

THE DOCTRINE OF AVATARAS
THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES
THE MYSTERY OF BUDDHA
“REINCARNATIONS” OF BUDDHA
AN UNPUBLISHED DISCOURSE OF BUDDHA
NIRVANA-MOKSHA

THE DOCTRINE OF AVATARAS

A strange story — a legend rather — is persistently current among the disciples of some great Himalayan Gurus, and even among laymen, to the effect that Gautama, the Prince of Kapilavastu, has never left the terrestrial regions, though his body died and was burnt, and its relics are preserved to this day. There is an oral tradition among the Chinese Buddhists, and a written statement among the secret books of the Lamaists of Tibet, as well as a tradition among the Aryans, that Gautama **BUDDHA** had two doctrines: one for the masses and His lay disciples, the other for His “elect,” the Arhats. His policy and after Him that of His Arhats was, it appears, to refuse no one admission into the ranks of candidates for Arhatship, but never to divulge the final mysteries except to those who had proved themselves, during long years of probation, to be worthy of Initiation. These once accepted were consecrated and initiated without distinction of race, caste or wealth, as in the case of His western successor. It is the Arhats who have set forth and allowed this tradition to take root in the people’s mind, and it is the basis, also, of the later dogma of Lamaic reincarnation or the succession of human Buddhas.

The little that can be said here upon the subject may or may not help to guide the psychic student in the right direction. It being left to the option and responsibility of the writer to tell the facts as she *personally* understood them, the blame for possible misconceptions created must fall only upon her. She has been taught the doctrine, but it was left to her sole intuition — as it is now left to the sagacity of the reader — to group the mysterious and perplexing facts together. The incomplete statements herein given are fragments of what is contained in certain secret volumes, but it is not lawful to divulge the details.

The esoteric version of the mystery given in the secret volumes may be told very briefly. The Buddhists have always stoutly denied that their **BUDDHA** was, as alleged by the Brahmans, an Avatara of Vishnu in the same sense as a man is an incarnation of his Karmic ancestor. They deny it partly, perhaps, because the esoteric meaning of the term "Maha Vishnu" is not known to them in its full, impersonal, and general meaning. There is a mysterious Principle in Nature called "Maha Vishnu," which is not the God of that name, but a principle which contains Bija, the seed of Avatarism or, in other words, is the potency and cause of such divine incarnations. All the World-Saviours, the Bodhisattvas and the Avatars, are the trees of salvation grown out from the one seed, the Bija or "Maha Vishnu." Whether it be called Adi-Buddha (Primeval Wisdom) or Maha Vishnu, it is all the same. Understood esoterically, Vishnu is both Saguna and Nirguna (with and without attributes). In the first aspect, Vishnu is the object of exoteric worship and devotion; in the second, as Nirguna, he is the culmination of the totality of spiritual wisdom in the Universe — Nirvana, * in short — and has as worshippers all philosophical minds. In this esoteric sense the Lord **BUDDHA** *was* an incarnation of Maha Vishnu.

* A great deal of misconception is raised by a confusion of planes of being and misuse of expressions. For instance, certain spiritual states have been confounded with the Nirvana of BUDDHA. The Nirvana of BUDDHA is totally different from any other spiritual state of Samadhi or even the highest Theophania enjoyed by lesser Adepts. After physical death the kinds of spiritual states reached by Adepts differ greatly.

2

This is from the philosophical and purely spiritual standpoint. From the plane of illusion, however, as one would say, or from the terrestrial standpoint, those initiated *know* that He was a direct incarnation of one of the primeval "Seven Sons of Light" who are to be found in every Theogony — the Dhyan Chohans whose mission it is, from one eternity (aeon) to the other, to watch over the spiritual welfare of the regions under their care. This has been already enunciated in *Esoteric Buddhism*.

One of the greatest mysteries of speculative and philosophical Mysticism — and it is one of the mysteries now to be disclosed — is the *modus operandi* in the degrees of such hypostatic transferences. As a matter of course, divine as well as human incarnations must remain a closed book to the theologian as much as to the physiologist, unless the esoteric teachings be accepted and become the religion of the world. This teaching may never be fully explained to an unprepared public; but one thing is certain and may be said now: that between the dogma of a newly-created soul for each new birth, and the physiological assumption of a temporary animal soul, there lies the vast region of Occult teaching* with its logical and reasonable demonstrations, the links of which may all be traced in logical and philosophical sequence in nature.

* This region is the one possible point of conciliation between the two diametrically opposed poles of religion and science, the one with its barren fields of dogmas on faith, the other Over-running with empty hypotheses, both overgrown with the weeds of error. They will never meet. The two are at feud, at an everlasting warfare with each other, but this does not prevent them from uniting against Esoteric Philosophy, which for two millenniums has had to fight against infallibility in both directions, or “mere vanity and pretence” as Antoninus defined it, and now finds the materialism of Modern Science arrayed against its truths.

3

This “Mystery” is found, for him who understands its right meaning, in the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, in the *Bhagavad Gita*, chapter iv. Says the Avatara: Many births of mine have passed, as also of yours, O Arjuna! All those I know, but you do not know yours, O harasser of your enemies. Although I am unborn, with exhaustless Atma, and am the Lord of all that is; yet, taking up the domination of my nature I am born by the power of illusion.† Whenever, O son of Bharata, there is decline of Dharma [the right law] and the rise of Adharma [the opposite of Dharma] there I manifest myself. For the salvation of the good and the destruction of wickedness, for the establishment of the law, *I am born* in every yuga. Whoever comprehends truly my divine birth and action, he, O Arjuna, having abandoned the body does not receive rebirth; he comes to me.

† Whence some of the Gnostic ideas? Cerinthus taught that the world and Jehovah having fallen off from virtue and primitive dignity the Supreme permitted one of his glorious Aeons, whose name was the “Anointed” (Christ) to incarnate in the man Jesus. Basilides denied the reality of the body of Jesus, and calling it an “illusion” held that it was Simon of Cyrene who suffered on the Cross in his stead. All such teachings are echoes of the Eastern Doctrines.

4

Thus, all the Avataras are one and the same: The Sons of their “Father,” in a direct descent and line, the “Father,” or one of the seven Flames becoming, for the time being, the Son, and these two being one — in Eternity. What is the Father? Is it the absolute Cause of all? — the fathomless Eternal? No; most decidedly. It is Karanatma, the “Causal Soul” which, in its general sense, is called by the Hindus Ishvara, the Lord, and by Christians, “God,” the One and Only. From the standpoint of unity, it is so; but then the lowest of the Elementals could equally be viewed in such case as the “One and Only.” Each human being has, moreover, his own divine Spirit or personal God. That divine Entity or Flame from which Buddhi emanates stands in the same relation to man, though on a lower plane, as the Dhyani-Buddha to his human Buddha. Hence monotheism and polytheism are not irreconcilable; they exist in Nature.

Truly, “for the salvation of the good and the destruction of wickedness,” the personalities known as Gautama, Shankara, Jesus and a few others were born each in his age, as declared — “I am born in every Yuga” — and they were all born through the same Power.

There is a great mystery in such incarnations and they are outside and beyond the cycle of general re-births. Rebirths may be divided into three classes: the divine incarnations called Avataras; those of Adepts who give up Nirvana for the sake of helping on humanity — the Nirmanakayas; and the natural succession of rebirths for all — the common law. The Avatara is an appearance, one which may be termed a special illusion within the natural illusion that reigns on the planes under the sway of that power, Maya; the Adept is re-born consciously, at his will and pleasure; * the units of the common herd unconsciously follow the great law of dual evolution.

* A genuine initiated Adept will retain his Adeptship, though there may be for our world of illusion numberless incarnations of him. The propelling power that lies at the root of a series of such incarnations is *not* Karma, as ordinarily understood, but a still more inscrutable power. During the period of his lives the Adept does not lose his Adeptship, though he cannot rise in it to a higher degree.

5

What *is* an Avatara? for the term before being used ought to be well understood. It is a descent of the manifested Deity — whether under the specific name of Shiva, Vishnu, or Adi-Buddha — into an illusive form of individuality, an appearance which to men on this illusive plane is objective, but is not so in sober fact. That illusive form having neither past nor future, because it had neither previous incarnation nor will have subsequent rebirths, has naught to do with Karma, which has therefore no hold on it.

Gautama **BUDDHA** was born an Avatara in one sense. But this, in view of unavoidable objections on dogmatic grounds, necessitates explanation. There is a great difference between an Avatara and a Jivanmukta: one, as already stated, is an illusive appearance, Karmaless, and having never before incarnated; and the other, the Jivanmukta, is one who obtains Nirvana by his individual merits. To this expression again an uncompromising, philosophical Vedantin would object. He might say that as the condition of the Avatara and the Jivanmukta are one and the same state, no amount of personal merit, in howsoever many incarnations, can lead its possessor to Nirvana. Nirvana, he would say, is actionless; how can, then, any action lead to it? It is neither a result nor a cause, but an ever-present, eternal *Is*, as Nagasena defined it. Hence it can have no relation to, or concern with, action, merit, or demerit, since these are subject to Karma. All this is very true, but still to our mind there is an important difference between the two. An Avatara *is*; a Jivanmukta *becomes* one. If the state of the two is identical, not so are the causes which lead to it. An Avatara is a descent of a God into an illusive form; a Jivanmukta, who may have passed through numberless incarnations and may have accumulated merit in them, certainly does not become a Nirvani because of that merit, but only because of the Karma generated by it, which leads and guides him in the direction of the Guru who will initiate him into the mystery of Nirvana and who alone can help

him to reach this abode.

The Shastras that from our works alone we obtain Moksha, and if we take no pains there will be no gain and we shall be neither assisted nor benefited by Deity [the Maha-Guru]. Therefore, it is maintained that Gautama, though an Avatara in one sense, is a true human Jivanmukta, owing his position to his personal merit, and thus more than an Avatara. It was his personal merit that enabled him to achieve Nirvana.

Of the voluntary and conscious incarnations of Adepts there are two types — those of Nirmanakayas, and those undertaken by the probationary chelas who are on their trial.

The greatest, as the most puzzling mystery of the first type lies in the fact, that such re-birth in a human body of the personal Ego of some particular Adept — when it has been dwelling in the Mayavi or the Kama Rupa, and remaining in the Kama Loka — may happen even when his “Higher Principles” are in the state of Nirvana.*

* From the so-called Brahmä Loka — the *seventh* and higher world, beyond which all is arupa, formless, purely spiritual — to the lowest world and insect, or even to an object such as a leaf, there is perpetual revolution of the condition of existence, evolution and re-birth. Some human beings attain states or spheres from which there is only a return in a new Kalpa (a day of Brahmā); there are other states or spheres from which there is only return after 100 years of Brahm (Maha-Kalpa, a period covering 311,040,000,000,000 years). Nirvana, it is said, is a state from which there is no return. Yet it is maintained that there may be, as exceptional cases, re-incarnation from that state; only such incarnations are illusion, like everything else on this plane, as will be shown.

7

Let it be understood that the above expressions are used for popular purposes, and therefore that what is written does not deal with this deep and mysterious question from the *highest* plane, that of absolute spirituality, nor again from the highest philosophical point of view, comprehensible but to the very few. It must not be supposed that anything can go into Nirvana which is not eternally

there; but human intellect in conceiving the Absolute must put It as the highest term in an indefinite series. If this be borne in mind a great deal of misconception will be avoided. The content of this spiritual evolution is the material on various planes with which the Nirvani was in contact prior to his attainment of Nirvana. The plane on which this is true, being in the series of illusive planes, is undoubtedly not the highest. Those who search for that must go to the right source of study, the teachings of the *Upanishads*, and must go in the right spirit. Here we attempt only to indicate the direction in which the search is to be made, and in showing a few of the mysterious Occult possibilities we do not bring our readers actually to the goal. The ultimate truth can be communicated only from Guru to initiated pupil.

Having said so much, the statement still will and must appear incomprehensible, if not absurd, to many. Firstly, to all those who are unfamiliar with the doctrine of the manifold nature and various aspects of the human Monad; and secondly to those who view the septenary division of the human entity from a too materialistic standpoint. Yet the intuitional Occultist, who has studied thoroughly the mysteries of Nirvana — who knows it to be identical with Parabrahman, and hence unchangeable, eternal and no Thing but the Absolute All — will seize the possibility of the fact. They know that while a Dharmakaya — a Nirvani “without remains,” as our Orientalists have translated it, being absorbed into that Nothingness, which is the one real, because Absolute, Consciousness — cannot be said to return to incarnation on Earth, the Nirvani being no longer a he, a she, or even an it, the Nirmanakaya — or he who has obtained Nirvana “with remains,” i.e., who is clothed in a subtle body, which makes him impervious to all outward impressions and to every mental feeling, and in whom the notion of his Ego has not entirely ceased — can do so. Again, every Eastern Occultist is aware of the fact that there are two kinds of Nirmanakayas — the natural, and the assumed; that the former is the name or epithet given to the condition of a high ascetic, or Initiate, who has reached a stage of bliss second only to Nirvana; while the latter means the self-sacrifice of one who voluntarily gives up the absolute Nirvana, in order to help humanity and be still doing it good, or, in other words, to save his fellow-creatures by guiding them. It may be objected that the Dharmakaya, being a Nirvani or Jivanmukta, can have no “remains” left behind him after death, for

having attained that state from which no further incarnations are possible, there is no need for him of a subtle body, or of the individual Ego that reincarnates from one birth to another, and that therefore the latter disappears of logical necessity; to this it is answered: it is so for all exoteric purposes and as a general law. But the case with which we are dealing is an exceptional one, and its realization lies within the Occult powers of the high Initiate, who, before entering into the state of Nirvana, can cause his “remains” (sometimes, though not very well, called his *Mayavi Rupa*), to remain behind,* whether he is to become a Nirvani, or to find himself in a lower state of bliss.

* This fact of the disappearance of the vehicle of Egotism in the fully developed Yogi, who is supposed to have reached Nirvana on earth, years before his corporeal death, has led to the law in *Manu*, sanctioned by millenniums of Brahmanical authority, that such a Paramatma should be held as absolutely blameless and free from sin or responsibility, do whatever he may (see last chapter of the *Laws of Manu*). Indeed, caste itself — that most despotic, uncompromising and autocratic tyrant in India — can be broken with impunity by the Yogi, who is above caste. This will give the key to our statements.

8

Next, there are cases — rare, yet more frequent than one would be disposed to expect — which are the voluntary and conscious reincarnations of Adepts on their trial. Every man has an Inner, a “Higher Self,” and also an Astral Body. But few are those who, outside the higher degrees of Adeptship, can guide the latter, or any of the principles that animate it, when once death has closed their short terrestrial life. Yet such guidance, or their transference from the dead to a living body, is not only possible, but is of frequent occurrence, according to Occult and Kabalistic teachings. The degrees of such power of course vary greatly. To mention but three: the lowest of these degrees would allow an Adept, who has been greatly trammelled during life in his study and in the use of his powers, to choose after death another body in which he could go on with his interrupted studies, though ordinarily he would lose in it every remembrance of his previous incarnation. The next degree permits him, in addition to this, to transfer the memory of his past life to his new body; while the highest has hardly any limits in the exercise of that wonderful faculty.

As an instance of an Adept who enjoyed the first mentioned power some mediaeval Kabalists cite a well-known personage of the fifteenth century — Cardinal de Cusa; Karma, due to his wonderful devotion to Esoteric study and the *Kabalab*, led the suffering Adept to seek intellectual recuperation and rest from ecclesiastical tyranny in the body of Copernicus. *Se non e vero e ben trovato*; and the perusal of the lives of the two men might easily lead a believer in such powers to a ready acceptance of the alleged fact. The reader having at his command the means to do so is asked to turn to the formidable folio in Latin of the fifteenth century, called *De Docta Ignorantia*, written by the Cardinal de Cusa, in which all the theories and hypotheses — all the ideas — of Copernicus are found as the key-notes to the discoveries of the great astronomer.*

* About fifty years before the birth of Copernicus, de Cusa wrote as follows: “Though the world may not be absolutely infinite, no one can represent it to himself as finite, since human reason is incapable of assigning to it any term.... For *in* the same way that our earth cannot be in the centre of the Universe, as thought, no more could the sphere of the fixed stars be in it. . . . Thus this world is like a vast machine, having its centre (Deity) everywhere, and its circumference nowhere [*machina mundi, quasi habens ubique centrum, et nullibi circumferentiam*].... Hence, the earth not being in the centre, cannot therefore be motionless.... and though it is far smaller than the sun, one must not conclude for all that, that she is worse [*vilior — more vile*].... One cannot see whether its inhabitants are superior to those who dwell nearer to the sun, or in other stars, as sidereal space cannot be deprived of inhabitants.... The earth, very likely [*fortasse*] one of the smallest globes, is nevertheless the cradle of intelligent beings, most noble and perfect.” One cannot fail to agree with the biographer of Cardinal de Cusa, who, having no suspicion of the Occult truth, and the reason of such erudition in a writer of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, simply marvels at such a miraculous foreknowledge, and attributes it to God, saying of him that he was a man incomparable in every kind of philosophy, by whom many a theological mystery inaccessible to the human mind (!), veiled and neglected for centuries (*velata et neglecta*) were once more brought to light. “Pascal might have read De Cusa’s works; but whence could the Cardinal have borrowed his ideas?” asks Moreri. Evidently from Hermes

and the works of Pythagoras, even if the mystery of his incarnation and re-incarnation be dismissed.

9

Who was this extraordinarily learned Cardinal? The son of a poor boatman, owing all his career, his Cardinal's hat, and the reverential awe rather than friendship of the Popes Eugenius IV, Nicholas V, and Pius II, to the extraordinary learning which seemed innate in him, since he had studied nowhere till comparatively late in life. De Cusa died in 1473; moreover, his best works were written before he was forced to enter orders — to escape persecution. Nor did the Adept escape it.

In the voluminous work of the Cardinal above-quoted is found a very suggestive sentence, the authorship of which has been variously attributed to Pascal, to Cusa himself, and to the *Zohar*, and which belongs by right to the Books of Hermes. The world is an infinite sphere, whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere.

This is changed by some into: "The centre being nowhere, and the circumference everywhere," a rather heretical idea for a Cardinal, though perfectly orthodox from a Kabalistic standpoint.

The theory of rebirth must be set forth by Occultists, and then applied to special cases. The right comprehension of this psychic fact is based upon a correct view of that group of celestial Beings who are universally called the seven Primeval Gods or Angels — our Dhyana Chohans — the "Seven Primeval Rays" or Powers, adopted later on by the Christian Religion as the "Seven Angels of the Presence." Arupa, formless, at the upper rung of the ladder of Being, materializing more and more as they descend in the scale of objectivity and form, ending in the grossest and most imperfect of the Hierarchy, man — it is the former purely spiritual group that is pointed out to us, in our Occult teaching, as the nursery and fountain-head of human beings. Therein germinates that consciousness which is the earliest manifestation from causal Consciousness — the Alpha and the Omega of divine being and life for ever. And as it proceeds downward through every phase of existence descending

through man, through animal and plant, it ends its descent only in the mineral. It is represented by the double triangle — the most mysterious and the most suggestive of all mystic signs, for it is a double glyph, embracing spiritual and physical consciousness and life, the former triangle running upwards, and the lower downwards, both interlaced, and showing the various planes of the twice-seven modes of consciousness, the fourteen spheres of existence, the Lokas of the Brahmans.

The reader may now be able to obtain a clearer comprehension of the whole thing. He will also see what is meant by the “Watchers,” there being one placed as the Guardian or Regent over each of the seven divisions or regions of the earth, according to old traditions, as there is one to watch over and guide every one of the fourteen worlds or Lokas.*

* This is the secret meaning of the statements about the Hierarchy of Prajapatis or Rishis. First seven are mentioned, then ten, then twenty-one, and so on. They are “Gods” and creators of men — many of them the “Lords of Beings”; they are the “Mind-born Sons” of Brahmâ and then they became mortal heroes, and are often shown as of a very sinful character. The Occult meaning of the Biblical Patriarchs, their genealogy, and their descendants dividing among themselves the earth, is the same. Again, Jacob’s dream has the same significance.

But it is not with any of these that we are at present concerned, but with the “Seven Breaths,” so-called, that furnish man with his immortal Monad in his cyclic pilgrimage. The Commentary on the *Book of Dzyan* says:

Descending on his region first as Lord of Glory, the Flame (or Breath), having called into conscious being the highest of the Emanations of that special region, ascends from it again to Its primeval seat, whence It watches over and guides Its countless Beams (Monads). It chooses as Its Avataras only those who had the Seven Virtues in them † in their previous incarnation. As for the rest, It overshadows each with one of Its countless beams. . . . Yet even the ‘beam’ is a part of the Lord of Lords. ‡

† He “of the Seven Virtues” is one who, without the benefit of Initiation, becomes as pure as any Adept by the simple exertion of his own merit. Being so holy, his body at his next incarnation becomes the Avatara of his “Watcher”

or Guardian Angel, as the Christian would put it.

‡ The title of the highest Dhyan Chohans.

11

The septenary principle in man — who can be regarded as dual only as concerns psychic manifestation on this gross earthly plane — was known to all antiquity, and may be found in every ancient Scripture. The Egyptians knew and taught it, and their division of principles is in every point a counterpart of the Aryan Secret Teaching. It is thus given in [*Isis Unveiled vol. ii 367:]*

“ In the Egyptian notions, as in those of all other faiths founded on philosophy, man was not merely.. . a union of soul and body: he was a trinity when Spirit was added to it. Besides, that doctrine made him consist of Kha (body), Khaba (astral form or shadow), Ka (animal soul or life-principle), Ba (the higher soul), and Akh (terrestrial intelligence). They had also a sixth principle, named Sah (or mummy), but the functions of this one commenced after the death of the body. “The seventh principle being of course the highest, uncreated Spirit was generically called Osiris, therefore every deceased person became Osirified — or an Osiris — after death.

But in addition to reiterating the old ever-present fact of reincarnation and Karma — not as taught by the Spiritists, but as by the most Ancient Science in the world — Occultists must teach cyclic and evolutionary reincarnation: that kind of re-birth, mysterious and still incomprehensible to many who are ignorant of the world’s history, which was cautiously mentioned in *Isis Unveiled*. A general re-birth for every individual with interlude of Kama Loka and Devachan, and a cyclic conscious reincarnation with a grand and divine object for the few. Those great characters who tower like giants in the history of mankind like Siddartha BUDDHA and Jesus in the realm of the spiritual, and Alexander the Macedonian and Napoleon the Great in the realm of physical conquests are but the reflected images of human types which had existed — not ten thousand years before, as cautiously put forward in *Isis Unveiled*, but for millions of consecutive years from the beginning of the Manvantara. For — with the exception of real Avatars, as above explained — they are the same

unbroken Rays (Monads), each respectively of its own special Parent-Flame — called Devas, Dhyan Chohans, or Dhyani-Buddhas, or again, Planetary Angels, etc. — shining in aeonic eternity as their prototypes. It is in their image that some men are born, and when some specific humanitarian object is in view, the latter are hypostatically animated by their divine prototypes reproduced again and again by the mysterious Powers that control and guide the destinies of our world.

No more could be said at the time when *Isis Unveiled* was written; hence the statement was limited to the single remark that ;

“There is no prominent character in all the annals of *sacred* or profane history whose prototype we cannot find in the half fictitious and half real traditions of bygone religions and mythologies. As the star, glimmering at an immeasurable distance above our heads, in the boundless immensity of the sky, reflects itself in the smooth waters of a lake, so does the imagery of men of the antediluvian ages reflect itself in the periods we can embrace in a historical retrospect. “

But now that so many publications have been brought out, stating much of the doctrine, and several of them giving many an erroneous view, this vague allusion may be amplified and explained. Not only does this statement apply to prominent characters in history in general, but also to men of genius, to every remarkable man of the age, who soars beyond the common herd with some abnormally developed special capacity in him, leading to the progress and good of mankind. Each is a reincarnation of an individuality that has gone before him with capacities in the same line, bringing thus as a dowry to his new form that strong and easily re-awakened capacity or quality which had been fully developed in him in his preceding birth. Very often they are ordinary mortals, the Egos of natural men in the course of their cyclic development.

But it is with “special cases” that we are now concerned. Let us suppose that a person during his cycle of incarnations is thus selected for special purposes — the vessel being sufficiently clean — by his personal God, the Fountain-head (on the plane of the manifested) of his Monad, who thus becomes his indweller. That God, his own prototype or “Father in Heaven,” is, in one sense, not only the image in which he, the spiritual man, is made, but in the case we

are considering, it is that spiritual, individual Ego himself. This is a case of permanent, life-long Theophania. Let us bear in mind that this is neither Avatarism, as it is understood in Brahmanical Philosophy, nor is the man thus selected a Jivanmukta or Nirvani, but that it is a wholly exceptional case in the realm of Mysticism. The man may or may not have been an Adept in his previous lives; he is so far, and simply, an extremely pure and spiritual individual — or one who was all that in his preceding birth, if the vessel thus selected is that of a newly-born infant. In this case, after the physical translation of such a saint or Bodhisattva, his astral principles cannot be subjected to a natural dissolution like those of any common mortal. They remain in our sphere and within human attraction and reach; and thus it is that not only a Buddha, a Shankaracharya, or a Jesus can be said to animate several persons at one and the same time, but even the principles of a high Adept may be animating the outward tabernacles of common mortals.

A certain Ray (principle) from Sanat Kumara spiritualized (animated) Pradyumna, the son of Krishna during the great Mahabharata period, while at the same time, he, Sanat Kumara, gave spiritual instruction to King Dhritarashtra. Moreover, it is to be remembered that Sanat Kumara is an “eternal youth of sixteen,” dwelling in Jana Loka, his own sphere or spiritual state.

Even in ordinary *mediumistic* life, so-called, it is pretty well ascertained that while the body is acting — even though only mechanically — or resting in one place, its astral double may be appearing and acting independently in another, and very often distant place. This is quite a common occurrence in mystic life and history, and if this be so with ecstasies, Seers and Mystics of every description, why cannot the same thing happen on a higher and more spiritually developed plane of existence? Admit the possibility on the lower psychic plane, then why not on a higher plane? In the cases of higher Adeptship, when the body is entirely at the command of the Inner Man, when the Spiritual Ego is completely reunited with its seventh principle even during the life-time of the personality, and the Astral Man or personal Ego has become so purified that he has gradually assimilated all the qualities and attributes of the middle nature (Buddhi and Manas in their terrestrial aspect) that personal

Ego substitutes itself, so to say, for the spiritual Higher Self, and is thenceforth capable of living an independent life on earth; when corporeal death takes place the following mysterious event often happens. As a Dharmakaya, a Nirvani “without remains” entirely free from terrestrial admixture, the Spiritual Ego cannot return to reincarnate on earth. But in such cases, it is affirmed, the personal Ego of even a Dharmakaya can remain in our sphere as a whole, and return to incarnation on earth if need be. For now it can no longer be subject, like the astral remains of any ordinary man, to gradual dissolution in the Kama Loka (the *limbus* or purgatory of the Roman Catholic, and the “Summer-land” of the Spiritualist); it cannot die a second death, as such disintegration is called by Proclus.*

* “After death, the soul continueth in the aerial (astral) body, till it is entirely purified from all angry, sensual passions; then doth it put off by a *second death* [when arising to Devachan] the aerial body as it did the earthly one. Wherefore the ancients say that there is a celestial body always joined with the soul, which is immortal, luminous and star-like.” It becomes natural then, that the “aerial body” of an Adept should have no such second dying, since it has been cleansed of all its natural impurity before its separation from the physical body. The high Initiate is a “Son of the Resurrection,” “being equal unto the angels,” and cannot die any more (see *Luke, xx, 36*).

12

It has become too holy and pure, no longer by reflected but its own natural light and spirituality, either to sleep in the unconscious slumber of a lower Nirvanic state, or to be dissolved like any ordinary astral shell and disappear in its entirety.

But in that condition known as the Nirmanakaya [the Nirvani “with remains”] he can still help humanity.

“Let me suffer and bear the sins of all [be reincarnated unto new misery] but let the world be saved!” was said by Gautama **BUDDHA**: an exclamation the real meaning of which is little understood now by his followers. “If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?” † asks the astral Jesus of

Peter. † *St. John*, xxi, 21.

“Till I come” means “till I am reincarnated again” in a physical body. Yet the Christ of the old crucified body could truly say: “I am with my Father and one with Him,” which did not prevent the astral from taking a form again nor John from tarrying indeed till his Master had come; nor hinder John from failing to recognize him when he did come, or from then opposing him. But in the Church that remark generated the absurd idea of the millennium or chiliasm, in its physical sense.

Since then the “Man of Sorrows” has returned perchance, more than once, unknown to, and undiscovered by, his blind followers. Since then also, this grand “Son of God” has been incessantly and most cruelly crucified daily and hourly by the Churches founded in his name. But the Apostles, only half-initiated, failed to tarry for their Master, and not recognizing him, spurned him every time he returned.*

* See the extract made in the *Theosophist* from a glorious novel by Dostoievsky — a fragment entitled “The Great Inquisitor.” It is a fiction, naturally, still a sublime fiction of Christ returning in Spain during the palmy days of the Inquisition, and being imprisoned and put to death by the Inquisitor, who fears lest Christ should ruin the work of Jesuit hands.

13

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES

The “Mystery of Buddha” is that of several other Adepts — perhaps of many. The whole trouble is to understand correctly that other mystery: that of the real fact, so abstruse and transcendental at first sight, about the “Seven Principles” in man, the reflections in man of the seven powers in Nature, physically, and of the seven Hierarchies of Being, intellectually and spiritually. Whether a man — material, ethereal, and spiritual — is for the clearer comprehension of his (broadly-speaking) triple nature, divided into groups according to one or another system, the foundation and the apex of that division will be always the same. There being only three Upadhis (bases) in man, any number of Koshas

(sheaths) and their aspects may be built on these without destroying the harmony of the whole. Thus, while the Esoteric System accepts the septenary division, the Vedantic classification gives five Koshas, and the Taraka Raja Yoga simplifies them into four — the three Upadhis synthesized by the highest principle, Atma.

That which has just been stated will, of course, suggest the question: “How can a spiritual (or semi-spiritual) personality lead a triple or even a dual life, shifting respective ‘Higher Selves’ *ad libitum*, and be still the one eternal Monad in the infinity of a Manvantara?” The answer to this is easy for the true Occultist, while for the uninitiated profane it must appear absurd. The “Seven Principles” are, of course, the manifestation of one indivisible Spirit, but only at the end of the Manvantara, and when they come to be re-united on the plane of the One Reality does the unity appear; during the “Pilgrim’s” journey the reflections of that indivisible One Flame, the aspects of the one eternal Spirit, have each the power of action on one of the manifested planes of existence — the gradual differentiations from the one unmanifested plane — on that plane namely to which it properly belongs. Our earth affording every Mayavic condition, it follows that the purified Egotistical Principle, the astral and personal Self of an Adept, though forming in reality one integral whole with its Highest Self (Atma and Buddhi) may, nevertheless, for purposes of universal mercy and benevolence, so separate itself from its divine Monad as to lead on this plane of illusion and temporary being a distinct independent conscious life of its own under a borrowed illusive shape, thus serving at one and the same time a double purpose: the exhaustion of its own individual Karma, and the saving of millions of human beings less favoured than itself from the effects of mental blindness. If asked: “When the change described as the passage of a Buddha or a Jivanmukta into Nirvana takes place, where does the original consciousness which animated the body continue to reside — in the Nirvani or in the subsequent reincarnations of the latter’s ‘remains’ (the Nirmanakaya)?” the answer is that *imprisoned* consciousness may be a “certain knowledge from observation and experience,” as Gibbon puts it, but *disembodied* consciousness is not an effect, but a cause. It is a part of the whole, or rather a Ray on the graduated scale of its manifested activity, of the one all-pervading, limitless Flame, the reflections of which alone can differentiate; and, as such,

consciousness is ubiquitous, and can be neither localized nor centred on or in any particular subject, nor can it be limited. Its effects alone pertain to the region of matter, for thought is an energy that affects matter in various ways, but consciousness *per se*, as understood and explained by Occult philosophy, is the highest quality of the sentient spiritual principle in us, the Divine Soul (or Buddhi) and our Higher Ego, and does not belong to the plane of materiality. After the death of the physical man, if he be an Initiate, it becomes transformed from a human quality into the independent principle itself; the conscious Ego becoming Consciousness *per se* without any Ego, in the sense that the latter can no longer be limited or conditioned by the senses, or even by space or time. Therefore, it is capable, without separating itself from or abandoning its possessor, Buddhi, of reflecting itself at the same time in its astral man that was, without being under any necessity for localizing itself. This is shown at a far lower stage in our dreams. For if consciousness can display activity during our visions, and while the body and its material brain are fast asleep — and if even during those visions it is all but ubiquitous — how much greater must be its power when entirely free from, and having no more connection with, our physical brain.

14

THE MYSTERY OF BUDDHA

Now the mystery of Buddha lies in this: Gautama, an incarnation of pure Wisdom, had yet to learn in His human body and to be initiated into the world's secrets like any other mortal, until the day when He emerged from His secret recess in the Himalayas and preached for the first time in the grove of Benares. The same with Jesus: from the age of twelve to thirty years, when He is found preaching the Sermon on the Mount, nothing is positively said or known of Him. Gautama had sworn inviolable secrecy as to the Esoteric Doctrines imparted to Him. In His immense pity for the ignorance — and as its consequence the sufferings — of mankind, desirous though He was to keep inviolate His sacred vows, He failed to keep within the prescribed limits. While constructing His Exoteric Philosophy (the "Eye-Doctrine") on the foundations of eternal Truth, He failed to conceal certain dogmas, and trespassing beyond the lawful lines, caused those dogmas to be misunderstood. In His anxiety to

make away with the false Gods, He revealed in the “Seven Paths to Nirvana” some of the mysteries of the Seven Lights of the Arupa (formless) World. A little of the truth is often worse than no truth at all.

Truth and fiction are like oil and water: they will never mix.

His new doctrine, which represented the outward dead body of the Esoteric Teaching without its vivifying Soul, had disastrous effects: it was never correctly understood, and the doctrine itself was rejected by the Southern Buddhists. Immense philanthropy, a boundless love and charity for all creatures, were at the bottom of His unintentional mistake; but Karma little heeds intentions, whether good or bad, if they remain fruitless. If the “Good Law” as preached resulted in the most sublime code of ethics and the unparalleled philosophy of things external in the visible Kosmos, it biassed and misguided immature minds into believing there was nothing more under the outward mantle of the system, and its dead-letter only was accepted. Moreover, the new teaching unsettled many great minds which had previously followed the orthodox Brahmanical lead.

Thus, fifty odd years after his death “the great Teacher * having refused full Dharmakaya and Nirvana, was pleased, for purposes of Karma and philanthropy, to be reborn. For Him death had been no death, but as expressed in the “Elixir of Life,” † He changed A sudden plunge into darkness to a transition into a brighter light.

* When we say the “great Teacher,” we do not mean His Buddhic Ego, but that principle in Him which was the vehicle of His personal or terrestrial Ego.

† *Five Years of Theosophy*, New Edition, p. 3.

15

The shock of death was broken, and like many other Adepts, He threw off the mortal coil and left it to be burnt, and its ashes to serve as relics, and began interplanetary life, clothed in His subtle body. He was reborn as Shankara, the greatest Vedantic teacher of India, whose philosophy — based as it is entirely

on the fundamental axioms of the eternal Revelation, the Shruti, or the primitive Wisdom-Religion, as Buddha from a different point of view had before based His — finds itself in the middle-ground between the too exuberantly veiled metaphysics of the orthodox Brahmans and those of Gautama, which, stripped in their exoteric garb of every soul-vivifying hope, transcendental aspiration and symbol, appear in their cold wisdom like crystalline icicles, the skeletons of the primeval truths of Esoteric Philosophy.

Was Shankaracharya Gautama the Buddha, then, under a new personal form? It may perhaps only puzzle the reader the more if he be told that there was the “astral” Gautama inside the outward Shankara, whose higher principle, or Atman, was, nevertheless, his own divine prototype — the “Son of Light,” indeed — the heavenly, mind-born son of Aditi. This fact is again based on that mysterious transference of the divine ex-personality merged in the impersonal Individuality — now in its full trinitarian form of the Monad as Atma-Buddhi-Manas — to a new body, whether visible or subjective. In the first case it is a Manushya-Buddha; in the second it is a Nirmanakaya. The Buddha is in Nirvana, it is said, though this once mortal vehicle — the subtle body — of Gautama is still present among the Initiates; nor will it leave the realm of conscious Being so long as suffering mankind needs its divine help — not to the end of this Root Race, at any rate. From time to time He, the “astral” Gautama, associates Himself, in some most mysterious — to us quite incomprehensible — manner, with Avatars and great saints, and works through them. And several such are named.

Thus, it is averred that Gautama Buddha was reincarnated in Shankaracharya — that, as is said in *Esoteric Buddhism: p. 175, Fifth Edition*. Shankaracharya simply *was* Buddha in all respects in a new body.

While the expression in its mystic sense is true, the way of putting it may be misleading until explained. Shankara was a Buddha, most assuredly, but he never was a reincarnation of the Buddha, though Gautama’s “Astral” Ego — or rather his Bodhisattva — may have been associated in some mysterious way with Shankaracharya. Yes, it was perhaps the Ego, Gautama, under a new and better adapted casket — that of a Brahman of Southern India. But the Atman,

the Higher Self that overshadowed both, was distinct from the Higher Self of the translated Buddha, which was now in Its own sphere in Kosmos.

Shankara was an Avatara in the full sense of the term. According to Sayanacharya, the great commentator on the *Vedas*, he is to be held as an Avatara, or direct incarnation of Shiva — the Logos, the Seventh Principle in Nature — Himself. In the Secret Doctrine Shri Shankaracharya is regarded as the abode — for the thirty-two years of his mortal life — of a Flame, the highest of the manifested Spiritual Beings, one of the Primordial Seven Rays.

And now what is meant by a “Bodhisattva”? Buddhists of the Mahayana mystic system teach that each BUDDHA manifests Himself (hypostatically or otherwise) simultaneously in three worlds of Being, namely, in the world of Kama (concupiscence or desire — the sensuous universe or our earth) in the shape of a man; in the world of Rupa (form, yet supersensuous) as a Bodhisattva; and in the highest Spiritual World (that of purely incorporeal existences) as a Dhyani-Buddha. The latter prevails eternally in space and time, *i.e.*, from one Maha-Kalpa to the other — the synthetic culmination of the three being Adi-Buddha, * the Wisdom-Principle, which is Absolute, and therefore out of space and time.

* It would be useless to raise objections from exoteric works to statements in this, which aims to expound, however superficially, the Esoteric Teachings alone. It is because they are misled by the exoteric doctrine that Bishop Bigandet and others aver that the notion of a supreme eternal Adi-Buddha is to be found only in writings of comparatively recent date. What is given here is taken from the secret portions of Dus Kyi Khorio (Kala Chakra, in Sanskrit, or the “Wheel of Time,” or duration).

16

Their inter-relation is the following: The Dhyani-Buddha, when the world needs a human Buddha, “creates” through the power of Dhyana (meditation, omnipotent devotion), a mind-born son — a Bodhisattva — whose mission it is after the physical death of his human, or Manushya-Buddha, to continue his work on earth till the appearance of the subsequent Buddha. The Esoteric

meaning of this teaching is clear. In the case of a simple mortal, the principles in him are only the more or less bright reflections of the seven cosmic, and the seven celestial Principles, the Hierarchy of supersensual Beings. In the case of a Buddha, they are almost the principles *in esse* themselves. The Bodhisattva replaces in him the Karana Sharira, the Ego principle, and the rest correspondingly; and it is in this way that Esoteric Philosophy explains the meaning of the sentence that “by virtue of Dhyana [or abstract meditation] the Dhyani Buddha [the Buddha’s Spirit or Monad] creates a Bodhisattva,” or the astrally clothed Ego within the Manushya-Buddha. Thus, while the Buddha merges back into Nirvana whence it proceeded, the Bodhisattva remains behind to continue the Buddha’s work upon earth. It is then this Bodhisattva that may have afforded the lower principles in the apparitional body of Shankaracharya, the Avatara.

Now to say that Buddha, after having reached Nirvana, returned thence to reincarnate in a new body, would be uttering a heresy from the Brahmanical, as well as from the Buddhistic standpoint. Even in the Mahayana exoteric School in the teaching as to the three “Buddhic” bodies,* it is said of the Dharmakaya — the ideal formless Being — that once it is taken, the Buddha in it abandons the world of sensuous perceptions forever, and has not, nor can he have, any more connection with it. To say, as the Esoteric or Mystic School teaches, that though Buddha is in Nirvana he has left behind him the Nirmanakaya (the Bodhisattva) to work after him, is quite orthodox and in accordance with both the Esoteric Mahayana and the Prasanga Madhyamika Schools, the latter an anti-esoteric and most rationalistic system. For in the *Kala Chakra* Commentary it is shown that there is: (1) Adi-Buddha, eternal and conditionless; then (2) come Sambhogakaya-Buddhas, or DhyaniBuddhas, existing from (aeonic) eternity and never disappearing — the *Causal* Buddhas so to say; and (3) the Manushya-Bodhisattvas. The relation between them is determined by the definition given. Adi-Buddha is Vajradhara, and the Dhyani-Buddhas are Vajrasattva; yet though these two are different Beings on their respective planes, They are identical in fact, one acting through the other, as a Dhyani through a human Buddha. One is “Endless Intelligence;” the other only “Supreme Intelligence.” It is said of Phra Bodhisattva — who was subsequently on earth Buddha Gautama:

Having fulfilled all the conditions for the immediate attainment of perfect Buddhahood, the Holy One preferred, from unlimited charity towards living beings, *once more* to incarnate for the benefit of man.

* The three bodies are (1) the Nirmanakaya (Pru-lpai-Ku in Tibetan), in which the Bodhisattva after entering by the six Paramitas the Path to Nirvana, appears to men in order to teach them; (2) Sambhogakaya (Dzog-pai-Ku), the body of bliss impervious to all physical sensations, received by one who has fulfilled the three conditions of moral perfection; and (3) Dharmakaya (in Tibetan, Chos-Ku), the Nirvanic body.

The Nirvana of the Buddhists is only the threshold of Paranirvana, according to the Esoteric Teaching: while with the Brahmans, it is the *summum bonum*, that final state from which there is no more return — not till the next Maha-Kalpa, at all events. And even this last view will be opposed by some too orthodox and dogmatic Philosophers who will not accept the Esoteric Doctrine. With them Nirvana is absolute nothingness, in which there is nothing and no one: only an unconditioned All. To understand the full characteristics of that Abstract Principle one must sense it intuitively and comprehend fully the “one permanent condition in the Universe,” which the Hindus define so truly as ; The state of perfect unconsciousness — bare Chidakasham (field of consciousness) in fact, however paradoxical it may seem to the profane reader. * * *Five Years of Theosophy*, art. “Personal and Impersonal God,” p. 129.

Shankaracharya was reputed to be an Avatara, an assertion the writer implicitly believes in, but which other people are, of course, at liberty to reject. And as such he took the body of a southern Indian, newly-born Brahman baby; that body, for reasons as important as they are mysterious to us, is said to have been animated by Gautama’s astral personal remains. This divine Non-Ego chose as its own Upadhi (physical basis), the ethereal, human Ego of a great Sage in this world of forms, as the fittest vehicle for Spirit to descend into. Said Shankaracharya: Parabrahman is Karta [Purusha], as there is no other Adhishtatha,† and Parabrahman is Prakriti, there being no other substance.‡

† Adhishtatha, the active or working agent in Prakriti (or matter).

‡ *Vedanta-Sueras*, Ad. I, Pada iv, Shi. 23. Commentary. The passage is given as follows in Thibaut's translation (*Sacred Books of the East*, xxxiv), p. 286: "The Self is thus the operative cause, because there is no other ruling principle, and the material cause because there is no other substance from which the world could originate."

Now what is true of the Macrocosmical is also true of the Microcosmical plane. It is therefore nearer the truth to say — when once we accept such a possibility — that the "astral" Gautama, or the Nirmanakaya, was the Upadhi of Shankaracharya's spirit, rather than that the latter was a reincarnation of the former.

When a Shankaracharya has to be born, naturally every one of the principles in the manifested mortal man must be the purest and finest that exist on earth. Consequently, those principles that were once attached to Gautama, who was the direct great predecessor of Shankara, were naturally attracted to him, the economy of Nature forbidding the re-evolution of similar principles from the crude state. But it must be remembered that the higher ethereal principles are not, like the lower more material ones, visible sometimes to man (as astral bodies), and they have to be regarded in the light of separate or independent Powers or Gods, rather than as material objects. Hence the right way of representing the truth would be to say that the various principles, the Bodhisattva, of Gautama Buddha, which did not go to Nirvana, re-united to form the middle principles of Shankaracharya, the earthly Entity. *

* In *Five Years of Theosophy* (art. "Shakya Muni's Place in History," p. 234, note) it is stated that one day when our Lord sat in the Sattapauni Cave (Saptaparna) he compared man to a Saptaparna (seven leaved) plant.

"Mendicants," he said, "there are seven Buddhas in every Buddha, and there are *six* Bhikshus and but one Buddha in each mendicant. What are the *seven*? The seven branches of complete knowledge. What are the *Six*? The six organs of sense. What are the five? The five elements of illusive being. And the One which is also ten? He is a true Buddha who develops in him the ten forms of holiness and subjects them all to the One." Which means that every

principle in the Buddha was the highest that could be evolved on this earth; whereas in the case of other men who attain to Nirvana this is not necessarily the case. Even as a mere human (Manushya) Buddha Gautama was a pattern for all men. But his Arhats were not necessarily so.

17

It is absolutely necessary to study the doctrine of the Buddhas esoterically and understand the subtle differences between the various planes of existence to be able to comprehend correctly the above. Put more clearly, Gautama, the human Buddha, who had, exoterically, Amitabha for his Bodhisattva and Avalokiteshvara for his Dhyani-Buddha — the triad emanating directly from AdiBuddha — assimilated these by his “Dhyana” (meditation) and thus became a Buddha (“enlightened”). In another manner this is the case with all men; every one of us has his Bodhisattva — the middle principle, if we hold for a moment to the trinitarian division of the septenary group — and his Dhyani-Buddha, or Chohan, the “Father of the Son.” Our connecting link with the higher Hierarchy of Celestial Beings lies here in a nut-shell, only we are too sinful to assimilate them.

Six centuries after the translation of the human Buddha (Gautama) another Reformer, as noble and as loving, though less favoured by opportunity, arose in another part of the world, among another and a less spiritual race. There is a great similarity between the subsequent opinions of the world about the two Saviours, the Eastern and the Western. While millions became converted to the doctrines of the two Masters, the enemies of both — sectarian opponents, the most dangerous of all — tore both to shreds by insinuating maliciously-distorted statements based on Occult truths, and therefore doubly dangerous. While of Buddha it is said by the Brahmans that He was truly an Avatara of Vishnu, but that He had come to tempt the Brahmans from their faith, and was therefore the evil aspect of the God; of Jesus the Bardesian Gnostics and others asserted that He was Nebo, the false Messiah, the destroyer of the old orthodox religion. “He is the founder of a new sect of Nazars,” said other sectarians. In Hebrew the word “Naba” means “to speak by inspiration,” (abg and wbg is Nebo, the God of wisdom). But Nebo is also Mercury, who is Buddha in the Hindu monogram of planets. And this is shown by the fact that

the Talmudists hold that Jesus was inspired by the Genius (or Regent) of Mercury confounded by Sir William Jones with Gautama Buddha. There are many other strange points of similarity between Gautama and Jesus, which cannot be noticed here.[See *Isis Unveiled*, ii, 132.]

If both the Initiates, aware of the danger of furnishing the uncultured masses with the powers acquired by ultimate knowledge, left the innermost corner of the sanctuary in profound darkness, who, acquainted with human nature, can blame either of them for this? Yet although Gautama, actuated by prudence, left the Esoteric and most dangerous portions of the Secret Knowledge untold, and lived to the ripe old age of eighty — the Esoteric Doctrine says one hundred — years, dying with the certainty of having taught its essential truths, and of having sown the seeds for the conversion of one-third of the world, He yet perhaps revealed more than was strictly good for posterity. But Jesus, who had promised His disciples the knowledge which confers upon man the power of producing “miracles” far greater than He had ever produced Himself, died, leaving but a few faithful disciples — men only half-way to knowledge. They had therefore to struggle with a world to which they could impart only what they but half-knew themselves, and — no more. In later ages the exoteric followers of both mangled the truths given out, often out of recognition. With regard to the adherents of the Western Master, the proof of this lies in the very fact that none of them can now produce the promised “miracles.” They have to choose: either it is they who have blundered, or it is their Master who must stand arraigned for an empty promise, an uncalled for boast.*

* “Before one becomes a Buddha he must be a Bodhisattva; before evolving into a Bodhisattva he must be a Dhyani-Buddha.... A Bodhisattva is the way and Path to his Father, and thence to the One Supreme Essence” (*Descent of Buddhas*, p. 17, from Aryasanga). “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life no man cometh unto the Father but by me” (*St. John*, xiv, 6). The “way” is not the goal. Nowhere throughout the *New Testament* is Jesus found calling himself God, or anything higher than “a son of God,” the son of a “Father” common to all, synthetically. Paul never said; (*I Tim* iii, 10), “God was manifest in the flesh,” but “He who was manifested in the flesh” (Revised Edition). While the common herd among the Buddhists — the Burmese especially — regard Jesus as an

incarnation of Devadatta, a relative who opposed the teachings of Buddha, the students of Esoteric Philosophy see in the Nazarene Sage a Bodhisattva with the spirit of Buddha Himself in Him.

18

Why such a difference in the destiny of the two? For the Occultist this enigma of the unequal favour of Karma or Providence is unriddled by the Secret Doctrine.

It is "not lawful" to speak of such things publicly, as St. Paul tells us. One more explanation only may be given in reference to this subject. It was said a few pages back that an Adept who thus sacrifices himself to live, giving up full Nirvana, though he can never lose the knowledge acquired by him in previous existences, yet can never rise higher in such borrowed bodies. Why? Because he becomes simply the vehicle of a "Son of Light" from a still higher sphere, who being Arupa, has no personal astral body of His own fit for this world. Such "Sons of Light," or Dhyani Buddhas, are the Dharmakayas of preceding Manvantaras, who have closed their cycles of incarnations in the ordinary sense and who, being thus Karmaless, have long ago dropped their individual Rupas, and have become identified with the first Principle. Hence the necessity of a sacrificial Nirmanakaya, ready to suffer for the misdeeds or mistakes of the new body in its earth-pilgrimage, without any future reward on the plane of progression and rebirth, since there are no rebirths for him in the ordinary sense. The Higher Self, or Divine Monad, is not in such a case attached to the lower Ego; its connection is only temporary, and in most cases, it acts through decrees of Karma. This is a real, genuine sacrifice, the explanation of which pertains to the highest Initiation of Gnana (Occult Knowledge). It is closely linked, by a direct evolution of Spirit and involution of Matter, with the primeval and great Sacrifice at the foundation of the manifested Worlds, the gradual smothering and death of the spiritual in the material. The seed "is not quickened except it die." [I *Corinth.* xv, 36.]

Hence in the Purusha Sukta of the *Rig Veda*, [*op. cit.* **Mandala x, hymn 90.**] the mother-fount and source of all subsequent religions, it is stated allegorically that "the thousand-headed Purusha" was slaughtered at the foundation of the World, that from his remains the Universe might arise. This is nothing more

nor less than the foundation — the seed, truly — of the later many-formed symbol in various religions, including Christianity, of the sacrificial lamb. For it is a play upon the words. “Aja” (Purusha), “the unborn,” or eternal Spirit, means also “lamb,” in Sanskrit. Spirit disappears — dies, metaphorically — the more it gets involved in matter, and hence the sacrifice of the “unborn,” or the “lamb.”

Why the **BUDDHA** chose to make this sacrifice will be plain only to those who, to the minute knowledge of His earthly life, add that of a thorough comprehension of the laws of Karma. Such occurrences, however, belong to the most exceptional cases. As tradition goes, the Brahmans had committed a heavy sin by persecuting Gautama **BUDDHA** and His teachings instead of blending and reconciling them with the tenets of pure Vaidic Brahmanism, as was done later by Shankaracharya. Gautama had never gone against the *Vedas*, only against the exoteric growth of preconceived interpretations. The Shruti — divine oral revelation, the outcome of which was the *Veda* — is eternal. It reached the ear of Gautama Siddartha as it had those of the Rishis who had written it down. He accepted the revelation, while rejecting the later overgrowth of Brahmanical thought and fancy, and built His doctrines on one and the same basis of imperishable truth. As in the case of His Western successor, Gautama, the “Merciful,” the “Pure,” and the “Just,” was the first found in the Eastern Hierarchy of historical Adepts, if not in the world-annals of divine mortals, who was moved by that generous feeling which locks the whole of mankind within one embrace, with no petty differences of race, birth, or caste. It was He who first enunciated that grand and noble principle, and He again who first put it into practice. For the sake of the poor and the reviled, the outcast and the hapless, invited by Him to the king’s festival table, He had excluded those who had hitherto sat alone in haughty seclusion and selfishness, believing that they would be defiled by the very shadow of the disinherited ones of the land — and these non-spiritual Brahmans turned against Him for that preference. Since then such as these have never forgiven the prince-beggar, the son of a king, who, forgetting His rank and station, had flung widely open the doors of the forbidden sanctuary to the pariah and the man of low estate, thus giving precedence to personal merit over hereditary rank or fortune. The sin was theirs — the cause nevertheless Himself: hence the “Merciful and the

Blessed One” could not go out entirely from this world of illusion and created causes without atoning for the sin of all — therefore of these Brahmans also. If “man afflicted by man” found safe refuge with the Tathagata, “man afflicting man” had also his share in His self-sacrificing, all-embracing and forgiving love. It is stated that He desired to atone for the sin of His enemies. Then only was He willing to become a full Dharmakaya, a Jivanmukta “without remains.”

The close of Shankaracharya’s life brings us face to face with a fresh mystery. Shankaracharya retires to a cave in the Himalayas, permitting none of his disciples to follow him, and disappears therein for ever from the sight of the profane. Is he dead? Tradition and popular belief answer in the negative, and some of the local Gurus, if they do not emphatically corroborate, do not deny the rumour. The truth with its mysterious details as given in the Secret Doctrine is known but to them; it can be given out fully only to the direct followers of the great Dravidian Guru, and it is for them alone to reveal of it as much as they think fit. Still it is maintained that this Adept of Adepts lives to this day in his spiritual entity as a mysterious, unseen, yet overpowering presence among the Brotherhood of Shamballa, beyond, far beyond, the snowy-capped Himalayas.

“REINCARNATIONS” OF BUDDHA

Every section in the chapter on “Dezhin Shegpa* (Tathagata) Literally, “he who walks (or follows in the way (or path of his predecessors.” in the Commentaries represents one year of that great Philosopher’s life, in its dual aspect of public and private teacher, the two being contrasted and commented upon. It shows the Sage reaching Buddhahood through a long course of study, meditation, and Initiations, as any other Adept would have to do, not one rung of the ladder up to the arduous “Path of Perfection” being missed. The Bodhisattva became a Buddha and a Nirvani through personal effort and merit, after having had to undergo all the hardships of every other neophyte — not by virtue of a divine birth, as thought by some. It was only the reaching of Nirvana while still living in the body and on this earth that was due to His having been in previous births high on the “Path of Dzyan” (knowledge, wisdom). Mental or intellectual gifts and abstract knowledge follow an Initiate in his new birth, but he has to acquire

phenomenal powers anew, passing through all the successive stages. He has to acquire Rinchen-na-dun (“the seven precious gifts”) † one after the other.

† Schmidt, in *Slanong Seetsen*, p. 471, and Schlagintweit, in *Buddhism in Tibet*, p. 53, accept these precious things *literally*, enumerating them as “the wheel, the precious stone, the royal consort, the best treasurer, the best horse, the elephant, the best leader.” After this one can little wonder if “besides a Dhyani-Buddha and a Dhyani-Bodhisattva” each human Buddha is furnished with “a female companion, a Shakti” — when in truth “Shakti” is simply the Soul-power, the psychic energy of the God as of the Adept. The “royal consort,” the third of the “seven precious gifts,” very likely led the learned Orientalist into this ludicrous error.

20

During the period of meditation no worldly phenomena on the physical plane must be allowed to enter into his mind or cross his thoughts.

Zhine-Ihagthong (Sanskrit: Vipashya, religious abstract meditation) will develop in him most wonderful faculties independently of himself. The four degrees of contemplation, or Sam-tan (Sanskrit: Dhyana), once acquired, everything becomes easy. For, once that man has entirely got rid of the idea of individuality, merging his Self in the Universal Self, becoming, so to say, the bar of steel to which the properties inherent in the loadstone (Adi Buddha, or Anima Mundi) are imparted, powers hitherto dormant in him are awakened, mysteries in invisible Nature are unveiled, and becoming a Thonglam-pa (a Seer) he becomes a Dhyani-Buddha. Every Zung (Dharani, a mystic word or mantra) of the Lokottaradharma (the highest world of causes) will be known to him.

Thus, after His outward death, twenty years later, Tathagata in His immense love and “pitiful mercy” for erring and ignorant humanity, refused Paranirvana * in order that He might continue to help men.

* A Bodhisattva can reach Nirvana and live, as Buddha did, and after death he can either refuse objective reincarnation or accept and use it at his convenience for the benefit of mankind whom he can instruct in various ways while he remains in the Devachanic regions within the attraction of our earth. But

having once reached Paranirvana or “Nirvana without remains” — the highest Dharmakaya condition, in which state he remains entirely outside of every earthly condition — he will return no more until the commencement of a new Manvantara, since he has crossed beyond the cycle of births.

Says a Commentary:

Having reached the Path of Deliverance (Thar-lam) from transmigration, one cannot perform Tulpat † any longer, for to become a Paranirvani is to close the circle of the Septenary Ku-Sum. ‡

† Tulpa is the voluntary incarnation of an Adept into a living body, whether of an adult, child, or new-born babe.

‡ Ku-sum is the triple form of the Nirvana state and its respective duration in the “cycle of Non-Being.” The number seven here refers to the seven Rounds of our septenary System.

He has merged his borrowed Dorjesempa [Vajrasattva] into the Universal and become one with it. Vajradhara, also Vajrasattva (Tibetan: Dorjechang and Dorjedzin, or Dorjosampa), is the regent or President of all the Dhyani Chohans or Dhyani Buddhas, the highest, the Supreme Buddha; personal, yet never manifested objectively; the “Supreme Conqueror,” the “Lord of all Mysteries,” the “One without Beginning or End” — in short, the Logos of Buddhism. For, as Vajrasattva, He is simply the Tsovo (Chief) of the Dhyani Buddhas or Dhyani Chohans, and the Supreme Intelligence in the Second World; while as Vajradhara (Dorjechang), He is all that which was enumerated above. “These two are one, and yet two,” and over them is “Chang, the Supreme Unmanifested and Universal Wisdom that has no name.” As two in one He (They) is the Power that subdued and conquered Evil from the beginning, allowing it to reign only over willing subjects on earth, and having no power over those who despise and hate it. Esoterically the allegory is easily understood; exoterically Vajradhara (Vajrasattva) is the God to whom all the evil spirits swore that they would not impede the propagation of the Good Law (Buddhism), and before whom all the demons tremble. Therefore, we say this dual personage has the same *role* assigned to it in canonical and dogmatic

Tibetan Buddhism as have Jehovah and the Archangel Mikael, the Metatron of the Jewish Kabalists. This is easily shown. Mikael is “the angel of the face of God,” or he who represents his Master. “My face shall go with thee” (in English, “presence”), before the Israelites, says God to Moses (*Exodus*, xxxiii, 14). “The angel of my presence” (Hebrew: “of my face” > (*Isaiah*, lxiii, 9), etc. The Roman Catholics identify Christ with Mikael, who is also his ferouer, or “face,” mystically. This is precisely the position of Vajradhara, or Vajrasattva, in Northern Buddhism. For the latter, in His Higher Self as Vajradhara (Dorjechang), is never manifested, except to the seven Dhyana Chohans, the primeval Builders. Esoterically, it is the Spirit of the “Seven” collectively, their seventh principle, or Atman. Esoterically, any amount of fables may be found in *Kala Chakra*, the most important work in the Gyut [or (D)gyu] division of the Kanjur, the division of mystic knowledge [(D)gyu]. Dorjechang (wisdom) Vajradhara, is said to live in the second Arupa World, which connects him with Metatron, in the first world of pure Spirits, the Briatic world of the Kabalists, who call this angel El-Shaddai, the Omnipotent and Mighty One. Metatron is in Greek a~ggelo" (Messenger), or the Great Teacher. Mikael fights Satan, the Dragon, and conquers him and his Angels. Vajrasattva, who is one with Vajrapani, the Subduer of the Evil Spirits, conquers Rahu, the Great Dragon who is always trying to devour the sun and moon (eclipses). “War in Heaven” in the Christian legend is based upon the bad angels having discovered the secrets (magical wisdom) of the good ones (Enoch), and the mystery of the “Tree of Life.” Let anyone read simply the exoteric accounts in the Hindu and Buddhist Pantheons — the latter version being taken from the former — and he will find both resting on the same primeval, archaic allegory from the Secret Doctrine. In the exoteric texts (Hindu and Buddhist), the Gods churn the ocean to extract from it the Water of Life — Amrita — or the Elixir of Knowledge. In both the Dragon steals some of this, and is exiled from heaven by Vishnu, or Vajradhara, or the chief God, whatever may be his name. We find the same in the Book of *Enoch*, and it is poetized in St. John’s *Revelation*. And now the allegory, with all its fanciful ornamentations, has become a dogma!

As will be found mentioned later, the Tibetan Lamaseries contain many secret and semi-secret volumes, detailing the lives of great Sages. Many of the

statements in them are purposely confused, and in others the reader becomes bewildered, unless a clue be given him, by the use of one name to cover many individuals who follow the same line of teaching. Thus there is a succession of “living Buddhas” and the name “Buddha” is given to teacher after teacher. Schlagintweit writes:

To each human Buddha belongs a Dhyani-Buddha, and a Dhyani-Bodhisattva, and the unlimited number of the former also involves an equally unlimited number of the latter. *

* *Buddhism in Tibet*, p. 52. This same generic use of a name is found among Hindus with that of Shankaracharya, to take **but** one instance. All His successors bear his name, **but** are not reincarnations of Him. So with the “Buddhas.”

It is stated that at the age of thirty-three, Shankaracharya, tired of his mortal body, “put it off” in the cave he had entered, and that the Bodhisattva, that served as his lower personality, was freed [With the burden of a sin upon him which he had not committed.] At the same time, it is added:

At whatever age one puts off his outward body by free will, at that age will he be made to die a violent death against his will in his next rebirth.

Now, Karma could have no hold on “Maha Shankara” (as Shankara is called in the secret work), as he had, as Avatara, no Ego of his own, but a Bodhisattva — a willing sacrificial victim. Neither had the latter any responsibility for the deed, whether sinful or otherwise. Therefore, we do not see the point, since Karma cannot act unjustly. There is some terrible mystery involved in all this story, one that no uninitiated intellect can ever unravel. Still, there it is, suggesting the natural query, “Who, then, was punished by Karma?” and leaving it to be answered.

A few centuries later Buddha tried one more incarnation, it is said, in * * * , and again, fifty years subsequent to the death of this Adept, in one whose name is given as Tiani-Tsang [**King Suddhodana.**] No details, no further information

or explanation is given. It is simply stated that the last Buddha had to work out the remains of his Karma, which none of the Gods themselves can escape, forced as he was to bury still deeper certain mysteries half revealed by him — hence misinterpreted. The words used would stand when translated: [There are several names marked simply by asterisks.

Born fifty-two years too early as Shramana Gautama, the son of King Zastang; then retiring fifty-seven years too soon as Maha Shankara, who got tired of his outward form. This willful act aroused and attracted King Karma, who killed the new form of * * * at thirty-three, the age of the body that was put off. [Shankaracharya died also at thirty-two years of age, or rather disappeared from the sight of his disciples, as the legend goes.]

[At whatever age one puts off his outward body by free will, at that age will he be made to die in his next incarnation *against his will* — Commentary.] He died in his next (body) at thirty-two and a little over, and again in his next at eighty — a Maya, and at one hundred, in reality. The Bodhisattva chose Tiani-Tsang, § then again the Sugata became Tsong-Kha-Pa, who became thus Dezhin-Shegpa [Tathagata — ‘one who follows in the way and manner of his predecessors’]. The Blessed One could do good to his generation as * * * but none to posterity, and so as Tiani-Tsang he became incarnated only for the ‘remains’ [of his precedent Karma, as we understand it].

§ Does “Tiani-Tsang” stand for Apollonius of Tyana? This is a simple surmise. Some things in the life of that Adept would seem to tally with the hypothesis — others to go against it.

The Seven Ways and the Four Truths were once more hidden out of sight. The Merciful One confined since then his attention and fatherly care to the heart of Bodyul, the nursery-grounds of the seeds of truth. The blessed ‘remains’ since then have overshadowed and rested in many a holy body of human Bodhisattvas.

No further information is given, least of all are there any details or explanations to be found in the secret volume. All is darkness and mystery in it, for it is

evidently written but for those who are already instructed. Several flaming red asterisks are placed instead of names, and the few facts given are abruptly broken off. The key of the riddle is left to the intuition of the disciple, unless the “direct followers” of Gautama the Buddha — “those who are to be denied by His Church for the next cycle” — and of Shankaracharya, are pleased to add more.

The final section gives a kind of summary of the seventy sections — covering seventy-three years of Buddha’s life * — from which the last paragraph is summarized as follows:

Emerging from — — — —, the most excellent seat of the three secrets [Sang-Sum] , the Master of incomparable mercy, after having performed on all the anchorites the rite of — — — —, and each of these having been cut off, † perceived through [the power of] Hlun-Chub ‡ what was his next duty.

* According to Esoteric teaching Buddha lived one hundred years in reality, though having reached Nirvana in his eightieth year he was regarded as one dead to the world of the living. See article “Shakyamuni’s Place in History” in *Five Years of Theosophy*.

† It is a *secret* rite, pertaining to high Initiation, and has the same significance as the one to which Clement of Alexandria alludes when he speaks of “the token of recognition being in common with us, as by cutting off Christ” (Strom. 13). Schlagintweit wonders what it may be. “The typical representation of a hermit,” he says, “is always that of a man with long, uncut hair and beard... A rite very often selected, though I am unable to state for what reason, is that of Chod (‘to cut’ or ‘to destroy’) the meaning of which is anxiously kept a profound secret by the Lamas.” (*Buddhism in Tibet*, p. 163.)

‡ Hlun-Chub is the divining spirit in man, the highest degree of seership. The Most-Illustrious meditated and asked himself whether this would help [the future] generations. What they needed was the sight of Maya in a body of illusion. Which?... The great conqueror of pains and sorrows arose and proceeded back to his birthplace. There Sugata was welcomed by the few, for they did not know Shramana Gautama. ‘Shakya [the Mighty] is in Nirvana....

He has given the Science to the Shuddhas [Shudra],’ said they of Damze Vul [the country of Brahmans: India] It was for that, born of pity, that the All-Glorious One had to retire to — — — —, and then appear [karmically] as Maha Shankara; and out of pity as — — — —, and again as — — — —, and again as Tsong-Kha-Pa.... For, he who chooses in humiliation must go down, and he who *loves not* allows Karma to raise him.*

* The secret meaning of this sentence is that Karma exercises its sway over the Adept as much as over any other man; “Gods” can escape it as little as simple mortals. The Adept who, having reached *the* Path and won His Dharmakaya — the Nirvana from which there is no return until the new grand Kalpa — prefers to use His right of choosing a condition inferior to that which belongs to Him, but that will leave him free to return whenever He thinks it advisable and under whatever personality He may select, must be prepared to take all the chances of failure — possibly — and a lower condition than was His lot — for a certainty — as it is an occult law. Karma alone is absolute justice and infallible in its selections. He who uses his rights with it (Karma) must bear the consequences — if any. Thus Buddha’s first reincarnation was produced by Karma — and it led Him higher than ever; the two following were “**Out of pity**” and.

This passage is confessedly obscure and written for the few. It is not lawful to say any more, for the time has not yet come when nations are prepared to hear the whole truth. The old religions are full of mysteries, and to demonstrate some of them *would* surely lead to an explosion of hatred, followed, perhaps, by bloodshed and worse. It will be sufficient to know that while Gautama Buddha is merged in Nirvana ever since his death, Gautama Shakyamuni may have had to reincarnate — this dual inner personality being one of the greatest mysteries of Esoteric psychism.

“The seat of the three secrets” refers to a place inhabited by high Initiates and their disciples. The “secrets” are the three mystic powers known as Gopa, Yasodhara, and Uptala Varna, that Cosmo de Kōros mistook for Buddha’s three wives, as other Orientalists have mistaken Shakti (Yoga power) personified by a female deity for His wife; or the Draupadi — also a spiritual power — for the wife in common of the five brothers Pandava.

AN UNPUBLISHED DISCOURSE OF BUDDHA

(It is found in the second Book of Commentaries and is addressed to the Arhats.)
Said the All-Merciful: Blessed are ye, O Bhikshus, happy are ye who have understood the mystery of Being and *Non-Being* explained in Bas-pa [dharma, doctrine], and have given preference to the latter, for ye are verily my Arhats.

The elephant, who sees his form mirrored in the lake, looks at it, and then goes away, taking it for the real body of another elephant, is wiser than the man who beholds his face in the stream, and looking at it, says, 'Here am I I am I': for the 'I,' his Self, is not in the world of the twelve Nidanas and mutability, but in that of Non-Being, the only world beyond the snares of maya That alone, which has neither cause nor author, which is self-existing, eternal, far beyond the reach of mutability, is the true 'I' [Ego], the Self of the Universe. The Universe of Nam-Kha says: 'I am the world of SienChan * the four illusions laugh and reply, 'Verily so.'

* The Universe of Brahm (Sien-Chan; Nam-Kha) is Universal Illusion, or our phenomenal world.

But the truly wise man knows that neither man, nor the Universe that he passes through like a flitting shadow, is any more a real Universe than the dewdrop that reflects a spark of the morning sun is that sun. . . . There are three things, Bhikshus, that are everlastingly the same, upon which no vicissitude, no modification can ever act: these are the Law, Nirvana, and Space, † and those three are One, since the first two are within the last, and that last one a maya, so long as man keeps within the whirlpool of sensuous existences. One need not have his mortal body die to avoid the clutches of concupiscence and other passions. The Arhat who observes the seven hidden precepts of Bas-pa may become dang-ma and lha.‡

† Akasha. It is next to impossible to render the mystic word "Tho-og" by any other term than "Space," and yet, unless coined on purpose, no new appellation can render it so well to the mind of the Occultist. The term "Aditi" is also translated "Space," and there is a world of meaning in it.

* Dang-ma, a purified soul, and Iha, a freed spirit within a living body; an adept or Arhat. In the popular opinion in Tibet, a Iha is a disembodied spirit, something similar to the Burmese Nat — only higher.

He may hear the ‘holy voice’ of... [Kwan-yin] * , and find himself within the quiet precincts of his Sangharama † transferred into Amitabha Buddha.‡
Becoming one with Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi, § he may pass through all the six worlds of Being (rupa-loka) and get into the first three worlds of arupa || ...
He who listens to my secret law, preached to my select Arhats, will arrive with its help at the knowledge of Self, and thence at perfection.

* Kwan-yin is a synonym, for in the original another term is used, but the meaning is identical. It is the divine voice of Self, or the “Spiritvoice” in man, and the same as Vachishvara (the “Voice-deity”) of the *Brahmanas*. In China, the Buddhist ritualists have degraded its meaning by anthropomorphizing it into a goddess of the same name, with one thousand hands and eyes, and they call it Kwan-shai-yin-Bodhisat. It is the Buddhist “daimon” — voice of Socrates.

† Sangharama is the *sanctum sanctorum* of an ascetic, a cave or *any* place he chooses for his meditation.

‡ Amitabha Buddha is in this connection the “boundless light” by which things of the subjective world are perceived.

§ Esoterically, “the unsurpassingly merciful and enlightened heart,” said of the “Perfect Ones,” the Jivan-muktas, collectively.

|| These six worlds — seven with us — are the worlds of Nats or Spirits, with the Burmese Buddhists, and the seven higher worlds of the Vedantins.

It is due to entirely erroneous conceptions of Eastern thought and to ignorance of the existence of an esoteric key to the outward Buddhist phrases that E. Burnouf and other great scholars have inferred from such propositions — held also by the Vedantins — as “my body is not body” and “myself is no self of

mine,” that Eastern psychology was all based upon non-permanency. Cousin, for instance, lecturing upon the subject, brings the two following propositions to prove, on Burnouf’s authority, that, unlike Brahmanism, Buddhism rejects the perpetuity of the thinking principle. These are:

1. Thought or Spirit ¶ — for the faculty is not distinguished from the subject — appears only with sensation and does not survive it.

¶ Two things entirely distinct from each other. The “faculty is not distinguished from the subject” only on this material plane, while [a] thought generated by our physical brain, one that has never impressed itself at the same time on the spiritual counterpart, whether through the atrophy of the latter or the intrinsic weakness of that thought, *can* never survive our body; this much is sure.

2. The Spirit cannot itself lay hold of itself, and in directing attention to itself it draws from it only the conviction of its powerlessness to see itself otherwise than as successive and transitory.

This all refers to Spirit embodied, not to the freed spiritual Self on whom maya has no more hold. Spirit is no body; therefore, have the Orientalists made of it “nobody” and nothing. Hence they proclaim Buddhists to be Nihilists, and Vedantins to be the followers of a creed in which the “Impersonal [God] turns out on examination to be a myth”; their goal is described as, “The complete extinction of all spiritual, mental, and bodily powers by absorption into the Impersonal.*

* Vedanta Sara, translated by Major Jacob, p. 123.

NIRVANA-MOKSHA

The few sentences given in the text from one of Gautama Buddha’s secret teachings show how uncalled for is the epithet of “materialist” when applied to one whom two-thirds of those who are looked upon as great adepts and Occultists in Asia recognize as their Master, whether under the name of Buddha or that of Shankaracharya. The reader will remember the just-quoted words are what Buddha Sang-gyas (or Pho) is alleged by the Tibetan Occultists to have

taught: there are three eternal things in the Universe — the Law, Nirvana, and Space. The Buddhists of the Southern Church claim, on the other hand, that Buddha held only two things as eternal — Akasha and Nirvana. But Akasha being the same as Aditi, † and both being translated “Space,” there is no discrepancy so far, since Nirvana as well as Moksha, is a state. Then in both cases the great Kapilavastu sage unifies the two, as well as the three, into one eternal Element, and ends by saying that even “that one is a maya” to one who is not a dang-ma, a perfectly purified soul.

† Aditi is, according to the *Rig Veda*, “the Father and Mother of all the gods”; and Akasha is held by Southern Buddhism as the Root of all, whence everything in the Universe came out, in obedience to a law of motion inherent in it; and this is the Tibetan “Space” (Tho-og).

The whole question hangs upon materialistic misconceptions and ignorance of Occult Metaphysics. To the man of science who regards Space as simply a mental representation, a conception of something existing *pro forma*, and having no real being outside our mind, Space *per se* is verily an illusion. He may fill the boundless interstellar Space with an “imaginary” ether, nevertheless Space for him is an abstraction. Most of the metaphysicians of Europe are as wide of the mark, from the purely occult standpoint, of a correct comprehension of “Space,” as are the materialists, though the erroneous conceptions of both of course differ widely.

If, bearing in mind the philosophical views of the ancients upon this question, we compare them with what is now termed exact physical science, it will be found that the two disagree only in inferences and names, and that their postulates are the same when reduced to their most simple expression. From the beginning of the human Aeons, from the very dawn of Occult Wisdom, the regions that the men of science fill with ether have been explored by the seers of every age. That which the world regards simply as cosmic Space, and abstract representation, the Hindu rishi, the Chaldean magus, the Egyptian hierophant held, each and all, as the one eternal Root of all, the playground of all the forces in Nature. It is the fountain-head of all terrestrial life, and the abode of those (to us) invisible swarms of existences — of real beings, as of the

shadows only thereof, conscious and unconscious, intelligent and senseless — that surround us on all sides, that interpenetrate the atoms of our Kosmos, and see us not, as we do not either see or sense them through our physical organisms. For the Occultist “Space” and “Universe” are synonyms. In Space there is not matter, force, nor spirit, but all that and much more. It is the One Element, and that one the Anima Mundi — Space, Akasha, Astral Light — the Root of Life which, in its eternal, ceaseless motion, like the out- and in-breathing of one boundless ocean, evolves but to reabsorb all that lives and feels and thinks and has its being in it. As said of the Universe in *Isis Unveiled* it is: The combination of a thousand elements and yet the expression of a single Spirit — a chaos to the sense, a Kosmos to the reason.

Such were the views upon the subject of all the great ancient philosophers, from Manu down to Pythagoras, from Plato to Paul. When the dissolution [pralaya] had arrived at its term the great Being [Para-Atma, or Para-Purusha], the Lord existing through himself, out of whom and through whom all things were, and are, and will be, . . . resolved to emanate from his own substance the various creatures.*

* *Manava-Dharma-Shastra*, i, 6, 7.

The mystic Decad [of Pythagoras] $1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10$ is a way of expressing this idea. The One is God; * the Two, matter; the Three, combining Monad and Duad and partaking of the nature of both, is the phenomenal world; the Tetrad, or form of perfection expresses the emptiness of all; and the Decad, or sum of all, involves the entire cosmos. †

* The “God” of Pythagoras, the disciple of the Aryan sages, is no personal God. Let it be remembered that he taught as a cardinal tenet that there exists a permanent principle of unity beneath all forms, changes, and other phenomena of the Universe.

† *Isis Unveiled*, I, xvi.

Plato’s “God” is the “Universal Ideation,” and Paul saying “Out of him, and through him, and in him, all things are,” had surely a principle — never a

Jehovah — in his profound mind. The key to the Pythagorean dogmas is the key to every great philosophy. It is the general formula of unity in multiplicity, the One evolving the many and pervading the All. It is the archaic doctrine of Emanation in a few words.

Speusippus and Xenocrates held, like their great master, Plato, that: The Anima Mundi (or 'world-soul') was not the Deity, but a manifestation. Those philosophers never conceived of the One as an *animate nature*. The original One did not *exist*, as we understand the term. Not till he (it) had united with the many emanated existences (the Monad and Duad), was a being produced. The tyion ('honoured') the something manifested, dwells in the centre as in the circumference, but it is only the reflection of the Deity — the World-Soul. In this doctrine we find the spirit of Esoteric Buddhism.‡

‡ *Isis Unveiled*, I, xviii.

And it is that of Esoteric Brahmanism and of the Vedantin Advaitis. The two modern philosophers, Schopenhauer and von Hartmann, teach the same ideas. The Occultists say that:

The psychic and ectenic forces, the 'ideo-motor' and 'electro-biological powers,' 'latent thought,' and even 'unconscious cerebration' theories can be condensed in two words: the Kabalistic ASTRAL LIGHT. [*Ibid.*, I, 59.]

Schopenhauer only synthesized all this by calling it Will, and contradicted the men of science in their materialistic views, as von Hartmann did later on. The author of the *Philosophy of the Unconscious* calls their views "an instinctual prejudice."

Furthermore, he demonstrates that no experimenter can have anything to do with matter properly so termed, but only with the forces into which he divides it. The visible effects of matter are but the effects of force. He concludes thereby that that which is now called matter is nothing but the aggregation of atomic forces, to express which the word 'matter' is used; outside of that, for science, matter is but a word void of sense. [*Ibid.*, I, 59.]

As much, it is to be feared, as those other terms with which we are now concerned, "Space," "Nirvana," and so on.

The bold theories and opinions expressed in Schopenhauer's works differ widely from those of the majority of our orthodox scientists. While they are to a great extent identical with those of Esoteric Buddhism, the Secret Doctrine of the East. In reality,' remarks this daring speculator, 'there is neither *matter* nor *spirit*. The tendency to gravitation in a stone is as unexplainable as thought in the human brain. . . . If matter can — no one knows why — fall to the ground, then it can also — no one knows why — think. . . . As soon, even in mechanics, as we trespass beyond the purely mathematical, as soon as we reach the inscrutable adhesion, gravitation, and so on we are faced by phenomena which are to our senses as mysterious as the **WILL** and **THOUGHT** in man: we find ourselves facing the incomprehensible, for such is every force in nature. Where is, then, that *matter* which you all pretend to know so well, and from which — being so familiar with it — you draw all your conclusions and explanations, and attribute to it all things?... That, which can be fully realized by our reason and senses, is but the superficial; they can never reach the true inner substance of things. Such was the opinion of Kant. If you consider that there is in a human head some sort of a *spirit*, then you are obliged to concede the same to a stone. If your dead and utterly passive matter can manifest a tendency toward gravitation or, like electricity, attract and repel and send out sparks, then as well as the brain it can also think. In short, every particle of the so-called spirit we can replace with an equivalent of matter, and every particle of matter replace with spirit. . . . Thus, it is not the Christian division of all things into matter and spirit that can ever be found philosophically exact; but only if we divide them into *will* and *manifestation*, which form of division has naught to do with the former, for it spiritualizes everything: all that which is in the first instance real and objective — body and matter — it transforms into a representation, and every manifestation into will.' [*Parerga*, ii, pp.111,112; quoted in *Isis Unveiled*, I, 58.]

The *matter* of science may be for all objective purposes a "dead and utterly passive matter"; to the Occultist not an atom of it can be dead — "Life is ever

present in it." We send the reader who would know more about it to our article, "Transmigration of Life-Atoms." [*Five Years of Theosophy*, p. 338, et seq.

What we are now concerned with is the doctrine of Nirvana. A "system of atheism" it may be justly called, since it recognizes neither God nor gods — least of all a Creator, as it entirely rejects creation. The *Fecit ex nihilo* is as incomprehensible to the occult metaphysical scientist as it is to the scientific materialist. It is at this point that all agreement stops between the two. But if such be the sin of the Buddhist and Brahman Occultist, then pantheists and atheists, and also theistical Jews — the Kabalists — must also plead 'guilty' to it; yet no one would ever think of calling the Hebrews of the Kabbalah "atheists." Except the Talmudistic and Christian exoteric systems there never was a religious philosophy, whether in the ancient or modern world, but rejected *a priori* the *ex nihilo* hypothesis, simply because Matter was always co-eternalized with Spirit.

Nirvana, as well as the Moksha of the Vedantins, is regarded by most of the Orientalists as a synonym of annihilation; yet no more glaring injustice could be done, and this capital error must be pointed out and disproved. On this most important tenet of the Brahma-Buddhistic system — the alpha and the omega of "Being" or "Non-Being" — rests the whole edifice of Occult Metaphysics. Now the rectification of the great error concerning Nirvana may be very easily accomplished with relation to the philosophically inclined, to those who, "In the glass of things temporal see the image of things spiritual."

On the other hand, to that reader who could never soar beyond the details of tangible material form, our explanation will appear meaningless. He may comprehend and even accept the logical inferences from the reasons given — the true spirit will ever escape his intuitions. The word "nihil" having been misconceived from the first, it is continually used as a sledge-hammer in the matter of Esoteric Philosophy. Nevertheless, it is the duty of the Occultist to try and explain it.

Nirvana and Moksha, then, as said before, have their being in non-being, if such a paradox be permitted to illustrate the meaning the better. Nirvana, as some

illustrious Orientalists have attempted to prove, does mean the blowing out' * of all sentient existence.

* Prof. Max **Muller**, in a letter to *The Times* (April, 1857), maintained most vehemently that Nirvana meant *annihilation* in the fullest sense of the word. (*Chips from a German Workshop*, i, 284.) But in 1869, in a lecture before the General Meeting of the Association of German Philologists at Kid, "he distinctly declares his belief that the Nihilism attributed to Buddha's teaching forms no part of his doctrine, and that it is wholly wrong to suppose that Nirvana means annihilation." (Trubner's *Amer. and Oriental Lit. Rec.*, Oct. 16th, 1869.)

It is like the flame of a candle burnt out to its last atom and then suddenly extinguished. Quite so. Nevertheless, as the old Arhat Nagasena affirmed before the king who taunted him: "Nirvana is" — and Nirvana is eternal. But the Orientalists deny this, and say it is not so. In their opinion Nirvana is not a reabsorption in the Universal Force, not eternal bliss and rest, but it means literally "the blowing-out, the extinction, complete annihilation, and not absorption." The *Lankavatara* quoted in support of their arguments by some Sanskritists, and which gives the different interpretations of Nirvana by the Tirthika Brahmans, is no authority to one who goes to primeval sources for information, namely, to the Buddha who taught the doctrine. As well quote the Charvaka materialists in their support.

If we bring as an argument the sacred Jaina books, wherein the dying Gautama Buddha is thus addressed: "Arise into Nirvi [Nirvana] from this decrepit body into which thou hast been sent. . . . Ascend into thy former abode, O blessed Avatara"; and if we add that this seems to us the very opposite of nihilism, we may be told that so far it may only prove a contradiction, one more discrepancy in the Buddhist faith. If again we remind the reader that since Gautama is believed to appear occasionally, redescending from his "former abode" for the good of humanity and his faithful congregation, thus making it incontestable that Buddhism does not teach final annihilation, we shall be referred to authorities to whom such teaching is ascribed. And let us say at once: Men are no authority for us in questions of conscience, nor ought they to be for anyone

else. If anyone holds to Buddha's philosophy, let him do and say as Buddha did and said; if a man calls himself a Christian, let him follow the commandments of Christ — not the interpretations of his many dissenting priests and sects.

In *A Buddhist Catechism* the question is asked:

Are there any dogmas in Buddhism which we are required to accept on faith?

A. No. We are earnestly enjoined to accept nothing whatever on faith, whether it be written in books, handed down from our ancestors, or taught by sages. Our Lord Buddha has said that we must not believe in a thing said merely because it is said; nor in traditions because they have been handed down from antiquity; nor rumours, as such; nor writings by sages, because sages wrote them: nor fancies that we may suspect to have been inspired in us by a deva (that is, in presumed spiritual inspiration); nor from inferences drawn from some haphazard assumption we may have made; nor because of what seems an analogical necessity; nor on the mere authority of our teachers or masters. But we are to believe when the writing, doctrine, or saying is corroborated by our own reason and consciousness. 'For this,' says he in concluding, 'I taught you — not to believe merely because you have heard, but when you believed of your consciousness, then to act accordingly and abundantly. *

* See the *Kalama Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikayo*, as quoted in *A Buddhist Catechism*, by H.S.Olcott.. . pp. 32, 33.

That Nirvana, or rather, that state in which we are in Nirvana, is quite the reverse of annihilation is suggested to us by our "reason and consciousness," and that is sufficient for us personally. At the same time, this fact being inadequate and very ill-adapted for the general reader, something more efficient may be added.

Without resorting to sources unsympathetic to Occultism, the *Kabalah* furnishes us with the most luminous and clear proofs that the term "nihil" in the minds of the ancient philosophers had a meaning quite different from that it has now received at the hands of materialists. It means certainly "nothing" — or "no-

thing.” F. Kircher, in his work on the *Kabalah* and the Egyptian Mysteries * explains the term admirably.

* *Oedipus Aegypticus*, II, i, 291.

He tells his readers that in the *Zohar* the first of the Sephiroth † has a name the significance of which is “the *Infinite*,” but which was translated indifferently by the Kabalists as “Ens” and “Non-Ens”: (“Being” and “Non-Being”); a *Being*, inasmuch as it is the *root* and source of all other beings; *Non-Being* because Ain Soph — the Boundless and the Causeless, the Unconscious and the Passive Principle — resembles nought else in the Universe.

The author adds: “This is the reason why St. Denys did not hesitate to call it Nihil.” “Nihil” therefore stands — even with some Christian theologians and thinkers, especially with the earlier ones who lived but a few removes from the profound philosophy of the initiated pagans — as a synonym for the impersonal, divine principle, the Infinite All, which is no Being or thing — the En or Ain Soph, the Parabrahman of the Vedanta. Now St. Denys was a pupil of St. Paul — an initiate — and this fact makes everything clear.

The “Nihil” is *in esse* the Absolute Deity itself, the hidden Power or Omnipresence degraded by Monotheism into an anthropomorphic being, with all the passions of a mortal on a grand scale. Union with that is no annihilation in the sense understood in Europe.‡

† Sephir, or Aditi (mystic Space). The Sephiroth, be it understood, are identical with the Hindu Prajapatis, the Dhyan Chohans of Esoteric Buddhism, the Zoroastrian Amshaspendis, and finally with the Elohim — the “Seven Angels of the Presence” of the Roman Catholic Church.

‡ According to the Eastern idea, the All comes out from the One, and returns to it again. Absolute annihilation is simply unthinkable. Nor can eternal Matter be annihilated. Form may be annihilated: co-relations may change. That is all. There can be no such thing as annihilation — in the European sense — in the

Universe.

In the East annihilation in Nirvana refers but to matter: that of the visible as well as the invisible body, for the astral body, the personal double, is still matter, however sublimated. Buddha taught that the primitive Substance is eternal and unchangeable. Its vehicle is the pure, luminous ether, the boundless, infinite Space, not a void resulting from the absence of forms, but on the contrary, the foundation of all forms.... [This] denotes it to be the creation of maya, all the works of which are as nothing before the uncreated Form [Spirit], in whose profound and sacred depths all motion must cease for ever.[*Isis Unveiled*, I, 289.]

Motion here refers only to illusive objects, to their change as opposed to perpetuity, rest — perpetual motion being the Eternal Law, the ceaseless Breath of the Absolute. The mastery of Buddhistic dogmas can be attained only according to the Platonic method: from universals to particulars. The key to it lies in the refined and mystical tenets of spiritual influx and divine life.

Saith Buddha: Whosoever is unacquainted with my Law, † and dies in that state, must return to earth until he becomes a perfect samano [ascetic]. To achieve this object, he must destroy within himself the trinity of maya. ‡ He must extinguish his passions, unite and identify himself with the Law [the teaching of the Secret Doctrine], and comprehend the philosophy of annihilation. §

† The Secret Law, the “Doctrine of the Heart,” so called in contrast to the “Doctrine of the Eye,” or exoteric Buddhism.

‡ “Illusive matter in its triple manifestation in the earthly, and the astral or fontal soul (the body), and the Platonian dual soul — the rational and the irrational one.”

§ *Isis Unveiled*, I, 289.

No, it is not in the dead-letter of Buddhistical literature that scholars may ever hope to find the true solution of its metaphysical subtleties. Alone in all antiquity the Pythagoreans understood them perfectly, and it is on the (to the average Orientalist and the materialist) incomprehensible abstractions of Buddhism that Pythagoras grounded the principal tenets of his philosophy.

Annihilation means with the Buddhistical philosophy only a dispersion of matter, in whatever form or *semblance* of form it may be, for everything that bears a shape was created, and thus must sooner or later perish, *i.e.*, change that shape; therefore, as something temporal, though seeming to be permanent, it is but an illusion, *maya*; for as eternity has neither beginning nor end, the more or less prolonged duration of some particular form passes, as it were, like an instantaneous flash of lightning. Before we have the time to realize that we have seen it, it is gone and passed for ever; hence even our astral bodies, pure ether, are but illusions of matter so long as they retain their terrestrial outline. The latter changes, says the Buddhist, according to the merits or demerits of the person during his lifetime, and this is metempsychosis. When the spiritual Entity breaks loose forever from every particle of matter, then only it enters upon the eternal and unchangeable Nirvana. He exists in Spirit, in nothing; as a form, a shape, a semblance, he is completely annihilated, and thus will die no more, for Spirit alone is no *maya*, but the only Reality in an illusionary universe of ever-passing forms.

It is upon this Buddhist doctrine that the Pythagoreans grounded the principal tenets of their philosophy. 'Can that spirit which gives life and motion, and partakes of the nature of light, be reduced to nonentity?' they ask. 'Can that sensitive spirit in brutes which exercises memory, one of the rational faculties, die and become nothing?' And Whitelock Bulstrode in his able defence of Pythagoras expounds this doctrine by adding:

'If you say they (the brutes) breathe their spirits into the air, and there vanish, that is all that I contend for. The air indeed is the proper place to receive them, being according to Laertius full of souls; and according to Epicurus full of atoms, the principles of all things; for even this place wherein we walk and

birds fly has so much of a spiritual nature that it is invisible, and therefore may well be the receiver of forms, since the forms of all bodies are so; we can only see and hear its effects; the air itself is too fine and above the capacity of the age. What then is the ether in the region above, and what are the influences of forms that descend from thence?' The *spirits of creatures*, the Pythagoreans hold, who are emanations of the most sublimated portions of ether — emanations, BREATHS, *but not forms*. Ether is corruptible — all philosophers agree in that; — and what is incorruptible *is so far from being annihilated* when it gets rid of the *form* that it lays a good claim to IMMORTALITY.

'But what is that which has no body, no *form*; which is imponderable, invisible and indivisible — that which exists, and yet *is not*?' ask the Buddhists. 'It is Nirvana,' is the answer. It is NO-THING, not a region, but rather a state. [*Isis Unveiled*, 1, 290.]

HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY

The incarnations of the Bodhisattva Padmapani or Avalokiteshvara, of Tsongkapa, and that of Amitabha, relinquished at their death the attainment of Buddhahood, *i.e.*, the *summum bonum* of bliss, and of individual personal felicity, that they might be born again and again for the benefit of mankind.

THE MAHA CHOHAN

The one and chief attribute of the universal spiritual principle — the unconscious but ever active life-giver — is to expand and shed; that of the universal material principle to gather in and fecundate. Unconscious and non-existing when separated, they become consciousness and life when brought together.

MAHATMA M.

Fathom the nature and essence of the sixth principle of the universe and man and you will have fathomed the greatest mystery in this our world.
MAHATMA K. H.

