

ESOTERIC HINDUISM

A few quotes to supplement the talk (Sunday 5th March)

“The “heel of Achilles” of orthodox Brahmanism is the Advaita 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.”

– H.P. Blavatsky, “The Secret Doctrine” Vol. 2, p. 63

“It is hard to explain on any other ground but theological unscrupulous cunning the origin of the current false belief that Shankaracharya was an enemy of Buddhism. This is a separate line of study for one who devotes his special attention to the historical development of occultism. This point, however, does in no way detract from the value and importance of the fact that Shankaracharya throughout his works keeps wisely silent about the esoteric doctrine taught by *Gautama Buddha*. He who studies *and reads between the lines* the *Brahmasutra Bhashya* of the former, will practically find for himself that Vedantic Advaitism is *identical with esoteric Buddhist Arhatism*. ... what we consider to be Vedantic Advaitism, which is precisely the same as Buddhist Arhatism.”

– Damodar K. Mavalankar, “The Vedantasara”

“We maintain that the Arhat Doctrine of which the *latest* public expounder was Gautama Buddha, is identical with the Advaitic Philosophy, whose *latest* public exponent was Shankaracharya. Hence the latter Philosopher’s silence about the former’s teaching.”

– Damodar K. Mavalankar, “Vedantism and Buddhism”

“What is therefore meant by the Advaitic Philosophy being identical with the Arhat Doctrine, is that the final goal or the ultimate possibility of both is the same. The synthetic process is one, for it deals only with eternal verities, the Abstract Truth, the noumenal. And these two

philosophies are put forth together [i.e. in Theosophy], for in their analytical methods they proceed on parallel lines, one proceeding from the subjective and the other from the objective standpoint, to meet ultimately or rather converge together in one point or centre. As such, each is the complement of the other and neither can be said to be complete in itself. It should be distinctly remembered here that the Adwaitee Doctrine does not date from Shankaracharya, nor does the Arhat Philosophy owe its origin to Gautama Buddha. They were but the latest expounders of these two systems which have existed from time immemorial as they must. Some natures can better comprehend the truth from a subjective standpoint, while others must proceed from the objective. These two systems are therefore as old as Occultism itself, while the later phases of the Esoteric Doctrine are but another aspect of either of these two, the details being modified according to the comprehensive faculties of the people addressed, as also the other surrounding circumstances. ... Thus one may say that Buddhism is rational Vedantism, while Vedantism is transcendental Buddhism."

– Damodar K. Mavalankar, "Metaphysical Basis of Esoteric Buddhism"

"It must be stated that the name of *Esoteric Buddhism* was given to Mr Sinnett's latest publication [Note: a book based upon teachings received in letters from the Master K.H. and the Master M.], not because the doctrine propounded therein is meant to be specially identified with any particular form of Faith, but because *Buddhism* means the doctrine of the *Buddhas*, the Wise, i.e., the WISDOM-RELIGION. At least that was the understanding on which the name was permitted to be used. ... it is extremely difficult to say whether exoteric Hinduism is nearer the Esoteric Doctrine than any other Faith. One can say that a *particular form* of Hinduism approaches the Occult Doctrine much nearer than any other; and that is all. We must say a few words more. Although the book of Mr Sinnett employs a Buddhistic phraseology, our correspondent must have noticed that *The Theosophist* almost invariably uses the Vedantic form of expression. Thus readers of the Theosophic literature will see that, although the two Faiths may use different phraseology, the ideas underlying the same are identical."

– Damodar K. Mavalankar, "Esoteric Buddhism and Hinduism"

UNITED LODGE OF THEOSOPHISTS
62 QUEENS GARDENS
LONDON W2 3AH

www.theosophy-ult.org.uk