Blavatsky on three unpublished essays by Éliphas Lévi

First published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. V, No. 6 (54), March 1884, *pp.* 136-137; No. 7 (55), April 1884, *pp.* 156-158; No. 8 (56), May 1884, *pp.* 186-187. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (NOTES AND FOOTNOTES TO "THREE UNPUBLISHED ESSAYS") VI *pp.* 175-80.

[H.P. Blavatsky translates from the original French and publishes three essays of the late Éliphas Lévi. They are introduced with the following remarks:]

THE THREE ESSAYS — the first of which is now given — belong to the unpublished MSS. of the late French Occultist, a series of whose other Lectures on Secret Sciences is being published serially in the *Journal of the Theosophical Society*. These three papers were kindly copied and sent for this Magazine by our respected Brother, Baron Spedalieri, F.T.S., of Marseilles. We hope to give, in good time, the translation of every scrap ever written by this remarkable "Professor of High Transcendental Sciences and Occult Philosophy," whose only mistake was to pander rather conspicuously to the dogmas of *the established church* — the church that unfrocked him.

[In the pages that follow, H.P. Blavatsky's footnotes are preceded by those words or sentences of Éliphas Lévi to which they specifically refer. Such words or sentences are enclosed in brackets.]

[**The Eggregores**] The giants of Enoch.

[**Created spirits**] The term "created" is a perfect misnomer when used by an Occultist, and always a *blind* in the works of Éliphas Lévi, who is quite aware of the fallacy implied in the word "*Creation*," in the theistic sense, and shows this repeatedly in his writings. It is the last tribute, we hope, paid by our century to an unscientific dogma of the Past.

[**There can be no such thing as spirits, formless or without an envelope**] Again an incorrect term. A "spirit" is — *spirit* only so long as it is formless and *arūpa*; and it loses its name as soon as it becomes entangled in matter or substance of any kind known to us. A "Spiritual Entity" would answer better.

[**. . . animals, of whose nature and destiny we are so far ignorant**] So little was É.L. "ignorant" of the nature — and *ultimate* destiny — of animals that he devotes to this a number of pages in his *Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie*. No true Occultist can be in the dark upon this subject. The prudent author pandered, we are afraid, to public prejudice and superstition.

[**. . . matter is but the *substratum* of created spirits**] Or the highest *Dhyāni Chohans* of Occultism. At the beginning of Manvantara, the *Fohat* which they radiate awakens and differentiates Mahattattva, itself the radiation of *Mūlaprakriti*.

[**the EGGREGORES of the *Book of Enoch***] The "giants" of *Genesis* who loved the daughters of men: an allusion to the first prehuman (so to say) races of men evoluted, not *born* — the Alpha and the Omega of Humanity in this our "Round."

[**we . . . have to recognize entirely blind forces**] A "blind" action does not necessarily constitute an undeniable proof that the agent it emanates from is devoid of individu-

al consciousness or "intelligence." It may simply point out the superiority of one force over the other, domineering, and hence guiding forcibly the actions of the weakest. There are no "blind" forces in nature in the sense the author places on the adjective. Every atom of the universe is permeated with the Universal Intelligence, from the latent spark in the mineral up to the quasi-divine light in man's brain. It is all as É.L. says "action and reaction," attraction or repulsion, two forces of equal potentiality being often brought to a dead standstill only owing to a mutual neutralization of power.

[Your sun — whose spots you regard as a commencement of his cooling off] É.L. says "you regard"; for, he himself, as an Occultist, does not so regard them. The real occult doctrine upon solar physics is given out plainly enough in the September number of *The Theosophist* (1883), Art. *Replies to an English F.T.S.*[1]

[**. . . the great Adam will be entirely reconstituted**] The seventh and last race of the seventh Round.

[**The divine sun gets never old, and the soul of the just is made in the image and likeness of *that* sun**] The "central sun" whence emanates and whither returns *intelligence* scattered throughout the universe. It is the one eternal universal focus, the central point "which is everywhere and nowhere" outbreathing and inbreathing its ever radiating rays. The "Soul of the just" is Avalokiteśvara "made in the image and likeness" of Ādi Buddha, Parabrahm.

[**Nature is the caster and her furnace is never extinguished. It is this, the true fire of hell**] Here the *annihilation* of "personality" is clearly hinted at, though the French Kabbalist would have never dreamt, nor dared to declare the "bitter" truth as plainly as we are doing. Had we from the beginning assumed the policy of pandering to people's prejudices and undeveloped ideas and given the name of "God" to the spiritual side of nature and of Creator to its physical potencies and called Spirit — Soul and *vice versa*, as necessary for concealing the unwelcome features of the doctrines taught — we would have had nearly all our present enemies on our side. Honesty, however, does not seem always the best policy, — not in the teaching of Truth, at any rate. We know of Western Occultists — among them pupils of Éliphas Lévi — who oppose the occult doctrines of the East as outlined in *Esoteric Buddhism* imagining them opposed to the Kabbalistic doctrines and far more materialistic, atheistic and *unscientific* than those of their masters — the Judeo-Christian Kabbalists. Let them understand well the real meaning of the comparison made by Éliphas Lévi, and see whether it is not in other words a perfect corroboration of the Eastern doctrine of the "survival of the fittest" in its application to the human *personal* soul. The "furnace of Nature" is the *eighth* sphere.[2] When man fails to mould his soul "in the image and likeness of the great Adam" — we say of — Buddha, Krishna, or Christ (according to our respective creeds) — he is "a failure of nature" and nature has to remould the cast before it can launch it again on the shoreless Ocean of Immortality. "Statues — die," in the words of É.L. — the metal of which they are cast "the perfect statue" never dies. It is a pity that Nature should not have consulted the sentimental prejudices

[1] [*Cf.* "Is the Sun a mere cooling mass?" in our Planetary Rounds and Globes Series.]

[2] [Or Avīchi, the antithesis of Devachan.]

of some people, and that so many of her great secrets and *facts* are so rudely opposed to human fictions.

[. . . **those seven Kings . . . *three on one side and four on the other***] Easy enough to perceive that É.L. hints at the 7 principles of man, but very difficult for one, unacquainted with occult terminology, to make out his meaning. The "middle" King is the body of Desire, the 4th principle, *Kāma-rūpa*. Had "Adam" or man, equilibrized the two triads by putting that body or his desires aside and thus triumphed over the evil counsel of his lower, animal triad, he would have caused the death of all except the 7th. This has reference to the psycho-physiological "mystery of the birth, life and death" of the 1st race in this Round.

[**The soul is beautiful from its birth and does not admit of any defects; a defective soul cannot yet be called properly a soul**] And since it is a trite axiom — "like cause, like results," then it necessarily follows that every bad result or effect has to be traced to the producer of the first cause — in other words to the "personal" god. We would rather decline for our deity such an imperfect Being.

[. . . **Psyche . . . which . . . is neither body, nor spirit, but serves as an instrument for both**] A *sheath* as it is called in Sanskrit — and in the Vedanta philosophy *Kāma rūpa* is the sheath of *Māyāvi rūpa*, and that also of the body for the realization of its desires.

[. . . **Psyche clad in her mediator, or her fluidic body**] *Māyāvi rūpa* the objective portion of it.

[**But where is hell? . . . It is not a locality but a state. It is the latent and hazy state of souls that are disintegrating. This hell is silent and shut in like a tomb**] *And this is the Eighth* sphere.

[**We know that death is composed of a series of successive deaths**] The successive stages through which a doomed soul passes to final annihilation are here referred to. Some of these stages are undergone on this earth, and then the disintegrating entity is drawn into the attraction of the eighth sphere, and there remoulded to start on another journey through life with a renewed impulse. The stages above referred to are, according to the teachings of our philosophy, sixteen in number — the last two being, however, the different aspects of one and the same condition, the final extinction and re-formation.[1]

[**Adam, the protoplast, that is to say, humanity is the verb, the only son of God**] On this, our Earth, of course.

[. . . **recollection of our anterior lives . . . when that remembrance once returns, it will be eternal**] Yes; on the day of Nirvānic Resurrection.[2]

[**God is creating soul eternally**] This assertion is only true in the sense that Parabrahman or Ādi-Buddha is eternally manifesting itself as Jivātman (7th principle) or Avalokiteśvara.

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[1] [*Cf.* "Woe for the living Dead" in the same series.]

[2] See *Esoteric Buddhism*.

"God is *creating* soul eternally" and "soul *eternal*" nevertheless! Can sense and logic be more sacrificed than to the fallacy of certain meaningless but holied words such as "creation"? Had É.L. said that "God is *evolving* soul eternally," that would have sense; for here "God" stands for the Eternal Principle, Parabrahm, one of whose *aspects* is "Mūlaprakriti" or the eternal *root*, the spiritual and physical germ of all — the soul and the body of the universe, both eternal [in] their ultimate constitution — which is one.

[**. . . it is through sacrifice alone that man can commune with God**] Surely, the "sacrifice" of our reason — if a *personal* God is meant.

[**Appended to a long and complicated paragraph of Éliphas Lévi**] What round-about prolific sentences to say that which can be expressed in a few words: God is nature, visible and invisible, and nature or Cosmos in its infinity is God! And yet É.L. was undoubtedly a great occultist.

[**This intelligence that manifests itself everywhere, where there is life, not as an accident, but as a cause — it is the soul**] We have been just told that soul only servilely copies "like the gobelin weavers" the ready models it finds, and that it is not conscious of the beauty of the forms it is shaping. What and wherefore the "intelligence" then? — God being intelligence itself, and the soul his agent likewise intelligent. Whence the imperfection, the evil, the failures of nature? Who is responsible for all this? Or shall we be answered by Christian occultists as we have hitherto been by their orthodox brethren: "the ways of Providence are mysterious and it is a sin to question them"?

It is in fact the Mahāmāyā of the Hindu occultists.

[**Universal soul has itself for support or for substratum the primordial corporeal substance**] And we the manifested prakriti (not differentiated).

[**. . . the great Adam, the Adam Kadmon of the Kabbalists. It is he who is the Macroprosopus of the *Zohar*, it is in him that we live, and move and have our being, as he lives and moves and has his being in God, whose black *mirage he is***] Which amounts to saying that it is not in the personal Jehovah, the God of the Bible, that "we live and move and have our being," but in Adam, the spirit of Adam — or HUMANITY in its universal and cosmical sense.[1] This is in perfect accord with the occult doctrine; but what will the Theists and Christians say to this?

This universal soul is in fact the manifested Brahman of the Hindu philosophers and Avalokiteśvara of the Buddhist occultists.

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[1] *Note to Students:* There are four variants of Adam, one for each of the preceding Root-Races:
Adam 1 (Kadmon)* or Heavenly Man (Second Logos) in the context of the above passage.
Adam 2, of *Genesis*, the ethereal, Self-born Astral Sons of Yoga (First Root-Race, Self-Existent).
Adam 3 plus Eve, the sweat-born, asexual, Sons of Passive Yoga (early Third Root-Race, Lemurian).
Adam 4, of *Genesis*, the womb-born men and women (Fourth Root-Race, Atlantean).

* Sephīrāh is the female power. See "The first four Root-Races" and Appendices in our Secret Doctrine's Third Proposition Series.

A further footnote

First published in the *Journal of The Theosophical Society*, Madras, Vol. I, No. 6, June 1884, *pp.* 82-83. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (FOOTNOTES TO "UNPUBLISHED WRITINGS OF ÉLIPHAS LÉVI") VI *p.* 238.

[To her own translation from the original French of Lecture Five in this Series, H.P. Blavatsky appends the following two footnotes:]

According to the statement of Llorente[1] from 1481 to 1808 there were burnt alive 31,912 persons; burned in effigy 17,659, tortured and imprisoned 291,456. All that in the name of "Jesus Christ" and by the supreme authority of the Pope, who appointed the "apostolic" judges of the inquisition. This is not "attacking Christianity," but simply stating historic facts.[2]

Éliphas Lévi being a Catholic, still cherishes the idea that the Pope of Rome is really the successor of Peter, who was made Bishop of Rome by Jesus Christ. If it is admitted that Peter really was the first Pope, then it follows logically that the "Roman Catholic" church is really the only Christian church that has any legitimate existence, and all the so-called protestant churches are only so many heresies that ought to be rooted out; but biblical criticism has shown that Peter had nothing whatever to do with the foundation of the Latin church. "Petroma" was the name of the double set of stone tablets used by the hierophant at all initiations during the final Mystery; and the designation "Peter" (in Phoenician and Chaldaic, an interpreter) appears to have been the *title* of this person. The majority of critics show that the "apostle" Peter never was in Rome, — and besides it is almost certain that the real "Jesus" of the gospels, whose name was "Jehoshua, the Nazarene," lived a hundred years before the Christian era.

[1] See *American Encyclopaedia*.

[H.P. Blavatsky has reference to the *Encyclopaedia Americana*. Edited by Francis Lieber, assisted by E. Wigglesworth. Philadelphia: Carey, Lea & Carey, 1829-33; also 1838, 1848, 1849. Article on "Inquisition," *p.* 33, where Llorente is referred to. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

[2] [See "Paul an Initiate and founder of Christianity," and "Peter not an Initiate and the enemy of Paul," in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]