

The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis Of Science, Religion, And Philosophy. By H. P. Blavatsky

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The Secret Doctrine establishes three fundamental propositions: --

(a) An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude. It is beyond the range and reach of thought -- in the words of Mandukya, "unthinkable and unspeakable."

To render these ideas clearer to the general reader, let him set out with the postulate that there is one absolute Reality which antecedes all manifested, conditioned, being. This Infinite and Eternal Cause -- dimly formulated in the "Unconscious" and "Unknowable" of current European philosophy -- is the rootless root of "all that was, is, or ever shall be." It is of course devoid of all attributes and is essentially without any relation to manifested, finite Being. It is "Be-ness" rather than Being (in Sanskrit, *Sat*), and is beyond all thought or speculation.

This "Be-ness" is symbolised in the Secret Doctrine under two aspects. On the one hand, absolute abstract Space, representing bare subjectivity, the one thing which no human mind can either exclude from any conception, or conceive of by itself. On the other, absolute Abstract Motion representing Unconditioned Consciousness. Even our Western thinkers have shown that Consciousness is inconceivable to us apart from change, and motion best symbolises change, its essential characteristic. This latter aspect of the one Reality, is also symbolised by the term "The Great Breath," a symbol sufficiently graphic to need no further elucidation. Thus, then, the first fundamental axiom of the Secret Doctrine is this metaphysical ONE ABSOLUTE -- BE-NESS -- symbolised by finite intelligence as the theological Trinity.

It may, however, assist the student if a few further explanations are given here.

Herbert Spencer has of late so far modified his Agnosticism, as to assert that the nature of the "First Cause,"* which the Occultist more logically derives from the "Causeless Cause," the "Eternal," and the "Unknowable," may be essentially the same as that of the Consciousness which wells up within us: in short, that the impersonal reality pervading

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*The "first" presupposes necessarily something which is the "first brought forth, the first in time, space, and rank" -- and therefore finite and conditioned. The "first" [[Footnote continued on next page]]

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the Kosmos is the pure noumenon of thought. This advance on his part brings him very near to the esoteric and Vedantin tenet.*

Parabrahm (the One Reality, the Absolute) is the field of Absolute Consciousness, *i.e.*, that Essence which is out of all relation to conditioned existence, and of which conscious existence is a conditioned symbol. But once that we pass in thought from this (to us) Absolute Negation, duality supervenes in the contrast of Spirit (or consciousness) and Matter, Subject and Object.

Spirit (or Consciousness) and Matter are, however, to be regarded, not as independent realities, but as the two facets or aspects of the Absolute (Parabrahm), which constitute the basis of conditioned Being whether subjective or objective.

Considering this metaphysical triad as the Root from which proceeds all manifestation, the great Breath assumes the character of precosmic Ideation. It is the *fons et origo* of force and of all individual consciousness, and supplies the guiding intelligence in the vast scheme of cosmic Evolution. On the other hand, precosmic root-substance (*Mulaprakriti*) is that aspect of the Absolute which underlies all the objective planes of Nature.

Just as pre-Cosmic Ideation is the root of all individual consciousness, so pre-Cosmic Substance is the substratum of matter in the various grades of its differentiation.

Hence it will be apparent that the contrast of these two aspects of the Absolute is essential to the existence of the "Manifested Universe." Apart from Cosmic Substance, Cosmic Ideation could not manifest as individual consciousness, since it is only through a vehicle** of matter that consciousness wells up as "I am I," a physical basis

being necessary to focus a ray of the Universal Mind at a certain stage of complexity. Again, apart from Cosmic Ideation, Cosmic Substance would remain an empty abstraction, and no emergence of consciousness could ensue.

The "Manifested Universe," therefore, is pervaded by duality, which is, as it were, the very essence of its EX-istence as "manifestation."

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[[Footnote continued from previous page]] *cannot be the absolute*, for it is a manifestation. Therefore, Eastern Occultism calls the Abstract All the "Causeless One Cause," the "Rootless Root," and limits the "First Cause" to the *Logos*, in the sense that Plato gives to this term.

* See Mr. Subba Row's four able lectures on the Bhagavad Gita, "Theosophist," February, 1887.

** Called in Sanskrit: "Upadhi."

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But just as the opposite poles of subject and object, spirit and matter, are but aspects of the One Unity in which they are synthesized, so, in the manifested Universe, there is "that" which links spirit to matter, subject to object.

This something, at present unknown to Western speculation, is called by the occultists Fohat. It is the "bridge" by which the "Ideas" existing in the "Divine Thought" are impressed on Cosmic substance as the "laws of Nature." Fohat is thus the dynamic energy of Cosmic Ideation; or, regarded from the other side, it is the intelligent medium, the guiding power of all manifestation, the "Thought Divine" transmitted and made manifest through the Dhyana Chohans,* the Architects of the visible World. Thus from Spirit, or Cosmic Ideation, comes our consciousness; from Cosmic Substance the several vehicles in which that consciousness is individualised and attains to self -- or reflective -- consciousness; while Fohat, in its various manifestations, is the mysterious link between Mind and Matter, the animating principle electrifying every atom into life.

The following summary will afford a clearer idea to the reader.

(1.) The ABSOLUTE; the *Parabrahm* of the Vedantins or the one Reality, SAT, which is, as Hegel says, both Absolute Being and Non-Being.

(2.) The first manifestation, the impersonal, and, in philosophy, *unmanifested* Logos, the precursor of the "manifested." This is the "First Cause," the "Unconscious" of European Pantheists.

(3.) Spirit-matter, LIFE; the "Spirit of the Universe," the Purusha and Prakriti, or the *second* Logos.

(4.) Cosmic Ideation, MAHAT or Intelligence, the Universal World-Soul; the Cosmic Noumenon of Matter, the basis of the intelligent operations in and of Nature, also called MAHA-BUDDHI.

The ONE REALITY; its *dual* aspects in the conditioned Universe.

Further, the Secret Doctrine affirms: --

(b.) The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; periodically "the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing," called "the manifesting stars," and the "sparks of Eternity." "The Eternity of the Pilgrim"*** is like a wink

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* Called by Christian theology: Archangels, Seraphs, etc., etc.

** "Pilgrim" is the appellation given to our *Monad* (the two in one) during its cycle of incarnations. It is the only immortal and eternal principle in us, being an indivisible part of the integral whole -- the Universal Spirit, from which it emanates, and into which it is absorbed at the end of the cycle. When it is said to emanate from the one
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of the Eye of Self-Existence (Book of Dzyan.) "The appearance and disappearance of Worlds is like a regular tidal ebb of flux and reflux." (See Part II., "Days and Nights of Brahma.")

This second assertion of the Secret Doctrine is the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, which physical science has observed and recorded in all departments of nature. An alternation such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a fact so common, so perfectly universal and without exception, that it is easy to comprehend that in it we see one of the absolutely fundamental laws of the universe.

Moreover, the Secret Doctrine teaches: --

(c) The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul -- a spark of the former -- through the Cycle of Incarnation (or "Necessity") in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term. In other words, no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth principle, -- or the OVER-SOUL, -- has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyani-Buddha). The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations. This is why the Hindus say that the Universe is Brahma and Brahmâ, for Brahma is in every atom of the universe, the six principles in Nature being all the outcome -- the variously differentiated aspects -- of the SEVENTH and ONE, the only reality in the Universe whether Cosmical or micro-cosmical; and also why the permutations (psychic, spiritual and physical), on the plane of manifestation and form, of the sixth (Brahmâ the vehicle of Brahma) are viewed by metaphysical

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[[Footnote continued from previous page]] spirit, an awkward and incorrect expression has to be used, for lack of appropriate words in English. The Vedantins call it Sutratma (Thread-Soul), but their explanation, too, differs somewhat from that of the occultists; to explain which difference, however, is left to the Vedantins themselves.

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antiphrasis as illusive and Mayavic. For although the root of every atom individually and of every form collectively, is that seventh principle or the one Reality, still, in its manifested phenomenal and temporary appearance, it is no better than an evanescent illusion of our senses. (See, for clearer definition, Addendum "Gods, Monads and Atoms," and also "Theophania," "Bodhisatvas and Reincarnation," etc., etc.)

In its absoluteness, the One Principle under its two aspects (of Parabrahmam and Mulaprakriti) is sexless, unconditioned and eternal. Its periodical (manvantaric) emanation -- or primal radiation -- is also One, androgynous and phenomenally finite. When the radiation radiates in its turn, all its radiations are also androgynous, to become male and female principles in their lower aspects. After Pralaya, whether the great or the minor Pralaya (the latter leaving the worlds in *statu quo**), the first that re-awakes to active life is the plastic A'kasa, Father-Mother, the Spirit and Soul of Ether, or the plane on the surface of the Circle. Space is called the "Mother" before its Cosmic activity, and Father-Mother at the first stage of re-awakening. (See Comments, Stanza II.) In the Kabala it is also Father-Mother-Son. But whereas in the Eastern doctrine, these are the Seventh Principle of the manifested Universe, or its "Atma-Buddhi-Manas" (Spirit, Soul, Intelligence), the triad branching off and dividing into the seven cosmical and seven human principles, in the Western Kabala of the Christian mystics it is the Triad or Trinity, and with their occultists, the male-female Jehovah, Jah-Havah. In this lies the whole difference between the esoteric and the Christian trinities. The Mystics and the Philosophers, the Eastern and Western Pantheists, synthesize their pregenetic triad in the pure divine abstraction. The orthodox, anthropomorphize it. *Hiranyagarbha*, *Hari*, and *Sankara* -- the three hypostases of the manifesting "Spirit of the Supreme Spirit" (by which title Prithivi -- the Earth -- greets Vishnu in his first Avatar) -- are the purely metaphysical abstract qualities of formation, preservation, and destruction, and are the three divine Avasthas (lit. hypostases) of that which "does


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* It is not the physical organisms that remain in *statu quo*, least of all their psychical principles, during the great Cosmic or even Solar pralayas, but only their Akasic or astral "photographs." But during the minor pralayas, once over-taken by the "Night," the planets remain intact, though dead, as a huge animal, caught and embedded in the polar ice, remains the same for ages.

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not perish with created things" (or Achyuta, a name of Vishnu); whereas the orthodox Christian separates his personal creative Deity into the three personages of the Trinity, and admits of no higher Deity. The latter, in Occultism, is the abstract Triangle; with the orthodox, the perfect Cube. The creative god or the aggregate gods are regarded by the Eastern philosopher as *Bhrantidarsanatah* -- "false apprehension," something "conceived of, by reason of erroneous appearances, as a material form," and explained as arising from the illusive conception of the Egotistic personal and human Soul (lower fifth principle). It is beautifully expressed in a new translation of Vishnu Purana. "That Brahma in its totality has essentially the aspect of Prakriti, both evolved and unevolved (Mulaprakriti), and also the aspect of Spirit and the aspect of Time. Spirit, O twice born, is the leading aspect of the Supreme Brahma.* The next is a twofold aspect, -- Prakriti, both evolved and unevolved, and is the time last." Kronos is shown in the Orphic theogony as being also a generated god or agent.

At this stage of the re-awakening of the Universe, the sacred symbolism represents it as a perfect Circle with the (root) point in the Centre. This sign was universal, therefore we find it in the Kabala also. The Western Kabala, however, now in the hands of Christian mystics, ignores it altogether, though it is plainly shown in the Zohar. These

sectarians begin at the end, and show as the symbol of pregenetic Kosmos this sign , calling it "the Union of the Rose and Cross," the great mystery of occult generation, from whence the name -- Rosicrucians (Rose Cross)!

As may be judged, however, from the most important, as the best known of the Rosicrucians' symbols, there is one which has never been hitherto understood even by modern mystics. It is that of the "Pelican" tearing open its breast to feed its seven little ones -- the real creed of the Brothers of the Rosie-Cross and a direct outcome from the Eastern

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* Thus Spencer, who, nevertheless, like Schopenhauer and von Hartmann, only reflects an aspect of the old esoteric philosophers, and hence lands his readers on the bleak shore of Agnostic despair -- reverently formulates the grand mystery; "that which persists unchanging in quantity, but ever changing in form, under these sensible appearances which the Universe presents to us, is an unknown and unknowable power, which we are obliged to recognise as without limit in Space and without beginning or end in time." It is only daring Theology -- never Science or philosophy -- which seeks to gauge the Infinite and unveil the Fathomless and Unknowable.

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Secret Doctrine. Brahma (neuter) is called Kalahansa, meaning, as explained by Western Orientalists, the Eternal Swan or goose (see Stanza III., Comment. 8), and so is Brahma, the Creator. A great mistake is thus brought under notice; it is Brahma (neuter) who ought to be referred to as Hansa-vahana (He who uses the swan as his Vehicle) and not Brahma the Creator, who is the real Kalahansa, while Brahma (neuter) is hamsa, and "A-hamsa," as will be explained in the Commentary. Let it be understood that the terms Brahma and Parabrahmam are not used here because they belong to our Esoteric nomenclature, but simply because they are more familiar to the students in the West. Both are the perfect equivalents of our one, three, and seven vowelled terms, which stand for the ONE ALL, and the One "All in all."

Such are the basic conceptions on which the Secret Doctrine rests.

It would not be in place here to enter upon any defense or proof of their inherent reasonableness; nor can I pause to show how they are, in fact, contained -- though too often under a misleading guise -- in every system of thought or philosophy worthy of the name.

Once that the reader has gained a clear comprehension of them and realized the light which they throw on every problem of life, they will need no further justification in his eyes, because their truth will be to him as evident as the sun in heaven. I pass on, therefore, to the subject matter of the Stanzas as given in this volume, adding a skeleton outline of them, in the hope of thereby rendering the task of the student more easy, by placing before him in a few words the general conception therein explained.