

## *Sāṃkhya and the Wisdom-Religion*

The existence of the once universal Wisdom-Religion was made known to the modern world by H. P. Blavatsky, who called its modern form Theosophy. She early on described its original form as “pre-Vedic Buddhism.”<sup>1</sup> Today, no one knows of any pre-Vedic Buddhism. Buddhism is thought to have originated with Gautama Buddha around 500 B.C.E., while the Vedas are much older than that. However, some intriguing indications have been found for a “pre-canonical Buddhism.” This refers to Buddhist teachings before their formulation into the known Buddhist canons. Those who have postulated the existence of pre-canonical Buddhism do not consider it to be pre-Vedic, since they still trace it to Gautama Buddha. But Buddhist texts speak of previous Buddhas, who when not taken as merely mythological could well have been pre-Vedic. This promising area of research is being pursued by my colleague Robert Hütwohl, and we may expect an article on it from him in due course. There remains, however, a great question.

The Wisdom-Religion has been described as pre-Vedic Buddhism. We have earlier reviewed the considerable evidence linking its present custodians, Blavatsky’s teachers, with Tibetan Buddhism.<sup>2</sup> In other words, from earliest to latest, we find the Wisdom-Religion associated with Buddhism. Yet its most basic teaching, presented to us as the first fundamental proposition of the Secret Doctrine, is not the teaching of any known form of Buddhism. Speaking generally, Southern Buddhism ignores any such teaching as that of an “omnipresent, eternal, boundless, and immutable principle,” while Northern Buddhism, particularly Tibetan Gelugpa Buddhism, specifically refutes it.<sup>3</sup> And a teaching this major will be hard to recover from the fragmentary remains of pre-canonical Buddhism. So we must ask if there are any other known systems that could possibly lay

claim to being pre-Vedic, and that preserve teachings we could possibly consider as being pre-Vedic Buddhism. The answer is yes, there are two such. These are the Jaina religion and the Sāṃkhya philosophy.<sup>4</sup> It is to Sāṃkhya that we must turn to find the primary ramification of the first fundamental proposition of the Secret Doctrine, namely, the teaching that the universe is the result not of God or of spirit, but of matter.

### **“We Believe in Matter Alone”**

The first fundamental proposition established by the Secret Doctrine is “An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception.”<sup>5</sup> Were we to stop at this, our difficulties would be minimized, since such a principle can be found in many of the Indian scriptures. It can be extracted from the Southern Buddhist Pali canon,<sup>6</sup> and can be found in the Tathāgata-garbha texts of Northern Buddhism.<sup>7</sup> But *The Secret Doctrine* goes on to explain that this one reality is symbolized under two aspects: absolute abstract space, and absolute abstract motion. It further describes these two aspects as pre-cosmic substance and pre-cosmic ideation, the precursors of manifested matter and spirit (or consciousness). We are cautioned not to regard these as two independent realities, but as the two facets or aspects of the one reality. Therefore when the doctrine is later summed up, this omnipresent, eternal, boundless, and immutable principle, the one reality, is called “the One homogeneous divine SUBSTANCE-PRINCIPLE.” Blavatsky explains:

It is called “Substance-Principle,” for it becomes “substance” on the plane of the manifested Universe, an illusion, while it remains a “principle” in the beginningless and endless abstract, visible and invisible SPACE. It is the omnipresent Reality: impersonal, because it contains all and everything. . . . It is latent in every atom in the Universe, and is the Universe itself.<sup>8</sup>

Six years earlier, in one of the clearest and most direct statements we have of the doctrines of the Mahatmas, this was summarized by Mahatma K.H. as: “we believe in matter alone.” K.H. was explaining to A. O. Hume in a letter that they do not believe in God, and here stated what they do believe in.

If people are willing to accept and to regard as God our ONE LIFE immutable and unconscious in its eternity they may do so and thus keep to one more gigantic misnomer.<sup>9</sup>

When we speak of our One Life we also say that it penetrates, nay is the essence of every atom of matter; and that therefore it not only has correspondence with matter but has all its properties likewise, etc.—hence *is* material, *is matter itself*.<sup>10</sup>

Matter we know to be eternal, *i.e.*, having had no beginning (*a*) because matter is Nature herself (*b*) because that which cannot annihilate itself and is indestructible exists necessarily—and therefore it could not begin to be, nor can it cease to be (*c*) because the accumulated experience of countless ages, and that of exact science show to us matter (or nature) acting by her own peculiar energy, of which not an atom is ever in an absolute state of rest, and therefore it must have always existed, *i.e.*, its materials ever changing form, combinations and properties, but its principles or elements being absolutely indestructible.<sup>11</sup>

In other words we believe in MATTER alone, in matter as visible nature and matter in its invisibility as the invisible omnipresent omnipotent Proteus with its unceasing motion which is its life, and which nature draws from herself since she is the great whole outside of which nothing can exist.<sup>12</sup>

The existence of matter then is a fact; the existence of motion is another fact, their self existence and eternity or indestructibility is a third fact. And the idea of pure spirit as a Being or an Existence—give it whatever name you will—is a chimera, a gigantic absurdity.<sup>13</sup>

An important article by the same author written just previously and published at that same time, “What Is Matter and What Is Force?,” concludes with the same idea:

Therefore, whether it is called Force or Matter, it will ever remain the Omnipresent Proteus of the Universe, the one element—LIFE—Spirit or Force at its *negative*, Matter at its *positive* pole; the former the MATERIO-SPIRITUAL, the latter, the MATERIO-PHYSICAL Universe—Nature, Svabhavat or INDESTRUCTIBLE MATTER.<sup>14</sup>

Most people assume that it is spirit that generates matter, not vice versa. A correspondent to *The Theosophist* magazine, where the above quoted article was published, did so in a letter a few months later. Blavatsky replied:

Nor do we believe that “Spirit breathed out Matter;” but that, on the contrary, it is *Matter which manifests Spirit*.<sup>15</sup>

In the following months she would return to this topic:

. . . the Arhat esoteric doctrine teaches that (1) “‘Matter and Life are equally eternal and indestructible,’ for—they are one and identical; the purely subjective—hence (for physical science) unprovable and unverifiable—matter becoming the ONE life or what is generally termed ‘Spirit.’”<sup>16</sup>

And again:

. . . the Eastern Occultists hold that there is but one element in the universe—infinite, uncreated and indestructible—MATTER; which element manifests itself in seven states. . . . *Spirit* is the highest state of that matter, they say, since that which is neither matter nor any of its attributes is—NOTHING.<sup>17</sup>

By the time she wrote *The Secret Doctrine* a few years later, she had come to prefer the term “substance” as being more accurate and less misleading than “matter.”

In strict accuracy—to avoid confusion and misconception—the term “Matter” ought to be applied to the aggregate of objects of possible perception, and “Substance” to *noumena*; . . .<sup>18</sup>

The Occultists, who do not say—if they would express themselves correctly—that *matter*, but only the *substance* or *essence* of matter, is indestructible and eternal (*i.e.*, the Root of all, *Mūlaprakṛiti*), . . .<sup>19</sup>

As just seen, she also used the Sanskrit equivalent “*mūlaprakṛiti*,” since this Sāṃkhya term was familiar to many readers, and was more precise than either “matter” or “substance.” Her teachers had also used the term “*mūlaprakṛiti*” in their letters:

The One reality is *Mūlaprakṛiti* (undifferentiated Substance)—the “Rootless root,” . . .<sup>20</sup>

So when she gave the first fundamental proposition of the Secret Doctrine, she explained its aspects using the terms “pre-cosmic substance” and “*mūlaprakṛiti*” rather than “matter.” She also used the Vedānta term “*parabrahman*” to refer to the omnipresent, eternal, boundless, and immutable principle as such.<sup>21</sup> It is important to keep in mind that these are not two different things, but that *parabrahman* only refers to *mūlaprakṛiti* or cosmic substance in its primary state of abstract potential objectivity.

During the period of Universal Pralaya [the dissolution of the universe], Cosmic Ideation is non-existent; and the variously differentiated states of Cosmic Substance are resolved back again into the primary state of abstract potential objectivity.<sup>22</sup>

Thus a casual reader, not knowing this, could easily take the following passage of *The Secret Doctrine* as teaching that spirit manifests as matter, which as we have seen above is not the case.

At the commencement of a great Manvantara [manifestation], Parabrahman manifests as *Mūlaprakṛiti* and then as the Logos.<sup>23</sup>

Blavatsky goes on in the same passage to again reiterate that matter precedes spirit, here termed force, at the same time pointing out that it is unnecessary to weave too fine a cobweb of subtleties when speaking of the order of succession of cosmic ultimates. This explains why she has not stressed this point in *The Secret Doctrine*, although she had spoken of it earlier.

Force, then, does not emerge with Primordial Substance from Parabrahmic Latency. . . . Force thus is *not synchronous with the first objectivation of Mūlaprakṛiti*. But as, apart from it, the latter is absolutely and necessarily inert—a mere abstraction—it is unnecessary to weave too fine a cobweb of subtleties as to the order of succession of the Cosmic Ultimates. Force *succeeds* Mūlaprakṛiti; but, *minus* Force, Mūlaprakṛiti is for all practical intents and purposes non-existent.<sup>24</sup>

As we have seen, *parabrahman* is the one substance-principle as a principle, and *mūlaprakṛiti* is the same substance-principle as substance.

The first fundamental proposition of the Secret Doctrine, an omnipresent, eternal, boundless, and immutable principle, the one reality, and the one homogeneous divine substance-principle, remains a principle in beginningless and endless abstract space, and becomes substance on the plane of the manifested universe. Thus for us, it is “matter alone.” In the plain words of a hitherto secret commentary:

It is Substance to OUR spiritual sight. It cannot be called so by men in their WAKING STATE; therefore they have named it in their ignorance ‘God-Spirit.’<sup>25</sup>

### **The Fundamental Doctrine of Sāṃkhya**

This distinctive teaching from the Wisdom-Religion once called pre-Vedic Buddhism and now called Theosophy, that the universe is matter alone, is the fundamental doctrine of the Sāṃkhya system. Of all known systems, only Sāṃkhya teaches

this. It is not taught by any school of Buddhism, nor is it taught by other Hindu schools. Indeed, all these schools have found in Sāṃkhya a favored target for their criticisms. Sāṃkhya has been around for so long that, except the system it is paired with, *yoga*, it has been refuted by practically all other Indian systems. For centuries now it has had no adherents of its own to defend it.

So what is Sāṃkhya? Sāṃkhya is now found in Hinduism as one of the six *darśanas*, worldviews, or systems of philosophical thought. It is studied along with the other five *darśanas*, but as just mentioned, for centuries it has had virtually no followers of its own. However, things were not always this way. It was once the prevailing worldview throughout ancient India. It is taken for granted in the epic, *Mahābhārata*, including the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and in the Purāṇas. It is found in the ancient medical work of Caraka. It is shown in the *Buddha-carita* being taught to the young Gautama in his quest for enlightenment. It is considered to be the original *darśana*, and its propounder, the sage Kapila, to be the first knower (*ādi-vidvān*). Although it is not normally considered to be pre-Vedic, its mythological origins could easily place it there. Indeed, the *Yukti-dīpikā* Sāṃkhya commentary, when giving the traditional lineage of the teaching,

boldly declares in this connection that the Śāstra [Sāṃkhya] was promulgated by Kapila at the beginning (of creation), hence it is not possible like [in] other systems of thought, to enumerate its lineage of teachers even in [a] hundred years.<sup>26</sup>

It has become customary to refer to Sāṃkhya as dualism, since it posits two eternal principles: *prakṛti* or matter, and *puruṣa* or spirit. However, it does not refer to itself as dualism, nor was it called dualism in the fourteenth-century summary of various systems, the *Sarva-darśana-saṃgraha* by Mādhavācārya. Further, Sāṃkhya scholar Gerald Larson points out that it is not dualism in any normal sense of the word, since the whole universe, including intelligence (*buddhi*), self-consciousness (*ahaṃkāra*), and mind (*manas*), all derive solely from *prakṛti* or matter.<sup>27</sup> The role of *puruṣa* or spirit, which he terms pure contentless consciousness, is mere passive presence (*sākṣitva*),

since it cannot think or act. Finally, it is well-recognized that we do not have the Sāṃkhya system in its completeness. Its original works such as the *Śaṣṭitantra* are referred to in extant texts, but are no longer available. Certain of the extant texts attribute to Sāṃkhya the teaching of *brahman*, which could refer to the unity of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*.<sup>28</sup>

If Sāṃkhya is indeed a direct teaching from the Wisdom-Religion, as it appears to be, we know that it cannot ultimately be dualistic. The oneness of all life is stressed repeatedly as a basic Theosophical teaching. The Mahatma K.H. specifically refers to the unity of matter and spirit, *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*:

The conception of matter and spirit as entirely distinct, and both eternal, could certainly never have entered my head, however little I may know of them, for it is one of the elementary and fundamental doctrines of Occultism that the two are one, and are distinct but in their respective manifestations, and only in the limited perceptions of the world of senses.<sup>29</sup>

It is entirely possible to write a treatise on Sāṃkhya, which deals with *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*, completely taking for granted the fact that they are ultimately one, and therefore never mentioning that fact separately. We would assume that this is exactly what Īśvara-kṛṣṇa did in his *Sāṃkhya-kārikā*, the basic textbook of the Sāṃkhya system.<sup>30</sup> As stated in Blavatsky's explanations of the first fundamental proposition of the Secret Doctrine, once we pass in thought from this absolute principle, duality supervenes in the contrast of spirit and matter. It is therefore only to be expected that a system would arise to deal with reality from this standpoint, just as we have another system to deal with reality from the standpoint of ultimate unity.<sup>31</sup>

The Sāṃkhya teaching of *puruṣa*, or spirit, is of course analogous to the Theosophical teaching of cosmic ideation, the other aspect of the one reality. Sāṃkhya posits a plurality of *puruṣas*, spirits or souls. However, in a few places *puruṣa* is said to be one.<sup>32</sup> Modern scholars have considered these to be wrong or unreliable readings. But *The Secret Doctrine* explains that spirit is a compound unity; that is, both one and many:



. . . *Īśvara* or *Logos* is Spirit; or, as Occultism explains, it is a compound unity of manifested living Spirits, the parent-source and nursery of all the mundane and terrestrial monads, *plus* their *divine* reflection, which emanate from, and return into, the *Logos*, each in the culmination of its time.<sup>33</sup>

This teaching of spirit as both one and many reaches its logical conclusion in the important doctrine of the Wisdom-Religion: the teaching of the preservation of individuality even when merged in unity.

. . . I maintain as an occultist, on the authority of the Secret Doctrine, that though merged entirely into Parabrahm, man's spirit while not individual *per se*, yet preserves its distinct individuality in Parinirvana, . . .<sup>34</sup>

The fundamental doctrine of Sāṃkhya is the universe as *prakṛti* or matter. It posits the evolution of the universe from the principle (*tattva*) of *prakṛti*, when in proximity with the inactive *puruṣa* or spirit (as if this were mere polarity). *Prakṛti* then evolves into twenty-three other principles of matter, together comprising the universe. This, the system of Kapila, founder of Sāṃkhya, and the system of Manu, are specifically stated to be the basis of the Theosophical teachings on evolution:

It has been repeatedly stated that evolution as taught by Manu and Kapila was the groundwork of the modern teachings [of *Esoteric Buddhism*, as opposed to Darwinism], . . .<sup>35</sup>

Both Occult and Eastern philosophies believe in evolution, which Manu and Kapila give with far more clearness than any scientist does at present.<sup>36</sup>

Although these teachings on matter and on evolution are not found in Buddhism, there do exist similarities between Sāṃkhya and Buddhism. In fact, some of these are so marked that earlier Western scholars long discussed the question of Sāṃkhya influence on Buddhism. For example, the first verse

of the *Sāṃkhya-kārikā* states that the reason for undertaking this inquiry, that is, the rationale of the Sāṃkhya system, is suffering (*duḥkha*). This, of course, is the first Noble Truth of Buddhism. The text also indicates that scriptural means are insufficient to get rid of suffering, so it proceeds to use reasoning rather than scriptural authority to determine how to do this. Again, this emphasis on use of reasoning is a distinctive characteristic of Buddhism. It has also been noticed that Gautama Buddha's birthplace is named Kapila-vastu, the place of Kapila (founder of Sāṃkhya). More recently, research on Sāṃkhya has moved away from comparisons with Buddhism. At about the same time that research on pre-canonical Buddhism began, an important book on early or pre-classical Sāṃkhya was published,<sup>37</sup> though it did not attempt to link Sāṃkhya and Buddhism. Sāṃkhya and Buddhism as we now know them are thus seen to have both significant similarities and significant differences.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, we do not say that Sāṃkhya is pre-Vedic Buddhism, but we do say that Sāṃkhya is a major piece of the ancient Wisdom-Religion now found nowhere else. It is the only place we find the universe described as matter alone. In accord with the first fundamental proposition of the Secret Doctrine, an omnipresent, eternal, boundless, and immutable principle, the one reality, the one substance-principle, Sāṃkhya teaches the manifested universe as substance. The only way to get this teaching in Buddhism is to understand *śūnyatā*, emptiness, as substance. There is reason for a student of *The Secret Doctrine* to do this,<sup>38</sup> but we do not expect any Buddhists to accept this. Even this would still not give us the doctrine of the evolution of the universe taught in the Wisdom-Religion, and taught in Sāṃkhya. Only in Sāṃkhya do we find the doctrine of *prakṛti*, matter or substance, and its evolution as the universe. So it is to Sāṃkhya that we must turn to trace this distinctive teaching of the Wisdom-Religion, the outcome of its first fundamental proposition.

## NOTES

1. *Isis Unveiled*, by H. P. Blavatsky, 1st ed., 1877; rev. ed. [by Boris de Zirkoff] (pagination unchanged), Wheaton, Illinois: Theosophical Publishing House, 1972, vol. 2, pp. 123, 169, 639.

2. "Theosophy and Buddhism," by David Reigle, *Fohat*, vol. 4, no. 1, Spring 2000, pp. 14-17, 22-23.

3. There is in Buddhism a famous group of questions pertaining to teachings such as this, that the Buddha refused to answer. These begin, as found in the Pali canon: (1) Is the universe eternal, or (2) is it not eternal? (3) Is the universe finite, or (4) infinite? While a similar group is also found in Northern Buddhism, it seems that the Southern Buddhists took them to heart. They frequently cite the story from the *Cūla Māluṅkya Sutta* of a person wounded by an arrow, who wanted to know what kind of arrow it was, where it came from, who shot it, etc., before being treated for the wound. For the Tibetan Gelugpa direct refutation of an absolute principle or essence, see by Tsong-kha-pa:

*Emptiness in the Mind-Only School of Buddhism: Dynamic Responses to Dzong-ka-ba's The Essence of Eloquence: I*, by Jeffrey Hopkins, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1999;

*The Nature of Things: Emptiness and Essence in the Geluk World*, by William Magee, Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1999.

4. On Jainism, see: *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, pp. 322-323.

5. *The Secret Doctrine*, by H. P. Blavatsky, 1st ed., 1888; [ed. by Boris de Zirkoff] (pagination unchanged), Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1978, vol. 1, p. 14.

6. For example, Khuddaka Nikāya, *Udāna*, 81: O monks, there is an unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, un compounded; and if there were not this unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, un compounded, no escape would be possible from what is born, is originated, is created, is compounded.

7. For example, *Ratna-gotra-vibhāga*, 80: It is not born, does not die, is not afflicted, and does not grow old, because it is permanent, stable, quiescent, and eternal.

8. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, p. 273.

9. *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, compiled by A. T. Barker, 1st ed., 1923; 3rd rev. ed., Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1962, p. 53; arranged in chronological sequence by Vicente Hao Chin, Jr., Quezon City, Metro Manila: Theosophical Publishing House, 1993, p. 270.

10. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd. ed. p. 53; chron. ed. p. 271.

11. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd. ed. p. 55; chron. ed. p. 272.
12. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd. ed. p. 56; chron. ed. p. 273.
13. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd. ed. p. 56; chron. ed. p. 273.
14. *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. 4, Wheaton, Illinois: Theosophical Publishing House, 1969, p. 226.
15. *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. 4, p. 298.
16. *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. 4, p. 452.
17. *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. 4, p. 602.
18. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, p. 329.
19. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, p. 147.
20. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd. ed. p. 341; chron. ed. p. 379.
21. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, pp. 15, 16. See also: *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. 7, pp. 347-348, where she clearly states that she gives the esoteric philosophy of the trans-Himalayan Occultists or Tibetan Arhats in Hindu Brahmanical terms obtained by consulting Brahmans around her, and that therefore these may not always be used correctly. Her use of the Vedānta term *parabrahman* in juxtaposition with the Sāṃkhya term *mūlaprakṛti* is taken from T. Subba Row's lectures on the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, published in *The Theosophist*, 1886-1887. These have been reprinted in book form several times; e.g., *Notes on the Bhagavad Gīta*, Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1934, 1978.
22. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, p. 328.
23. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 2, p. 24.
24. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 2, pp. 24-25.
25. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, p. 289.
26. *Origin and Development of the Sāṃkhya System of Thought*, by Pulinbihari Chakravarti, Calcutta: Metropolitan Printing and Publishing House, 1951; reprint, New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1975; p. 130.
27. *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies/Sāṃkhya: A Dualist Tradition in Indian Philosophy*, ed. Gerald James Larson and Ram Shankar Bhattacharya, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, pp. 75-77.
28. *Origin and Development of the Sāṃkhya System of Thought*, pp. 25-28, cites *Mahābhārata* 12.218.14, 12.221.18 (Southern recension); *Buddhacarita* 12.65; *Caraka-saṃhitā* 1.99, 5.19, 5.34; *Yoga-sūtra-bhāṣya* 4.22; etc., giving the teaching of *brahman* in Sāṃkhya. Although Gauḍapāda and others give *brahman* as a synonym of *prakṛti* in their commentaries on *Sāṃkhya-kārikā* 22, we know that these are not always full synonyms. The *Yukti-dīpikā* commentary, like the other texts just cited, explains *brahman* in terms referring to the ultimate stage of unity.
29. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed. p. 138; chron. ed. p. 282.

30. The classic *Sāṃkhya-kārikā* has for many centuries been the basic textbook of the Sāṃkhya *darśana*, even though we would expect the *Sāṃkhya-sūtras* of Kapila to be. The now extant *Sāṃkhya-sūtras* clearly contain late interpolations. Most scholars have despaired of trying to sort out the undeniably old *sūtras* from this modern collection. It may therefore be useful for readers to know that, according to Udayavira Shastri, there are (besides some small sections) two large sections of interpolated *sūtras*: 1.20-54 and 5.84-115. See his “Antiquity of the Sāṃkhya Sūtras,” *Ātambharā: Studies in Indology*, Ghaziabad: Society for Indic Studies, 1986, pp. 31-43.

31. This is, of course, the Vedānta system, specifically Advaita Vedānta. We are fully aware of the extensive critique of Sāṃkhya in Śāṅkarācārya’s commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtras*, but this is a subject for another paper.

32. For example, *Caraka-saṃhitā* 1.14, 1.84, and 1.155, say *puruṣa* is one. See: “The Sāṃkhya Philosophy in the Carakasamhitā,” by K. B. Ramakrishna Rao, *Adyar Library Bulletin*, vol. 26, parts 3-4, Dec. 1962, pp. 193-205, especially p. 200. We know that *Sāṃkhya-kārikā* 18 teaches the plurality of *puruṣas*. Gauḍapāda’s commentary on *Sāṃkhya-kārikā* 11, even though first using the plural phrase “of all the *puruṣas*” (*sarva-puruṣānām*), says later that: “the manifest is manifold; the unmanifest is one; so also is spirit one” (. . . *tathā pumān apy ekah*). Here the old commentary translated into Chinese by Paramārtha and now found in the Chinese Buddhist canon has that spirit is plural, as does the later commentary of Vācaspati-mīśra. But what looks like a mistake and a contradiction by Gauḍapāda may in fact be an intentional statement, in agreement with *Caraka-saṃhitā*, that spirit is both one and many.

33. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, p. 573.

34. *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. 7, p. 51.

35. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, p. 186.

36. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 2, p. 259.

37. *Early Sāṃkhya*, by E. H. Johnston, London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1937; reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1974. This book includes a discussion of *svabhāva* in Sāṃkhya, pp. 67-72. Note, however, that his reading of Gauḍapāda on *Sāṃkhya-kārikā* 27 seems faulty (p. 68). The idea of pre-canonical Buddhism was introduced by Stanislaw Schayer in 1935: “Precanonical Buddhism,” *Archiv Orientalni*, vol. 7, pp. 121-132.

38. *Blavatsky’s Secret Books*, by David Reigle and Nancy Reigle, San Diego: Wizards Bookshelf, 1999, p. 120; quoting *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, p. 289.

[The foregoing article was written by David Reigle, and published in *Fohat*, A Quarterly Publication of Edmonton Theosophical Society, vol. 4, no. 4, Winter 2000, pp. 84-86, 92-94. This online edition is published by Eastern Tradition Research Institute, copyright 2004.]