

# H. P. BLAVATSKY ON THE BHAGAVAD GITA

“**Bhagavad-gita** (*Sk.*). *Lit.*, “the Lord’s Song”. A portion of the *Mahabharata*, the great epic poem of India. It contains a dialogue wherein Krishna – the “Charioteer” – and Arjuna, his *Chela*, have a discussion upon the highest spiritual philosophy. The work is pre-eminently occult or esoteric.”

– *The Theosophical Glossary*, p. 56

“Like the Book of Job very wrongly incorporated into the Bible, since it is the allegorical and double record of the Egyptian sacred mysteries in the temples and of the disembodied Soul appearing before Osiris, and the Hall of Amenti, to be judged according to its Karma – the Gita is a record of the ancient teachings during the Mystery of Initiation.”

– *Footnote to an article titled “Bhagavad-Gita”*

“We shall begin this work by expounding, so far as permitted, the esoteric meaning of the text of the Bhagavad Gita. ... Some of our readers, especially Hindus, will be doubtless astonished to discover the almost perfect identity between the concealed sense of this immortal epic and the Arhat Tibetan Doctrine, which has been in part expounded in the Fragments and other writings.”

– *Our Fifth Year*

“Since the birth of the Theosophical Society and the publication of “Isis”, it is being repeated daily that all the Esoteric Wisdom of the ages lies concealed in the Vedas, the Upanishads and Bhagavad-Gita. Yet, unto the day of the first appearance of “Esoteric Buddhism” [*i.e. the book of this title, in which A.P. Sinnett presented teachings given to him in letters by the Master K.H. and the Master M.*], and for long centuries back, these doctrines remained a sealed letter to all but a few initiated Brahmins who had always kept the spirit of it to themselves. The allegorical text was taken literally by the educated and the uneducated, the first laughing secretly at the fables and the latter falling into superstitious worship, and owing to the variety of the interpretations – splitting into numerous sects. ... Most undeniably, not “nearly all” – but positively all the doctrines given in “Esoteric Buddhism” and far more yet untouched, are to be found in the Gita, and not only there but in a thousand more known or unknown MSS. of Hindu sacred writings.”

– *The Bhagavad-Gita and Esoteric Buddhism*

“As regards the revival of Oriental literature, the whole press of India, Ceylon, and Japan unqualifiedly gives us the credit of having done more in that direction than any other agency of modern times. We have not only helped to revive in India the ancient Tols, or pandit-schools of Sanskrit literature and philosophy, and to reawaken reverence for the class of real Yogis, or saintly devotees, but we have created a demand for reprints and translations of ancient Sanskrit classics, which is being met by the frequent issues of works of this class at Calcutta, Bombay, Benares, Lucknow, Lahore, Madras, and other Indian literary centres. Among the most important are the Vedas, Bhagavad-Gita, the writings of Shankara, Patanjali, and other renowned Aryan philosophers and mystics. The Asiatic people have publicly testified most unqualifiedly their gratitude and respect to us for what we have done on the lines of the second of our declared objects. Nor should it be overlooked that the prevalent interest in Theosophy and mystical Oriental philosophy in general, which the most casual observer is forced to see throughout Europe and America, is directly or indirectly the result of our society’s activity.”

– *Recent Progress in Theosophy*

**OVERLEAF: HPB ON ADI SHANKARACHARYA**

# H. P. BLAVATSKY ON ADI SHANKARACHARYA

“... Buddha’s grand successor, Shankaracharya.”

– “*The Secret Doctrine*” Vol. 1, p. xliv

“Shankaracharya the greatest of the Esoteric masters of India ...”

– “*The Secret Doctrine*” Vol. 1, p. 86

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

– “*The Secret Doctrine*” Vol. 1, p. 271-272

“The followers of one of the greatest minds that ever appeared on Earth, the *Adwaita* Vedantins are called *Atheists*, because they regard all save Parabrahm, the *secondless*, or Absolute Reality – as an illusion. Yet the wisest Initiates came from their ranks, as also the greatest Yogis.”

– “*The Secret Doctrine*” Vol. 1, p. 522

“But it is simply this: every “Round” brings about a new development and even an entire change in the mental, psychic, spiritual and physical constitution of man, all these principles evolving on an ever ascending scale. Thence it follows that those persons who, like Confucius and Plato, belonged psychically, mentally and spiritually to the higher planes of evolution, were in our Fourth Round as the average man will be in the Fifth Round, whose mankind is destined to find itself, on this scale of Evolution, immensely higher than is our present humanity. Similarly Gautama Buddha – Wisdom incarnate – was still higher and greater than all the men we have mentioned, who are called Fifth Rounders, while Buddha and Shankaracharya are termed Sixth Rounders, allegorically.”

– “*The Secret Doctrine*” Vol. 1, p. 162

“The “heel of Achilles” of orthodox Brahmanism is the *Adwaita* philosophy, whose followers are called by the pious “Buddhists in disguise”; as that of orthodox Buddhism is Northern mysticism, as represented by the disciples of the philosophies of *Aryasanga* (the *Yogacharya* School) and *Mahayana*, who are twitted in their turn by their correlative as “Vedantins in disguise.” The esoteric philosophy of both these can be but one if carefully analysed and compared, as Gautama Buddha and Shankaracharya are most closely connected, if one believes tradition and certain esoteric teachings. Thus every difference between the two will be found one of form rather than of substance.”

– “*The Secret Doctrine*” Vol. 2, p. 637

“Thus, fifty odd years after his death “the great Teacher” [*i.e. Gautama Buddha*] having refused full *Dharmakaya* and *Nirvana*, was pleased, for purposes of *Karma* and philanthropy, to be reborn. ... He was reborn as *Shankara*, the greatest Vedantic teacher of India, ... Thus it is averred that *Gautama Buddha* was reincarnated in *Shankaracharya* ... According to *Sayanacharya*, the great commentator on the *Vedas*, he is to be held as an *Avatara*, or direct incarnation of *Shiva* – the *Logos*, the Seventh Principle in Nature – Himself. In the *Secret Doctrine* *Shri Shankaracharya* is regarded as the abode – for the thirty-two years of his mortal life – of a Flame, the highest of the manifested Spiritual Beings, one of the Primordial Seven Rays.”

– “*The Mystery of Buddha*”