

SUMMING UP

The History of Creation and of this world from its beginning up to the present time is composed of *seven chapters*. The *seventh* chapter is not yet written.

T. Subba Row, *Theosophist*, 1881

THE first of these Seven chapters has been attempted and is now finished. However incomplete and feeble as an exposition, it is, at any rate, an approximation—using the word in a mathematical sense—to that which is the oldest basis for all the subsequent Cosmogonies. The attempt to render in a European tongue the grand panorama of the ever periodically recurring Law—impressed upon the plastic minds of the first races endowed with Consciousness by those who reflected the same from the Universal Mind—is daring, for no human language, save the Sanskrit—which is that *of the Gods*—can do so with any degree of adequacy. But the failures in this work must be forgiven for the sake of the motive.

As a whole, neither the foregoing nor what follows can be found in full anywhere. It is not taught in any of the six Indian schools of philosophy, for it pertains to their synthesis—the seventh, which is the Occult doctrine. It is not traced on any crumbling papyrus of Egypt, nor is it any longer graven on Assyrian tile or granite wall. The Books of the *Vedanta* (the last word of human knowledge) give out but the metaphysical aspect of this world-Cosmogony; and their priceless thesaurus, the *Upanishads*—*Upa-ni-shad* being a compound word meaning “the conquest of ignorance by the revelation of *secret, spiritual* knowledge”—require now the additional possession of a Master-key to enable the student to get at their full meaning. The reason for this I venture to state here as I learned it from a Master.

The name, “*Upanishads*,” is usually translated “esoteric doctrine.” These treatises form part of the *Sruti* or “revealed knowledge,” *Revelation*, in short, and are generally attached to the *Brahmana* portion of the Vedas,¹ as their third division. There are over 150 *Upanishads* enumerated by, and known to, Orientalists, who credit the oldest with being written *probably* about 600 years B.C.; but of *genuine* texts there does not exist a fifth of the number. The *Upanishads* are to the Vedas what the Kabala is to the Jewish Bible. They treat of and expound the secret and mystic meaning of the Vedic texts. They speak of the origin of the Universe, the nature of Deity, and of Spirit and Soul, as also of the metaphysical connection of mind and matter. In a few words: They CONTAIN *the beginning and the end of all human knowledge, but they have now ceased to REVEAL it*, since the day of Buddha. If it were otherwise, the *Upanishads* could not be called *esoteric*, since they are now openly attached to the Sacred Brahmanical books, which have, in our present age, become accessible even to the *Mlechchhas* (out-castes) and the European Orientalists. One thing in them—and this in all the *Upanishads*—invariably and constantly points to their ancient origin, and proves (*a*) that they were written, in some of their portions, *before* the caste system became the tyrannical institution which it still is; and (*b*) that half of their contents have been eliminated, while some of them were rewritten and abridged. “The great Teachers of the higher Knowledge and the Brahmins

are continually represented as going to Kshatriya (military caste) kings to become their pupils.” As Cowell pertinently remarks, the *Upanishads* “breathe an entirely different spirit” (from other Brahmanical writings), “a freedom of thought unknown in any earlier work except in the Rig Veda hymns themselves.” The second fact is explained by a tradition recorded in one of the MSS. on Buddha’s life. It says that the Upanishads were originally attached to their Brahmanas after the beginning of a reform, which led to the exclusiveness of the present caste system among the Brahmins, a few centuries after the invasion of India by the “twice-born.” They were complete in those days, and were used for the instruction of the chelas who were preparing for their initiation.

This lasted so long as the Vedas and the Brahmanas remained in the sole and exclusive keeping of the temple-Brahmins—while no one else had the right to study or even read them outside of the *sacred* caste. Then came Gautama, the Prince of Kapilavastu. After *learning* the whole of the Brahmanical wisdom in the *Rahasya* or the *Upanishads*, and finding that the teachings differed little, if at all, from those of the “Teachers of Life” inhabiting the snowy ranges of the Himalaya,² the Disciple of the Brahmins, feeling indignant because the sacred wisdom was thus withheld from all but the Brahmins, determined to save the whole world by popularizing it. Then it was that the Brahmins, seeing that their sacred knowledge and Occult wisdom was falling into the hands of the “*Mlechchhas*,” abridged the texts of the Upanishads, originally containing thrice the matter of the Vedas and the Brahmanas together, without altering, however, one word of the texts. They simply detached from the MSS. the most important portions containing the last word of the Mystery of Being. The key to the Brahmanical secret code remained henceforth with the initiates alone, and the Brahmins were thus in a position to publicly deny the correctness of Buddha’s teaching by appealing to their *Upanishads*, silenced for ever on the chief questions. Such is the esoteric tradition beyond the Himalayas.

Sri Sankaracharya, the greatest Initiate living in the historical ages, wrote many a Bhâshya on the *Upanishads*. But his original treatises, as there are reasons to suppose, have not yet fallen into the hands of the Philistines, for they are too jealously preserved in his *maths* (monasteries, *mathams*). And there are still weightier reasons to believe that the priceless Bhâshyas (Commentaries) on the esoteric doctrine of the Brahmins, by their greatest expounder, will remain for ages yet a dead letter to most of the Hindus, except the *Smârtava* Brahmins. This sect, founded by Sankaracharya, (which is still very powerful in Southern India) is now almost the only one to produce students who have preserved sufficient knowledge to comprehend the dead letter of the Bhashyas. The reason of this is that they alone, I am informed, have occasionally real Initiates at their head in their mathams, as for instance, in the “Sringa-giri,” in the Western Ghats of Mysore. On the other hand, there is no sect in that desperately exclusive caste of the Brahmins, more exclusive than is the *Smârtava*; and the reticence of its followers to say what they may know of the Occult sciences and the esoteric doctrine, is only equalled by their pride and learning.

Therefore the writer of the present statement must be prepared beforehand to meet with great opposition and even the denial of such statements as are brought forward in this work. Not that any claim to infallibility, or to perfect correctness in every detail of all that which is herein said, was ever put forward. Facts are there, and they can hardly be denied. But, owing to the intrinsic difficulties of the subjects treated, and the almost

insurmountable limitations of the English tongue (as of all other European languages) to express certain ideas, it is more than probable that the writer has failed to present the explanations in the best and in the clearest form; yet all that could be done was done under every adverse circumstance, and this is the utmost that can be expected of any writer.

Let us recapitulate and show, by the vastness of the subjects expounded, how difficult, if not impossible, it is to do them full justice.

(1.) The Secret Doctrine is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages, and its cosmogony alone is the most stupendous and elaborate system: *e.g.*, even in the exotericism of the Purânas. But such is the mysterious power of Occult symbolism, that the facts which have actually occupied countless generations of initiated seers and prophets to marshal, to set down and explain, in the bewildering series of evolutionary progress, are all recorded on a few pages of geometrical signs and glyphs. The flashing gaze of those seers has penetrated into the very kernel of matter, and recorded the soul of things there, where an ordinary profane, however learned, would have perceived but the external work of form. But modern science believes not in the “soul of things,” and hence will reject the whole system of ancient cosmogony. It is useless to say that the system in question is no fancy of one or several isolated individuals. That it is the uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of Seers whose respective experiences were made to test and to verify the traditions passed orally by one early race to another, of the teachings of higher and exalted beings, who watched over the childhood of Humanity. That for long ages, the “Wise Men” of the Fifth Race, of the stock saved and rescued from the last cataclysm and shifting of continents, had passed their lives *in learning, not teaching*. How did they do so? It is answered: by checking, testing, and verifying in every department of nature the traditions of old by the independent visions of great adepts; *i.e.*, men who have developed and perfected their physical, mental, psychic, and spiritual organisations to the utmost possible degree. No vision of one adept was accepted till it was checked and confirmed by the visions—so obtained as to stand as independent evidence—of other adepts, and by centuries of experiences.

(2.) The fundamental Law in that system, the central point from which all emerged, around and toward which all gravitates, and upon which is hung the philosophy of the rest, is the One homogeneous divine SUBSTANCE-PRINCIPLE, the one radical cause.

Some few, whose lamps shone brighter, have been led
From cause to cause to nature's secret head,
And found that one first Principle must be. . . .

It is called “Substance-Principle,” for it becomes “substance” on the plane of the manifested Universe, an illusion, while it remains a “principle” in the beginningless and endless abstract, visible and invisible SPACE. It is the omnipresent Reality: impersonal, because it contains all and everything. *Its impersonality is the fundamental conception* of the System. It is latent in every atom in the Universe, and is the Universe itself. (See in chapters on Symbolism, “Primordial Substance, and Divine Thought.”)

(3.) The Universe is the periodical manifestation of this unknown Absolute Essence. To call it “essence,” however, is to sin against the very spirit of the philosophy. For though the noun may be derived in this case from the verb *esse*, “to be,” yet IT cannot be

identified with a *being* of any kind, that can be conceived by human intellect. IT is best described as neither Spirit nor matter, but both. “Parabrahmam and Mulaprakriti” are One, in reality, yet two in the Universal conception of the manifested, even in the conception of the One Logos, its first manifestation, to which, as the able lecturer in the “Notes on the Bhagavadgita” shows, IT appears from the objective standpoint of the One Logos as Mulaprakriti and not as Parabrahmam; as its *veil* and not the one REALITY hidden behind, which is unconditioned and absolute.

(4.) The Universe is called, with everything in it, MAYA, because all is temporary therein, from the ephemeral life of a fire-fly to that of the Sun. Compared to the eternal immutability of the ONE, and the changelessness of that Principle, the Universe, with its evanescent ever-changing forms, must be necessarily, in the mind of a philosopher, no better than a will-o’-the-wisp. Yet, the Universe is real enough to the conscious beings in it, which are as unreal as it is itself.

(5.) Everything in the Universe, throughout all its kingdoms, is CONSCIOUS: *i.e.*, endowed with a consciousness of its own kind and on its own plane of perception. We men must remember that because *we* do not perceive any signs—which we can recognise—of consciousness, say, in stones, we have no right to say that *no consciousness exists there*. There is no such thing as either “dead” or “blind” matter, as there is no “Blind” or “Unconscious” Law. These find no place among the conceptions of Occult philosophy. The latter never stops at surface appearances, and for it the *noumenal* essences have more reality than their objective counterparts; it resembles therein the mediæval *Nominalists*, for whom it was the Universals that were the realities and the particulars which existed only in name and human fancy.

(6.) The Universe is worked and *guided* from *within outwards*. As above so it is below, as in heaven so on earth; and man—the microcosm and miniature copy of the macrocosm—is the living witness to this Universal Law, and to the mode of its action. We see that every *external* motion, act, gesture, whether voluntary or mechanical, organic or mental, is produced and preceded by *internal* feeling or emotion, will or volition, and thought or mind. As no outward motion or change, when normal, in man’s external body can take place unless provoked by an inward impulse, given through one of the three functions named, so with the external or manifested Universe. The whole Kosmos is guided, controlled, and animated by almost endless series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform, and who—whether we give to them one name or another, and call them Dhyān-Chohans or Angels—are “messengers” in the sense only that they are the agents of Karmic and Cosmic Laws. They vary infinitely in their respective degrees of consciousness and intelligence; and to call them all pure Spirits without any of the earthly alloy “which time is wont to prey upon” is only to indulge in poetical fancy. For each of these Beings either *was*, or prepares to become, a man, if not in the present, then in a past or a coming cycle (Manvantara). They are *perfected*, when not *incipient*, men; and differ morally from the terrestrial human beings on their higher (less material) spheres, only in that they are devoid of the feeling of personality and of the *human* emotional nature—two purely earthly characteristics. The former, or the “perfected,” have become free from those feelings, because (a) they have no longer fleshly bodies—an ever-numbing weight on the Soul; and (b) the pure spiritual element being left untrammelled and more free, they are less influenced by *maya* than man can ever be, unless he is an adept who keeps his two personalities—the spiritual and the

physical—entirely separated. The incipient monads, having never had terrestrial bodies yet, can have no sense of personality or EGO-ism. That which is meant by “personality,” being a limitation and a relation, or, as defined by Coleridge, “individuality existing in itself but with a nature as a ground,” the term cannot of course be applied to non-human entities; but, as a fact insisted upon by generations of Seers, none of these Beings, high or low, have either individuality or personality as separate Entities, *i.e.*, they have no individuality in the sense in which a man says, “*I am myself and no one else;*” in other words, they are conscious of no such distinct separateness as men and things have on earth. Individuality is the characteristic of their respective hierarchies, not of their units; and these characteristics vary only with the degree of the plane to which those hierarchies belong: the nearer to the region of Homogeneity and the One Divine, the purer and the less accentuated that individuality in the Hierarchy. They are finite, in all respects, with the exception of their higher principles—the immortal sparks reflecting the universal divine flame—individualized and separated only on the spheres of Illusion by a differentiation as illusive as the rest. They are “Living Ones,” because they are the streams projected on the Kosmic screen of illusion from the ABSOLUTE LIFE; beings in whom life cannot become extinct, before the fire of ignorance is extinct in those who sense these “Lives.” Having sprung into being under the quickening influence of the uncreated beam, the reflection of the great Central Sun that radiates on the shores of the river of Life, it is the inner principle in them which belongs to the waters of immortality, while its differentiated clothing is as perishable as man’s body. Therefore Young was right in saying that

“Angels are men of a superior kind”

and no more. They are neither “ministering” nor “protecting” angels; nor are they “Harbingers of the Most High” still less the “Messengers of wrath” of any God such as man’s fancy has created. To appeal to their protection is as foolish as to believe that their sympathy may be secured by any kind of propitiation; for they are, as much as man himself is, the slaves and creatures of immutable Karmic and Kosmic law. The reason for it is evident. Having no elements of personality in their essence they can have no personal qualities, such as attributed by men, in their exoteric religions, to their anthropomorphic God—a jealous and exclusive God who rejoices and feels wrathful, is pleased with sacrifice, and is more despotic in his vanity than any finite foolish man. Man, as shown in Book II., being a compound of the essences of all those celestial Hierarchies may succeed in making himself, as such, superior, in one sense, to any hierarchy or class, or even combination of them. “Man can neither propitiate nor command the *Devas,*” it is said. But, by paralyzing his lower personality, and arriving thereby at the full knowledge of the *non-separateness* of his higher SELF from the One absolute SELF, man can, even during his terrestrial life, become as “One of Us.” Thus it is, by eating of the fruit of knowledge which dispels ignorance, that man becomes like one of the Elohim or the Dhyanis; and once on *their* plane the Spirit of Solidarity and perfect Harmony, which reigns in every Hierarchy, must extend over him and protect him in every particular.

The chief difficulty which prevents men of science from believing in divine as well as in nature Spirits is their materialism. The main impediment before the Spiritualist which hinders him from believing in the same, while preserving a blind belief in the “Spirits” of the Departed, is the general ignorance of all, except some Occultists and Kabalists, about

the true essence and nature of matter. It is on the acceptance or rejection of the theory of the *Unity of all in Nature, in its ultimate Essence*, that mainly rests the belief or unbelief in the existence around us of other conscious beings besides the Spirits of the Dead.

It is on the right comprehension of the primeval Evolution of Spirit-Matter and its real essence that the student has to depend for the further elucidation in his mind of the Occult Cosmogony, and for the only sure clue which can guide his subsequent studies.

In sober truth, as just shown, every “Spirit” so-called is either a *disembodied or a future man*. As from the highest Archangel (Dhyan Chohan) down to the last conscious “Builder” (the inferior class of Spiritual Entities), all such are *men*, having lived æons ago, in other Manvantaras, on this or other Spheres; so the inferior, semi-intelligent and non-intelligent Elementals—are all *future men*. That fact alone—that a Spirit is endowed with intelligence—is a proof to the Occultist that that Being must have been a *man*, and acquired his knowledge and intelligence throughout the human cycle. There is but one indivisible and absolute Omniscience and Intelligence in the Universe, and this thrills throughout every atom and infinitesimal point of the whole finite Kosmos which hath no bounds, and which people call SPACE, considered independently of anything contained in it. But the first differentiation of its *reflection* in the manifested World is purely Spiritual, and the Beings generated in it are not endowed with a consciousness that has any relation to the one we conceive of. They can have no human consciousness or Intelligence before they have acquired such, personally and individually. This may be a mystery, yet it is a fact, in Esoteric philosophy, and a very apparent one too.

The whole order of nature evinces a progressive march towards a *higher life*. There is design in the action of the seemingly blindest forces. The whole process of evolution with its endless adaptations is a proof of this. The immutable laws that weed out the weak and feeble species, to make room for the strong, and which ensure the “survival of the fittest,” though so cruel in their immediate action—all are working toward the grand end. The very *fact* that adaptations *do* occur, that the fittest *do* survive in the struggle for existence, shows that what is called “unconscious Nature”³ is in reality an aggregate of forces manipulated by semi-intelligent beings (Elementals) guided by High Planetary Spirits, (Dhyan Chohans), whose collective aggregate forms the manifested *verbum* of the unmanifested LOGOS, and constitutes at one and the same time the MIND of the Universe and its immutable LAW.

Three distinct representations of the Universe in its three distinct aspects are impressed upon our thought by the esoteric philosophy: the PRE-EXISTING (evolved from) the EVER-EXISTING; and the PHENOMENAL—the world of illusion, the reflection, and shadow thereof. During the great mystery and drama of life known as the Manvantara, real Kosmos is like the object placed behind the white screen upon which are thrown the Chinese shadows, called forth by the magic lantern. The actual figures and things remain invisible, while the wires of evolution are pulled by the unseen hands; and men and things are thus but the reflections, *on* the white field, of the realities *behind* the snares of *Mahamaya*, or the great Illusion. This was taught in every philosophy, in every religion, *ante* as well as *post* diluvian, in India and Chaldea, by the Chinese as by the Grecian Sages. In the former countries these three Universes were allegorized, in exoteric teachings, by the three trinities emanating from the Central eternal germ and forming with it a Supreme Unity: the *initial*, the *manifested*, and the *Creative Triad*, or the three in One. The last is but the symbol, in its concrete expression, of the first *ideal* two. Hence

Esoteric philosophy passes over the necessarianism of this purely metaphysical conception, and calls the first one, only, the Ever Existing. This is the view of every one of the six great schools of Indian philosophy—the *six principles of that unit body of WISDOM of which the “gnosis,” the hidden knowledge, is the seventh.*

The writer hopes that, superficially handled as may be the comments on the Seven Stanzas, enough has been given in this cosmogonic portion of the work to show Archaic teachings to be more *scientific* (in the modern sense of the word) on their very face, than any other ancient Scriptures left to be regarded and judged on their exoteric aspect. Since, however, as confessed before, this work *withholds far more than it gives out*, the student is invited to use his own intuitions. Our chief care is to elucidate that which has already been given out, and, to our regret, very incorrectly at times; to supplement the knowledge hinted at—whenever and wherever possible—by additional matter; and to bulwark our doctrines against the too strong attacks of modern Sectarianism, and more especially against those of our latter-day Materialism, very often miscalled Science, whereas, in reality, the words “Scientists” and “Sciologists” ought alone to bear the responsibility for the many illogical theories offered to the world. In its great ignorance, the public, while blindly accepting everything that emanates from “authorities,” and feeling it to be its duty to regard every *dictum* coming from a man of Science as a proven fact—the public, we say, is taught to scoff at anything brought forward from “heathen” sources. Therefore, as materialistic Scientists can be fought solely with their own weapons—those of controversy and argument—an *Addendum* is added to every Book contrasting our respective views and showing how even great authorities may often err. We believe that this can be done effectually by showing the weak points of our opponents, and by proving their too frequent sophisms—made to pass for scientific *dicta*—to be incorrect. We hold to Hermes and his “Wisdom”—in its universal character; they—to Aristotle as against intuition and the experience of the ages, fancying that Truth is the exclusive property of the Western world. Hence the disagreement. As Hermes says, “Knowledge differs much from sense; for sense is of things that surmount it, but Knowledge (*gyi*) is the end of sense”—*i.e.*, of the illusion of our physical brain and its intellect; thus emphasizing the contrast between the laboriously acquired knowledge of the senses and mind (*manas*), and the intuitive omniscience of the Spiritual divine Soul—Buddhi.

Whatever may be the destiny of these actual writings in a remote future, we hope to have proven so far the following facts:

(1) The Secret Doctrine teaches no *Atheism*, except in the Hindu sense of the word *nastika*, or the rejection of *idols*, including every anthropomorphic god. In this sense every Occultist is a *Nastika*.

(2) It admits a Logos or a collective “Creator” of the Universe; a *Demi-urgos*—in the sense implied when one speaks of an “Architect” as the “Creator” of an edifice, whereas that Architect has never touched one stone of it, but, while furnishing the plan, left all the manual labour to the masons; in our case the plan was furnished by the Ideation of the Universe, and the constructive labour was left to the Hosts of intelligent Powers and Forces. But that *Demiurgos* is no *personal* deity,—*i.e.*, an imperfect *extra-cosmic god*,—but only the aggregate of the Dhyān-Chohans and the other forces.

As to the latter—

(3) They are dual in their character; being composed of (*a*) the irrational *brute energy*, inherent in matter, and (*b*) the intelligent soul or cosmic consciousness which directs and

guides that energy, and which is the *Dhyan-Chohan*ic thought reflecting the Ideation of the Universal mind. This results in a perpetual series of physical manifestations and moral effects on Earth, during manvantaric periods, the whole being subservient to Karma. As that process is not always perfect; and since, however many proofs it may exhibit of a guiding intelligence behind the veil, it still shows gaps and flaws, and even results very often in evident failures—therefore, neither the collective Host (Demiurgos), nor any of the working powers individually, are proper subjects for divine honours or worship. All are entitled to the grateful reverence of Humanity, however, and man ought to be ever striving to help the divine evolution of *Ideas*, by becoming to the best of his ability a *co-worker with nature* in the cyclic task. The ever unknowable and incognizable *Karana* alone, the *Causeless Cause* of all causes, should have its shrine and altar on the holy and ever untrodden ground of our heart—invisible, intangible, unmentioned, save through “the still small voice” of our spiritual consciousness. Those who worship before it, ought to do so in the silence and the sanctified solitude of their Souls 4 ; making their spirit the sole mediator between them and the *Universal Spirit*, their good actions the only priests, and their sinful intentions the only visible and objective sacrificial victims to the *Presence*. (See Part II., “*On the Hidden Deity*.”)

(4) Matter is *Eternal*. It is the *Upadhi* (the physical basis) for the One infinite Universal Mind to build thereon its ideations. Therefore, the Esotericists maintain that there is no inorganic or *dead* matter in nature, the distinction between the two made by Science being as unfounded as it is arbitrary and devoid of reason. Whatever Science may think, however—and *exact Science* is a fickle dame, as we all know by experience—Occultism knows and teaches differently, from time immemorial—from *Manu* and *Hermes* down to Paracelsus and his successors.

Thus Hermes, the thrice great Trismegistus, says: “Oh, my son, matter *becomes*; formerly it *was*; for matter is the vehicle of becoming.” 5 Becoming is the mode of activity of the uncreate deity. Having been endowed with the germs of becoming, matter (objective) is brought into birth, for the creative force fashions it *according to the ideal forms*. Matter not yet engendered had no form; it becomes when it is put into operation.” (*The Definitions of Asclepius*, p. 134, “*Virgin of the World*.”)

“Everything is the product of one universal creative effort. . . . There is nothing *dead*, in Nature. *Everything is organic and living*, and therefore the whole world appears to be a living organism.” (Paracelsus, “*Philosophia ad Athenienses*,” F. Hartmann’s translations, p. 44.)

(5.) The Universe was evolved out of its ideal plan, upheld through Eternity in the unconsciousness of that which the Vedantins call Parabrahm. This is practically identical with the conclusions of the highest Western Philosophy—the innate, eternal, and self-existing *Ideas* of Plato, now reflected by Von Hartmann. The “unknowable” of Herbert Spencer bears only a faint resemblance to that transcendental *Reality* believed in by Occultists, often appearing merely a personification of a “*force behind phenomena*”—an infinite and eternal *Energy* from which all things proceed, while the author of the “*Philosophy of the Unconscious*” has come (in this respect only) as near to a solution of the great *Mystery* as mortal man can. Few were those, whether in ancient or mediæval philosophy, who have dared to approach the subject or even hint at it. Paracelsus mentions it inferentially. His ideas are admirably synthesized by Dr. F. Hartmann, F.T.S., in his “*Life of Paracelsus*.”

All the *Christian* Kabalists understood well the Eastern root idea: The active Power, the “Perpetual motion of the great Breath” only awakens Kosmos at the dawn of every new Period, setting it into motion by means of the two contrary Forces,⁶ and thus causing it to become objective on the plane of Illusion. In other words, that dual motion transfers Kosmos from the plane of the Eternal Ideal into that of finite manifestation, or from the *Noumenal* to the *Phenomenal* plane. Everything that *is, was, and will be*, eternally IS, even the countless forms, which are finite and perishable only in their objective, not in their *ideal* Form. They existed as Ideas, in the Eternity,⁷ and, when they pass away, will exist as reflections. Neither the form of man, nor that of any animal, plant or stone has ever been *created*, and it is only on this plane of ours that it commenced “becoming,” *i.e.*, objectivising into its present materiality, or expanding *from within outwards*, from the most sublimated and supersensuous essence into its grossest appearance. Therefore *our* human forms have existed in the Eternity as astral or ethereal prototypes; according to which models, the Spiritual Beings (or Gods) whose duty it was to bring them into objective being and terrestrial Life, evolved the protoplasmic forms of the future *Egos* from *their own essence*. After which, when this human *Upadhi*, or basic mould was ready, the natural terrestrial Forces began to work on those supersensuous moulds *which contained, besides their own, the elements of all the past vegetable and future animal forms of this globe in them*. Therefore, man’s *outward* shell passed through every vegetable and animal body before it assumed the human shape. As this will be fully described in Book II., with the Commentaries thereupon, there is no need to say more of it here.

According to the Hermetico-Kabalistic philosophy of Paracelsus, it is Yliaster—the ancestor of the just-born *Protyle*, introduced by Mr. Crookes in chemistry—or primordial *Protomateria* that evolved out of itself the Kosmos.

“When Evolution took place the Yliaster divided itself. . . . melted and dissolved, developing from within itself the *Ideos* or Chaos, called respectively *Mysterium magnum, Iliados, Limbus Major*, or Primordial Matter. This Primordial essence is of a monistic nature, and manifests itself not only as vital activity, a spiritual force, an invisible, incomprehensible, and indescribable power, but also as vital matter of which the substance of living beings consists.” In this *Ideos* of primordial matter, or the *proto-ilos*—which is the matrix of all created things—is contained the substance from which everything is formed. It is the Chaos . . . out of which the Macrocosm, and, later on, by evolution and division in *Mysteria Specialia*,⁸ each separate being, came into existence. “All things and all elementary substances were contained in it *in potentia* but not in *actu*”—which makes the translator, Dr. F. Hartmann, justly observe that “it seems that Paracelsus anticipated the modern discovery of the ‘potency of matter’ three hundred years ago” (P. 42).

This Magnus Limbus, then, or Yliaster of Paracelsus, is simply our old friend “Father-Mother,” *within*, before it appeared in Space, of the second and other Stanzas. It is the universal matrix of Kosmos, personified in the dual character of Macro- and Microcosm (or the Universe and our Globe)⁹ by Aditi-Prakriti, the Spiritual and the physical nature. For we find it explained in Paracelsus that “the Magnus Limbus is the nursery out of which all creatures have grown, in the same sense as a tree grows out of a small seed; with the difference, however, that the great Limbus takes its origin from the Word, while the Limbus minor (the terrestrial seed or sperm) takes it from the earth. The great Limbus

is the seed out of which all beings have come, and the little Limbus is each ultimate being that reproduces its form, and that has itself been produced by the ‘great.’ The latter possesses all the qualifications of the great one, in the same sense as a son has an organization similar to that of his father.” (*See Comment. Book II. para. iii.*) . . . “As Yliaster dissolved, *Ares*, the dividing, differentiating, and individualising power (*Fohat*, another old friend,) . . . began to act. All production took place in consequence of separation. There were produced out of the Ideos, the elements of Fire, Water, Air and Earth, whose birth, however, did not take place in a material mode, or by simple separation,” but by spiritual and dynamical, not even complex, combinations—e.g., mechanical *mixture* as opposed to *chemical* combination—just as fire may come out of a pebble, or a tree out of a seed, although there is originally no fire in the pebble, nor a tree in the seed. Spirit is living, and Life is Spirit, and Life and Spirit (*Prakriti Purusha*) (?) produce all things, but they are essentially one and not two. . . . The elements too, have each one its own Yliaster, because all the activity of matter in every form is only an effluvium of the same fount. But as from the seed grow the roots with their fibres, and after that the stalk with its branches and leaves, and lastly the flowers and seeds; likewise all beings were born from the elements, and consist of elementary substances out of which other forms may come into existence, bearing the characteristics of their parents.” (“This doctrine, preached 300 years ago,” remarks the translator, “is identical with the one that has revolutionized modern thought, after having been put into new shape and elaborated by Darwin. It was still more elaborated by Kapila in the Sankhya philosophy”) The elements as the mothers of all creatures *are of an invisible, spiritual nature, and have souls.*¹⁰ They all spring from the “*Mysterium Magnum.*” (*Philosophia ad Athenienses.*)

Compare this with Vishnu Purâna.

“From *Pradhâna* (primordial substance) presided over by *Kshetrajna* (embodied Spirit?) proceeds the evolution of those qualities..... From the great Principle *Mahat* (Universal Intellect, or mind)..... proceeds the origin of the subtle elements and from these the organs of sense (*Book I, ii.*).

Thus it may be shown that all the fundamental truths of nature were universal in antiquity, and that the basic ideas upon spirit, matter, and the universe, or upon God, Substance, and man, were identical. Taking the two most ancient religious philosophies on the globe, Hinduism and Hermetism, from the scriptures of India and Egypt, the identity of the two is easily recognisable.

The Secret Doctrine, i p. 269–285

H.P. Blavatsky

Footnotes

- 1 “The Vedas have a distinct dual meaning—one expressed by the literal sense of the words, the other indicated by the metre and the *swara*—intonation—which are as the life of the Vedas Learned pundits and philologists of course deny that *swara* has anything to do with philosophy or ancient esoteric doctrines; but the mysterious connection between *swara* and *light* is one of its most profound secrets.” (T. Subba Row, *Five Years of Theosophy*, p. 154.)

- 2 Also called “the Sons of Wisdom,” and of the “Fire-Mist” and the “Brothers of the Sun” in the Chinese records. *Si-dzang* (Tibet) is mentioned in the MSS. of the sacred library of the province of Fo-Kien, as the great seat of Occult learning from time immemorial, ages before Buddha. The Emperor Yu, the “great” (2,207 years B.C.), a pious mystic and great adept, is said to have obtained his knowledge from the “great teachers of the Snowy Range” in Si-dzang.
- 3 Nature taken in its abstract sense, *cannot* be “unconscious,” as it is the emanation from, and thus an aspect (on the manifested plane) of the ABSOLUTE consciousness. Where is that daring man who would presume to deny to vegetation and even to minerals *a consciousness of their own*. All he can say is, that this consciousness is beyond his comprehension.
- 4 “When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are . . . but enter into *thine inner chamber and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.*” *Matt. vi.*) Our Father is *within us* “in Secret,” our 7th principle, in the “inner chamber” of our Soul perception. “The Kingdom of Heaven” and of God “*is within us*” says Jesus, not *outside*. Why are Christians so absolutely blind to the self-evident meaning of the words of wisdom they delight in mechanically repeating?
- 5 To this the late Mrs. (Dr.) Kingsford, the able translator and compiler of the Hermetic Fragments (see “*The Virgin of the World*”) remarks in a foot-note; “Dr. Menard observes that in Greek the same word signifies *to be born* and *to become*. The idea here is that the material of the world is in its essence eternal, but that before creation or ‘becoming’ it is in a passive and motionless condition. Thus it ‘was’ before being put into operation; now it ‘becomes,’ that is, it is mobile and progressive.” And she adds the purely Vedantic doctrine of the Hermetic philosophy that “Creation is thus the period of activity (Manvantara) of God, who, according to Hermetic thought (or *which*, according to the Vedantin) has two modes—Activity or Existence, God evolved (*Deus explicitus*); and Passivity of Being (Pralaya) God involved (*Deus implicitus*). Both modes are perfect and complete, as are the waking and sleeping states of man. Fichte, the German philosopher, distinguished Being (Seyn) as One, which we know only through existence (Dasein) as the Manifold. This view is thoroughly Hermetic. The ‘Ideal Forms’ are the archetypal or formative ideas of the Neo-Platonists; the eternal and subjective concepts of things subsisting in the divine mind prior to ‘becoming’ ” (p. 134).
- 6 The centripetal and the centrifugal forces, which are male and female, positive and negative, physical and spiritual, the two being the one *Primordial Force*.
- 7 Occultism teaches that no form can be given to anything, either by nature or by man, whose ideal type does not already exist on the subjective plane. More than this; that no such form or shape can possibly enter man’s consciousness, or evolve in his imagination, which does not exist in prototype, at least as an approximation.
- 8 This word is explained by Dr. Hartmann from the original texts of Paracelsus before him, as follows. According to this great Rosicrucian: “Mysterium is everything out of which something may be developed, which is only germinally contained in it. A seed is the ‘Mysterium’ of a plant, an egg that of a living bird, etc.”
- 9 It is only the mediæval Kabalists who, following the Jewish and one or two Neo-Platonists, applied the term *Microcosm* to man. Ancient philosophy called the Earth the Microcosm of the Macrocosm, and man the outcome of the two.
- 10 The Eastern Occultist says—“are guided and informed by the Spiritual Beings” the Workmen in the invisible worlds and behind the veil of Occult nature, or nature *in Abscondito*.