishna’s time — has never been understood. Yet, in connection with the Occult Sciences, Nārada, the son of Brahmā, is one of the most prominent characters; he is directly connected in his first incarnation with the “Builders” — hence with the seven “Rectors” of the Christian Church, who “helped God in the work of creation.” This grand personification is hardly noticed by our Orientalists, who refer only to that which he is alleged to have said of Pātāla, namely, “that it is a place of sexual and sensual gratifications.” This is thought to be amusing, and the reflection is suggested that Nārada, no doubt, “found the place delightful.” Yet this sentence simply shows him to have been an Initiate, connected directly with the Mysteries, and walking, as all the other neophytes, before and after him, had to walk, in “the pit among the thorns” in the “sacrificial *Chrēst* condition,” as the suffering victim made to descend thereinto — a mystery, truly!

¹ *Buddhism in Tibet*, p. 31 [London, Trübner, 1863; also London, Susil Gupta, 1968. *Paramārtha* means the *Prajñā-Pāramitā Sūtras*.]

Nārada is one of the seven Rishis, the “mind-born sons” of Brahmā. The fact of his having been during his incarnation a high Initiate — he, like Orpheus, being the founder of the Mysteries — is corroborated, and made evident by his history. The *Mahābhārata* states that Nārada, having frustrated the scheme formed for peopling the universe, in order to remain true to his vow of chastity, was cursed by Daksha, and sentenced to be born once more. Again, when born during Krishna’s time, he is accused of calling his father Brahmā “a false teacher,” because the latter advised him to get married, and he refused to do so. This shows him to have been an Initiate, going against the orthodox worship and religion. It is curious to find this Rishi and leader among the “Builders” and the “Heavenly Host” as the prototype of the Christian “leader” of the same “Host” — the Archangel Mikael. Both are the male “Virgins,” and both are the only ones among their respective “Hosts” who refuse to create. Nārada is said to have dissuaded the Hari-ashvas, the five thousand sons of Daksha, begotten by him for the purpose of peopling the Earth, from producing offspring. Since then the Hari-ashvas have “dispersed themselves through the regions, and have never returned.” The Initiates are, perhaps, the incarnations of these Hari-ashvas?

It was on the seventh day, the third of his ultimate trial, that the Eastern neophyte arose as a regenerated man and returned to earth as triumphant conqueror of death, a Hierophant.

An Eastern neophyte in his Chrēst condition may be seen in a certain engraving in Moor’s *Hindoo Pantheon*, whose author mistook another form of the crucified Sun or Vishnu, Vithobā, for Krishna, and calls it “Krishna crucified in Space.” The engraving is also given in Dr. Lundy’s *Monumental Christianity*, in which work the reverend author has collected as many proofs as his ponderous volume could hold of “Christian symbols *before* Christianity,” as he expresses it. Thus he shows us Krishna and Apollo as good shepherds, Krishna holding the cruciform Conch and the Chakra, and Krishna “crucified in Space,” as he calls it. Of this figure it may be truly said, as the author says of it himself:

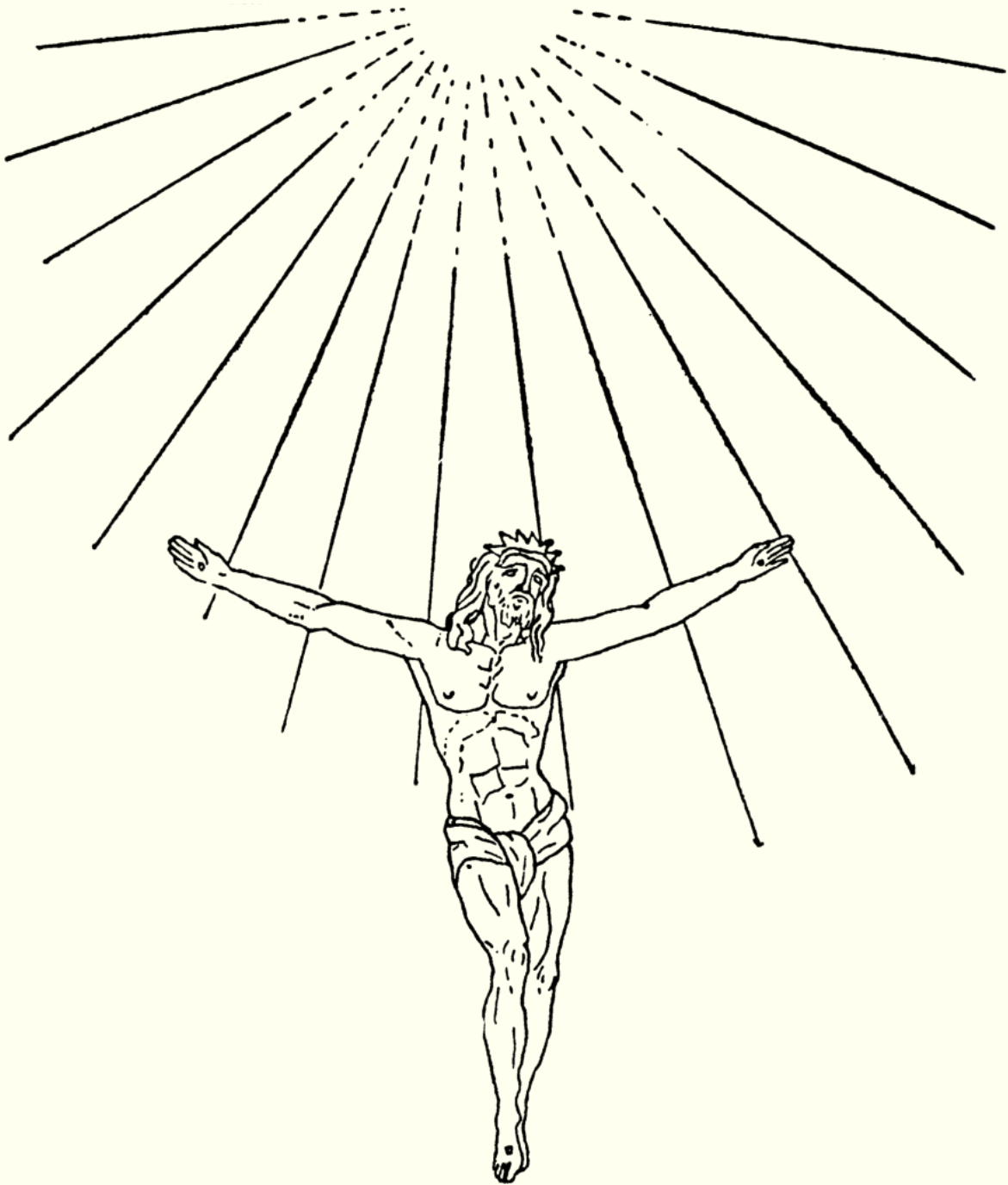
. . . this representation I believe to be anterior to Christianity . . . It looks like a Christian crucifix in many respects. . . The drawing, the attitude, and the nail marks in hands and feet,¹ indicate a Christian origin; while the Parthian coronet of seven points, the absence of the wood and of the usual inscription, and the rays of glory above, would seem to point to some other than a Christian

¹ [Explanation of the nails of the cross after J. Ralston Skinner:

In symbol, the nails of the cross have for the shape of the heads thereof a solid pyramid, and a tapering square obeliscal shaft, or phallic emblem, for the nail. Taking the position of the *three* nails in the man’s extremities, and on the cross they form or mark a *triangle* in shape, one nail being at each corner of the triangle. The wounds, or *stigmata*, in the extremities are necessarily *four*, designative of the *square*; and, as in the candlestick, there have been two used as one, or rather one used as two, in the connection of the *three* nails with the four extremities. The three nails with the three wounds are in number 6, which denotes the 6 faces of the cube *unfolded*, on which the man is placed; and this in turn points to the circular measure transferred onto the edges of the cube. The *one* wound of the feet separates into *two* when the feet are separated, making *three* together for all, and *four* when separated, or 7 in all — another and *most holy feminine* base number.

The Source of Measures, § 21 p. 52; searchable PDF in our Planetary Rounds and Globes Series. See also *Cube unfolded with anthropos crucified* in: “Keys to the Mystery Language,” in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series, and “Crucified between two thieves” in the same series. — ED. PHIL.]

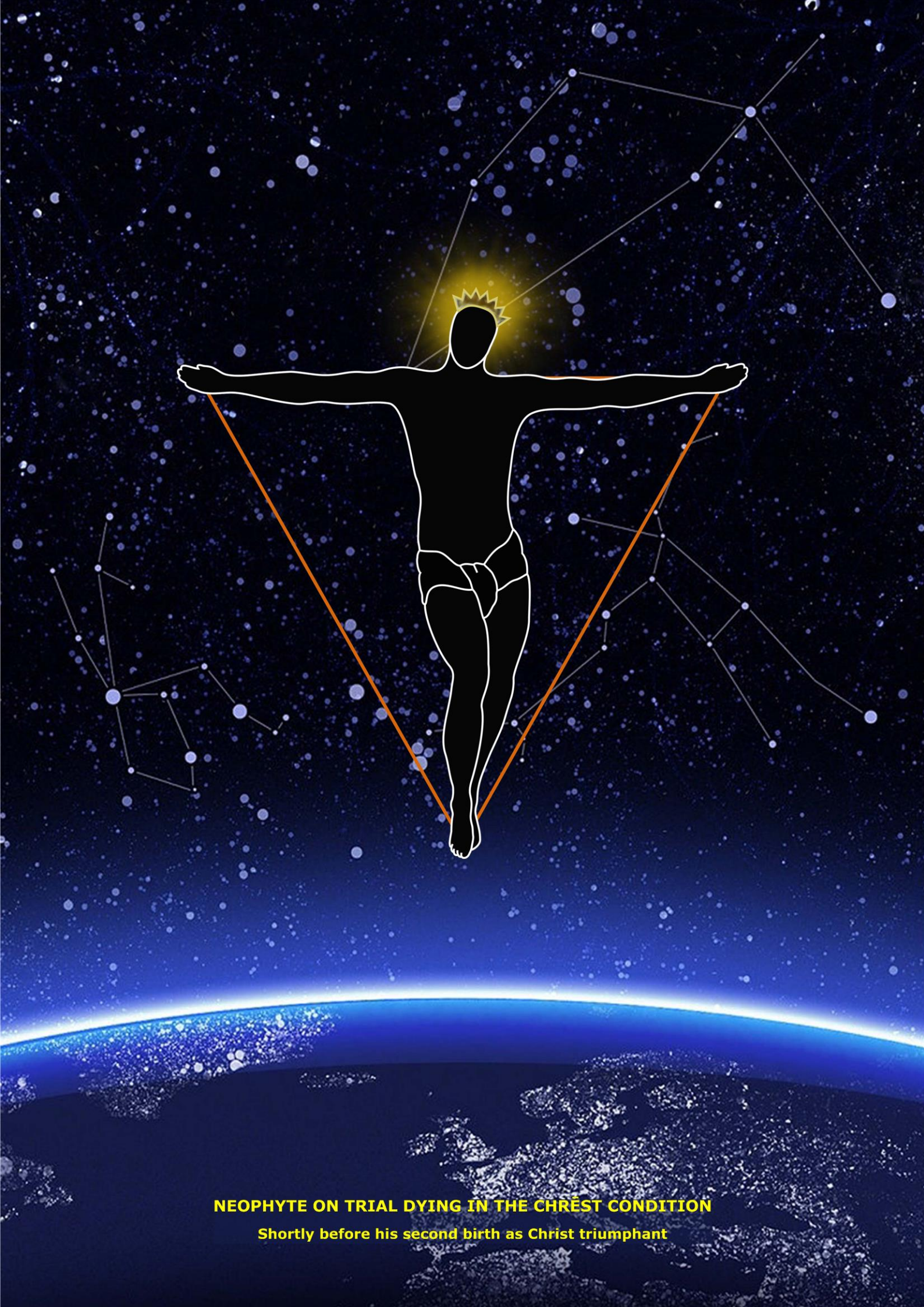
origin. Can it be the Victim-Man, or the Priest and Victim both in one, of the Hindu mythology, who offered himself a sacrifice before the worlds were?¹



“KRISHNA” IN SPACE
[Eastern neophyte in Chrēst condition]
From Edward Moor, *The Hindoo Pantheon*,
Plate 98, First ed., London 1810²

¹ [*Monumental Christianity or the Art and Symbolism of the Primitive Church*, etc., by John P. Lundy. New York, J.W. Bouton, 1876, p. 173]

² A Philaetheians’ drawing, inspired by the above engraving, is shown overleaf.



NEOPHYTE ON TRIAL DYING IN THE CHRËST CONDITION
Shortly before his second birth as Christ triumphant

It is surely so.

Can it be Plato's Second God who impressed himself on the universe in the form of the cross? Or is it his divine man, who would be scourged, tormented, fettered, have his eyes burnt out; and lastly . . . *would be crucified?*

It is all that and much more; archaic religious Philosophy was universal, and its Mysteries are as old as man. It is the eternal symbol of the personified Sun — astronomically purified — in its mystic meaning regenerated, and symbolised by all the Initiates in memory of a sinless Humanity when all were "Sons of God." Now, mankind has become the "Son of Evil" truly. Does all this take anything away from the dignity of Christ as an ideal, or of Jesus as a divine man? Not at all. On the contrary, made to stand alone, glorified above all other "Sons of God," He can only foment evil feelings in all those many-millioned nations who do not believe in the Christian system, provoking their hatred and leading to iniquitous wars and strifes. If, on the other hand, we place Him among a long series of "Sons of God" and Sons of divine Light, every man may then be left to choose for himself, among those many ideals, which he will choose as a God to call to his help, and worship on earth as in Heaven.

Initiates are said to have "crushed the serpent's head," i.e., conquered their sensual nature.

Many among those called "Saviours" were "good shepherds," as was Krishna for one, and all of them are said to have "crushed the serpent's head" — in other words to have conquered their sensual nature and to have mastered divine and Occult Wisdom. Apollo killed Python, a fact which exonerates him from the charge of being himself the great Dragon, Satan: Krishna slew the snake Kālīyanāga, the Black Serpent; and the Scandinavian Thor bruised the head of the symbolical reptile with his crucifixion mace.

Four out of seven degrees of Initiation at Thebes will be now described.

In Egypt every city of importance was separated from its burial place by a sacred lake. The same ceremony of judgment, as is described in *The Book of the Dead* — "that precious and mysterious book" (Bunsen) — as taking place in the world of Spirit, took place on earth during the burial of the mummy. Forty two judges or assessors assembled on the shore and judged the departed "Soul" according to its actions when in the body. . . . After that the priests returned within the sacred precincts and instructed the neophytes upon the probable fate of the Soul, and the solemn drama that was then taking place in the invisible realm whither the Soul had fled. The immortality of the Spirit was strongly inculcated on the neophytes by the *Al-om-jah* — the name of the highest Egyptian Hierophant. In the *Crata Repoa*¹ the following are described as four out of the seven degrees of Initiation.

After a preliminary trial at Thebes, where the neophyte had to pass through many probationations, called the "Twelve Tortures," he was commanded, in order that he might come out triumphant, to govern his passions and never lose for a moment the idea of

¹ *Crata Repoa oder Einweihungen in der alten geheimen Gesellschaft der Egyptischen Priester*, Berlin, 1778, pp. 17-31

his inner God or seventh Principle. Then, as a symbol of the wanderings of the unpurified Soul, he had to ascend several ladders and wander in darkness in a cave with many doors, all of which were locked. Having overcome all, he received the degree of Pastophoros, after which he became, in the second and third degrees, the Neocoris and Melanēphoros. Brought into a vast subterranean chamber, thickly furnished with mummies lying in state, he was placed in presence of the coffin which contained the mutilated body of Osiris. This was the hall called the “Gates of Death,” whence the verse in *Job* [xxxviii, 17]:

Have the gates of death been opened unto thee?
Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?

Thus asks the “Lord,” the Hierophant, the Al-om-jah, the Initiator of Job, alluding to this third degree of Initiation. For the *Book of Job* is the poem of Initiation *par excellence*.

When the neophyte had conquered the terrors of this trial, he was conducted to the “Hall of Spirits,” to be judged by them. Among the rules in which he was instructed, he was commanded:

Never to either desire or seek revenge; to be always ready to help a brother in danger, even unto the risk of his own life; to bury every dead body, to honour his parents above all; to respect old age, and protect those weaker than himself; and finally, to ever bear in mind the hour of death, and that of resurrection in a new and imperishable body.¹

Purity and chastity were highly recommended, and adultery was threatened with death. Thus the Egyptian neophyte was made a Kistophoros. In this degree the mystery-name of IAŌ was communicated to him.

Let the reader compare the above sublime precepts with the precepts of Buddha, and the noble commandments in the “Rule of Life” for the ascetics of India, and he will understand the unity of the Secret Doctrine everywhere.

Once unravelled and understood, the Mystery of the Hermaphrodite will demolish sexual worship with the hammer of Truth.

It is impossible to deny the presence of a sexual element in many religious symbols, but this fact is not in the least open to censure, once it becomes generally known that — in the religious traditions of every country — man was not born in the first “human” race from father and mother. From the bright “mind-born Sons of Brahmā,” the Rishis, and from Adam-Kadmon with his Emanations, the Sephirōth, down to the “parentless,” the Anupapādaka, or the Dhyāni-Buddhas, from whom sprang the Bodhisattvas and Mānushya-Buddhas, the earthly Initiates — men — the first race of men was with every nation held as being born without father or mother. Man, the “Mānushya-Buddha,” the Manu, the “Enosh,” son of Seth, or the “Son of Man” as he is called — is born in the present way only as the consequence, the unavoidable fatality, of the law of natural evolution. Mankind — having reached the last limit, and that turning point where its spiritual nature had to make room for mere physical or-

¹ [H. Malhandreni, *Ritual of Initiations*, p. 105; Venice, 1657]

ganization — had to “fall into matter” and generation. But man’s evolution and involution are cyclic. He will end as he began. Of course to our grossly material minds even the sublime symbolism of Kosmos conceived in the matrix of Space after the divine Unit had entered into and fructified it with Its holy fiat, will no doubt suggest materiality. Not so with primitive mankind. The initiatory rite in the Mysteries of the self-sacrificing Victim that dies a spiritual death to save the world from destruction — really from depopulation — was established during the Fourth Race, to commemorate an event, which, physiologically, has now become the Mystery of Mysteries among the world-problems. In the Jewish script it is Cain and the female Abel who are the sacrificed and sacrificing couple — both immolating themselves (as permutations of Adam and Eve, or the dual Jehovah) and shedding their blood “of separation and union,” for the sake of and to save mankind by inaugurating a new physiological race. Later still, when the neophyte, as already mentioned, in order to be reborn once more into his lost spiritual state, had to pass through the entrails (the womb) of a *virgin* heifer¹ killed at the moment of the rite, it involved again a mystery and one as great, for it referred to the process of birth, or rather the first entrance of man onto this earth, through Vāch — “the melodious cow who milks forth sustenance and water” — and who is the female Logos. It had also reference to the same self-sacrifice of the “divine Hermaphrodite” — of the third Root-Race — the transformation of Humanity into truly physical men, after the loss of spiritual potency. When, the fruit of evil having been tasted along with the fruit of good, there was as a result the gradual atrophy of spirituality and a strengthening of the materiality in man, then he was doomed to be born thenceforth through the present process. This is the Mystery of the Hermaphrodite, which the Ancients kept so secret and veiled. It was neither the absence of moral feeling, nor the presence of gross sensuality in them that made them imagine their Deities under a dual aspect; but rather their knowledge of the mysteries and processes of primitive Nature. The Science of Physiology was better known to them than it is to us now. It is in this that lies buried the key to the Symbolism of old, the true focus of national thought, and the strange dual-sexed images of nearly every God and Goddess in both pagan and monotheistic Pantheons.

For the truths of science have always been the arcana of the Priests.

Says Sir William Drummond in *The Œdipus Judaicus*:

The truths of science were the arcana of the Priests [because these truths were the foundations of religion.]²

But why should the missionaries so cruelly twit the Vaishnavas and Krishna worshippers for the supposed grossly indecent meaning of their symbols, since it is made clear beyond the slightest doubt, and by the most unprejudiced writers, that Chrēstos in the pit — whether the pit be taken as meaning the grave or hell — had likewise a sexual element in it, from the very origin of the symbol.

¹ The Āryans replaced the living cow by one made of gold, silver or any other metal, and the rite is preserved to this day, when one desires to become a Brāhman, a twice-born, in India.

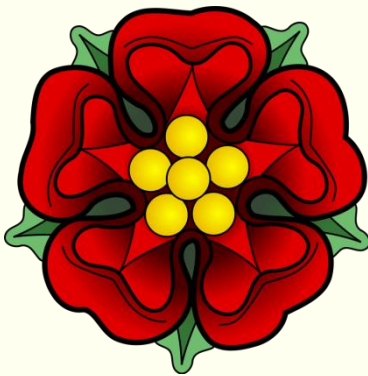
² [See p. 124 in the new revised edition of 1866; London, Reeves & Turner]

The Egyptian Initiates held the Rose as symbol of Nature, the mother and nourisher of man, represented as a virgin woman. The Brothers of the Rosy Cross, as a symbol of sexual procreation!

This fact is no longer denied today. The “Brothers of the Rosy Cross” of the Middle Ages were as good Christians as any to be found in Europe, nevertheless, all their rites were based on symbols whose meaning was pre-eminently phallic and sexual. Their biographer, Hargrave Jennings, the best modern authority on Rosicrucianism, speaking of this mystic Brotherhood, describes how

The tortures and the sacrifice of Calvary, the Passion of the Cross, were, in their [the Rose-Croix’s] glorious blessed magic and triumph, the protest and appeal.

Protest — by whom? The answer is, the protest of the crucified Rose,¹ the greatest and the most unveiled of all sexual symbols — the Yoni and Linga, the “victim” and the “murderer,” the female and male principles in Nature. Open the last work of that author, *Phallicism*, and see in what glowing terms he describes the sexual symbolism in that which is most sacred to the Christian:



The flowing blood streamed from the crown, or the piercing circlet of the thorns of Hell. The Rose is feminine. Its lustrous carmine petals are guarded with thorns. The Rose is the most beautiful of flowers. The Rose is the Queen of God’s Garden (Mary, the Virgin). It is not the Rose alone which is the magical idea, or truth. But it is the “crucified rose,” or the “martyred rose” (by the grand mystic apocalyptic figure) which is the talisman, the standard, the object of adoration of all the “Sons of Wisdom” or the true Rosicrucians.²

Not of *all* the “Sons of Wisdom,” by any means, not even of the *true* Rosicrucian. For the latter would never put in such sickening *relievo*, in such a purely sensual and terrestrial, not to say animal light, the grandest, the noblest of Nature’s symbols. To the Rosicrucian, the “Rose” was the symbol of Nature, of the ever prolific and virgin Earth, or Isis, the mother and nourisher of man, considered as feminine and represented as a virgin woman by the Egyptian Initiates. Like every other personification of Nature and the Earth she is the sister and wife of Osiris, as the two characters answer to the personified symbol of the Earth, both she and the Sun being the progeny of the same mysterious Father, because the Earth is fecundated by the Sun — according to the earliest Mysticism — by divine insufflation. It was the pure ideal of mystic Nature that was personified in the “World Virgins,” the “Celestial Maidens,” and later on by the human Virgin, Mary, the Mother of the Saviour, the *Salvator Mundi* now chosen by the Christian World. And it was the character of the Jewish

¹ [Rose is an anagram of Erôs. — ED. PHIL.]

² *op. cit.*, p. 141

maiden that was adapted by Theology to archaic Symbolism,¹ and not the Pagan symbol that was modelled for the new occasion.

The old Indian Mysteries of Initiation were brought to Greece by Orpheus, nine millennia before Homer and Hesiod.

We know through Herodotus that the Mysteries were brought from India by Orpheus — a hero far anterior to both Homer and Hesiod. Very little is really known of him, and till very lately Orphic literature, and even the Argonauts, were attributed to Onomacritus, a contemporary of Pisistratus, Solon and Pythagoras — who was credited with their compilation in the present form toward the close of the sixth century B.C. or 800 years after the time of Orpheus. But we are told that in the days of Pausanias there was a sacerdotal family, who, like the Brahmans with the *Vedas*, had committed to memory all the Orphic Hymns, and that they were usually thus transmitted from one generation to another. By placing Orpheus so far back as 1200 B.C., official Science — so careful in her chronology to choose in each case as late a period as possible — admits that the Mysteries, or in other words Occultism dramatized, belong to a still earlier epoch than the Chaldæans and Egyptians.

The downfall of the Mysteries in Europe may now be mentioned.²



¹ In Ragon's *Orthodoxie Maçonnique*, p. 105, note, we find the following statement — borrowed from Albumazar the Arabian, probably:

The Virgin of the Magi and Chaldæans. The Chaldæan sphere [globe] showed in its heavens a newly-born babe, called *Christ* and *Jesus*, it was placed in the arms of the Celestial Virgin. It was to this Virgin that Eratosthenes, the Alexandrian Librarian, born 276 years before our era, gave the name of Isis, mother of Horus.

This is only what Kircher gives (in *Œdipus Ægypticus*, Vol. II (1653), Pt. II, p. 203), quoting Albumazar:

In the first decan of the Virgin rises a maid, called Aderenosa [Ardhanārī?], that is, pure, immaculate virgin . . . sitting upon an embroidered throne nursing a boy . . . a boy . . . named Iessus . . . which signifies Issa, whom they also call Christ in Greek. (See *Isis Unveiled*, II p. 491)

² Article excerpted from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (TRACES OF THE MYSTERIES) XIV pp. 281-93

6. The Last of the Mysteries in Europe

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (LAST MYSTERIES IN EUROPE) XIV pp. 294-99.

AS WAS PREDICTED BY THE GREAT HERMES in his dialogue with Æsculapius, the time had indeed come when impious foreigners accused Egypt of adoring monsters, and naught but the letters engraved in stone upon her monuments survived — enigmas unintelligible to posterity. Her sacred Scribes and Hierophants became wanderers upon the face of the earth. Those who had remained in Egypt found themselves obliged for fear of a profanation of the sacred Mysteries to seek refuge in deserts and mountains, to form and establish secret societies and brotherhoods — such as the Essenes; those who had crossed the oceans to India and even to the (now-called) New World, bound themselves by solemn oaths to keep silent, and to preserve secret their Sacred Knowledge and Science; thus these were buried deeper than ever out of human sight. In Central Asia and on the northern borderlands of India, the triumphant sword of Aristotle's pupil swept away from his path of conquest every vestige of a once pure Religion: and its Adepts receded further and further from that path into the most hidden spots of the globe. The cycle of * * * being at its close, the first hour for the disappearance of the Mysteries struck on the clock of the Races, with the Macedonian conqueror. The first strokes of its last hour sounded in the year 47 B.C. Alesia^{1, 2} the famous city in Gaul, the Thebes of the Kelts, so renowned for its ancient rites of Initiation and Mysteries, was, as J.M. Ragon well describes it:

The ancient metropolis and the tomb of Initiation, of the religion of the Druids and of the freedom of Gaul.³

Alesia, Arles, and Bibractis, the last bastions of the Ancient Mysteries in Europe, are no more.

It was during the first century before our era, that the last and supreme hour of the great Mysteries had struck. History shows the populations of Central Gaul revolting against the Roman yoke. The country was subject to Cæsar, and the revolt was crushed; the result was the slaughter of the garrison at Alesia (or Alisa), and of all its

¹ [This statement flatly contradicts a widely held belief amongst modern theosophists that the Lodge's efforts to send Messengers to the West began after Tsong-kha-pa (1357-1419 CE). The Eastern Brothers began helping out the West as early as the 1st century before the Christian era. Also *cf.*

The messengers sent out westward periodically in the last quarter of every century — ever since the mysteries which alone had the key to the secrets of nature had been crushed out of existence in Europe by heathen and Christian conquerors . . .

Blavatsky Collected Writings, (THE CYCLE MOVETH) XII, p. 120 — ED. PHIL.]

² Now called *St. Reine* (Côte d'Or) on the two streams, the Ose and the Oserain. Its fall is a historical fact in Keltic Gaulish History.

³ *Orthodoxie Maçonnique*, p. 22

inhabitants, including the Druids, the college-priests and the neophytes; after this the whole city was plundered and razed to the ground.

Bibractis, a city as large and as famous, not far from Alesia, perished a few years later. J.M. Ragon describes her end as follows:

. . . Bibractis, the mother of sciences, the soul of the early nations [in Europe], a town equally famous for its sacred college of Druids, its civilisation, its schools, in which 40,000 students were taught philosophy, literature, grammar, jurisprudence, medicine, astrology, occult sciences, architecture, etc. Rival of Thebes, of Memphis, of Athens and of Rome, it possessed an amphitheatre for gladiators, surrounded with colossal statues and accommodating 100,000 spectators, a capitol, temples of Janus, Pluto, Proserpine, Jupiter, Apollo, Minerva, Cybelē, Venus and Anubis, and in the midst of these sumptuous edifices the Naumachy, with its vast basin, an incredible construction, a gigantic work wherein floated boats and galleys devoted to naval games; then a *Champ de Mars*, an aqueduct, fountains, public baths; finally fortifications and walls, the construction of which dated from the heroic ages.¹

Such was the last city in Gaul wherein died for Europe the secrets of the Initiations of the Great Mysteries, the Mysteries of Nature, and of her forgotten Occult truths. The rolls and manuscripts of the famous Alexandrian Library were burned and destroyed by the same Cæsar,² but while History deprecates the action of the Arab General, Amru, who gave the final touch to this act of vandalism perpetrated by the great conqueror, it has not a word to say to the latter for his destruction of nearly the same amount of precious rolls in Alesia, nor to the destroyer of Bibractis. While Sacrovir — chief of the Gauls, who revolted against Roman despotism under Tiberius, and was defeated by Silius in the year 21 of our era — was burning himself alive with his fellow conspirators on a funeral pyre before the gates of the city, as Ragon tells us, the latter was sacked and plundered, and all her treasures of literature on the Occult Sciences perished by fire. The once majestic city, Bibractis, has now become Autun,³ Ragon explains.

A few monuments of glorious antiquity are still there, such as the temples of Janus and Cybelē.

Ragon goes on:

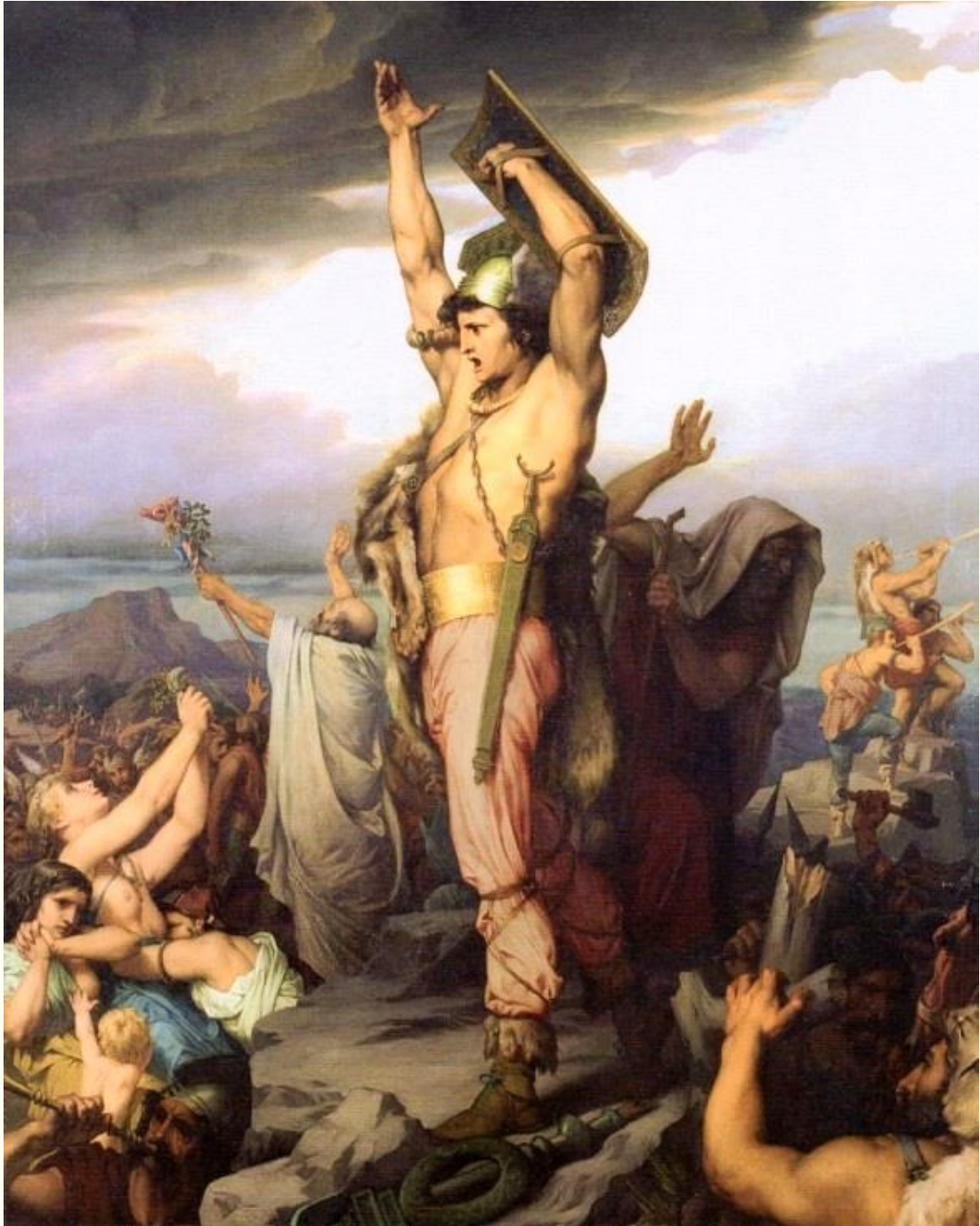
Arles, founded two thousand years before Christ, was sacked in 270. This metropolis of Gaul, restored 40 years later by Constantine, has preserved to this day a few remains of its ancient splendour; amphitheatre, capitol, an obelisk, which is a block of granite 17 metres high, a triumphal arch, catacombs, etc. Thus ended Kelto-Gaulic civilisation. Cæsar, as a barbarian worthy of Rome, had already accomplished the destruction of the ancient Mysteries by the sack

¹ *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23

² The Christian mob in 389 of our era completed the work of destruction upon what remained; most of the priceless works were saved for students of Occultism, but lost to the world.

³ [Bibracte was abandoned in favour of Autun, 25 Km away. Today, Mont Beuvray is generally credited as the ancient Bibracte. The site straddles the borders of the French départements of Nièvre and Saône-et-Loire in Burgundy.]

of the temples and their initiatory colleges, and by the massacre of the Initiates and the Druids. Remained Rome; but she never had but the *lesser Mysteries*, shadows of the Secret Science. The Great Initiation was extinct.¹



Vercingetorix calls to the Gauls for the defence of Alesia (1869) François-Emile Ehrmann

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 23. J.M. Ragon, a Belgian by birth, and a Mason, knew more about Occultism than any other non-initiated writer. For fifty years he studied the ancient Mysteries wherever he could find accounts of them. In 1805, he founded at Paris the Brotherhood of *Les Trinosophes*, in which Lodge he delivered for years lectures on Ancient and Modern Initiation (in 1818 and again in 1841), which were published, and now are lost. Then he became the writer-in-chief of *Hermes*, a masonic paper. His best works were *La Maçonnerie Occulte* and the *Fastes Initiatiques*. After his death, in 1862, a number of his MSS. remained in the possession of the Grand Orient of France. A high Mason told the writer that Ragon had corresponded for years with two Orientalists in Syria and Egypt, one of whom is a Kopt gentleman.

A few further extracts may be given from his *Occult Masonry*, as they bear directly upon our subject. However learned and erudite, some of the chronological mistakes of that author are very great.

He [Ragon] says:

After deified man (Hermes) came the King-Priest [the Hierophant]. Menes was the first legislator and the founder of Thebes of the hundred palaces. He filled that city with magnificent splendour; it is from his day that the sacerdotal epoch of Egypt dates. The priests reigned, for it is they who made the laws. It is said that there have been three hundred and twenty-nine [Hierophants] since his time — all of whom have remained unknown.

Occult Wisdom is now replaced by absolute theocracy that displays its crowned priests to the ignorant masses.

After that, genuine Adepts having become scarce, the author shows the Priests choosing false ones from the midst of slaves, whom they exhibited, having crowned and deified them, for the adoration of the ignorant masses.

Tired of reigning in such a servile way, the kings rebelled and freed themselves. Then came Sesostris, the founder of Memphis (1613, they say before our era). To the sacerdotal election to the throne succeeded that of the warriors. . . . Cheops who reigned from 1178 to 1122 built the great Pyramid which bears his name. He is accused of having persecuted theocracy and closed the temples.

Whatever else Cheops might have done, he has not built the pyramid bearing his name. Neither Solomon his temple, nor Noah his arc, for that matter.

This is utterly incorrect, though Ragon repeats “History.” The Pyramid called by the name of Cheops is the Great Pyramid, the building of which even Baron Bunsen assigned to 5,000 B.C. He says in *Egypt’s Place in Universal History*:

. . . the origins of the two kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt go back to the ninth millennium [before Christ].¹

And as the Mysteries were performed and the Initiations took place in that Pyramid — for indeed it was built for that purpose — it looks strange and an utter contradiction with known facts in the history of the Mysteries, to suppose that Cheops, if the builder of that Pyramid, ever turned against the initiated Priests and their temples. Moreover, as far as the Secret Doctrine teaches, it was not Cheops who built the Pyramid of that name, whatever else he might have done.

Yet, it is quite true that

Owing to an Ethiopian invasion and the federated government of twelve chiefs, royalty fell into the hands of Amasis, a man of low birth.

This was in 570 B.C., and it was Amasis who destroyed priestly power. And

Thus perished that ancient theocracy which showed its crowned priests for so many centuries to Egypt and the whole world.

¹ *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 468

The strict silence of the Initiates and the total loss of all written memorials of Secret Knowledge may explain why so little is known of the Ancient Mysteries.

Egypt had gathered the students of all countries around her Priests and Hierophants before Alexandria was founded. Ennemoser asks:

. . . how comes it . . . that so little has become known of these Mysteries, and of their particular contents, through so many ages and amongst so many different times and people? The answer is, that it is owing to the universally strict silence of the initiated. Another cause may be found in the destruction and total loss of all the written memorials of the secret knowledge of the remotest antiquity. . . . Numa's books, described by Livy, consisting of natural philosophy, were found in his tomb; but they were not allowed to be made known, lest they should reveal the most secret mysteries of the state religion. . . . The senate and the tribunes of the people determined . . . that the books themselves should be burned, which was done. . . .¹

Yet, there is spiritual Alchemy and physical Transmutation: their cradle is to be sought in the most distant times.

Cassianus mentions a treatise, well-known in the fourth and fifth centuries, which was accredited to Ham, the son of Noah, who in his turn was reputed to have received it from Jared, the fourth generation from Seth, the son of Adam. Alchemy also was first taught in Egypt by her learned Priests, though the first appearance of this system is as old as man. Many writers have declared that Adam was the first Adept; but that was a blind and a pun upon the name, which is "red earth" in one of its meanings. The correct information — under its allegorical veil — is found in the sixth chapter of *Genesis*, which speaks of the "Sons of God" who took wives of the daughters of men, after which they communicated to these wives many a mystery and secret of the phenomenal world. The cradle of Alchemy, says Olaus Borrichius, is to be sought in the most distant times. Democritus of Abdera was an Alchemist, and a Hermetic Philosopher. Clement of Alexandria wrote considerably upon the Science, and Moses and Solomon are called proficient in it. We are told by William Godwin:

The first authentic record on this subject is an edict of Diocletian about 300 years A.D., ordering a diligent search to be made in Egypt for all the ancient books which treated of the art of making gold and silver, that they might without distinction be consigned to the flames.²

The Alchemy of the Chaldæans and the old Chinese is not even the parent of that Alchemy which revived among the Arabians many centuries later. There is a spiritual Alchemy and a physical transmutation: The knowledge of both was imparted at the Initiations.³

¹ [*The History of Magic* by Joseph Ennemoser tr. by Wm. Howitt in two volumes. London, H.G. Bohn, 1854. See Vol. II, p. 11 of this ed.]

² [*Lives of the Necromancers*, London, 1876, p. 18]

³ Article excerpted from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (LAST MYSTERIES IN EUROPE) XIV pp. 294-99

7. The Post-Christian Successors to the Mysteries

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (POST-CHRISTIAN SUCCESSORS TO THE MYSTERIES) XIV pp. 300-13.

THE ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES WERE NO MORE. Yet it was these which gave their principle features to the Neo-Platonic school of Ammonius Saccas, for the Eclectic System was chiefly characterised by its Theurgy¹ and ecstasis. It was Iamblichus who added to it the Egyptian doctrine of Theurgy with its practices, and Porphyry, the Jew, who opposed this new element. The school, however, with but few exceptions, practised asceticism and contemplation, its mystics passing through a discipline as rigorous as that of the Hindu devotee. Their efforts never tended so much to develop the successful practice of thaumaturgy, necromancy or sorcery — such as they are now accused of — as to evolve the higher faculties of the inner man, the Spiritual Ego. The school held that a number of spiritual beings, denizens of spheres quite independent of the earth and of the human cycle, were mediators between the “Gods” and men, and even between man and the Supreme Soul. To put it in plainer language, the soul of man became, owing to the help of the Planetary Spirits, “recipient of the soul of the world” as Emerson puts it. Apollonius of Tyana asserted his possession of such a power in these words (quoted by Professor Wilder in his *New Platonism*):

I can see the present and the future in a clear mirror. The sage [Adept] need not wait for the vapours of the earth and the corruption of the air to foresee plagues and fevers; he must know them later than God, but earlier than the people. The *theoi* or gods see the future; common men, the present; sages, that which is about to take place. My peculiar abstemious mode of living produces such an acuteness of the senses, or creates some other faculty, so that the greatest and most remarkable things may be performed.²

Professor A. Wilder’s comment thereupon is remarkable:

This is what may be termed *spiritual photography*. The soul is the camera in which facts and events, future, past, and present, are alike fixed; and the mind becomes conscious of them. Beyond our everyday world of limits, all is as one day or state — the past and future comprised in the present. Probably this is the “great day,” the “last day,” the “day of the Lord,” of the Bible writers — the day into which everyone passes by death or *ecstasis*. Then the soul is freed

¹ [Theurgy or Raja-Yoga is Divine Work: it marks the end point of an Individual Soul poised to be re-united with the Universal Soul and activates latent spiritual powers.]

² *New Platonism and Alchemy*, p. 15; [full text in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series. — ED. PHIL.]

from the constraint of the body, and its nobler part is united to higher nature and becomes partaker in the wisdom and foreknowledge of the higher beings.¹

How far the system practised by the Neo-Platonists was identical with that of the old and the modern Vedāntins may be inferred from what Dr. A. Wilder says of the Alexandrian Theosophists.

The Neo-Platonic School of Ammonius Saccas became the successor of the Eleusinian Mysteries and herald of the Eastern Secret Teachings.

The anterior idea of the New Platonists was that of a single Supreme Essence. . . . All the old philosophies contained the doctrine that *θεοί, theoi*, gods or disposers, angels, demons, and other spiritual agencies, emanated from the Supreme Being. Ammonius accepted the doctrine of the Books of Hermes, that from the Divine All proceeded the Divine Wisdom or Amun; that from Wisdom proceeded the Demiurge or Creator; and from the Creator, the subordinate spiritual beings; the world and its people being the last. The first is contained in the second, the first and second in the third, and so on through the entire series.²

This is a perfect echo of the belief of the Vedāntins, and it proceeds directly from the secret teachings of the East. The same author says:

Akin to this is the doctrine of the Jewish Kabala, which was taught by the Pharsi or Pharisees, who probably borrowed it, as their sectarian designation would seem to indicate, from the Magians of Persia. It is substantially embodied in the following synopsis.

The Divine Being is the All, the Source of all existence, the Infinite; and He cannot be known. The Universe reveals Him, and subsists by Him. At the beginning, His effulgence went forth everywhere.³ Eventually He retired within Himself, and so formed around Him a vacant space. Into this He transmitted His first Emanation, a Ray, containing in it the generative and conceptive power, and hence the name IE, or Jāh. This, in its turn, produced the *tikkun*, the *pattern* or idea of form; and in this emanation, which also contained the male and female, or generative and conceptive potencies, were the three primitive forces of Light, Spirit and Life. This Tikkun is united to the Ray, or first emanation, and pervaded by it: and by that union is also in perpetual communication with the infinite source. It is the pattern, the primitive man, the Adam-Kadmon, the *macrocosm* of Pythagoras and other philosophers. From it proceeded the *Sephirōth*. . . . From the ten Sephirōth in turn emanated the four worlds, each proceeding out of the one immediately above it, and the lower one enveloping

¹ *loc. cit.*

² *op. cit.*, pp. 9, 10

³ This Divine Effulgence and Essence is the light of the Logos; only the Vedāntin would not use the pronoun "He," but would say "It." [H.P. Blavatsky]

its superior. These worlds become less pure as they descend in the scale, the lowest of all being the material world.¹

Unveiling the long and laborious descent and re-ascent of the Divine Monad or Soul.

This veiled enunciation of the Secret Teaching will be clear to our readers by this time. These worlds are:

. . . *Aziluth* is peopled by the purest emanations [the First, almost spiritual, Race of the human beings that were to inhabit the Fourth²]; the second, *Beriah*, by a lower order, the servants of the former [the second Race]; the third, *Yetzirāh*, by the cherubim and seraphim, the Elōhīm and B’ni Elōhīm [“Sons of Gods” or *Elōhīm*, our Third Race]. The fourth world, *Asiāh*, is inhabited by the Klippoth, of whom Belial is chief [the Atlantean Sorcerers].³

These worlds are all the earthly duplicates of their heavenly prototypes, the mortal and temporary reflections and shadows of the more durable, if not eternal, races dwelling in other, to us, invisible worlds. The souls of the men of our Fifth Race derive their elements from these four worlds — Root-Races — that preceded ours: namely, our intellect, *Manas*, the fifth principle, our passions and mental and corporeal appetites. A conflict having arisen, called “war in heaven,” among our prototypical worlds, war came to pass, æons later, between the Atlanteans⁴ of *Asiāh*, and those of the third Root-Race, the Bnēy ha-Elōhīm or the “Sons of God,”⁵ and then evil and wickedness were intensified. Mankind (in the last sub-race of the third Root-Race) having

. . . sinned in their first parent [a physiological allegory, truly!], from whose soul every human soul is an emanation,

says the *Zohar*, men were “exiled” into more material bodies to

. . . expiate the sin and become proficient in goodness.

Each of us have to pass through the “Valley of Thorns” before we emerge into the plains of divine light and rest.

To accomplish the cycle of necessity, rather, explains the doctrine; to progress on their task of evolution, from which task none of us can be freed, neither by death nor suicide, for each of us have to pass through the “Valley of Thorns” before he emerges into the plains of divine light and rest. And thus men will continue to be born in new bodies

. . . till they become sufficiently pure to enter a higher form of existence.

This means only that Mankind, from the First down to the last, or Seventh Race, is composed of one and the same company of actors, who have descended from higher

¹ *loc. cit.*, note, p. 10

² [Consult “The Seven Worlds of Being” in our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ *loc. cit.*, note

⁴ Consult *Esoteric Buddhism*, by A.P. Sinnett, Fifth Edition, 1885. [Reprinted by Wizards Bookshelf, in 1973 & 1981, with index.]

⁵ Consult *Isis Unveiled*, I pp. 589-95. The “Sons of God” and their war with the giants and magicians.

spheres to perform their artistic tour on this our planet, Earth. Starting as pure spirits on our downward journey around the world (verily!) with the knowledge of truth — now feebly echoed in the Occult Doctrines — inherent in us, cyclic law brings us down to the reversed apex of matter, which is lost down here on earth and the bottom of which we have already struck; and then, the same law of spiritual gravity will make us slowly ascend to still higher, still purer spheres than those we started from.

Foresight, prophecy, oracular powers! Illusive fancies of man's dwarfed perceptions, which see actual images in reflections and shadows, and mistake past actualities for prophetic images of a future that has no room in Eternity. Our macrocosm and its smallest microcosm, man, are both repeating the same play of universal and individual events at each station, as on every stage on which Karma leads them to enact their respective dramas of life. False prophets could have no existence had there been no true prophets. And so there were, and many of both classes, and in all ages. Only, none of these ever saw anything but that which had already come to pass, and had been before prototypically enacted in higher spheres — if the event foretold related to national or public weal or woe — or in some preceding life, if it concerned only an individual, for every such event is stamped as an indelible record of the Past and Future, which are only, after all, the ever Present in Eternity. The "worlds" and the purifications spoken of in the *Zohar* and other Kabbalistic books, relate to our globe and races no more and no less than they relate to other globes and other races that have preceded our own in the great cycle. It was such fundamental truths as these that were performed in allegorical plays and images during the Mysteries, the last Act of which, the Epilogue for the Mystai, was the *anastasis* or "continued existence," as also the "Soul transformation."

The Eclectic doctrines are strongly reflected in the Epistles of Paul and John the Evangelist.

Hence, the author of *New Platonism and Alchemy* shows us that all such Eclectic doctrines were strongly reflected in the *Epistles* of Paul, and were

. . . inculcated more or less among the churches. Hence such passages as these;

"Ye were dead in errors and sins; ye walked according to the æon of this world, according to the *archon* that has the domination of the air."

"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the dominations, against potencies, against the lords of darkness, and against the mischievousness of spirits in the empyrean regions."¹

But Paul was evidently hostile to the effort to blend his gospel with the gnostic ideas of the Hebrew-Egyptian school, as seems to have been attempted at Ephesus; and accordingly wrote to Timothy, his favourite disciple, →

¹ [*Ephesians* vi, 12]

“Keep safe the precious charge intrusted to thee; and reject the new doctrines and the antagonistic principles of the gnosis falsely so-called, of which some have made profession and gone astray from the faith.”¹

For it is not Judaism and Christianity that remodelled the ancient Pagan Wisdom, but rather the latter that put its heathen curb on the new “faith” and was further influenced by the Eclectic Theosophical system, the direct emanation of the Wisdom-Religion.

But as the Gnosis is the Science pertaining to our Higher Self, as blind faith is a matter of temperament and emotionalism, and as Paul’s doctrine was still newer and his interpretations far more thickly veiled, to keep the inner truths hidden far away from the Gnostic, preference has been given to the former by every earnest seeker after truth.

Ammonius, Plotinus, Iamblichus, Proclus, were prominent Theosophists — though they never claimed the title.

Besides this, the great Teachers who professed the so-called “false Gnosis” were very numerous in the days of the Apostles, and were as great as any converted Rabbi could be. If Porphyry, the Jew Malek, went against Theurgy on account of old traditional recollections, there were other teachers who practised it. Plotinus, Iamblichus, Proclus, were all thaumaturgists, and the latter

. . . elaborated the entire theosophy and theurgy of his predecessors into a complete system.²

As to Ammonius,

Countenanced by Clement and Athenagoras in the church, and by learned men of the Synagogue, the Academy and the Grove, he fulfilled his labour by teaching a common doctrine for all.³

All that is grand and noble in Christian theology comes from Neo-Platonism.

Thus it is not Judaism and Christianity that remodelled the ancient Pagan Wisdom, but rather the latter that put its heathen curb, quietly and insensibly, on the new faith; and this, moreover, was still further influenced by the Eclectic Theosophical system, the direct emanation of the Wisdom-Religion. All that is grand and noble in Christian theology comes from Neo-Platonism. It is too well-known now to need much repetition that Ammonius Saccas, the God-taught (*theodidaktos*) and the lover of the truth (*philalēthes*), in establishing his school, made a direct attempt to benefit the world by teaching those portions of the Secret Science that were permitted by its direct guardians to be revealed in those days.⁴ The modern movement of our own Theosophical Society was begun on the same principles; for the Neo-Platonic school

¹ [1 Timothy vi, 20-21] *New Platonism and Alchemy*, p. 10, note; [full text in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series. — ED. PHIL.]

² *op. cit.*, p. 18

³ *op. cit.*, p. 8

⁴ No orthodox Christian has ever equalled, far less surpassed, in the practice of true Christ-like virtues and ethics, or in the beauty of his moral nature, Ammonius, the Alexandrian pervert from Christianity (he was born from Christian parents).

of Ammonius aimed, as we do, at the reconciliation of all sects and peoples, under the once common faith of the Golden Age, trying to induce the nations to lay aside their contentions — in religious matters at any rate — by proving to them that their various beliefs are all the more or less legitimate children of one common parent, the Wisdom-Religion.

Nor was the Eclectic Theosophical system — as some writers inspired by Rome would make the world believe — developed only during the third century of our era; but it belongs to a much earlier age, as has been shown by Diogenes Laërtius. He traces it to the beginning of the dynasty of the Ptolemies; to the great seer and prophet, the Egyptian Priest Pot-Amun, of the temple of the God of that name — for Amun is the God of Wisdom. Unto that day the communication between the Adepts of Upper India and Bactria and the Philosophers of the West had never ceased.

Under Philadelphus . . . the Hellenic teachers became rivals of the College of Rabbis of Babylon. The Buddhistic, Vedāntic and Magian systems were expounded along with the philosophies of Greece. . . . Aristobulus, the Jew, declared that the ethics of Aristotle were derived from the Law of Moses [!]; and Philo, after him, attempted to interpret the Pentateuch in accordance with the doctrines of Pythagoras and the Academy. In Josephus it is said that, in the book of the *Genesis*, Moses wrote philosophically — that is, in the figurative style; and the Essenes of Carmel were reproduced in the Therapeutai of Egypt, who, in turn, were declared by Eusebius to be identical with the Christians, though they actually existed long before the Christian Era. Indeed, in its turn, Christianity also was taught at Alexandria, and underwent an analogous metamorphosis. Pantænus, Athenagoras and Clement were thoroughly instructed in the Platonic philosophy, and comprehended its essential unity with the oriental systems.¹

Ammonius was a true Philaletheian, one of us.

Ammonius, though the son of Christian parents, was a *lover* of the truth, a true Philaletheian foremost of all. He set his heart upon the work of reconciling the different systems into a harmonious whole, for he had already perceived the tendency of Christianity to raise itself on the hecatomb which it had constructed out of all other creeds and faiths. What says history?

The ecclesiastical historian, Mosheim, declares that

“Ammonius, conceiving that not only the philosophers of Greece, but also all those of the different barbarous nations, were perfectly in unison with each other with regard to every essential point, made it his business so to temper and expound the tenets of all these various sects, as to make it appear they had all of them originated from one and the same source, and all tended to one and the same end.”

¹ *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 4

Again, Mosheim says that Ammonius taught that:

. . . the religion of the multitude went hand in hand with philosophy, and with her had shared the fate of being by degrees corrupted and obscured with mere human conceits, superstition and lies; that it ought, therefore, to be brought back to its original purity by purging it of this dross and expounding it upon philosophical principles; and that the whole which Christ had in view was to re-instate and restore to its primitive integrity the Wisdom of the ancients. . . .¹

His Eclectic Theosophical School, a precursor and prototype of the modern Theosophical Movement, was made of the crumbs permitted to be gathered from the antediluvian lore.

Now what was that “Wisdom of the Ancients” that the Founder of Christianity “had in view”? The system taught by Ammonius in his Eclectic Theosophical School was made of the crumbs permitted to be gathered from the antediluvian lore; those Neo-Platonic teachings are described in the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia* as follows:

He [Ammonius] adopted the doctrines which were received in Egypt concerning the Universe and the Deity, considered as constituting one great whole, concerning the eternity of the world, the nature of souls, the empire of Providence [Karma] and the government of the world by demons [*daimōns* or spirits, arch-angels]. He also established a system of moral discipline which allowed the people in general to live according to the laws of their country and the dictates of nature; but required the wise to exalt their minds by contemplation, and to mortify the body,² so that they might be capable of enjoying the presence and assistance of the demons [including their own *daimōn* or Seventh Principle], and ascending after death to the presence of the Supreme [Soul] Parent. In order to reconcile the popular religions, and particularly the Christian, with this new system, he made the whole history of the heathen gods an allegory, maintaining that they were only celestial ministers³ entitled to an inferior kind of worship; and he acknowledged that Jesus Christ was an excellent man and the friend of God, but alleged that it was not his design entirely to abolish the worship of demons,⁴ and that his only intention was to purify the ancient religion.⁵

No more could be declared except for those Philaletheians who were initiated, “persons duly instructed and disciplined” to whom Ammonius communicated his more important doctrines,

. . . imposing on them the obligations of secrecy, as was done before him by Zoroaster and Pythagoras, and in the Mysteries [where an oath was required

¹ [Eccles. Hist. Cent. II, Pt. II, ch. i, § 8, 9]

² “Mortification” is here meant in the moral, not the physical sense; to restrain every lust and passion, and live on the simplest diet possible.

³ This is the Neo-Platonic teaching adopted as a doctrine in the Roman Catholic Church, with its worship of the Seven Spirits.

⁴ The Church has made of it the worship of devils. “Daimōn” is Spirit, and relates to our divine Spirit, the seventh Principle and to the Dhyāni-Chohans. Jesus prohibited going to the temple or church “as Pharisees do” but commanded that man should retire for prayer (communion with his God) into a private closet. Is it Jesus who would have countenanced, in the face of the starving millions, the building of the most gorgeous churches?

⁵ *New Platonism*, p. 5

from the neophytes or catechumens not to divulge what they had learned] . . .
The great Pythagoras divided his teachings into exoteric and esoteric.¹

Has not Jesus done the same, since He declared to His disciples that to them it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, whereas to the multitudes it was not given, and therefore he spoke in parables which had a twofold meaning?

Dr. A. Wilder proceeds:

Thus Ammonius found his work ready to his hand. His deep spiritual intuition, his extensive learning, his familiarity with the Christian fathers, Pantænus, Clement and Athenagoras, and with the most erudite philosophers of the time, all fitted him for the labour which he performed so thoroughly. . . . The results of his ministration are perceptible at the present day in every country of the Christian world; every prominent system of doctrine now bearing the marks of his plastic hand. Every ancient philosophy has had its votaries among the moderns; and even Judaism, oldest of them all, has taken upon itself changes which were suggested by the “God-taught” Alexandrian.²

Woe to those who mock Divine Knowledge and betray Her secrets.

The Philaletheians had their division into neophytes (*chelas*) and Initiates, or Masters; and the eclectic system was characterised by three distinct features, which are purely Vedāntic; a Supreme Essence, One and Universal; the eternity and indivisibility of the human spirit; and Theurgy, which is Mantricism. So also, as we have seen, they had their secret or Esoteric teachings like any other mystic school. Nor were they allowed to reveal anything of their secret tenets, any more than were the Initiates of the Mysteries. Only the penalties incurred by the revealers of the secrets of the latter were far more terrible, and this prohibition has survived to this day, not only in India, but even among the Jewish Kabbalists in Asia.³

The Neo-Platonic School of Alexandria founded by Ammonius — the prototype proposed for the Theosophical Society — taught Theurgy and Magic, as much as they

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 7

² *loc. cit.*

³ The *Talmud* [*Mishnāh 'Hagiga*, 14b] gives the story of the four Tanna'im, who are made, in allegorical terms, to enter into *the garden of delights*; *i.e.*, to be initiated into the occult and final science.

According to the teaching of our holy masters the names of the four who entered the garden of delight, are: Ben Asai, Ben Zoma, Ahher, and Rabbi A'qibah. . . .

Ben Asai looked and — lost his sight.

Ben Zoma looked and — lost his reason.

Ahher made depredations in the plantation [mixed up the whole and failed]. But A'qibah, who had entered in peace, came out of it in peace, for the saint, whose name be blessed, has said,

This old man is worthy of serving us with glory.

The learned commentators of the *Talmud*, the Rabbis of the synagogue, explain that the *garden of delight*, in which those four personages are made to enter, is but that mysterious science, the most terrible of sciences for *weak intellects*, which it leads directly to insanity,

says A. Franck, in his *La Kabbale*. It is not the pure at heart and he who studies but with a view to perfecting himself and so more easily acquiring the promised immortality, who need have any fear; but rather he who makes of the science of sciences a sinful pretext for worldly motives, who should tremble. *The latter will never withstand the Kabbalistic evocations of the supreme initiation.* (*Isis Unveiled*, II p. 119)

were taught in the days of Pythagoras, and by others far earlier than his period. For Proclus says that the doctrines of Orpheus, who was an Indian and came from India, were the origin of the systems afterwards promulgated.

What Orpheus delivered in hidden allegories, Pythagoras learned when he was initiated into the Orphic mysteries; and Plato next received a perfect knowledge of them from Orphic and Pythagorean writings.¹

But those who are pure in thought and deed, and have trust and confidence in their Immortal Spirit, have nothing to fear.

One of the reasons for such secrecy may be the undoubtedly serious difficulties and hardships of chelaship, and the dangers attending Initiation. The modern candidate has, like his predecessor of old, to either conquer or die; when, which is still worse, he does not lose his reason. There is no danger to him who is true and sincere, and, especially, unselfish. For he is thus prepared beforehand to meet any temptation.

He, who fully recognised the power of his immortal spirit, and never doubted for one moment its omnipotent protection, had naught to fear. But woe to the candidate in whom the slightest physical fear — sickly child of matter — made him lose sight and faith in his own invulnerability. He who was not wholly confident of his moral fitness to accept the burden of these tremendous secrets was doomed.²

The aim of Initiation is reunion of the part with the All, the dew-drop with the Ocean of Life.

There were no such dangers in Neo-Platonic Initiations. The selfish and unworthy failed in their object, and in the failure was the punishment. The chief aim was “reunion of the part with the *all*.” This All was One, with numberless names. Whether called *Diu*, the “bright Lord of Heaven” by the Āryan; *Iaō* by the Chaldæan and Kabbalist; *Iabe* by the Samaritan; *Tiu* or *Tuisto* by the Northman; *Duw* by the Briton; *Zeus* by the Thracian or *Jupiter* by the Roman — it was *the* Being, the *Facit*, One and Supreme,³ the unborn and the inexhaustible source of every emanation, the fountain of life and light eternal, a Ray of which every one of us carries in him on this earth. The knowledge of this Mystery had reached the Neo-Platonists from India through Pythagoras, and still later through Apollonius of Tyana and the rules and methods for producing ecstasy had come from the same lore of the divine Vidyā, the Gnōsis. For Āryāvarta, the bright focus into which had been poured in the beginning of time the flames of Divine Wisdom, had become the centre from which radiated the “tongues of fire” into every portion of the globe. What was Samādhi but that

Sublime ecstasy, in which state things divine and the mysteries of Nature are revealed to us,

of which Porphyry speaks?

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 18

² *Isis Unveiled*, II p. 119

³ See *New Platonism*, p. 9

The efflux from the Divine Being was imparted to the human spirit in unre-served abundance, accomplishing for the soul a union with the divine, and en-abling it while in the body to be partaker of the life which is not in the body,

— he explains elsewhere. [*New Platonism*, p. 13]

Thus under the title of Magic was taught every Science, physical and metaphysical, natural or deemed supernatural by those who are ignorant of the omnipresence and universality of Nature.

Divine Magic makes of man a God; human magic creates a new fiend.

We wrote in *Isis Unveiled* [I p. 18]:

In the oldest documents now in our possession — the *Vedas* and the older *Laws of Manu* — we find many magical rites practiced and permitted by the Brahmans.¹ Tibet, Japan and China, teach in the present age that which was taught by the oldest Chaldæans. The clergy of these respective countries prove moreover what they teach, namely: that the practice of moral and physical pu- rity, and of certain austerities, develops the vital soul-power of self- illumination. Affording to man the control over his own immortal spirit, it gives him truly magical powers over the elementary spirits inferior to himself. In the West we find magic of as high an antiquity as in the East. The Druids of Great Britain practiced it in the silent crypts of their deep caves; and Pliny devotes many a chapter to the “wisdom”² of the leaders of the Celts. The Semothees, the Druids of the Gauls, expounded the physical as well as the spiritual scienc- es. They taught the secrets of the universe, the harmonious progress of the heavenly bodies, the formation of the earth, and above all — the immortality of the soul.³ Into their sacred groves — natural academies built by the hand of the Invisible Architect — the initiates assembled at the still hour of midnight to learn about what man once was, and what he will be.⁴ They needed no artificial illumination, nor life-drawing gas, to light up their temples, for the chaste god- dess of night beamed her most silvery rays on their oak-crowned heads; and their white-robed sacred bards knew how to converse with the solitary queen of the starry vault.⁵

**The last of the Druids may have perished at Alesia and Bibractis
but the Neo-Platonic School was for a long time successful.**

During the palmy days of Neo-Platonism these Bards were no more, for their cycle had run its course, and the last of the Druids had perished at Bibractis and Alesia. But the Neo-Platonic school was for a long time successful, powerful and prosperous. Still, while adopting Āryan Wisdom in its doctrines, the school failed to follow the wisdom of the Brāhmans in practice. It showed its moral and intellectual superiority too openly, caring too much for the great and powerful of this earth. While the

¹ See the Code published by Sir William Jones, chap. vi, xi.

² Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, xxx, 1; xxix, 12, etc.

³ Pomponius Mela [*De situ orbis*] ascribes to them the knowledge of the highest sciences.

⁴ Cæsar, *Commentaries*, vi, 14

⁵ Pliny, *op. cit.*, xvi, 95; xxx, 4

Brāhmans and their great Yogis — experts in matters of philosophy, metaphysics, astronomy, morals and religion — preserved their dignity under the sway of the most powerful princes, remained aloof from the world and would not condescend to visit them or ask for the slightest favour,¹ the Emperors Alexander Severus, and Julian, and the greatest among the aristocracy of the land, embraced the tenets of the Neo-Platonists, who mixed freely with the world. The system flourished for several centuries and comprised within the ranks of its followers the ablest and most learned among the men of the time; Hypatia, the teacher of the Bishop Synesius, was one of the ornaments of the School until the fatal and shameful day when she was murdered by the Christian mob at the instigation of Bishop Cyril of Alexandria. The school was finally removed to Athens, and closed by order of the Emperor Justinian.

How accurate is Dr. Wilder's remark that:

Modern writers have commented upon the peculiar views of the New Platonists upon these [metaphysical] subjects, seldom representing them correctly, even if this was desired or intended.²

The few speculations on the sublunary, material, and spiritual universes that they did put into writing — Ammonius never having himself written a line, after the wont of reformers — could not enable posterity to judge them rightly, even had not the early Christian Vandals, the later crusaders, and the fanatics of the Middle Ages, destroyed three parts of that which remained of the Alexandrian Library and its later schools.

Professor Draper shows that Cardinal Jimenez alone . . .

Delivered to the flames, in the squares of Granada, eighty thousand Arabic manuscripts, many of them translations of classical authors.³

Until the Vatican erased and blotted out whole passages in the most rare and precious treatises of Archaic Wisdom, and even destroyed over thirty-six volumes written by Porphyry.

In the Vatican Library, whole passages in the most rare and precious treatises of the Ancients were found erased and blotted out, “for the sake of interlining them with absurd psalmodies!” Moreover it is well known that over thirty-six volumes written by Porphyry were burnt and otherwise destroyed by the “Fathers.” Most of the little that is known of the doctrines of the Eclectics is found in the writings of Plotinus and of those same Church Fathers.

¹ “The care which they took in educating youth, in familiarizing it with generous and virtuous sentiments, did them peculiar honour, and their maxims and discourses, as recorded by historians, prove that they were expert in matters of philosophy, metaphysics, astronomy, morality and religion,” says a modern writer. “If kings or princes desired the advice or the blessings of the holy men, they were either obliged to go themselves, or to send messengers. To these men no secret power of either plant or mineral was unknown. They had fathomed nature to its depths, while psychology and physiology were to them open books, and the result was that science that is now termed, so superciliously, *magic*.”

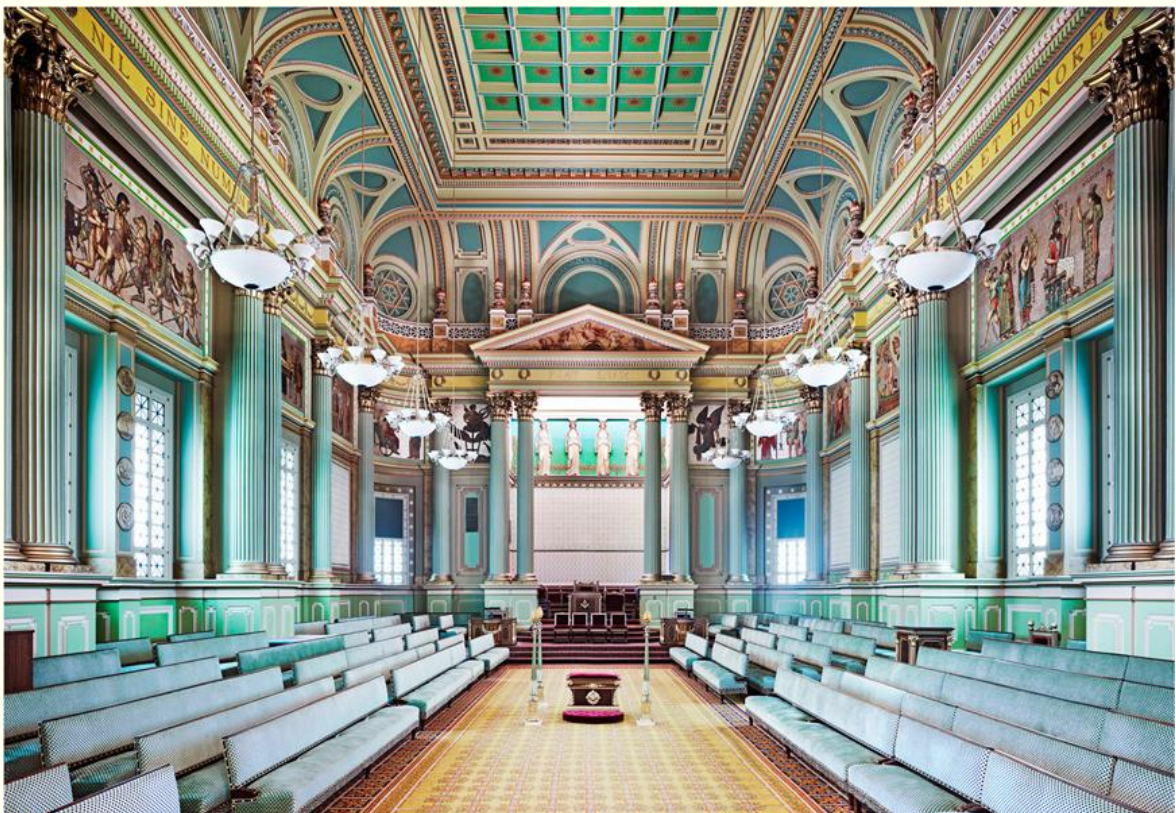
² *op. cit.*, p. 9

³ *The History of the Conflict*, etc., p. 104

Says the author of *New Platonism and Alchemy*:

What Plato was to Socrates, and the Apostle John to the head of the Christian faith, Plotinus became to the God-taught Ammonius. To Plotinus, Origenes, and Longinus we are indebted for what is known of the Philaletheian system. They were duly instructed, initiated and intrusted with the interior doctrines.¹

This accounts marvellously for Origen's calling people "idiots" who believe in the Garden of Eden and Adam and Eve fables;² as also for the fact that so few of the writings of that Church Father have passed to posterity. Between the secrecy imposed, the vows of silence and that which was maliciously destroyed by every foul means, it is indeed miraculous that even so much of the Philaletheian tenets has reached the world.³



Corinthian Hall, Masonic Temple, Philadelphia (2007), photographed by Candida Höfer



¹ Wilder, *op. cit.*, p. 11

² [See p. 37 of this volume, *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, XIV]

³ Article excerpted from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (POST-CHRISTIAN SUCCESSORS TO THE MYSTERIES) XIV pp. 300-13

Suggested reading for students.



- ALL AVATĀRAS ARE IDENTICAL, WORLD-SAVIOURS GROWN OUT FROM A SINGLE SEED
- ARNOLD NOT AN INITIATE
- ARNOLD'S LIGHT OF ASIA
- AURA OF THE YOGI IN TRANCE
- BLAVATSKY ON APOLLONIUS OF TYANA
- BLAVATSKY ON COUNT ALESSANDRO DI CAGLIOSTRO
- BLAVATSKY ON DIVINE REINCARNATIONS IN TIBET
- BLAVATSKY ON SCHOPENHAUER
- BLAVATSKY ON THE COUNT DE SAINT-GERMAIN
- BLAVATSKY ON THE TRANS-HIMALAYAN FRATERNITY
- BLAVATSKY PAYS TRIBUTE TO ÉLIPHAS LEVI
- BUDDHISM IN ACTION IS UNCONDITIONAL COMPASSION, WISE AND MERCIFUL
- BUDDHISM, THE RELIGION OF PRE-VEDIC INDIA
- BURNET AND BLAVATSKY ON ANAXAGORAS' IDEAS AND IMPACT
- CHANT FOR THE NEOPHYTES AFTER THEIR LAST INITIATION
- DATE OF GAUTAMA BUDDHA'S DISINCARNATION
- DRAWING 1 - FORCES AND STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS
- DRAWING 2 - CHRIST OR HIGHER MANAS CRUCIFIED BETWEEN TWO THIEVES
- DRAWING 3 - NEOPHYTE ON TRIAL DYING IN THE CHRĒST CONDITION
- DRAWING 4 - NEOPHYTE ASCENDING TO THE CHRIST CONDITION
- DRAWING 5 - THE SECRET HEART SEAL
- DUTIES OF A DHYĀNI CHOCHAN
- EMERSON ON PLUTARCH'S MORALS
- EMPEDOCLES, PAGAN THAUMATURGIST

BUDDHAS AND INITIATES SERIES
SUGGESTED READING TO STUDENTS

- ESOTERIC VERSUS TANTRIC TATTVAS (TABLE)
- EVERY INITIATE MUST BE AN ADEPT IN OCCULTISM
- G.R.S. MEAD'S ESSAY ON SIMON MAGUS
- GAUTAMA AND JESUS PARALLEL LIVES
- GAUTAMA BUDDHA BEATIFIED!
- GAUTAMA IS THE FIFTH TEACHER IN THE CURRENT PLANETARY ROUND
- HINTS ABOUT THE TRIADIC HYPOSTASIS OF BUDDHA
- HUMILITY IS NO VIRTUE
- IAMBLICHUS ON PYTHAGORAS
- IAMBLICHUS ON THEURGY (1915)
- JESUS BEN PANDIRA, THE HISTORICAL CHRIST
- JUDGE ON THE DWELLERS ON HIGH MOUNTAINS
- JULIAN AND SOCRATES WERE PUT TO DEATH FOR THE SAME CRIME
- KALI-YUGA AND THE KALKI-AVATĀRA
- LOHANS ARE THE MELLIFLUOUS DISCIPLES OF TATHĀGATA
- MAGIC OR THEURGY, PURPOSE AND PITFALLS
- MORALITY IS MAN'S PRISTINE EFFORT TO HARMONISE WITH UNIVERSAL LAW
- OCCULT METAPHYSICS UNRIDDED FROM MATERIALISTIC MISCONCEPTIONS
- OVID ON PYTHAGORAS' TEACHINGS AND ETHICS
- PARACELSUS BY FRANZ HARTMANN
- PARACELSUS ON SYMPATHETIC REMEDIES AND CURES
- PAUL AN INITIATE AND FOUNDER OF CHRISTIANITY
- PETER NOT AN INITIATE AND THE ENEMY OF PAUL
- PHERECYDES, AN EARLY WESTERN PHILOSOPHER
- PLUTARCH ON PHOCION CHRĒSTOS
- PLUTARCH ON THE TUTELARY DAIMŌN OF SOCRATES
- PORPHYRY ON PYTHAGORAS
- PRINCIPLES AND FORCES IN NATURE AND MAN (DIAGRAM)
- PRINCIPLES AND FORCES IN NATURE AND MAN (INSTRUCTIONS)
- PROCLUS ON SOCRATES' DAEMON (TAYLOR)
- SAMSON AND HERCULES ARE PERSONIFICATIONS OF NEOPHYTES
- SHANKARA WAS A CONTEMPORARY OF PATAÑJALI AND HIS CHELA
- THE ADEPTS DESTROY THE WICKED AND GUARD THE PATH OF THE VIRTUOUS

BUDDHAS AND INITIATES SERIES
SUGGESTED READING TO STUDENTS

- THE HOLY RITES OF ELEUSIS WERE ARCHAIC WISDOM RELIGION
- THE INITIATE'S CROWN OF THORNS
- THE KEY TO THE MYSTERY OF BUDDHA LIES IN THE CLEAR APPERCEPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN
- THE LITTLE ONES ARE ABOVE THE LAW
- THE NOBLE GENIUS OF PARACELSUS
- THE REAL CHRIST IS BUDDHI-MANAS, THE GLORIFIED DIVINE EGO
- THE ROLE OF ADEPTS IN THE GREAT AMERICAN REVOLUTION
- THE TRIPLE MYSTERY OF BUDDHA'S EMBODIMENT
- THEOPHANIA AND OPTIONS OPEN TO THE ADEPT
- THEOSOPHICAL JEWELS – THE AURA OF SUGATA
- THEOSOPHICAL JEWELS – THE LOVE OF GODS
- THOMAS TAYLOR, THE ENGLISH PLATONIST
- WHY THE SECRECY OF INITIATES?
- ZANONI BY BULWER-LYTTON

