

SOUL, LIFE, AND SEVENFOLD MAN

Articles by H. P. Blavatsky

THE POPULAR IDEA OF SOUL-SURVIVAL

CLASSIFICATION OF "PRINCIPLES"

RE-CLASSIFICATION OF PRINCIPLES

TRANSMIGRATION OF THE LIFE ATOMS

THE LIFE PRINCIPLE

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FOREWORD

IN the third issue of the *Theosophist*—for December, 1879—H.P. Blavatsky printed a long article, “The Popular Idea of Soul-Survival,” as a means of showing the universal belief in the survival of the soul after death. Hardly a people can be found who are without some popular idea of immortality. And she is able to demonstrate that even “primitive” tribes, such as the Aztec Indians in Nicaragua, had convictions which are in some ways more logical than those of the Spiritualists. Her purpose, it seems clear, is to illustrate this prevalence of the idea of soul-survival, while pointing to the divergences of many of the old beliefs from the doctrines of the Spiritualists. The Hindus want no commerce with the “ghosts” of the departed, and the Neoplatonic writer and teacher, Porphyry, warned against the evil of which such “demons” are capable. “The agreement we find,” she says, “between this blind popular instinct and the wise conclusion of some of the greatest philosophers, and even modern specialists, is very remarkable.”

The next article, “Classification of ‘Principles’,” introduces the reader to the complexities which may arise when the sevenfold classification of Theosophy is compared with the traditional teachings of particular groups, as in the case of the Vedantins of India. In this article, which was published in the *Theosophist* for April, 1887, H.P.B. is obliged to defend the Arhat teaching of seven principles against the objections of Subba Row. Her effort is to show the importance of the metaphysics now known through Mr. Judge’s *Ocean of Theosophy*, and H.P.B.’s *Key to Theosophy* and *The Secret Doctrine*, and give ample explanation of why the sevenfold division was required, even though there might be reasons for the fourfold division preferred by

Subba Row. The controversy has little importance today, but the philosophical discussions which are a part of H.P.B.'s explanation have great value for the student.

“Re-Classification of Principles,” printed in the *Theosophist* for August of the same year, deals with the same subject, since Subba Row had renewed his argument, as she explains, making necessary a further defense of the sevenfold division. Here she makes it plain that only the teaching of the seven principles allows adequate explanation of Spiritualistic phenomena, which was a part of H.P.B.'s work and mission. Again, in this article, she sought to mend the breach with Subba Row, at the same time declaring the ground of the teaching of sevenfold man in archaic philosophy, the source of Theosophy and of all “the fundamental doctrines of Occultism and Esoteric philosophy.”

In published correspondence and by answers to the questions of students and members, H.P.B. put of record subtleties of ancient philosophy which could hardly be understood except with the help of occult knowledge. “Transmigration of the Life Atoms,” beginning with a question about the ancient Egyptian practice of mummification, becomes an informing article on the relation of the reincarnating ego to the “lives” which make up its body, and to the lower principles. The comment on William Oxley's article appeared in the *Theosophist* for July, 1883, and the reply to N.D.K.'s questions in the following August issue of that year.

“The Life Principle,” printed in *Lucifer* for March, 1888, begins with a discussion by N.D.K. of scientific views of the origin of life and “spontaneous generation,” with comment added by H.P.B. in several footnotes. N.D.K. quotes from an article which appeared earlier in the *Theosophist*—“Odorigen and Jiva”—and was reprinted in *Five Years of Theosophy*. N.D.K. formulates three questions based on the passage quoted from this article, to which H.P.B. replies in a long editor's note.

Theosophist, December, 1879

THE POPULAR IDEA OF SOUL-SURVIVAL

AT what epoch the dawning intellect of man first accepted the idea of future life, none can tell. But we know that, from the very first, its roots struck so deeply, so entwined about human instincts, that the belief has endured through all generations, and is imbedded in the consciousness of every nation and tribe, civilized, semi-civilized or savage. The greatest minds have speculated upon it; and the rudest savages, though having no name for the Deity, have yet believed in the existence of spirits and worshipped them. If, in Christian Russia, Wallachia, Bulgaria and Greece, the Oriental Church enjoins that upon All-Saints day offerings of rice and drink shall be placed upon the graves; and in “heathen” India, the same propitiatory gifts of rice are made to the departed; so, likewise, the poor savage of New Caledonia makes his sacrifice of food to the skulls of his beloved dead.

According to Herbert Spencer, the worship of souls and relics is to be attributed to the primitive idea that any property characterizing an aggregate, inheres in all parts of it. . . . The soul, present in the body of the dead man preserved entire, is also present in the preserved parts of his body. Hence, the faith in relics.” This definition, though in logic equally applicable to the gold-enshrined and jewelled relic of the cultured Roman Catholic devotee, and to the dusty, time-worn skull of the fetish worshipper, might yet be excepted to by the former, since he would say that he does not believe the soul to be present in either the whole cadaver, skeleton, or part, nor does he, strictly speaking, worship it. He but honours the relic as something which, having belonged to one whom he deems saintly, has by the contact acquired a sort of miraculous virtue. Mr. Spencer's definition, therefore, does

not seem to cover the whole ground. So also Professor Max Muller, in his *Science of Religion*, after having shown to us, by citing numerous instances, that the human mind had, from the beginning, a “vague hope of a future life,” explains no more than Herbert Spencer whence or how came originally such a hope. But merely points to an inherent faculty in *uncultivated* nations of changing the forces of nature into gods and demons. He closes his lecture upon the Turanian legends and the universality of this belief in ghosts and spirits, by simply remarking that the worship of the spirits of the departed is the most widely spread form of *superstition* all over the world.

Thus, whichever way we turn for a philosophical solution of the mystery; whether we expect an answer from theology which is itself bound to believe in miracles, and teach supernaturalism; or ask it from the now dominant school of modern thought—the greatest opponents of the miraculous in nature; or, again, turn for an explanation to that philosophy of extreme positivism which, from the days of Epicurus down to the modern school of James Mill, adopting for its device the glaring sciolism “*in intellectu quod non ante fuerit in sensu*,” makes intellect subservient to matter—we receive a satisfactory reply from none!

If this article were intended merely for a simple collation of facts, authenticated by travellers on the spot, and concerning but “superstitions” born in the mind of the primitive man, and now lingering only among the savage tribes of humanity, then the combined works of such philosophers as Herbert Spencer might solve our difficulties. We might remain content with his explanation that in the absence of hypothesis “foreign to thought in its earliest stage... primitive ideas, arising out of various experiences, derived from the inorganic world” — such as the actions of wind, the echo, and man’s own shadow—proving to the uneducated mind that there was “an invisible form of existence which manifests power,” were all sufficient to have created a like inevitable belief “(see Spencer’s *Genesis of Superstition*). But we are now concerned with something nearer to us, and higher than the primitive man of the stone age; the man who totally ignored “those conceptions of physical causation which have arisen only as experiences, and have been slowly organized during civilization.” We

are now dealing with the beliefs of twenty millions of modern Spiritualists; our own fellow men, living in the full blaze of the enlightened 19th century. These men ignore none of the discoveries of modern science; nay, many among them are themselves ranked high among the highest of such scientific discoverers. Notwithstanding all this, are they any the less addicted to the same, “form of superstition,” if superstition it be, than the primitive man? At least their interpretations of the physical phenomena, whenever accompanied by those coincidences which carry to their minds the conviction of an intelligence behind the physical Force—are often precisely the same as those which presented themselves to the apprehension of the man of the early and undeveloped ages.

What is a shadow? asks Herbert Spencer. By a child and a savage “a shadow is thought of as an entity.” Bastian says of the Benin negroes, that “they regard men’s shadows as their souls” . . . thinking “that they . . . watch all their actions, and bear witness against them.” According to Crantz, among the Greenlanders a man’s shadow is one of his two souls—the one which goes away from his body at night.” By the Feejeans, the shadow is called “the dark spirit, as distinguished from another which each man possesses.” And the celebrated author of the “Principles of Psychology” explains that “the community of meaning, hereafter to be noted more fully, which various unallied languages betray between shade and spirit, show us the same thing.”

What all this shows us the most clearly however, is that, wrong and contradicting as the conclusions may be, yet the premises on which they are based are no fictions. A thing must be, before the human mind can think or conceive of it. The very capacity to imagine the existence of something usually invisible and intangible, is itself evidence that it must have manifested itself at some time. Sketching in his usual artistic way the gradual development of the soul-idea, and pointing out at the same time how “*mythology* not only pervades the sphere of religion . . . but, infects more or less the whole realm of thought,” Professor Muller in his turn tells us that, when men wished for the first time to express “a distinction between the body, and something

else within him distinct from the body. . . the name that suggested itself was *breath*, chosen to express at first the principle of life as distinguished from the decaying body, afterwards the incorporeal . . . immortal part of man—his soul, his mind, his self . . . when a person dies, we, too, say that he has given up the ghost, and ghost, too, meant originally spirit, and spirit meant breath.” As instances of this, narratives by various missionaries and travellers are quoted. Questioned by Father R. de Bobadilla, soon after the Spanish conquest, as to their ideas concerning death, the Indians of Nicaragua told him that “when men die, there comes forth from their mouth something which resembles a person and is called *Julio* (in Aztec *yuli* ‘to live’—explains M. Muller). This being is like a person, but does not die and the corpse remains here. . . .” In one of his numerous works, Andrew Jackson Davis, whom considered the greatest American clairvoyant and known as the “Poughkeepsie Seer,” gives us what is a perfect illustration of the belief of the this belief in ghosts and spirits, by simply remarking that the worship of the spirits of the departed is the most widely spread form of *superstition* all over the world.

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¹ “Suppose a person is dying,” says the Poughkeepsie Seer: “The clairvoyant sees right over the head what may be called a magnetic halo—an ethereal emanation, in appearance golden and throbbing as though conscious. . . . The person has ceased to breathe, the pulse is still, and the emanation is elongated and fashioned in the outline of the human form! Beneath it, is connected the brain—owing to the brain’s momentum. I have seen a dying person, even at the last feeble pulse-beat, rouse impulsively and rise up in bed to converse, but the next instant he was gone—his brain being the last to yield up the life-principles. The golden emanation . . . is connected with the brain by a very fine life-thread. When it ascends, there appears something white and shining like a human head; next, a faint outline of the face divine; then the fair neck and beautiful shoulders; then, in rapid succession come all parts of the new body, down to the feet—a bright shining image, a little smaller than the physical body, but a perfect prototype . . . in all except its disfigurements. The fine life-thread continues attached to the old brain. The next thing is the withdrawal of the electric principle. When this thread snaps, the spiritual body is free (!) and prepared to accompany its guardian to the Summer Land.”

Among some Hindus the spirit is supposed to remain forty days seated on the eaves of the house where it parted from the body. That it may bathe and drink, two plantain leaf-cups are placed on the eaves, one full of milk and the other of water. “On the first day the dead is supposed to get his head; on the second day his ears, eyes, and nose; on the third, his hands, breast, and neck; on the fourth, his middle parts; on the fifth, his legs and feet; on the sixth, his vitals; on the seventh, his bones, marrow, veins and arteries; on the eighth, his nails, hair, and teeth; on the ninth, all the remaining limbs, organs, and manly strength; and, on the tenth, hunger and thirst for the renewed body.” *{The Patane Prabhus}*, by Krishnanath Rag-hunathji; in the Government Bombay Gazeteer, 1879.)

Mr. Davis’s theory is accepted by all the Spiritualists, and it is on this model that the clairvoyants now describe the separation of the “incorruptible from the corruptible. “But here, Spiritualists and the Aztecs branch off into two paths; for, while the former maintain that the soul is in every case immortal and preserves its individuality throughout eternity, the Aztecs say that “when the deceased has lived well, the julio goes up on high with our gods; but when he has lived ill, the julio perishes with the body, and there is an end of it.”

Some persons might perchance find the “primitive” Aztecs more consistent in their logic than our modern Spiritualists. The Laplanders and Finns also maintain that while the body decays, a *new* one is given to the dead, which the Shaman can alone see.

“Though breath, or spirit, or ghost,” says further on Professor Muller, “are the most common names. . . we yet speak of the *shades* of the departed, which meant originally their shadows. . . . Those who first introduced this expression—and we find it in the most distant parts of the world—evidently took the shadow as the nearest approach to what they wished to express; something that should be incorporeal, yet closely connected with the body. The Greek *eidolon*, too, is not much more than the shadow . . . but the curious part is this. . . that people who speak of the life or soul as the shadow of the body, have brought themselves to believe that a dead body casts no shadow, because the shadow has departed from it; that it becomes, in fact, a kind of Peter Schlemihl.” (“The Science of Religion.”)

Do the Amazulu and other tribes of South Africa only thus believe? By no means; it is a popular idea among Slavonian Christians. A corpse which is noticed to cast a shadow in the sun is deemed a sinful soul rejected by heaven itself. It is doomed henceforth to expiate its sins as an earth-bound spirit, till the day of the Resurrection.

Both Lander and Catiin describe the savage Mandans as placing the skulls of their dead in a circle. Each wife knows the skull of her former husband or child, and there seldom passes a day that she does not visit it, with a dish of the best cooked food. . . . There is scarcely an hour in a pleasant day but more or less of these women may be seen sitting or lying by the skulls of their children or husbands—talking to them in the most endearing language that they can use (as they were wont to do in former days) “and *seemingly getting an answer back.*” (Quoted by Herbert Spencer in *Fetish-w or ship.*)

What these poor, savage Mandan mothers and wives do, is performed daily by millions of civilized Spiritualists, and but the more proves the universality of the conviction that our dead hear and can answer us. From a theosophical, magnetic,—hence, in a certain sense a scientific—standpoint, the former have, moreover, far better reasons to offer than the latter. The skull of the departed person, so interrogated, has surely closer magnetical affinities and relations to the defunct, than a table through the tippings of which the dead ones answer the living; a table, in most cases, which the spirit while embodied had never seen nor touched. But the Spiritualists are not the only ones to vie with the Madans. In every part of Russia, whether mourning over the yet fresh corpse or accompanying it to the burying ground, or during the six weeks following the death, the peasant women as well as those of the rich mercantile classes, go on the grave to shout, or in Biblical phraseology to “lift up their voices.” Once there, they wail in rhythm, addressing the defunct by name, asking of him questions, pausing as if for an answer.

Not only the ancient and idolatrous Egyptian and Peruvian had the curious notion that the ghost or soul of the dead man was either present in the mummy, or that the corpse was itself conscious, but there is a similar belief now among the orthodox Christians of the

Greek and Roman Churches. We reproach the Egyptians with placing their embalmed dead at the table; and the heathen Peruvians with having carried around the fields the dried-up corpse of a parent, that it might see and judge of the state of the crops. But what of the Christian Mexican of today, who under the guidance of his priest, dresses up his corpses in finery; bedecks them with flowers, and in case of the defunct happening to be a female—even paint its cheeks with rouge. Then seating the body in a chair placed on a large table, from which the ghastly carrion presides, as it were, over the mourners seated around the table, who eat and drink the whole night and play various games of cards and dice, consult the defunct as to their chances. On the other hand, in Russia, it is a universal custom to crown the deceased person’s brow with a long slip of gilt and ornamented paper, called *Ventchik* (the crown), upon which a prayer is printed in gaudy letters. This prayer is a kind of a letter of introduction with which the parish priest furnishes the corpse to his patron Saint, recommending the defunct to the Saint’s protection.² The Roman Catholic Basques write letters to their deceased friends and relatives, addressing them to either Paradise, Purgatory or— Hell, according to the instructions given by the Father confessor of the late addressees—and, placing them in the coffins of the newly departed, ask the latter to safely deliver them in the other world, promising as a fee to the messenger, more or less masses for the repose of his soul.

At a recent *seance*, held by a well known medium in America,— (see *Banner of Light*, Boston, June 14th, 1879).

Mercedes, late Queen of Spain, announced herself, and came forth in full bridal array—a magnificent profusion of lace and jewels, and spoke in several different tongues with a linguist present. Her sister, the Princess Christina, came also just after in much plainer costume, and with a timid school-girl air.

Thus, we see that not only can the dead people deliver letters, but, even returning from their celestial homes, bring back with them their “lace and jewels.” As the ancient pagan Greek people dhis Olympian heaven with feasting and flirting deities; and the American red Indian has

² It runs in this wise: “St. Nicholas, (or St. Mary So-and-so) holy patron of—(follow defunct’s full name and title) receive the soul of God’s servant, and intercede for remission of his (or her) sins.”

hishappy hunting-grounds where the spirits of brave chiefs bestride their ghostly steeds, and chase their phantom game; and the Hindu his many superior lokas, where their numerous gods live in golden palaces, surrounded with all manner of sensual delights; and the Christian his New Jerusalem with streets of “pure gold, as it were transparent glass,” and the foundations of the wall of the city “garnished ... with precious stones”; where bodiless chirping cherubs and the elect, with golden harps, sing praises to Jehovah; so the modern Spiritualist has his “Summer Land Zone within the milky way,”³ though somewhat higher than the celestial territories of other people.⁴ There, amid cities and villages abounding in palaces, museums, villas, colleges and temples, an eternity is passed. The young are nurtured and taught, the undeveloped of the earth matured, the old rejuvenated, and every individual taste and desire gratified; spirits flirt, get married, and have families of children.⁵

Verily, verily we can exclaim with Paul, “O death where is thy sting; O grave, where is thy victory!” Belief in the survival of the ancestors is the oldest and most time honoured of all beliefs.

Travellers tell us all the Mongolian, Tartar, Finnish, and Tungu-sic tribes, besides the spirits of nature, deify also their ancestral spirits. The Chinese historians, treating of the Turanians, the Huns and the *Tukui*—the forefathers of the modern Turks—show them as worshipping “the spirits of the sky, of the earth, and the spirits of the departed.” Medhurst enumerates the various classes of the Chinese spirits thus: The principal are the celestial spirits (*tien shm*); the terrestrial (*ti-ki*); and the ancestral or wandering spirits (*jin kwei*).

3 See “Stellar key to the Summer Land” by Andrew Jackson Davis.

4 In the same author’s work—“The Spiritual Congress,” Galen says through the clairvoyant seer? “Between the Spirit Home and the earth, there are, strewn along the intervening distance ... more than four hundred thousand planets, and fifteen thousand solar bodies of lesser magnitude/f

5 The latest intelligence from America is that of the marriage of a spirit daughter of Colonel Eaton, of Leavenworth, Kansas, a prominent member of the National Democratic Committee. This daughter who died at the age of three weeks; grew in some twenty odd years in the Summer-Land, to be a fine young lady and now is wedded to the spirit son of Franklin Pierce, late President of the U. S. The wedding, witnessed by a famous clairvoyant of New York, was gorgeous. The “spirit bride” was “arrayed in a dress of mild green.” A wedding supper was spread by the spirit’s order, with lights and bouquets, and plates placed for the happy couple. The guests assembled, and the wedded ghosts fully “materialized” themselves and sat at table with them. (New York Times, June 29th, 1879.)

Among these, the spirits of the late Emperors, great philosophers, and sages, are revered the most. They are the public property of the whole nation, and are a part of the state religion, “while each family has, besides this, its own *manes*, which are treated with great regard; incense is burned before their relics, and many superstitious rites performed.”

But if all nations equally believe in, and many worship, their dead, their views as to the desirability of a direct intercourse with these late citizens differ widely. In fact, among the educated, only the modern Spiritualists seek to communicate constantly with them. We will take a few instances from the most widely separated peoples. The Hindus, as a rule, hold that no pure spirit, of a man who died reconciled to his fate, will ever come back bodily to trouble mortals. They maintain that it is only *thebhutas*—the souls of those who depart this life, unsatisfied, and having their terrestrial desires unquenched, in short, bad, sinful men and women—who become “earth-bound.” Unable to ascend at once to Moksha, they have to linger upon earth until either their next transmigration or complete annihilation; and thus take every opportunity to obsess people, especially weak women. So undesirable is to them the return or apparition of such ghosts, that they use every means to prevent it. Even in the case of the most holy feeling—the mother’s love for her infant—they adopt measures to prevent her return to it. There is a belief among some of them that whenever a woman dies in childbirth, she will return to see and watch over her child. Therefore, on their way back from the ghaut, after the burning of the body,—the mourners thickly strew mustard seeds all along the road leading from the funeral pile to the defunct’s home. For some unconceivable reasons they think that the ghost will feel obliged to pick up, on its way back, every one of these seeds. And, as the labor is slow and tedious, the poor mother can never reach her home before the cock crows, when she is obliged—in accordance with the ghostly laws—to vanish, till the following night, dropping back all her harvest. Among the Tchuvashes, a tribe inhabiting Russian domains (Castren’s “*Finaische Mythologie*,” p. 122), a son, whenever offering sacrifice to the spirit of his father, uses the following exorcism: “We honour thee with a feast; look, here is bread for thee, and various kinds of food;

thou hast all thou canst desire: but do not trouble us, do not come back near us." Among the Lapps and Finns, those departed spirits, which make their presence visible and tangible, are supposed to be very mischievous and "the most mischievous are the spirits of the priests." Everything is done to keep them away from the living. The agreement we find between this blind popular instinct and the wise conclusions of some of the great philosophers, and even modern specialists, is very remarkable. "Respect the spirits and—keep them at a distance" said Confucius, six centuries B.C. Nine centuries later, Porphyry the famous anti-theurgist, writing upon the nature of various spirits, expressed his opinion upon the spirits of the departed by saying that *he knew of no evil* which these pestilent demons would not be ready to do. And, in our own century, a kabalist, the greatest magnetizer living, Baron Dupotet, in his "Magie Devoilee," warns the spiritists not to trouble the rest of the dead. For "the evoked shadow can *fasten itself* 'upon, follow, and for ever afterwards influence you; and we can appease it but through a pact which will bind us to it—till death!"

But all this is a matter of individual opinion; what we are concerned with now is merely to learn how the basic fact of belief in soul-survival could have so engrafted itself upon every succeeding age,—despite the extravagances woven into it—if it be but a shadowy and unreal intellectual conception originating with "primitive man." Of all modern men of science, although he does his best in the body of the work to present the belief alluded to as a mere "superstition"—the only satisfactory answer is given by Prof. Max Muller, in his "introduction to the Science of Religion." And by his solution we have to abide for want of a better one. He can only do it, however, by overstepping the boundaries of comparative philology, and boldly invading the domain of pure metaphysics; by following, in short, a path forbidden by exact science. At one blow he cuts the Gordian knot which Herbert Spencer and his school have tied under the chariot of the "Unknowable." He shows us that: "there is a philosophical discipline which examines into the conditions of sensuous or intuitional knowledge," and "another philosophical discipline which examines into the conditions of rational or conceptual knowledge"; and then defines for us a third

faculty...." The faculty of apprehending the Infinite, not only in religion but in all things; a power independent of sense and reason, a power in a certain sense contradicted by sense and reason, but yet a very real power, which has held its own from the beginning of the world, neither sense nor reason being able to overcome it, while it alone is able to overcome both reason and sense."

The faculty of *Intuition*—that which lies entirely beyond the scope of our modern biologists—could hardly be better defined. And yet, when closing his lecture upon the superstitious rites of the Chinese, and their temples devoted to the worship of the departed ancestors, our great philologist remarks: "All this takes place by slow degrees; it begins with placing a flower on the tomb; it ends—with worshipping the Spirits. . . ."

Theosophist, April 1887

CLASSIFICATION OF “PRINCIPLES”

IN a most admirable lecture by Mr. T. Subba Row on the *Bhagavad-Gita*, published in the February number of the *Theosophist*, the lecturer deals, incidentally as I believe, with the question of septenary “principles” in the Kosmos and Man. The division is rather criticized, and the grouping hitherto adopted and favoured in theosophical teachings is resolved into one of *Four*.

This criticism has already given rise to some misunderstanding, and it is argued by some that a slur is thrown on the original teachings. This *apparent* disagreement with one whose views are rightly held as almost decisive on occult matters in our Society is certainly a dangerous handle to give to opponents who are ever on the alert to detect and blazon forth contradictions and inconsistencies in our philosophy. Hence I feel it my duty to show that there is in reality *no* inconsistency between Mr. Subba Row’s views and our own in the question of the septenary division; and to show (*a*) that the lecturer was perfectly well acquainted with the septenary division before he joined the Theosophical Society; (*b*) that he knew it was the teaching of old “Aryan philosophers who have associated seven occult powers with the seven principles” in the Macrocosm and the Microcosm (see the end of this article); and (*c*) that from the beginning he had objected—not to the classification but to the form in which it was expressed. Therefore, now, when he calls the division “unscientific and misleading,” and adds that “this sevenfold classification is almost conspicuous by its absence in *many* (not *all*?) of our Hindu books,” etc., and that it is better to adopt the time-honoured classification of four principles, Mr. Subba Row must mean only some special orthodox books, as it would be impossible for him to contradict himself in such a conspicuous way.

A few words of explanation, therefore, will not be altogether out of place. For the matter of being “conspicuous by its absence” in Hindu books, the said classification is as conspicuous by its absence in Buddhist books. This, for a reason transparently clear: it was always esoteric; and as such, rather inferred than openly taught. That it is “misleading” is also perfectly true; for the great feature of the day—materialism—has led the minds of our Western theosophists into the prevalent habit of viewing the seven principles as distinct and self-existing *entites*, instead of what they are—namely, *upadhis* and correlating states—three *upadhis*, basic groups, and four principles. As to being “unscientific,” the term can be only attributed to a *lapsus lingue*, and in this relation let me quote what Mr. Subba Row wrote about a year *before he joined* the Theosophical Society in one of his ablest articles, “Brahmanism on the Seven-fold Principle in Man,” the best review that ever appeared of the *Fragments of Occult Truth*—since embodied in *Esoteric Buddhism*. Says the author:—

“I have carefully examined it (the teaching) and find that the results arrived at (in the Buddhist doctrine) do not differ much from the conclusions of our Aryan philosophy, though our mode of stating the arguments may differ in form.” Having enumerated, after this, the “three primary causes” which bring the human being into existence—*i.e.*, Parabrahmam, Sakti and Prakriti—he explains: “Now, according to the Adepts of ancient Aryavarta, *seven principles* are evolved out of these three primary entities. Algebra teaches us that the number of *combinations* of things, taken *one* at a time, *two* at a time, *three* at a time, and so forth = $2^n - 1$. Applying this formula to the present case, the number of entities evolved from different combinations of these three primary causes amount to $2^3 - 1 = 8 - 1 = 7$. As a general rule, whenever seven entities are mentioned in the ancient occult sciences of India in any connection whatsoever, you must suppose that these seven entities come into existence from the three primary entities; and that these three entities, again, are evolved out of a single entity or MONAD.” (See *Five Years of Theosophy*, p. 160.)

This is quite correct, from the occult standpoint, and also kabbalistically, when one looks into the question of *Wuzseven and ten Sephiroths*, and the *seven* and *ten* Rishis, Manus, etc. It shows that in

sober truth there is not, nor can there be any fundamental disagreement between esoteric philosophy of the *Trans-* and *Cw-Hima-layan* Adepts. The reader is referred, moreover, to the earlier pages of the above mentioned article, in which it is stated that "the knowledge of the occult powers of nature possessed by the inhabitants of the lost Atlantis was learnt by the ancient Adepts of India, and was appended by them to the esoteric doctrine taught by the residents of the sacred island (now the Gobi desert).¹ The Tibetan Adepts, however (their precursors of Central Asia), have not accepted the addition" (pp. 155-156). But this difference between the two doctrines does not include the septenary division, as it was universal after it had originated with the Atlanteans, who, as the Fourth Race, were of course an earlier race than the Fifth—the Aryan.

Thus, from the purely metaphysical standpoint, the remarks made on the *Septenary Division* in the "*Bhagavad-Gita*" Lecture of good today, as they did five or six years ago in the article, "Brahmanism on the Sevenfold Principle in Man," their apparent discrepancy notwithstanding. For purposes of purely theoretical esotericism, they are as valid in Buddhist as they are in Brahmanical philosophy. Therefore, when Mr. Subba Row proposes to hold to "the time-honoured classification of four principles" in a lecture on a Vedanta work—the Vedantic classification, however, dividing man into the "*kosas*" (sheaths) and the *Atma* (the sixth *nominally*, of course),² he simply shows thereby that he desires to remain strictly within theoretical and metaphysical, and also orthodox computations of the same. This is how I understand his words, at any rate. For the *Tara-ka Raj-Yoga* classification is again *three upadhis*, the *Atma* being the fourth principle, *and noupadhi* of course, as it is one with Para-brahm. This is again shown by himself in a little article called "Septenary Division in Different Indian Systems."³

Why then should not "Buddhist" Esotericism, so-called, resort to

¹ See his *Unveiled*, Vol. I, pp. 598-9, and the appendices by the Editor to the above quoted article in *Five Years of Theosophy*.

² This is the division given to us by Mr. Subba Row, See *Five Years of Theosophy*, p. 136, article signed T.S.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

such a division? It is perhaps "misleading"—that is admitted; but surely it cannot be called "unscientific." I will even permit myself to call that adjective a thoughtless expression, since it has been shown to be on the contrary very "scientific" by Mr. Subba Row himself; and quite mathematically so, as the afore-quoted algebraic demonstration of the same proves it. I say that the division is due to nature herself pointing out its necessity in kosmos and man; just because the number seven is "a power, and a spiritual force" in its combination of *three* and *four*, of the triangle and the quaternary. It is no doubt far more convenient to adhere to the fourfold classification in a metaphysical and synthetical sense, just as I have adhered to the threefold classification—of body, soul and spirit—in *his Unveiled*, because had I then adopted the septenary division, as I have been compelled to do later on for purposes of strict analysis, no one would have understood it, and the multiplication of principles, instead of throwing light upon the subject, would have introduced endless confusion. But now the question has changed, and the position is different. We have *unfortunately*—for it was premature—opened a chink in the Chinese wall of esotericism, and we cannot now close it again, even if we would. I for one had to pay a heavy price for the indiscretion, but I will not shrink from the results.

I maintain then, that when once we pass from the plane of pure subjective reasoning on esoteric matters to that of practical demonstration in Occultism, wherein each principle and attribute has to be analysed and defined in its application to the phenomena of daily and especially *of post-mortem* life, the sevenfold classification is the right one. For it is simply a convenient division which prevents in no wise the recognition of but *three* groups—which Mr. Subba Row calls "four principles associated with four *upadhis*, and which are associated in their turns with four distinct states of consciousness."⁴ This is the *Bhagavad-Gita* classification, it appears; but not that of the Vedanta, nor—what the Raj-Yogis of the pre-Aryasanga schools

⁴ A crowning proof of the fact that the division is arbitrary and varies with the schools it belongs to, is in the words published in "Personal and Impersonal God" by Mr. Subba Row, where he states that "we have six states of consciousness, either objective or subjective ... and a perfect state of unconsciousness, etc." (See *Five Years of Theosophy* pp. 200 and 201.) Of course those who do not hold to the old school of Aryan and Arhat Adepts are in no way bound to adopt the septenary classification.

and of the *Mahayana* system held to, and still hold beyond the Himalayas, and their system is almost identical with the *Taraka Raj-Yoga*,—the difference between the latter and the Vedanta classification having been pointed out to us by Mr. Subba Row in his little article on the "Septenary Division in Different Indian Systems." The Taraka Raj-Yogis recognize only *three upadhis* in which *Atma* may work, which, in India, if I mistake not, are the *Jagrata*, or waking state of consciousness (corresponding to *Sthulopadhi*); the *Swapna*, or dreaming state (in *Sukshmapadhi*); and the *Sushupti*, or causal state, produced by, and through *Karanopadhi*, or what we call *Buddhi*. But, then, in transcendental states of *Samadhi*, the body with its *lingasarira*, the vehicle of the life-principle, is entirely left out of consideration: the three states of consciousness are made to refer only to the three (*with Atma* the fourth) principles which remain after death. And here lies the real key to the septenary division of man, the three principles coming in as an addition only during his life.

As in the Macrocosm, so in the Microcosm: analogies hold good throughout nature. Thus the universe, our solar system, our earth down to man, are to be regarded as all equally possessing a septenary constitution—*four* superterrestrial and superhuman, so to say;—*three* objective and astral. In dealing with the special case of man, only, there are two standpoints from which the question may be considered. Man in *incarnation* is certainly made up of seven principles, if we so term the seven states of his material, astral, and spiritual framework, which are all on different planes. But if we classify the principles according to the seat of the four degrees of consciousness, these *upadhis* may be reduced to four groups.⁵ Thus his consciousness, never being centered in the second or third principles—both of which are composed of states of matter (or rather of "substance") on different planes, each corresponding on one of the planes and principles in kosmos—is necessary to form links between the first,

5 Mr. Subba Row's argument that in the matter of the three divisions of the body "we may make any number of divisions, and may as well enumerate nerve-force, blood and bones," is not valid, I think. Nerve-force—well and good, though it is one with the life-principle and proceeds from it: as to blood, bones, etc., these are objective material things, and one with, and inseparable from the human body; while all the other six principles are in their Seventh—the body—purely subjective principles, and therefore all denied by material science, which ignores them.

fourth and fifth principles, as well as subserving certain vital and psychic phenomena. These latter may be conveniently classified with the physical body under one head, and laid aside during trance (*Samadhi*), as after death, thus leaving only the traditional *exoteric* and metaphysical *four*. Any charge of contradictory teaching, therefore, based on this simple fact, would obviously be wholly invalid; the classification of principles as septenary or quaternary depending wholly on the stand-point from which they are regarded, as said. It is purely a matter of choice which classification we adopt. Strictly speaking, however, *occult*—as also profane—physics would favour the septenary one for these reasons.⁶

There are *six* Forces in nature: this in Buddhism as in Brahmanism, whether exoteric or esoteric, and the seventh—the *all-Force*, or the absolute Force, which is the synthesis of all. Nature again in her constructive activity strikes the key-note to this classification in more than one way. As stated in the third aphorism of *Sankhya karika* "of *Prakriti*—"the root and substance of all things," she (*Prakriti*, or nature) is no production, but herself a *producer of seven* things, "which, produced by her, become all in their turn producers." Thus all the liquids in nature begin, when separated from their parent mass, by becoming a spheroid (a drop); and when the globule is formed, and it falls, the impulse given to it transforms it, when it touches ground, almost invariably into an equilateral triangle (or three), and then into an *hexagon*, after which out of the corners of the latter begin to be formed squares or cubes as plane figures. Look at the *natural* work of nature, so to speak, her artificial, or helped production—the prying into her occult work-shop by science. Behold the coloured rings of a soap-bubble, and those produced by polarized light. The rings obtained,

6 In that most admirable article of his—"Personal and Impersonal God"—one which has attracted much attention in the Western Theosophical circles, Mr. Subba Row says "Just as a human being is composed of seven principles, differentiated matter in the solar system exists in seven different conditions. These do not all come within the range of our present objective consciousness, but they can be perceived by the spiritual ego in man. Further, Pragna, or the capacity of perception, exists in seven different aspects, corresponding to the seven conditions of matter. Strictly speaking there are six states of differentiated pragna, the seventh state being a condition of perfect unconsciousness (or absolute consciousness). By differentiated pragna, I mean the condition in which pragna, is split up into various states of consciousness. Thus we have six states of consciousness, etc. etc." (Five Years of Theosophy, pp. 200 and 201.) This is precisely our Trans-Himalayan Doctrine.

whether in Newton's soap-bubble, or in the crystal through the polarizer, will exhibit invariably, six or seven rings—"a black spot surrounded by six rings, or a circle with a plane cube inside, circumscribed with six distinct rings," the circle itself the *seventh*. The "Noremburg" polarizing apparatus throws into objectivity almost all our occult geometrical symbols, though physicists are none the wiser for it. (See Newton's and Tyndall's experiments.⁷)

The number seven is at the very root of occult Cosmogony and Anthropogony. No symbol to express evolution from its starting to its completion points would be possible without it. For the circle produces the point; the point expands into a triangle, returning after two angles upon itself, and then forms the mystical *Tetraktis*—the plane cube; which *three* when passing into the manifested world of effects, differentiated nature, become geometrically and numerically $3 + 4 = 7$. The best kabbalists have been demonstrating this for ages ever since Pythagoras, and down to the modern mathematicians and symbologists, one of whom has succeeded in wrenching forever *one of the seven* occult keys, and has proven his victory by a volume of figures. Set any of our theosophists interested in the question to read the wonderful work called "The Hebrew Egyptian

Mystery, the Source of Measures"; and those of them who are good mathematicians will remain aghast before the revelations contained in it. For it shows indeed the occult source of the measure by which were built kosmos and man, and then by the latter the great Pyramid of Egypt, as all the towers, mounds, obelisks, cave-temples of India, and pyramids in Peru and Mexico, and all the archaic monuments; symbols in stone of Chaldea, both Americas, and even of the Eastern Islands—the living and solitary witness of a submerged prehistoric continent in the midst of the Pacific Ocean. It shows that the same figures and measures for the same esoteric symbology existed throughout the world; it shows in the words of the author that the kabbala is a "whole series of developments based upon the use of geometrical elements; giving expression in numerical values, founded

⁷ One need only open Webster's Dictionary and examine the snow flakes and crystals at the word "Snow" to perceive nature's work. "God geometrizes," says Plato.

on integral values of the circle" (one of the seven keys hitherto known but to the Initiates), discovered by Peter Metius in the 16th century, and re-discovered by the late John A Parker.⁸ Moreover, that the system from whence all these developments were derived "was anciently considered to be one resting in *nature* (or God), at the *basis* or *law* of the exertions practically of creative design"; and that it also underlies the Biblical structures, being found in the measurements given for Solomon's temple, the ark of the Covenant, Noah's ark, etc., etc.,—in all the symbolical myths, in short, of the Bible.

And what are the figures, the measure in which the sacred Cubit is derived from the esoteric Quadrature, which the Initiates know to have been contained in the *Tetraktis* of Pythagoras? Why, it is the universal primordial symbol. The figures found in the *Ansated Cross* of Egypt, as (I maintain) in the Indian *Swastika*, "the sacred sign" which embellishes the thousand heads of Seshu, the Serpent-cycle of eternity, on which rests Vishnu, the deity in Infinitude; and which also may be pointed out in the threefold (*treta*) fire of Puru-ravas, *the first fire in the present Manvantara*, out of the forty-nine (7×7) mystic fires. It may be absent from many of the Hindu books, but the Vishnu and other Puranas teem with this symbol and figure under every possible form, which I mean to prove in "THE SECRET DOCTRINE." The author of the *Source of Measures* does not, of course, himself know as yet, the whole scope of what he has discovered. He applies his key, so far, only to the esoteric language and the symbology in the Bible, and the Books of Moses especially. The great error of the able author, in my opinion, is, that he applies the key discovered by him chiefly to post-Atlantean and quasi-historical phallic elements in the world religions; feeling, intuitionally, a nobler, a higher, a more transcendental meaning in all this—*only* in the Bible,—and a mere sexual worship in all other religions. This phallic element, however, in the older pagan worship related, in truth, to the physiological evolution of the human races, something that could not be discovered in the Bible, as it is absent from it (the Pentateuch being the latest of all the

⁸ Of Newark, in his work *The Quadrature of the Circle*, his "problem of the three revolving bodies" (N.Y. John Wiley and Son).

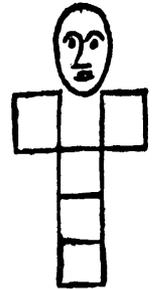
old Scriptures). Nevertheless, what the learned author has discovered and proved mathematically, is wonderful enough, and sufficient to make our claim good: namely, that the figures $O\Delta \square$ and $3+4 = 7$, are at the very basis, and are the soul of cosmogony and the evolution of mankind.

To whosoever desires to display this process by way of symbol, says the author speaking of the *ansated cross*, the *Tau* $\overline{\tau}$ of the Egyptians and the Christian cross—"it would be by *the figure of the cube unfolded in connection with the circle whose measure is taken off on to the edges of the cube*. The cube unfolded becomes in superficial display a *cross proper*, or of the *tau* form, and the attachment of the circle to this last, gives the *ansated cross* of the Egyptians with its obvious meaning of *the Origin of Measures*.⁹ Because this kind of measure was also made to co-ordinate with the idea of *the origin of life*, it was made to assume the type of the *hermaphrodite*, and in fact it is placed by representation to cover this part of the human person in the Hindu form. . . ." [It is "the hermaphrodite Indranse Indra, the nature goddess, the *Issa* of the Hebrews, and the *Isis* of the Egyptians," as the author calls them in another place.] ". . . It is very observable, that while there are but six faces to a cube, the representation of the cross as the cube unfolded as to the cross bars displays one face of the cube as *common to two bars*, counted as belonging to either; then, while the faces originally represented are but six, the use of the two bars counts the square as four for the upright and three for the cross bar, making seven in all. Here we have the famous four, three and seven again, the four and three on the factor members of the Parker (quadrature and of the 'three revolving bodies') problem". . . (pp. 50 and 51).

And they are the factor members in the building of the Universe and MAN. Wittoba —an aspect of Krishna and Vishnu—is therefore the "man crucified in space," or the "cube unfolded," as explained

⁹ And, by adding to the cross proper $\overline{\tau}$ the symbol of the four cardinal points and infinity at the same time, thus, $\overline{\tau} \oplus$ the arms pointing above, below, and right and left, making six in the circle—the Archaic sign of the Yomas—it would make of it the Swastike, the "sacred sign" used by the order of "Ishmael masons," which they call the Universal Hermetic Cross and do not understand its real wisdom, nor know its origin.

(see Moore's *Pantheon*, for Wittoba). It is the oldest symbol in India, now nearly lost, as the real meaning of *Vishvakarina* and *Vikkartana* (the "sun shorn of his beams") is also lost. It is the Egyptian *ansated cross*, and *vice versa*, and the latter—even the *sistrum* with its cross bars—is simply *the symbol of the Deity as man*—however phallic it may have become later, after the submersion of Atlantis. The *ansated cross* $\overline{\tau}$ is of course, as Professor Seyfforth has shown—again the *six* with its head—the *seventh*. Seyfforth says "It is the skull with the brains, the seat of the soul with the nerves extending to the spine, back, and eyes and ears. For the Tanis stone thus translates it repeatedly by *anthropos* (man); and we have the Coptic *ank*, {*vita*, life) properly *anima*, which corresponds with the Hebrew *anosh*, properly meaning *anima*. The Egyptian *anki* signifies "my soul."¹⁰



It means in its synthesis, the *seven principles*, the details coming later. Now the *ansated cross*, as given above, having been discovered on the backs of the gigantic statues found on the Easter Isles (mid-Pacific Ocean) which is a part of the submerged continent; this remnant being described as "thickly studded with cyclopean statues, remnants of the civilization of a dense and cultivated people";—and Mr. Subba Row having told us what he had found in the old Hindu books, namely, that the ancient Adepts of India had learned occult powers from the Atlanteans (vide supra)—the logical inference is that they had their septenary division from them, just as our Adepts from the "Sacred Island" had. This ought to settle the question.

And this *Tau* cross is ever *septenary*, under whatever form—it has many forms, though the main idea is always one. What are the Egyptian *oozas* (the eyes), the amulets called the "mystic eye," but symbols of the same? There are the *four* eyes in the upper row and the *three* smaller ones in the lower. Or again, the *ooza* with the *seven luths* hanging from it, "the combined melody of which *creates one man*," say the hieroglyphics. Or again, the *hexagon* formed of six triangles, whose apices converge to a point—thus the *symboi of the*

¹⁰ Quoted in "Source of Measures."

Universal creation, which kenneth mackenzie tells us “was worn as a ring by the Sovereign Princes of the Royal Secret”—which they never knew by the bye. *If seven* has nought to do with the mysteries of the universe and men, then indeed from the Vedas down to the Bible all the archaic Scriptures—the Puranas, the Avesta and all the fragments that have reached us—have no *esoteric* meaning, and must be regarded as the orientalist regard them—as a farrago of childish tales.



It is quite true that the *three upadhis* of the *Taraka Raj Yoga* are, as Mr. Subba Row explains in his little article, “The Septenary Division in Different Indian Systems,” “the best and the simplest”—but only in purely *contemplative* Yoga. And he adds: “Though there are *seven* principles in man there are but *three* distinct *upadhis*, in each of which his/4fm0 may work independently of the rest. These *three upadhis* can be separated by the Adept without killing himself. He cannot separate the seven principles from each other without destroying his constitution” (*Five Years of Theosophy*, p. 185). Most decidedly he cannot. But this again holds good only with regard to his lower three principles—the body and its (in life) inseparable *prana* and *linga sarira*. The rest can be separated, as they constitute no *vital*, but rather a mental and spiritual necessity. As to the remark in the same article objecting to the fourth principle being “included in the third *kosa*, as the said principle is but a vehicle of will-power, which is but an energy of the mind,” I answer, Just so! But as the higher attributes of the fifth (*Manas*), go to make up the original *triad*, and it is just the *terrestrial* energies, feelings and volitions which remain in the *Kama loka*, what, is the vehicle, the *astral* form, to carry them about as *bhoota* until they fade out—which may take centuries to accomplish? Can the “false” personality, or the *pisacha*, whose ego is made up precisely of all those terrestrial passions and feelings, remain in ^wL^a, and occasionally appear, without a substantial vehicle, however ethereal? Or are we to give up the seven principles, and the belief that there is such a thing as an *astral body*, and a *bhoot*, or *spook*?

Most decidedly not. For Mr. Subba Row himself once more explains how, from the Hindu stand-point, the *lower* fifth, or *Manas*

can reappear after death, remarking very justly, that it is absurd to call it a *disembodied spirit*. (*Five Years of Theosophy*, p. 1747) As he says: “It is merely a power, or force, retaining the impressions of the thoughts or ideas of the individual *into whose composition it originally entered*. It sometimes summons to its aid the *Kamarupa* power, and creates for itself some particular, ethereal form.”

Now that which “sometimes summons” *Kamarupa* and the “power” of that name make already two principles, two “powers”—call them as you will. Then we have *Atma* and its vehicle—*Buddhi*—which make/bar. With the three which disappeared on earth this will be equivalent to *seven*. How can we, then, speak of modern Spiritualism, of its materializations and other phenomena, without resorting to the Septenary?

To quote our friend and much respected brother for the last time, since he says that “our (Aryan) philosophers have associated seven *occult* powers with the *seven principles* (in men and in the *kosmos*), which seven occult powers correspond in the *microcosm* with, or are counterparts of, occult powers in the *macrocosm*,”¹¹—quite an esoteric sentence,—it does seem almost a pity that words pronounced in an extempore lecture, though such an able one, should have been published without revision.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

11 “Brahmanism on the Sevenfold Principle in Man.”

Theosophist, August 1887

RE-CLASSIFICATION OF PRINCIPLES

IN the May *Theosophist* (1887), I find the first part of a long explanatory article, by Mr. Subba Row, in which the able author has gone to the trouble of dissecting almost every thing I have written for the last ten years, upon the subject under review.

My first thought was, to leave his "answer" without reply. Upon reading it carefully over, however, I have come to the conclusion that perhaps it would not be safe to do so. The article in question is a manifesto. I am not allowed to labour any longer under the impression that it was only an apparent disagreement. Those members and ex-members of our Society who *bad rejoiced* at Mr. Subba Row's remarks were consequently right in their conclusions, and I—wrong. As I do not admit—in our case, at any rate—that "a house divided against itself" must fall, for the Theosophical Society can never fall so long as its foundation is very strong, I regard the disagreement, even *if real*, as of no great or vital importance. Yet, were I to fail to answer the strictures in question, it would be immediately inferred that I was silenced by the arguments; or, worse, that I had expounded a tenet which had no basis.

Before I say anything further upon the main subject, however, I must express my surprise at finding the learned author referring to me continually as his "critic." I have never criticized him, nor his teachings, whether orally, or in print. I had simply expressed regret at finding in the *Theosophist* words calculated, as I then thought, to create false impressions. The position assumed by the lecturer on the Gita was as unexpected as it was new to me, and my remarks were meant to be as friendly as I could make them. Nor am I actuated even now by any other feelings. I can only regret, and nothing more,

that such new developments of ideas should occur just now, after nearly seven years of *tacit*, if not actual, agreement.

Nor do I find on page 450 of the April *Theosophist* in my foot note* anything that should imply, even remotely, least of all "probably," that I endorse the views that "a slur was thrown on the original teaching." I had said that "some (Theosophists) argued that it looked like a slur." As for myself, I have too much reverence for the "original" TEACHERS to ever admit that any thing said or done, could ever be "a slur" upon their teachings. But if I *personally*, am made out "the original expounder," there can be no slur whatever. It is, at the worst, a disagreement in personal views. Every one is free in the Theosophical Society to give full expression to his own ideas, —I among the rest; especially when I know that those views are those of *trans*-Himalayan esotericism, if not of *cis*-Himalayan esoteric Brahmanism, as I am now told squarely—for the first time. The words written by me in the foot-note, therefore—"Of course those who do not hold to the old school of Aryan and Arhat adepts are in no way bound to adopt the septenary classification"—were never meant for Mr. Subba Row. They applied most innocently, and as I thought liberally, to every and each member of our Association. Why my friend, Mr. T. Subba Row, should have applied them to himself is one of those mysterious combinations—evolved by my own *karma*, no doubt—which pass *my* comprehension. To expect a Brahmin, a Vedantin (whether an occultist or otherwise) to accept *in their dead-letter*, the tenets of Buddhist (even if Aryan) adepts, is like expecting a western Kabbalist, an Israelite by birth and views, to adhere to our Lord Buddha instead of to Moses. To charge me on such grounds with dogmatism and a desire to evolve "an orthodox creed" out of tenets I have tried to explain to those who are interested in Buddhist occultism, is rather hard. All this compels me to explain my past as well as my present position. As the second portion of Mr. Subba Row's *reply* can hardly contain stronger charges than I find in the first, I ask permission to state that:—

(I) Neither the original "Fragments of Occult Truths" nor yet

* See "Classification of Principles."

Esoteric Buddhism, were ever meant to expound *Brahminical* philosophy, but that of the *trans-Himalayan Arhats*, as very correctly stated by Mr. Subba Row in his “Brahminism on the Seven-fold Principle in Man”—“it is extremely difficult to show (to the profane H.P.B.!) whether the Tibetans derived their doctrine from the ancient Rishis of India, or the ancient Brahmins learned their occult science from the adepts of Tibet; or again, whether the adepts of both countries professed originally the same doctrine and derived it from a common source.... However that may be, the knowledge of the *occult powers of nature* possessed by the inhabitants of the lost Atlantis, was learnt by the ancient adepts of India, and was appended by them to their esoteric doctrine taught by the residents of the sacred island (Shambhala). The Tibetan adepts, however, have not accepted this addition to their esoteric doctrine.” .. Thus, the readers of the *Theosophist* were told from the first (in 1882) that they “should expect to find a difference between the two doctrines.” One of the said “differences” is found in the *exoteric exposition*, or form of presentation, of the seven-fold principle in man.

(II) Though *the fundamental* doctrines of Occultism and Esoteric philosophy are one and the same the world over, and that is the secret meaning under the outward shell of every old religion—how ever much they may conflict in appearance—[since each] is the outcome of, and proceeds from, the universal WISDOM-RELIGION—the modes of thought and of its expression must necessarily differ. There are Sanskrit words used—“*Jiva*,” for one—by *trans-Himalayan* adepts, whose meaning differs greatly in verbal applications, from the meaning it has among the Brahmins in India.

(III) I have never boasted of any knowledge of Sanskrit, and, when I came to India last, in 1879, knew very superficially the philosophies of the six schools of Brahminism. I never pretended to teach Sanskrit or explain Occultism in that language. I claimed to know the esoteric philosophy of the *trans-Himalayan* Occultists and no more. What I knew again, was that the philosophy of the ancient *Dwijas* and Initiates did not, nor could it, differ *essentially* from the esotericism of the “Wisdom-religion,” any more than ancient Zoro-

astrianism, Hermetic philosophy, or Chaldean Kabbala could do so. I have tried to prove it by rendering the technical terms used by the Tibetan Arhats of things and principles, as adopted in *trans-Himalayan* teaching (and which when given to Mr. Sinnett and others without their Sanskrit or European equivalents, remained to them unintelligible, as they would to all in India)—in terms used in Brahmanical philosophy. I may have failed to do so correctly, very likely I have, and made mistakes,—I never claimed infallibility—but this is no reason why these seven-fold divisions should be regarded as “unscientific.” That it was *puzzling* I had already admitted, yet, once properly explained, it is the right one, though, in transcendental metaphysics, the quaternary may do as well. In my writings in the *Theosophist* I have always consulted learned and (even *not* very learned) Sanskrit-speaking Brahmins, giving credit to every one of them for knowing the value of Sanskrit terms better than I did. The question then is not, whether I may or may not have made use of wrong Sanskrit terms, but whether the occult tenets expounded through me are the right ones—at any rate those of the “Aryan-Chaldeo-Tibetan doctrine” as we call the “universal Wisdom-religion.” (See *Five Years of Theosophy*, 1st note to Mr. Subba Row’s “Brahminism on the Seven-fold Principle in Man,” pp. 177-9.)

(IV) When saying that the seven-fold classification of principles is *absolutely* necessary to explain *post-mortem* phenomena, I repeat only that which I had always said and that which every mystic will understand. “Once we pass from the plane of pure subjective (or metaphysical, hence purely *theoretical*) reasoning on esoteric matters to that of practical demonstration in occultism, wherein each (lower) principle and attribute has to be analyzed and defined in its application ... to *post-mortem* life (that of spooks and *pisachas*), the sevenfold classification is the right one.” These are my words, which every spiritualist will understand. Vedantin metaphysicians, denying as they do objective reality or importance even to our physical body, are not likely to lose their time in dividing the lower principles in man, the compound *aspects* and nature of the *hantom* of that body. *Practical* occultism does; and it is one of the duties of those

Theosophists who study occultism to warn their brethren of the dangers incurred by those who know nothing of the real nature of those apparitions: to warn them that a *shell* is not “*spirit*.” This statement of mine I find qualified as “simply absurd.” Having never regarded as *absurd* anything said or written by Mr. Subba Row, I could not retaliate even if I would, I can only pronounce the epithet, let us say—*unkind*, and demur to the qualification. Had the author to face “practical demonstration” in spiritual phenomena and “*materializations of spirits*,” so called, he would soon find that his four principles never could cover the ground of this kind of phenomena. Even the *lower aspect* of the principle of *manas* (physical brain, or its *post-mortem* auric survival) and of *kama rupa* are hardly sufficient to explain the seemingly intelligent and spiritual principles (*bhut* or elements) that manifest through mediums.

(V) It is not consistent with fact and truth to charge me, “the original (?) exponent herself,” with changing my conceptions about the nature of principles. “I have never changed them, nor could I do so.” In this I claim my right too, as Mr. Subba Row does to my evidence being “the best and the most direct evidence available as regards *my own states of consciousness*” I may have used wrong Sanskrit expressions (and even wrong and clumsily put English sentences, for the matter of that)—while trying to blend the Arhat with the Brahmanical occult tenets. As to those conceptions, my “four principles” have to disintegrate and vanish in the air, before any amount of criticism can make me regard my ten fingers as only four; although *metaphysically*, I am fully prepared to admit that they exist only in my own *mayavic* perceptions and states of consciousness.

(VI) Mr. Subba Row, taking hold of *Esoteric Buddhism*, the “Elixir of Life,” and *Man*, is pleased to father all their sins of omission and commission on the “Original Expounder.” This is hardly fair. The first work was written absolutely without my knowledge, and as the author understood those teachings from letters he had received, what have I to do with them? The “Elixir of Life” was written by its author under direct direction, or *inspection*, in his own house, in a faraway country, in which I had never been till two years later. Finally, *Man*

was *entirely rewritten* by one of the two “chelas” and from the same materials as those used by Mr. Sinnett for *Esoteric Buddhism*; the two having understood the teachings, each in his own way. What had I to do with the “states of consciousness” of the three authors, two of whom wrote in England while I was in India? He may attribute to the lack of *scientific* precision in the “original teachings,” there being “a jumble.” No one would accuse Mr. Subba Row’s *Bhagavad Git* a lectures of any such defects. Yet, I have already heard three or four intelligent persons among our members expounding the said three lectures (those which have already appeared)—*in three different and diametrically opposite ways*.

This will do, I believe. The *Secret Doctrine* will contain, no doubt, still more *heterodox* statements from the Brahminical view. No one is forced to accept *my* opinions or teaching in the Theosophical Society, one of the rules of which enforces only mutual tolerance for religious views. Our body is entirely unsectarian and “only exacts from each member that toleration of the beliefs of others which he desires ... in regard to his own faith.”

Most of us have been playing truants to this golden rule as to all others: more’s the pity.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

Theosophist, July & August 1883

TRANSMIGRATION OF THE LIFE ATOMS

[In an article titled "Hierosophy and Theosophy" which appeared in the *Theosophist* for July, 1883, William Oxley, F.T.S., referred briefly to the mummification practiced by the ancient Egyptians in order to support his speculation about "atoms" and "souls." To this passage H.P.B. appended a critical footnote. Then, in the succeeding August issue, a correspondent, "N.D.K.," asked some questions about statements made by H.P.B. in this footnote. Here we print the July footnote, followed by a summary of N.D.K.'s questions, and then the article of the above title, which gave H.P.B.'s replies.—Editors]

MR. Oxley will permit us to correct him. He looks at the objective terrestrial and *empty* shell—the "mummy," "and forgets that there may be hidden under the crude allegory a great scientific and occult truth. We are taught that for 3,000 years at least the "mummy" notwithstanding all the chemical preparations goes on throwing off to the last invisible atoms, which from the hour of death re-entering the various *vortices* of being go indeed "through every variety of organized life forms." But it is not the soul, the 5th, least of all the 6th, principle, but the *life atoms* of the 7th principle. At the end of the 3,000 years, sometimes more, and sometimes less, after endless transmigrations all these atoms are once more drawn together, and are made to form the new outer clothing or the body of the same monad (the real soul) which had already been clothed with two or three thousands of years before. Even in the worst case that of the annihilation of the conscious *personal* principle the monad or individual soul is ever the same as are also the atoms of the lower principles which regenerated and renewed in this ever flowing river of being are magnetically drawn together owing to their affinity, and are once more re-incarnated together. Such was the true occult theory of the Egyptians.

[In his letter to the Editor, N.D.K. remarks that H.P.B.'s footnote constitutes "a new installment of occult teaching" suggesting a basis of truth in the doctrine of transmigration. "What then," he asks, "is meant by the *life atoms*, and their going through endless transmigrations?" Also, do "both the invisible atoms of the Jiva after going through various life-atoms return again to re-form the physical body, and the Jiva of the entity that has reached the end of its Devachanic state and is ready to be re-incarnated again?" Further, "does the term Mower principles' include the 'Kama rupa' also, or only the lower triad of body, Jiva, and Lingasarira?" Finally, "do the atoms of the 4th principle (Kama rupa) and lower portion of the 5th, which cannot be assimilated by the 6th . . . also re-form—after going through various transmigrations, to constitute over again the 4th and lower 5th of the next incarnation?"]

We would, to begin with, draw our correspondent's attention to the closing sentence of the foot-note under his review. "Such was the true occult theory of the Egyptians"—the word "true" being used there in the sense of its being the doctrine they really believed in, as distinct from both the tenets fathered upon them by some Orientalists and quoted by Mr. Oxley, and that which the modern occultists may be now teaching. It does not stand to reason that, outside those occult truths that were known to, and revealed by, the great Hierophants during the final initiation, we should accept *all* that either the Egyptians or any other people may have regarded as true. The Priests of Isis were the only true initiates, and their occult teachings were still more veiled than those of the Chaldeans. There was the true doctrine of the Hierophants of the *inner* Temple; than the half-veiled Hieratic tenets of the Priest of the *outer* Temple; and finally, the vulgar popular religion of the great body of the ignorant who were allowed to reverence animals as divine. As shown correctly by Sir Gardner Wilkinson, the initiated priests taught that—"dissolution is only the cause of reproduction . . . nothing perishes which has once existed, but things which appear to be destroyed only change their natures and pass into another form." In the present case, however, the Egyptian doctrine of atoms coincides with our own occult teachings.

The just criticism of our observing brother, who takes naturally enough the sentence—"The life-atoms of the Jiva" in its literal sense, reminds us at the same time, more than ever, of that most important fact that one can never take too much care to express clearly new

ideas while writing on metaphysical subjects. In penning the words under review, no thought was given in fact, that the idea was “a new installment,” and, therefore, its incompleteness gave rise to a fresh misunderstanding. Without any doubt *Jiva* or *Prana* is quite distinct from the atoms it animates. The latter belong to the lowest or grossest state of matter—the *objec-tive* conditioned; the former—to its highest state: that state which the uninitiated, ignorant of its nature, would call the “objectively finite,” but which, to avoid any future misunderstanding, we may, perhaps, be permitted to call the *Subjectively Eternal*, though at the same time, and in one sense the subsistent existence—however paradoxical and unscientific the term may appear.¹

Life, the occultist says, is the eternal uncreated energy, and it alone represents in the infinite universe, that which the physicists have agreed to name the principle, or the law of continuity, though they apply it only to the endless development of the conditioned. But since modern science admits through her most learned professors that “energy has as much claim to be regarded as an objective reality as matter itself.”² and that life, according to the occult doctrine,—is the *one* energy acting Proteus-like under the most varied forms, the occultists have a certain right to use such a phraseology. Life is ever present in the atom or matter, whether organic or inorganic, conditioned or unconditioned—a difference that the occultists do not accept. Their doctrine is that life is as much present in the inorganic as in the organic matter: when life-energy is active in the atom, that atom is organic; when dormant or latent, then the atom is inorganic. Therefore, the expression “life-atom” though apt in one sense to mislead the reader, is not incorrect after all, since occultists do not recognise that anything in nature can be inorganic and know of no “dead atoms,” whatever meaning science may give to the adjective.

The alleged *law* of Biogenesis is the result of the ignorance of the

¹ Though there is a distinct term for it in the language of the adepts, how can one translate it into a European Language? What name can be given to that which is objective yet immaterial in its finite manifestations, subjective yet substantive (though not in our sense of substance) in its eternal existence? Having explained it the best we can, we leave the task of finding a more appropriate term for it to our learned English occultists. —Ed.

² Unseen Universe.

man of science of *occult* physics. It is accepted because the man of science was hitherto unable to find the necessary means to awaken into activity dormant life in what he terms an inorganic atom: hence the fallacy that a living thing can only be produced from a living thing, as though there ever was such a thing as *dead* matter in Nature! At this rate, and to be consistent, a mule ought to be also classed with inorganic matter, since it is unable to reproduce itself, and generate life.

We lay so much stress upon the above to answer at once any future objection to the idea that a mummy several thousand years old, can be throwing off atoms. Nevertheless the sentence may perhaps have been more clearly expressed by saying instead of the “life-atoms of *Jiva*,” the atoms “animated by dormant *Jiva* or life energy.” Again, the sentence quoted by our correspondent from Fragment No. 1,* though quite correct on the whole, might be more fully, if not more clearly, expressed. The “*Jiva*,” or life principle which animates man, beast, plant or even a mineral, certainly *is* “a form of force, indestructible,” since this force is the one life, or *anima mundi*, the universal living soul, and that the various modes in which the various objective things appear to us in nature in their atomic aggregations, such as minerals, plants, animals, etc., are all the different forms or states in which this force manifests itself. Were it to become, we will not say absent, for this is impossible, since it is omnipresent, but for one single instant inactive, say in a stone, the particles of the latter would lose instantly their cohesive property and disintegrate as suddenly—though the force would still remain in each of its particles, but in a dormant state. Thus the continuation of the sentence which states that, when this indestructible force is “disconnected with one set of atoms, it becomes attracted immediately by others” does not imply that it abandons entirely the first set, but only that it transfers its *vis viva* or living power, the energy of motion, to another set. But because it manifests itself in the next set as what is called Kinetic energy, it does not follow that the first set is deprived of it altogether; for

*From “Fragments of Occult Truth—I” (Theosophist III. 18; see THEOSOPHY 2:100). The full sentence reads: “The Vital principle (or *Jiv-atma*), a form of force, indestructible, and when disconnected with one set of atoms, becoming attracted immediately by others.”

itisstill in it, as potential energy, or life latent.³ This is a cardinal and basic truth of occultism, on the perfect knowledge of which depends the production of every phenomenon. Unless we admit this point, we should have to give up all the other truths of occultism. Thus what is “meant by the life-atom going through endless transmigration” is simply this: we regard and call in our occult phraseology those atoms that are moved by Kinetic energy as “life-atoms,” while those that are for the time being passive, containing but *invisible* potential energy, we call “sleeping atoms,” regarding at the same time those two forms of energy as produced by the one and same force, or life. We have to beg our readers’ indulgence: we have neither a man of science, nor an English scholar. Forced by circumstances to give out the little we know, we do the best we can and explain matters to the best of our ability. Ignorant of Newton’s laws, we claim to know something only of the *Occult* Laws of motion. And now to the Hindu doctrine of Metempsychosis.

It has a basis of truth; and, in fact, it is an axiomatic truth— but only in reference to human atoms and emanations, and that not only after a man’s death, but during the whole period of his life. The esoteric meaning of the Laws of Manu (Sec. XII, 3, and XII, 54 and 55), of the verses that state that “every act, either mental, verbal or corporeal, bears good or evil fruit (Karma), the various transmigrations of *men* (not souls) through the highest, middle, and lowest stages, are produced by his actions”; and again that “A Brahman-killer enters the body of a dog, bear, ass, camel, goat, sheep, bird, etc.,” bears no reference to the human Ego, but only to the atoms of his body, of his lower triad, and his fluidic emanations.

It is all very well for the Brahmins to distort in their own interest, the real meaning contained in these laws, but the words as quoted never meant what they were made to yield from the above verses later on. The Brahmins applied them selfishly to themselves, whereas

³ We feel constrained to make use of terms that have become technical in modern science—though they do not always fully express the idea to be conveyed—for want of better words. It is useless to hope that the occult doctrine may be ever thoroughly understood—even the few tenets that can be safely given to the world at large—unless a glossary of such words is edited; and, what is of a still more primary importance—until the full and correct meaning of the terms therein taught is thoroughly mastered.—Ed.

by “Brahman,” man’s seventh principle, his immortal monad and the essence of the personal Ego were allegorically meant. He who kills or extinguishes in himself the light of Para-brahm, *i.e.*, severs his personal Ego from the Atman and thus kills the future Devachanee, becomes a “Brahman-killer.” Instead of facilitating, through a virtuous life and spiritual aspirations the mutual union of the *Buddhi* and the *Manas*, he condemns by his own evil acts every atom of his lower principles to become attracted and drawn, in virtue of the magnetic affinity thus created by his passions, into the forming bodies of lower animals or brutes. This is the real meaning of the doctrine of Metempsychosis. It is not that such amalgamation of human particles with animal or even vegetable atoms can carry in it any idea of personal punishment *per se*, for of course it does not. But it is a cause created, the effects of which may manifest themselves throughout the next rebirths—unless the personality is annihilated. Otherwise, from cause to effect, every effect becoming in its turn a cause, they will run along the cycle of rebirths, the once-given impulse expending itself only at the threshold of Pralaya. But of this anon.

Notwithstanding their esoteric meaning, even the words of the grandest and noblest of all the adepts, Gautama Buddha, are misunderstood, distorted and ridiculed in the same way. *The Hina-yana*, the lowest form of transmigration of the Buddhist, is as little comprehended as the *Maha-yana*, its highest form, and, because Sakya Muni is shown to have once remarked to his Bhikkus, while pointing out to them a broom, that “it had formerly been a novice who neglected to sweep out” the Council room, hence was reborn as a broom (!), therefore, the wisest of all of the world’s sages stands accused of idiotic superstition. Why not try and find out, before accusing, the true meaning of the figurative statement? Why should we scoff before we understand?

Is or is not that which is called magnetic effluvia a something, a stuff, or substance, invisible, and imponderable though it be? If the learned authors of “The Unseen Universe” object to light, heat and electricity being regarded merely as imponderables, and show that each of these phenomena has as much claim to be recognized as an objective reality as matter itself—our right to regard the mesmeric or

magnetic fluid which emanates from man to man or even from man to what is termed an *inanimate* object, is far greater. It is not enough to say that this fluid is a species of molecular energy like heat, for instance, for it is vastly more. Heat is produced whenever visible energy is transformed into molecular energy, we are told, and it may be thrown out by any material composed of sleeping atoms or inorganic matter as it is called: whereas the magnetic fluid projected by a living human body *is life itself*. “Indeed it is life-atoms” that a man in a blind passion throws off, unconsciously, and though he does it quite as effectively as a mes-meriser who transfers them from himself to any object consciously and under the guidance of his will. Let any man give way to any intense feeling, such as anger, grief, etc., under or near a tree, or in direct contact with a stone; and many thousands of years after that any tolerable Psychometer will see the man and sense his feelings, from one single fragment of that tree or stone that he had touched. Hold any object in your hand, and it will become impregnated with your life atoms, indrawn and outdrawn, changed and transferred in us at every instant of our lives. Animal heat is but so many life atoms in molecular motion. It requires no adept knowledge, but simply the natural gift of a good clairvoyant subject to see them passing to and fro, from man to objects and *vice versa* like a bluish lambent flame.

Why then should not a broom, made of a shrub, which grew most likely in the vicinity of the building where the lazy novice lived, a shrub, perhaps, repeatedly touched by him while in a state of anger, provoked by his laziness and distaste to his duty,—why should not a quantity of his life atoms have passed into the materials of the future besom and therein have been recognised by Buddha, owing to his superhuman (not *supernatural*) powers? The processes of nature are acts of incessant borrowing and giving back. The materialistic sceptic, however, will not take anything in any, save in a literal, dead-letter sense. We would invite those Christian Orientalists who chuckle at this record of Buddha’s teachings to compare it with a certain passage in the Gospels—a teaching of Christ. To his disciples’ query “who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”—the answer they received was—“neither hath this man sinned, nor his

parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.” (John ix. 2-3.)

Now Gautama’s statement has a scientific and philosophic meaning for every occultist at least, if it lacks a clear meaning for the profane; while the answer put (probably centuries later⁴) into the mouth of the founder of Christianity by his over-zealous and ignorant biographers has not even that esoteric meaning, which so many of the sayings of Jesus are pregnant with. This alleged teaching is an uncalled-for and blasphemous insult to their own God, implying, as it clearly does, that for the pleasure of manifesting his power, the Deity had foredoomed an innocent man to the torture of a life-long blindness. As well accuse Christ of being the author of the 39 Articles!

To conclude our too long answer, the “lower principles” mentioned in the foot-note are—the 1st, 2nd and 3rd. They cannot include the *Kamarupa*, for this “rupa” belongs to the middle, not the lower principles. And, to our correspondent’s further query, “do the atoms of these (the 4th and 5th) also re-form after going through various transmigrations to constitute over again the 4th and the lower 5th of the next incarnation’ “—we answer—”they do.” The reason why we have tried to explain the doctrine of the “life atoms” at such length, is precisely in connection with this last question, and with the object of throwing out one more valuable hint. We do not feel at liberty at present, however, to give any further details.

⁴ And probably by, or under, the inspiration of Irenaeus—since the sentence is found in the 4th Gospel, that of John, that did not exist yet at the time of his quarrels with the Gnostics.—Ed.

Lucifer, March 1888

THE LIFE PRINCIPLE

A FEW years back a very interesting controversy raged between several scientists of reputation. Some of these held that spontaneous generation was a fact in nature, whilst others proved the contrary; to the effect that, as far as experiments went, there was found to be biogenesis, or generation of life from previously existing life, and never the production of any form of life from non-living matter.

An erroneous assumption was made in the first instance that heat, equal to the boiling point of water, destroyed all life organisms; but by taking hermetically sealed vessels containing infusions, and subjecting them to such or a greater degree of heat, it was shown that living organisms did appear even after the application of so much heat. By more careful experiments, the following fact was brought to light, that spores of Bacteria, and other animalcules, which generally float in the air, can, when dry, withstand a greater degree of heat, and that when the experiments are made in optically pure air, no life ever appears, and the infusions never putrefy.

Along with the fact of biogenesis, we must note, however, Mr. Huxley's caution, when he says, "that with organic chemistry, molecular physics, and physiology yet in their infancy, and every day making prodigious strides, it would be the height of presumption for any man to say that the conditions under which matter assumes the qualities called vital, may not some day be artificially brought together"; and, again, "that as a matter not of proof, but of probability, if it were given me to look beyond the abyss of geologically recorded time, to the still more remote period, when the earth was passing through chemical and physical conditions which it can never see again, I should

expect to be a witness of the evolution of living protoplasm from non-living matter."

Tracing inorganic matter upwards to the form which approaches most nearly to vital organisms, we come to those complex substances called "colloids," which are something like the white of an egg, and form the last stage of the ascending line from inorganic matter to organic life.

Tracing life downwards we ultimately reach "protoplasm," called by Huxley "the physical basis of life," a colourless, jelly-like substance, absolutely homogeneous without parts or structure. Protoplasm is evidently the nearest approach of life to matter; and if life ever originated from atomic and molecular combinations, it was in this form.

Protoplasm in its substance is a nitrogenous carbon compound, differing only from other similar compounds of the albuminous family of colloid by the extremely complex composition of its atoms. Its peculiar qualities, including life, are not the result of any new and peculiar atom added to the known chemical compounds of the same family, but of the manner of grouping and motions of these elements.¹ Life in its essence is manifested by the faculties of nutrition, sensation, movement, and reproduction, and every speck of protoplasm develops organisms which possess these faculties. The question has been asked whether this primitive speck of protoplasm can be artificially manufactured by chemical processes. Science has answered in the negative, as it knows as yet of no process by which any combination of inorganic matter could be vivified.

The law of evolution has now been satisfactorily proved to pervade the whole of the Universe, but there are several missing links, and, doubtless, the discoveries of modern science will in course of time bring many new facts to light on these obscure points which at present defy all search. Far more important than the question of the origin of species is the great problem of the development of life from what is

¹ Vide Mr. Samuel Laing's new book "A Modern Zoroastrian." The whole of the work is well worth study, as it is as interesting as it is scientific. Several quotations have been made in this article from that excellent volume.—N.D.K.

Notwithstanding its excellency, it is a very materialistic work.—(Ed.)

looked upon as the inanimate mineral kingdom

Every discovery of science, however limited it may be, affords food for thought, and enables us to understand how far we are to believe on the ground of observation and experiment, and how far we theorize in the right direction.

Science has not been able to prove the fact of “spontaneous generation” by experiment, but the best of scientists think it safe to believe that there must have been spontaneous generation² at one time. Thus far, scientific thought is in accord with esoteric teachings.

Occult philosophy has it, that motion, cosmic matter, duration, space, are everywhere. Motion is the imperishable life, and is conscious or unconscious, as the case may be. It exists as much during the active period of the Universe, as during Pralaya, or dissolution, when the unconscious life still maintains the matter³ it animates in sleepless and unceasing motion.

Life is ever present in the atom or matter, whether organic or inorganic—a difference that occultists do not accept. When the life energy is active in the atom, that atom is organic; when dormant or latent, the atom is inorganic. The *Jiva*, or life principle, which animates man, beast, plant, and even a mineral, is a form of force indestructible since this force is the one life, or *anima mundi*, the universal living soul, and since the various modes in which objective things appear to us in nature in their atomic aggregations, such as minerals, plants, animals, etc., are all the different forms or states in which this force manifests itself. Were it to become for one single instant inactive, say in a stone, the particles of the latter would lose instantly their cohesive property, and disintegrate as suddenly, though the force would *still* remain in each of its particles, but in a dormant state.⁴ When the life force is disconnected with one set of atoms it becomes immediately attracted by others; but in doing so, it does not abandon entirely the first set, but only transfers its *vis viva*, or living power—the energy of motion—to another set. But because it manifests itself in the next set as what is called Kinetic energy, it does not follow that the first set is deprived of it altogether; for it is still in it, as potential energy, or life latent.

2 Esoteric Science, holding that nothing in nature is inorganic, but that every atom is a “life,” does not agree with “Modern Science” as to the meaning attached to “Spontaneous Generation.” We may deal with this later.—(Ed.)

3 Esoteric Science does not admit of the “existence” of “matter,” as such in Pralaya. In its noumenal state, dissolved in the “Great Breath,” or its “laya” condition, it can exist only potentially. Occult philosophy, on the contrary, teaches that during Pralaya, “Naught is. All is ceaseless eternal Breath.”—(Ed.)

4 “Five Years of Theosophy,” page 535.

More than any other, the life principle in man is one with which we are most familiar, and yet are so hopelessly ignorant as to its nature. Matter and force are ever found allied. Matter without force, and force without matter, are inconceivable. In the mineral kingdom the universal life energy is one and undivided; it begins imperceptibly to differentiate in the vegetable kingdom, and from the lower animals to the higher animals, and man, the differentiation increases at every step in complex progression.

When once the life-principle has commenced to differentiate, and has become sufficiently individualized, does it keep to organisms of the same kind, or does it after the death of one organism go and vivify an organism of another kind? For instance, after the death of a man, does the Kinetic energy which kept him alive up to a certain time to after death and attach itself to a protoplasmic speck of the human kind, or does it go and vivify some animal or vegetable germ?⁵

After the death of a man, the energy of motion which vitalized his frame is said to be partly left in the particles of the dead body in a dormant state, while the main energy goes and unites itself with another set of atoms. Here a distinction is drawn between the dormant life left in the particles of the dead body and the remaining Kinetic energy, which passes off elsewhere to vivify another set of atoms. Is not the energy that becomes dormant⁶ life in the particles of the dead body a

5 As far as the writer knows, Occultism does not teach that the LIFE-PRINCIPLE—which is per se immutable, eternal, and as indestructible as the one causeless cause, for it is THAT in one of its aspects—can ever differentiate individually. The expression in Five Years of Theosophy must be misleading, if it led to such an inference. It is only each body—whether man, beast, plant, insect, bird, or mineral—which, in assimilating more or less the life principle, differentiates it in its own special atoms, and adapts it to this or another combination of particles, which combination determines the differentiation. The monad partaking in its universal aspect of the Parabrahmic nature, unites with its monas on the plane of differentiation to constitute an individual. This individual, being in its essence inseparable from Parabrahm, also partakes of the Life-Principle in its parabrahmic or Universal Aspect. Therefore, at the death of a man or an animal, the manifestation of life or the evidences of Kinetic energy are only withdrawn to one of those subjective planes of existence which are not ordinarily objective to us. The amount of Kinetic energy to be expended during life by one particular set of physiological cells is allotted by Karma—another aspect of the Universal Principle—consequently when this is expended the conscious activity of man or animal is no longer manifested on the plane of those cells, and the chemical forces which they represent are disengaged and left free to act in the physical plane of their manifestation. *Jiva*—in its universal aspect—has⁸ like *Prakriti*, its seven forms, or what we have agreed to call “principles.” Its action begins on the plane of the Universal Mind (*Mahat*) and ends in the grossest of the Tanmatric five planes—the last one, which is ours. Thus though we may, repeating after Sankhya philosophy, speak of the seven *prakritis* (or “productive productions”) or after the phraseology of the Occultists of the seven *Jivas*—yet, both *Prakriti* and *jiva* are indivisible abstractions, to be divided only out of condescension for the weakness of our human intellect. Therefore also, whether we divide it into four, five or seven principles matters in reality very little.—(Ed.)

6 A dormant energy is no energy.

lower form of energy than the Kinetic energy, which passes off elsewhere; and although during the life of a man they appear mixed up together, are they not two distinct forms of energy, united only for the time being?

A student of occultism writes as follows:

Jiva, or the life-principle, is subtle super-sensuous matter, permeating the entire physical structure of the living being, and when it is separated from such structure life is said to be extinct. A particular set of conditions is necessary for its connection with an animal structure, and when those conditions are disturbed it is attracted by other bodies presenting suitable conditions.⁷

Every atom has contained within it its own life, or force, and the various atoms which make up the physical frame always carry with them their own life wherever they travel. The human or animal life-principle, however, which vitalizes the whole being, appears to be a progressed, differentiated, and individualized energy of motion, which seems to travel from organism to organism at each successive death. Is it really, as quoted above, “subtle super-sensuous matter,” which is something distinct from the atoms that form the physical body? (1)

If so, it becomes a sort of a monad, and would be something akin to the higher human soul which transmigrates from body to body.

Another and more important question is:—Is the life-principle, or Jiva, something different from the higher or spiritual soul? Some Hindoo Philosophers hold that these two principles are not distinct, but one and the same. (2)

To make the question plainer, it may be enquired whether occultism knows of cases in which human beings have been known to live quite separated from their spiritual soul? (3)

A correct comprehension of the nature, qualities, and mode of action of the principle, called “Jiva,” is very essential for a proper understanding of the very first principles of Esoteric Science, and it is with a view to elicit further information from those who have kindly promised to give help to the Editors of LUCIFER on deep questions of the science, that this feeble attempt has been made to formulate a

⁷ “Five Years of Theosophy,” page 512.

few questions which have been puzzling almost every student of Theosophy.

Ahmedabad

N.D.K.

EDITOR'S NOTE

(1) Modern Science, tracing all vital phenomena to the molecular forces of the original protoplasm, disbelieves in a *Vital Principle*, and in its materialistic negation laughs, of course, at the idea. Ancient Science, or Occultism, disregarding the laugh of ignorance, asserts it as a fact. THE ONE LIFE—is deity itself, immutable, omnipresent, eternal. It is “subtle, super-sensuous matter” on this lower plane of ours, whether we call it one thing or the other; whether we trace it to the “Sun-force”—a theory by B. W. Richardson, F.R.S.—or call it this, that, or the other. The learned Dr. Richardson—an eminent authority—goes further than words, for he speaks of the life-principle as of “a form of MATTER”(!!) Says the great man of science: “I speak only of a veritable material agent, refined, but actual and substantial; an agent having quality of weight and of volume; an agent susceptible of chemical combination, and thereby of change of physical state and condition; an agent passive in its action, moved always, *i.e.*, by influences apart from itself, obeying other influences; an agent possessing no initiative power, no *vis* or *energia naturae*, but still playing a most important, if not a primary part in the production of the phenomena resulting from the action of the *energia* upon visible matter” (p. 379). As one sees, the Doctor plays at blind man’s buff with occultism, and describes admirably the passive, “life elementals” used—say—by great sorcerers to animate their *homunculi*. Still the F.R.S. describes one of the countless aspects of our “subtle, super-sensuous-matter-life-principle.”

(2) And the Hindu philosophers are right. It is here that we have real need of the divisions of everything—Prakriti, Jiva, etc.—into principles to enable us to explain the action of *Jiva* on our low planes without degrading it. Thence, while the Vedantin philosopher may be content with four principles in his universal Kos-mogony, we occultists need at least *Seven* to enable ourselves to understand the difference

of the Protean nature of the life-principle once it acts on the five lower spheres or planes.

Our readers, enamoured with Modern Science, at the same time as with the occult doctrines—have to choose between the two views of the nature of the Life Principle, which are the most accepted now, and—the third view—that of the occult doctrines. The three may be described as follows: —

I. That of the scientific “molecularists” who assert that life is the resultant *of the interplay of ordinary molecular forces*.

II. That which regards “living organisms” as animated by an independent “vital principle,” and declares “inorganic” matter to be lacking this.

III. The Occultist or Esoteric standpoint, which looks up on the distinction between organic and inorganic matter as fallacious and nonexistent in nature. For it says that matter in all its phases being merely a vehicle for the manifestation *through it* of LIFE—The Parabrahmic Breath—in its physically pantheistic aspect (as Dr. Richardson would say, we suppose) it is a super-sensuous state of matter *itself* the vehicle of the ONE LIFE, the unconscious purposiveness of Parabrahm.

(3) It is just this. A human being *can* “live” quite separated from his Spiritual Soul—the 7th and 6th principles of the ONE LIFE or “Atma-Buddhi”; but no being—whether human or animal—can live separated from its *physical* Soul, *Nephesh* or the *Breath of Life* (in *genesis*). These “*seven souls*” or *lives* (that which we call Principles), are admirably described in the Egyptian *Ritual* and the oldest papyri. Chabas has unearthed curious papyri and Mr. Gerald Massey has collected priceless information upon this doctrine; and though his conclusions are not ours, we may yet in a future number quote the facts he gives, and thus show how the oldest philosophy known to Europe—the Egyptian—corroborates our esoteric teachings.