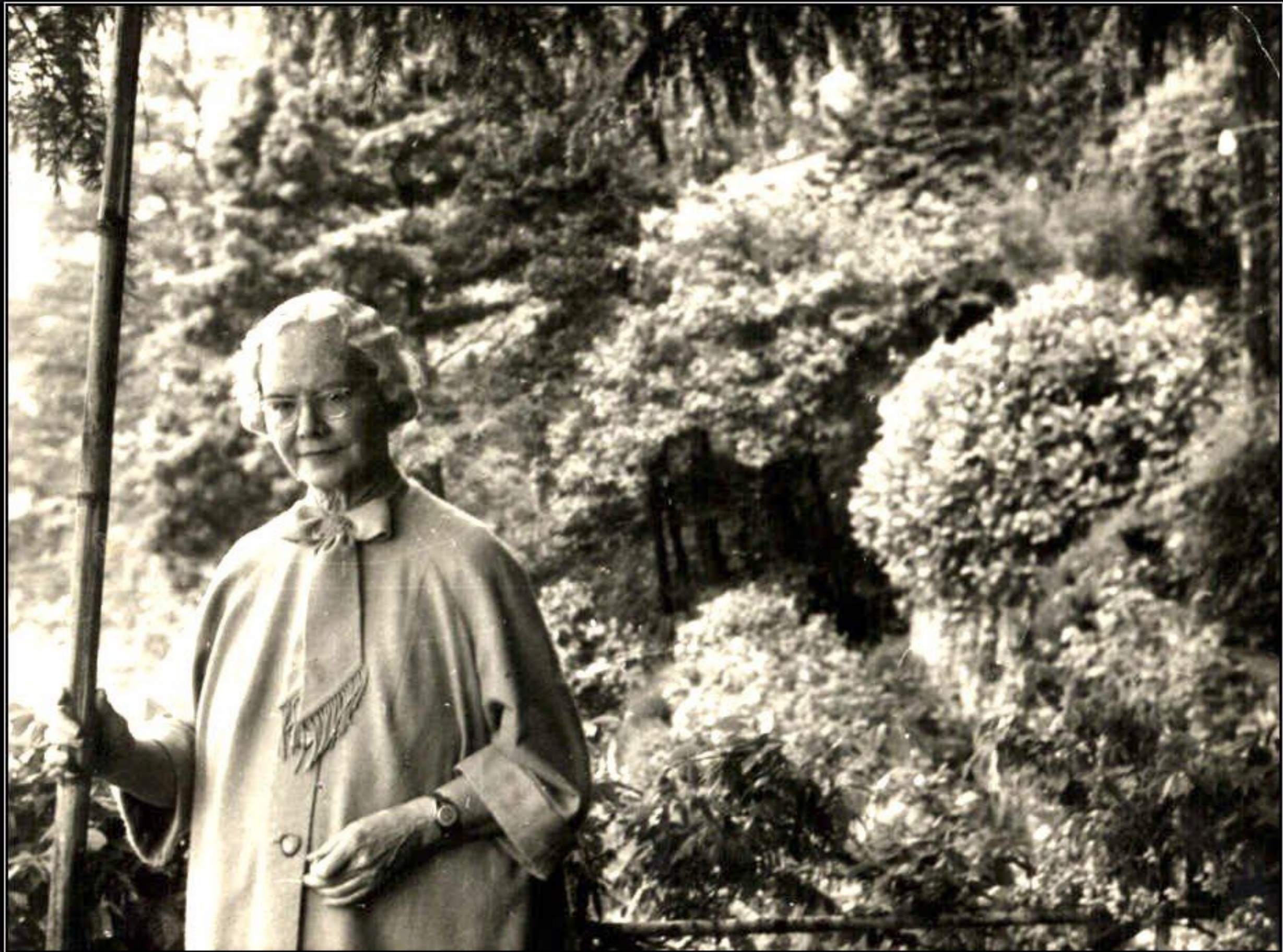




'The Great Mother'
by Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn





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Home »



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Simla - The Mall

R. HOTZ, PHOTOGR.



Nothing more remaining for us to do at Simla, we left that delightful mountain station by tonga cart to take up a pre-arranged tour in the plains. In summing up the results of the visit, it may be said that we gained a few friends, relieved our Society of its political embarrassments, and made many enemies among the Anglo-Indian public who held to the theory of Satanic interferences in human affairs. In so prim and conservative a social world it was only to have been expected that H. P. B.'s Bohemian manners should have shocked the general sense of propriety, her immense intellectual and spiritual superiority have excited envy and resentment, and her uncanny psychical powers have made her to be regarded with a sort of terror. Still, looking at it from the broad point of view, the gain outweighed the loss and the visit was worth the making.



Our progress homeward was so slow, filled as the time was with halts, visits, conversations by H. P. B. and lectures by myself, that we did not reach Bombay until the seventieth day after leaving Simla. The incidents of the tour were memorable, picturesque, sometimes important—among the latter an illness imperiling H. P. B.'s life. I shall treat them in their proper order.

Our first halt was at Amritsar, the city which is adorned with that architectural beauty, the Golden Temple of the warlike Sikhs. As we were then in full favor of Swâmi Dayânand Saraswati, our relations with his followers were most friendly, and the local Branches of his Arya Samaj gave us cordial receptions and generous hospitality everywhere. Thirty Samajists met us at the railway station of Amritsar and took us to an empty bungalow, gave a cook to wait on us, and a few necessary articles of furniture, including large striped durries, or Indian cotton carpets, laid on a portion of the beaten earthen floor, for our visitors to sit upon cross-legged when calling.



After wearisome waiting, our boy Babula, and the other cook, got food prepared for us, and then we drove out to see the Golden Temple. The temple is a most poetical object to look upon. It comprises a central fluted dome, rising from four arches which cap the walls of a central tower, and is flanked at the four corners of the main, square building, by as many mauresque [Moorish] kiosks, like those on the Taj Mahal. The walls of the temple are capped with tiny domes standing close together; ornamental bay windows, with highly artistic open-work carved stone lattices and screens, project from the four sides; and the first story walls are broken into large and small panels full of carving.



The structure stands on a marble-paved, bronze-railed platform, on a small island in the centre of a tank of crystal-pure water, like a magician's illusive palace rising from the sea. Access to it is by a causeway paved with squares of Italian marble, and the whole tank is bordered by a broad pavement of the same rich material. The upper portion of the temple is overlaid with gold, and its radiant appearance when the Indian sun beats upon it out of the azure sky may be imagined better than described.



As it stands today, it dates back hardly more than a century, for the original fane, begun by Ram Das in 1580 and finished by his son, was blown up with gunpowder by Ahmad Shah in 1761; the sacred tank—Amrita Saras, the fount of Immortality—was filled with mud, and the site was desecrated by the slaughter of cows upon the spot: a touching proof of the “superiority” of one religion over another for which bigoted soldiers and theological politicians have great partiality. But as I am to play neither the guide nor the moralizing archaeologist, I must take H. P. B. back to our mud-walled bungalow, in our dust-and-mud-besmeared; jolting ticca gharry (hackney carriage), drawn by two skeleton horses, to receive visitors. Before leaving we flung our offering of copper coins on the ground in the central room of the temple, and lingered another minute to hear the *akalis* intoning verses from the *Granth*, or Sikh holy book, which is written on tanned bullock hides. ODL:248-52

STANZA I.

1. The eternal parent wrapped in her ever invisible robes had slumbered once again for seven eternities.
2. Time was not, for it lay asleep in the infinite bosom of duration.
3. Universal mind was not, for there were no *Ah-hi* to contain it.
4. The seven ways to bliss were not. The great causes of misery were not, for there was no one to produce and get ensnared by them.
5. Darkness alone filled the boundless all, for father, mother and son were once more one, and the son had not awakened yet for the new wheel, and his pilgrimage thereon.
6. The seven sublime lords and the seven truths had ceased to be, and the Universe, the son of Necessity, was immersed in *Paranishpanna*, to be out-breathed by that which is and yet is not. Naught was.
7. The causes of existence had been done away with; the visible that was, and the invisible that is, rested in eternal non-being— the one being.
8. Alone the one form of existence stretched boundless, infinite, causeless, in dreamless sleep; and life pulsed unconscious in universal space, throughout that all-presence which is sensed by the opened eye of the *Dangma*.
9. But where was the *Dangma* when the *Alaya* of the universe was in *Paramartha* and the great wheel was *Anupadaka*?

STANZA II.

1. Where were the builders, the luminous sons of *Manvantaric* dawn? . . . In the unknown darkness in their *Ah-hi Paranishpanna*. The producers of form from no-form—the root of the world—the *Devamatri* and *Svâbhâvat*, rested in the bliss of non-being.
2. Where was silence? Where the ears to sense it? No, there was neither silence nor sound; naught save ceaseless eternal breath, which knows itself not.
3. The hour had not yet struck; the ray had not yet flashed into the Germ; the *Matripadma* had not yet swollen.
4. Her heart had not yet opened for the one ray to enter, thence to fall, as three into four, into the lap of *Maya*.
5. The seven sons were not yet born from the web of light. Darkness alone was father-mother, *Svâbhâvat*; and *Svâbhâvat* was in darkness.
6. These two are the Germ, and the Germ is one. The Universe was still concealed in the Divine thought and the Divine bosom. . . . SD1:27-8

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STANZA III

1. . . . The last vibration of the seventh eternity thrills through infinitude. The mother swells, expanding from within without, like the bud of the lotus.
2. The vibration sweeps along, touching with its swift wing the whole universe and the germ that dwelleth in darkness: the darkness that breathes over the slumbering waters of life. . .
3. Darkness radiates light, and light drops one solitary ray into the mother-deep. The ray shoots through the virgin egg the ray causes the eternal egg to thrill, and drop the non-eternal germ, which condenses into the world-egg.
4. Then the three fall into the four. The radiant essence becomes seven inside, seven outside. The luminous egg, which in itself is three, curdles and spreads in milk-white curds throughout the depths of mother, the root that grows in the depths of the ocean of life.
5. The root remains, the light remains, the curds remain, and still *Oeaohoo* is one.
6. The root of life was in every drop of the ocean of immortality, and the ocean was radiant light, which was fire, and heat, and motion. Darkness vanished and was no more; it disappeared in its own essence, the body of fire and water, or father and mother.
7. Behold, oh *Lanoo*! The radiant child of the two, the unparalleled refulgent glory: Bright Space Son of Dark Space, which emerges from the depths of the great dark waters. It is *Oeaohoo* the younger, the * * * He shines forth as the son; he is the blazing Divine Dragon of Wisdom; the One is Four, and Four takes to itself Three,† and the Union produces the *Sapta*, in whom are the seven which become the *Tridasa* (or the hosts and the multitudes). Behold him lifting the veil and unfurling it from east to west. He shuts out the above, and leaves the below to be seen as the great illusion. He marks the places for the shining ones, and turns the upper into a shoreless sea of fire, and the one manifested into the great waters.
8. Where was the germ and where was now darkness? Where is the spirit of the flame that burns in thy lamp, oh *Lanoo*? The germ is that, and that is light, the white brilliant son of the dark hidden father.
9. Light is cold flame, and flame is fire, and fire produces heat, which yields water: the water of life in the great mother.
10. Father-Mother spin a web whose upper end is fastened to spirit—the light of the one darkness—and the lower one to its shadowy end, matter; and this web is the universe spun out of the two substances made in one, which is *Svâbhâvat*.
11. It expands when the breath of fire is upon it; it contracts when the breath of the mother touches it. Then the sons dissociate and scatter, to return into their mother's bosom at the end of the great day, and re-become one with her; when it is cooling it becomes radiant, and the sons expand and contract through their own selves and hearts; they embrace infinitude.
12. Then *Svâbhâvat* sends *Fohat* to harden the atoms. Each is a part of the web. Reflecting the "Self-Existent Lord" like a mirror, each becomes in turn a world.

† In the English translation from the Sanskrit the numbers are given in that language, *Eka*, *Chatur*, etc., etc. It was thought best to give them in English. SD1:28-30

Stanza III describes the Re-awakening of the Universe to life after Pralaya. It depicts the emergence of the "Monads" from their state of absorption within the One; the earliest and highest stage in the formation of "Worlds;" the term Monad being one which may apply equally to the vastest Solar System or the tiniest atom. SD1:21

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5. The root remains, the light remains, the curds remain, and still *Oeaohoo* is one.
6. The root of life was in every drop of the ocean of immortality, and the ocean was radiant light, which was fire, and heat, and motion. Darkness vanished and was no more; it disappeared in its own essence, the body of fire and water, or father and mother. SD1:28-9

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1. The last vibration of the seventh eternity thrills through infinitude (a). The mother swells, expanding from within without like the bud of the lotus (b).

(a) The seemingly paradoxical use of the sentence “Seventh Eternity,” thus dividing the indivisible, is sanctified in esoteric philosophy. The latter divides boundless duration into unconditionally eternal and universal Time and a conditioned one (*Khandakâla*). One is the abstraction or noumenon of infinite time (*Kâla*); the other its phenomenon appearing periodically, as the effect of *Mahat* (the Universal Intelligence limited by *Manvantaric* duration). With some schools, *Mahat* is “the first-born” of *Pradhâna* (undifferentiated substance, or the periodical aspect of *Mulaprakriti*, the root of Nature), which (*Pradhâna*) is called *Maya*, the Illusion. In this respect, I believe, esoteric teaching differs from the *Vedantin* doctrines of both the *Adwaita* and the *Visishtadwaita* schools. For it says that, while *Mulaprakriti*, the noumenon, is self-existing and without any origin—is, in short, parentless, *Anupadaka* (as one with *Brahmam*)—*Prakriti*, its phenomenon, is periodical and no better than a phantasm of the former, so *Mahat*, with the Occultists, the first-born of *Gnâna* (or gnosis) knowledge, wisdom or the Logos—is a phantasm reflected from the Absolute *nirguna* (*Parabrahm*, the one reality, “devoid of attributes and qualities”; see *Upanishads*); while with some *Vedantins*, *Mahat* is a manifestation of *Prakriti*, or Matter. SD1:62

1. The last vibration of the seventh eternity thrills through infinitude (a). The mother swells, expanding from within without like the bud of the lotus (b).

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1. The last vibration of the seventh eternity thrills through infinitude (a). The mother swells, expanding from within without like the bud of the lotus (b).

(b) Therefore, the “last vibration of the Seventh Eternity” was “fore-ordained”—by no God in particular, but occurred in virtue of the eternal and changeless Law which causes the great periods of Activity and Rest, called so graphically, and at the same time so poetically, the “Days and Nights of Brahmâ.” The expansion “from within without” of the Mother, called elsewhere the “Waters of Space,” “Universal Matrix,” etc., does not allude to an expansion from a small centre or focus, but, without reference to size or limitation or area, means the development of limitless subjectivity into as limitless objectivity. The ever (to us) invisible and immaterial Substance present in eternity, threw its periodical shadow from its own plane into the lap of Maya.” It implies that this expansion, not being an increase in size—for infinite extension admits of no enlargement—was a change of condition. It “expanded like the bud of the Lotus”; for the Lotus plant exists not only as a miniature embryo in its seed (a physical characteristic), but its prototype is present in an ideal form in the Astral Light from “Dawn” to “Night” during the Manvantaric period, like everything else, as a matter of fact, in this objective Universe; from man down to mite, from giant trees down to the tiniest blades of grass. SD1:62-3

STANZA I

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The Seven Eternities meant are the seven periods, or a period answering in its duration to the seven periods, of a Manvantara, and extending throughout a Maha-Kalpa or the "Great Age"—100 years of Brahmâ

Each Day of Brahma consists of 1,000 aggregates of four yugas or 1,000 mahayugas (great ages). In a smaller sense it is also a mahamanvantara or kalpa of a planetary chain, composed of seven rounds, a period of 4,320,000,000 terrestrial years. A Night of Brahma, a cosmic pralaya, inbreathing of Brahma, or planetary paranirvana, is of equal length. OTG

5. The seven sons were not yet born from the web of light. Darkness alone was father-mother, Svâbhâvat; and Svâbhâvat was in darkness.

(a) **The Secret Doctrine, in the Stanzas given here, occupies itself chiefly, if not entirely, with our Solar System, and especially with our planetary chain. The "Seven Sons," therefore, are the creators of the latter...**

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(a) The seemingly paradoxical use of the sentence “Seventh Eternity,” thus dividing the indivisible, is sanctified in esoteric philosophy. The latter divides boundless duration into unconditionally eternal and universal Time and a conditioned one (*Khandakâla*). One is the abstraction or noumenon of infinite time (*Kâla*); the other its phenomenon appearing periodically, as the effect of *Mahat* (the Universal Intelligence limited by *Manvantaric* duration). With some schools, *Mahat* is “the first-born” of *Pradhâna* (undifferentiated substance, or the periodical aspect of *Mulaprakriti*, the root of Nature), which (*Pradhâna*) is called *Maya*, the Illusion. In this respect, I believe, esoteric teaching differs from the *Vedantin* doctrines of both the *Adwaita* and the *Visishtadwaita* schools. For it says that, while *Mulaprakriti*, the noumenon, is self-existing and without any origin—is, in short, parentless, *Anupadaka* (as one with *Brahmam*)—*Prakriti*, its phenomenon, is periodical and no better than a phantasm of the former, so *Mahat*, with the Occultists, the first-born of *Gnâna* (or gnosis) knowledge, wisdom or the Logos—is a phantasm reflected from the Absolute *nirguna* (*Parabrahm*, the one reality, “devoid of attributes and qualities”; see *Upanishads*); while with some *Vedantins*, *Mahat* is a manifestation of *Prakriti*, or Matter. SD1:62

Kâla: unconditionally eternal and universal Time

Khandakâla: periodic time, an effect of *Mahat*

Mahat: Universal Intelligence limited by Manvantaric duration

Pradhâna: undifferentiated substance, or the periodical aspect of Mulaprakriti, the root of Nature
(nature visible and invisible)

2. Time was not, for it lay asleep in the infinite bosom of duration.
[“Time was not, for there was no Mahat to perceive it.”]

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Advaita Vedantists: “Those who believe in a non-dualistic form of *Vedanta* expounded by *Sankaracharya* who taught the oneness of *Brahman* or the *Paramatman* of the universe with the human spirit-soul, or *jivatman*.

Vasishta-dvaita: “The chief doctrine of this school is duality, standing in opposition to the teachings of *Sankaracharya*, whose system is known as the *Advaita* (non-duality). The *Dvaita Vedantists* assert that there are two principles in the universe: the supreme Being, and the innumerable multitudes of other beings among which are mankind.

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(b) Therefore, the “last vibration of the Seventh Eternity” was “fore-ordained”—by no God in particular, but occurred in virtue of the eternal and changeless Law which causes the great periods of Activity and Rest, called so graphically, and at the same time so poetically, the “Days and Nights of Brahmâ.” The expansion “from within without” of the Mother, called elsewhere the “Waters of Space,” “Universal Matrix,” etc., does not allude to an expansion from a small centre or focus, but, without reference to size or limitation or area, means the development of limitless subjectivity into as limitless objectivity. The ever (to us) invisible and immaterial Substance present in eternity, threw its periodical shadow from its own plane into the “lap of Maya.” It implies that this expansion, not being an increase in size—for infinite extension admits of no enlargement—was a change of condition. It “expanded like the bud of the Lotus”; for the Lotus plant exists not only as a miniature embryo in its seed (a physical characteristic), but its prototype is present in an ideal form in the Astral Light from “Dawn” to “Night” during the Manvantaric period, like everything else, as a matter of fact, in this objective Universe; from man down to mite, from giant trees down to the tiniest blades of grass. SD1:62-3

3. The hour had not yet struck; the ray had not yet flashed into the Germ; the Matripadma had not yet swollen.

4. Her heart had not yet opened for the one ray to enter, thence to fall, as three into four, into the lap of Maya.

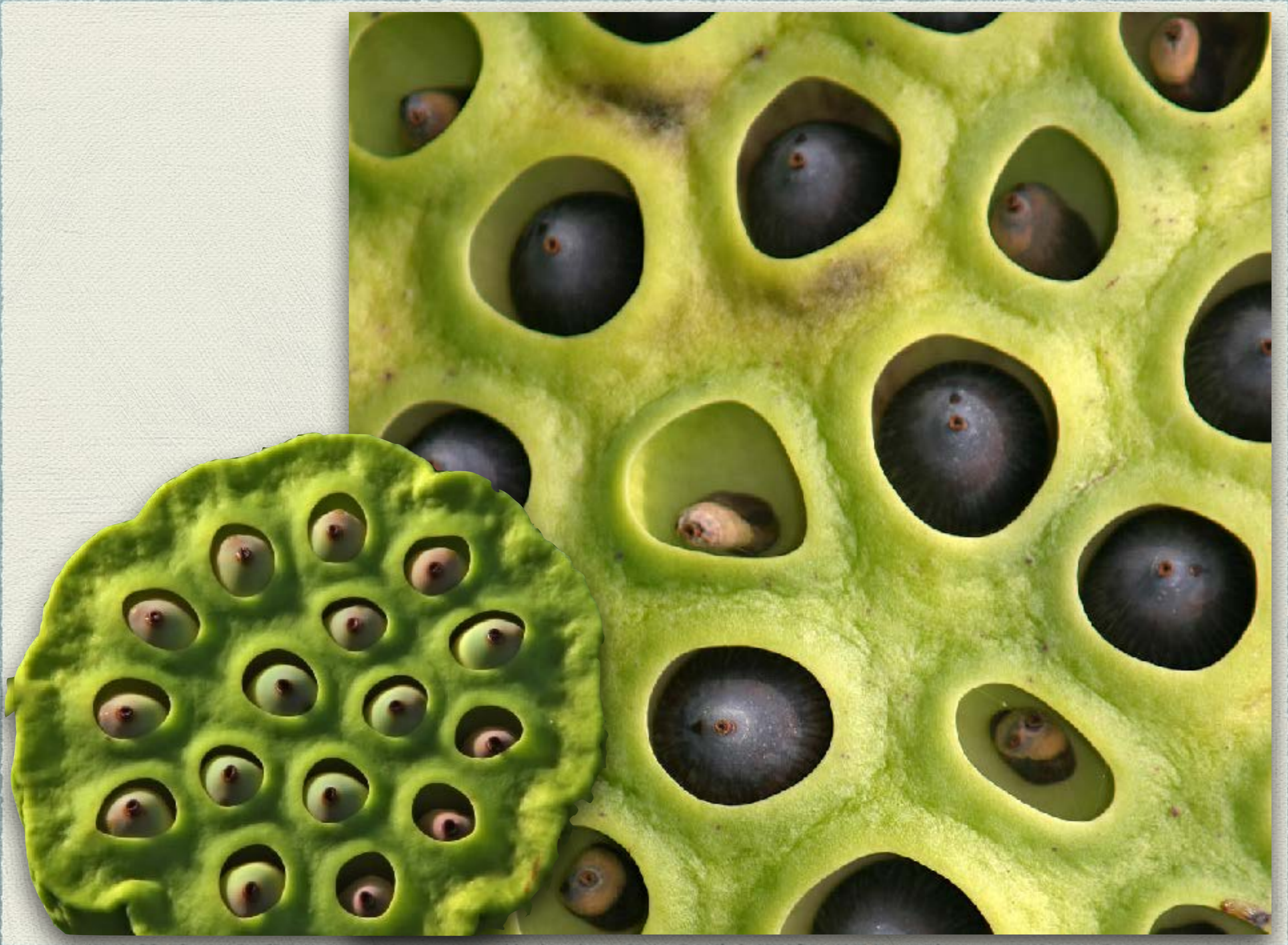


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'The Great Mother'
by Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn

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Astral Light: This is the next cosmic plane above the physical, which is to the physical globes of our earth or of the other bodies of our solar system what the *linga-sarira* is to the human physical body. As such, it is the carrier of life-forces — *jiva* cosmically, and *prana* individually — and the storehouse of cosmic energies on their way to or from physical manifestation. It preserves an indelible record of all events on the astral and physical planes, there being continual interaction between the two planes. No natural phenomenon, whether mental, psychic, or physical, can be explained without it, for without it, the physical world would crumble to impalpable dust.

The astral light is itself divided into subordinate planes; the lower regions teem with gross emanations from the earth, including psychic remnants from deceased beings, which exert a negative influence on the living, especially when intercourse with these remnants is encouraged by moral and physical weakness or by ignorant experiments.

The alchemical action of the astral light and its intimate connection with the physical sphere explains epidemics, whether physical or psychological. Because it transmits thoughts and emotions, its connection with karma is evident. The astral light is the mother of the physical world, just as *akasa* is the mother of the astral light.

The astral light is virtually the same as the sidereal light of Paracelsus and other medieval mystic philosophers who followed him. The reason for calling this kosmic plane astral or sidereal is that all nature being a vast and intricately interwoven organism, the stars and planets emanate into each other their respective celestial energies and substances. Thus, because there is this constant interchange of starry fluids emanating from the different celestial bodies, the term astral light has a foundation of esoteric scientific fact. It is applied specifically to the second kosmic plane only because it is nearest to the physical and beings living on the physical plane at times become sensible of the existence of the second kosmic plane by means of flashes of starry light or sensations of luminosity. Hence the ancient initiates, knowing the source of this starry substance, properly called it the astral or sidereal light, or by some similar expression. The astral light, finally, is the very dregs of *akasa*, and is virtually the same as the hypothetical ether of science. OTG