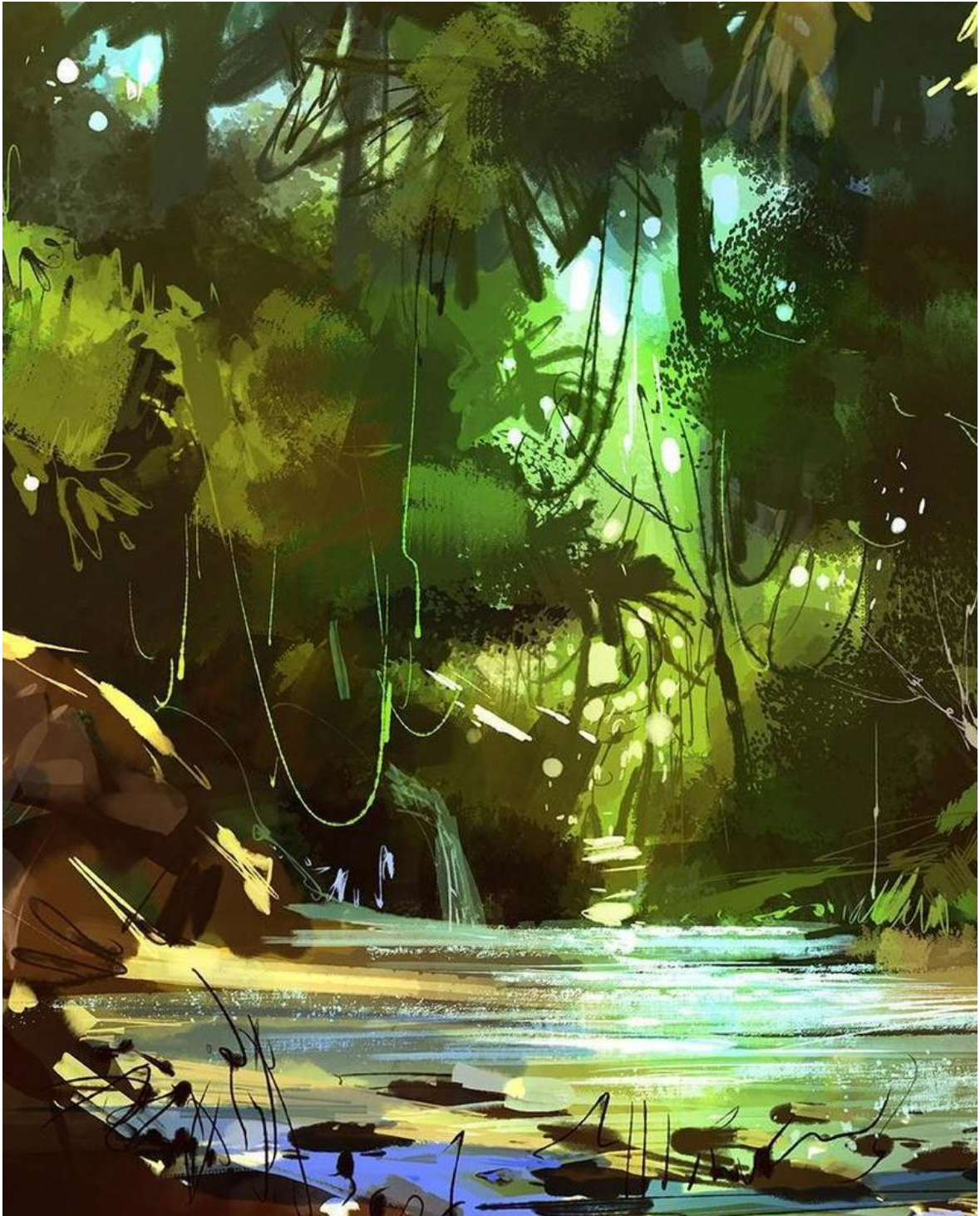


*Pages from the Caves
and Jungles of Hindostan*



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Gupta-vidya is a two-edged weapon.¹

“What are the ‘secret sciences’?” continued the Thakur, turning, our attention from this unpleasant memory. “To me and to all those who have dedicated their lives to them, these secret sciences contain the key to all nature’s places of concealment and to the worlds both seen and unseen. This key, however, is much more difficult to discover than you may think. *Gupta-vidyā* is a two-edged weapon and you cannot approach it without at the very outset sacrificing all earthly things, nay, even reason itself, as she overwhelms and destroys anyone who does not succeed in subduing her. Ancient fables are not built on imagination alone. In our [458] antediluvian Āryāvarta you will also find the Sphinx, similar to the Egyptian one, and for every single Oedipus there are thousands of victims. This science is especially dangerous to you, Europeans and whites. That is why I hesitate to accede to your determined but foolish desire even to try a period of probation.”

A materialist’s self-perception after death.²

“You see, the Babu is a *Chārvāka*³ and, therefore, says only that which any other *Chārvāka* will tell you.”

“But, *Chārvākas* are liars! There are others who believe that the man is not his physical envelope, but consists of his mind, the seat of his self-consciousness. But can self-consciousness ever forsake the soul after death?”

“In *his case* it can,” answered the Thakur calmly, “because *he sincerely and firmly believes in that which he now professes.*”

Nārāyana threw an amazed and perplexed glance at the Thakur, but the Babu, who was rather afraid of the latter, threw us a triumphant smile.

“How is that? Does not the Vedanta teach that ‘the spirit of the Spirit’ is deathless and that the soul of man does not die in Parabrahman. Are there any exceptions?”

“In the fundamental laws of the spiritual world there can be no exceptions, but there are rules for those who see, and rules for those who do not.”

“I understand that. But in such a case, as I told him, the ‘complete and final disappearance of his self-consciousness’ is no more than the aberration of the blind man who, unable to see the sun, denies that it exists during life . . . but will see it with his spiritual eyes beyond the grave.”

“He will see nothing at all. Having denied it during his lifetime he will not see it beyond the grave.”

¹ Radda-Bai (nom de plume of H.P. Blavatsky). *From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan*, 1883–1886. Republished in: *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*. Edited and translated from the Russian by Boris de Zirkoff. Wheaton: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1975. Excerpted from pp. 457-58.

² *ibid.*, excerpted from pp. 558-59

³ *Chārvākas* are a sect of Bengal materialists.

Noticing that Nārāyana was dreadfully perturbed, and also that both the Colonel and I stared at him in expectation of a more explicit answer, the Thakur continued, obviously unwillingly.

“You speak of ‘spirit from Spirit’ — of Atman, and confuse the spirit with the soul of the mortal, the *Manas*. Undoubtedly Spirit is deathless for it is without beginning and, therefore, without end. But the discussion is now not about spirit, but about the self-conscious human soul. You confuse it with the former, while the Babu denies both the one and the other, the spirit as well as the soul. Both of you misunderstand each other.” [559]

“I understand him, but . . . ”

“Don’t you understand me? I shall try to express myself more clearly. The whole gist of your question is to learn whether complete loss of self-consciousness and self-perception after death is possible, even in the case of a deep-rooted materialist? Is that so?”

“Yes, because he completely denies everything that constitutes unquestionable truth for us . . . that in which we all sacredly believe.”

“Very well. To this, believing just as sacredly as you do in our teaching which regards the *post-mortem* period, or the interval between two lives as *temporary* state, I positively by saying: Whether this intermission between two acts of the illusion of life lasts one year or a million, that *post-mortem* state may, without any breach of the law prove to be completely like the state in which the human being finds himself in a dead faint. The Babu, therefore, is *right* in his own case.”

“But why? . . . How is that, since the laws of immortality as you tell us, admit of no exceptions?” asked the Colonel.

“Certainly they do not — *for all that really exists*. He has studied *Mundakopanishad* and the *Vedāntasāra* should not even ask that . . . ”

“But *Mundakopanishad* actually teaches,” timidly commented Nārāyana, “that between *Buddhi*¹ and *Manas*² between *Īśvara* and *Prajñā*,³ there is, in fact, no more difference than *between a forest and its trees, or between a lake and its waters*.”

“Perfectly true, because one or even a hundred trees withered because of lack of life-giving sap, or uprooted cannot prevent the forest from still being a forest.”

¹ The “divine soul” of man.

² *Manas*, as the seat of the terrestrial mind, gives rise to a perception of the Universe that is based on the evidence of that mind, and does not arouse spiritual vision.

³ *Īśvara* is the collective consciousness of the *manifested* deity, *Brahmā*; and *Prajñā* is its individual wisdom.

Methora and Kleisovora are descendants of Buddha and Ella.¹

Apart from its saintliness, Mathura is one of the most interesting and ancient cities in India. In the days of the observant Megasthenes, the Greeks took home recollections of many sacred *Vaishnava* cities. Thus, quoting the ambassador of Seleucus, Arrianus mentions Mathura (Μέθορα, *Methora*) and Κλεισόβωρα, Kleisobora(?), calling them the chief towns of the *Surasenas*. It is probable that Megasthenes meant by Kleisobora *Kailaspur*, as both Mathura and this town were built by the descendants of *Surasena*, the grandfather of Krishna. The Greek writer speaks also of *Bouduan* (Βουδύαν) and of *Kradeuan* (Κραδεύαν) as being the progenitors of this tribe of *Surasenas*; the foremost in the country at the time.² Megasthenes, following the Greek habit of distorting words, probably refers to the Buddha and Kroshtu-deva, the progenitors of the tribe of Yadu, the *Induwansa* or “lunar” race. According to the genealogical tree officially examined, verified and certified by the administration of the Raja of Udaipur, these two names actually head the list of the descendants of Buddha³ and Ella (the earth), one of whom was Krishna, and they are often mentioned in the *Purānas*. As far back as the time of the flowering of Krishna (according to the Brāhmanas some 5,000 years ago, and according to the Orientalists some 1200 years B.C.), Mathura was an ancient city.

Now, however, there remains of the erstwhile strongly fortified city merely three half-destroyed gates and some ruins of a former mighty fortress. The monkeys have completed the destruction begun by the Afghans, and even the mosque of Aurangzib, with its four towers of light blue tiles, has become crooked from neglect. At present there is no place for Moslems at Muttra. Even American missionaries, not [604] easily dislodged from the nests of idol-worshippers, dodged the monkeys and the bulls and took to their heels long ago. Dark azure Krishnas and their menagerie, with attendant Brāhmanas, remained all-powerful masters.

¹ Radda-Bai (nom de plume of H.P. Blavatsky). *From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan*, 1883–1886. Republished in: *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*. Edited and translated from the Russian by Boris de Zirkoff. Wheaton: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1975. Excerpted from pp. 603–4.

² [Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander*, Book VIII (*Indica*), viii. — Boris de Zirkoff.]

³ The adjective *Buddha* (all-wise) should not be confused with Gautama the Buddha, the well-known reformer and the founder of Buddhism, who acquired that title in his advanced age. There were in India many *Buddhas* before the time of Prince Gautama.

Olympus is nearer to the Himalayas.¹

To ascertain whether definite data exists about Krishna, we must turn to the Orientalists. By listing their different opinions we get the following:

- 1 Krishna is one of the ten *avatars* of Vishnu. The period of his birth is not yet determined. It varies between 1200 B.C. and 1200 A.D.
- 2 Krishna is an historical personage, because he is called the “Black Prince” (*kri*) of the tribe of Yadu, and everything points to his Ethiopian origin. [608]
- 3 Krishna is either a myth or a monkey, because he is represented as being blue, and blue men, as is well known, do not exist, whereas there are blue monkeys.
- 4 Krishna is the personification of all the virtues, and here follow some laudatory verses of the *Bhagavad-Gita*.
- 5 Krishna is the personification of immorality; as proof of this the *Purānas* and the sect of the *Vallabhāchāryas* are mentioned.

This is sufficient to convince one that the sum total of information concerning this hero-god is worthless. The Orientalists evolve their hypotheses because the Brāhmanas are silent; and the European public in general cares nothing for this particular one of the numerous Indian gods. It is certainly not the later deification of Krishna which is of interest, but the fact, that in his case, as well as in those of many other gods of the Brāhmanas, everything points to one of the ancient prehistoric heroes, more definite data about whom might lead to extremely important ethnological discoveries and might throw a brilliant light on the prehistoric, and later on the historic, races of both Europe and Asia. It has now become very clear to me that the Scandinavian, Egyptian, Greek, Central Asiatic, German and Slavonic gods were nearly all, at least the most important of them, once living heroes of antiquity, born in prehistoric India and generally in Asia. But it would have been well if this had become clear to those authorities who direct the minds of the profane or *non*-specialists, those who themselves do not study, and discovering nothing of their own, accept the word of their “authorities” literally. As a matter of fact, in all questions concerning the ancient and still existing religions founded on symbolism, as for instance the religion of the Brāhmanas, our best Orientalists are also *profanes* (*pro fanum*), as are their followers. They stand “*outside the temple*,” just as the general public does, because the Brāhmanas do not allow our *Oriental* scholars into their pagodas — this inner world behind their public presentations. But many exceptions were made for us, as is well known in India, and, to the great irritation of the Anglo-Indians, we were admitted into places where no one of them had ever been. [609]

This happened also at Mathura. Before Ananda-Svami, *the envoy of the Thakur*, the doors which were usually tightly locked to all except the officiating *Vaishnavas* were opened, and we were allowed to see places where no foot of *feringhee* or *mlechchha* had entered since the time of the Afghans. But here also, as in Jubbulpore, only two

¹ Radda-Bai (nom de plume of H.P. Blavatsky). *From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan*, 1883–1886. Republished in: *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*. Edited and translated from the Russian by Boris de Zirkoff. Wheaton: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1975. Excerpted from pp. 607-29.

were admitted, Colonel O. and myself, whereas the Hindus who had lost their caste waited outside.

In Mathura, we became convinced of the fact the inhabitants of the Greek Olympus were born nearer to the Himalayas than to the country of Homer, that Parnassus must be sought near the Bāmiān, and that Apollo, Hercules, Bacchus and Orpheus are *avatāras* of Krishna, Baladeva, Vagisa¹ and Arjuna, the friend of Krishna, one of the [610] Pāndavas. It is not in vain that enthusiasts like Pococke, the author of *India in Greece*, tried to prove, *not having seen what we saw in the inner sanctum of the temples of Mathura*, that all Greece with her gods, as well as Egypt with its *zoolatria*, came wholesale from India, not modern India of course, which is locked in by its Himalayan frontier, but the prehistoric land.

In one of the temples,² we saw Krishna playing the pipe company with other gods, on a mountain which the Brāhmanas who showed us around called “Parnassus.” We were told that a part of the Paropamisos (Bāmiān) was called thus in ancient times. These mountains were generally called, and are so even today, Devanīka, because according to tradition they are inhabited by “earthly gods,” *bhū-devas* (*bhūmi — earth*), *i.e.*, deified heroes.³ In the *Purānas*, we read that the abode of the gods during the period of their religious retreat was always situated on mountains, were they built little huts out of bamboo which are called *parnasi* even today; Rama and Krishna also lived on the mountain Parnassus, in “parnasi.”⁴ [611]

Just as Bacchus is the *avatāra* of Vagisa, so is Apollo the Greek personification of Krishna. Everything tends to prove it. Krishna is called *Muralidhara*, *i.e.*, “flute-bearer”; he is the god of music. The pipe was invented before the lyre, of which the primitive pastoral tribes were ignorant. The *Purānas* say that the *bansli* (the pipe made of reeds, from the word *bana* — reed) was the favourite instrument of Kanyā

¹ Vagisa is the god of the Word; dressed in the skin of a leopard or a tiger, he is sitting with his feet under him like a *yogīn*. Vagisa is one of the *aspects* of Siva, as well as of Vishnu; such a role belongs to many gods, all of whom were at first *brahmachārins* or “celibate ascetics.” The head of this god, as well as his neck, are covered with garlands of *bilva*, a plant similar to grapevine from which a strongly intoxicating drink is made and the dry leaves of which are constantly chewed by the hatha-yogīns. The fact that the Greek Bacchus was born as Siva-Vagisa is proved by the following: The first appearance of Vagisa (dressed like Bacchus and crowned with a grapevine) occurred on Mount *Su-Meru* (*su*, saintly, and *meru*, mountain), near Bāmiān in the Paropamisos. “He there taught humanity the art of agriculture and civilization.” The historians of Alexander called this mountain *Su-Meros*, with the usual ending, and insisted even in those days that it was the abode of Bacchus. According to the tradition of the Brāhmanas and on the word of Arrian, it was here that the Macedonian held a Bacchanalia with his generals; crowned with *bilva*, they drank heavily. This mountain, like many others, is covered with wild grapevines. According to the mythology of the Greeks, Bacchus was born from the thigh of Jupiter. In Greek *meros* means *thigh*. Is it not evident that the Greeks either confused this word with *meru*, mountain in Sanskrit (pronounced by the Greeks as *meros*), or simply forgot their place of origin, as the centuries and millennia passed between the autochthone of Attica and the Macedonian? Their mountain “Tomaros” must also have originated in the Paropamisos. As the letter *d* changes in Greek into *z*, *Deus*, *Zeus*, in the same way the letter *s* often becomes a *t*. *Sumeru* became first *Sumeros*, and later “Tomaros” in Greece.

² Up to this point I have tried in my story to point out accurately the different places and to call the temples by their names. I am very sorry that here I *cannot name* the temples of Mathura, because, having received permission to publish the facts, we were made to give *our word of honor* and to promise most solemnly *not to mention the names*.

³ *Vide* on the subject of Parnassus, *etc.*, Capt. Francis Wilford’s essay “On Mount Caucasus,” in *Asiatick Researches*, Calcutta, 1801, VI, p. 497.

⁴ In the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* the word Parnassus occurs frequently. It is difficult to say, however, whether the mountains had been called after the huts, or *vice versa*.

(one of Krishna's names)¹ because his herds preferred the *bansli* of their divine shepherd to the *chatara* or *vīnā* (lyre).²

In Muttra alone, not counting other cities consecrated to his name (such as Dvaraka and Nathdvara), Krishna appears in seven different personalities or *aspects*, each one of which ought to be the object of serious cogitation for the Orientalists. The similarity of these additional "personalities," or separate gods, so to say, with those of Western mythologies is quite striking!

Let us examine, for instance, Krishna-Kanyā more closely. Here we find the god of Hindu music represented as looking for a place for his religious rituals and meditations on the Asiatic "Parnassus."³ Compare him with Apollo as presented in the hymn in his honour,⁴ where the poet describes him as seeking a place for his altar on the borders of the Greek Parnassus. Hills, mountains, streams, rivers, all nature sing their praises to both of these gods in almost the same words. Near the stream, by the cave, Krishna-Kanyā meets the snake Nagaputra and overcomes it. Apollo finds the snake Python and kills it in the same way. Between [612] the snakes *Putra* and *Python* there is more similarity than in the sound alone.

In the muses of Apollo we recognize many of the *gopis* shepherdesses beloved by Krishna. The chief ones among them are aspects of the goddesses of science and art, Sarasvatī, the goddess of wisdom, Lakshmi, the goddess of poetry, *etc.*

The statue of "Krishna on Parnassus" was first transferred from the cave of the "Vihara of Girdhana"⁵ to Nathdvara, and later to Mathura. Just as in the worship of Apollo, the "mysteries" of Krishna were performed in caves. One can recognize the Pythian Apollo in other statues also, for instance in the great statue of Krishna-Kanyā killing the black snake Kāliya-Naga which, according to the local and Purānic tradition, was poisoning the waters of the Jumna before it was killed by the hero. Krishna-Kanyā is represented as dragging the many-headed Hydra out of the river and then crushing its head under his foot.

Diodorus says that *Kan* was one of the titles of the Egyptian Apollo in his aspect of Sun God. It is not far from *Kan* to *Kanyā*. Krishna-Kanyā is called *Nilanath* (the blue god), due to his azure colour. Then again *Nilanath* accompanies the dead souls *into Surya-Svarga* (the sun paradise), and in this *aspect*, instead of a human head, he has an *eagle's head and holds in his hands a lotus*. At all times the eagle serves him as his *vahāna*. In Turin there are hieroglyphic inscriptions describing the Egyptian *Kan* as follows: The head of an eagle on a blue body, in the hands of a lotus, and lotuses before him on the altar. As *Nilanath*, Krishna is also painted blue, because he

¹ "Krishna-Kanyā" is the god of music and the inventor of the chromatic scale. In Greece this invention is ascribed to Timothy, a contemporary of Alexander of Macedonia, who could easily have brought it from India. One should compare the Greek hymns in Apollo's honor to the hymns of *Jayadevan*, composed 3,000 years ago in honor of Krishna. There is a collection of them at Mathura.

² The Greek *kithara*, taken probably from the six-stringed *chatara* of the Hindus, produced in its turn the Anglo-Saxon and the German *zither*, and later the Spanish *guitarra*. *Chatara* is a compound word, from *chah* — six [Sanskrit *shash*], and *tara* — string or wire.

³ On statues, bas-reliefs, and in the hymns of *Jayadevan*.

⁴ Hesiod, *The Homeric Hymns*: Hymn to Delian Apollo, lines 22-24

⁵ [Colloquial for *Govardhana*. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

is the symbol of space — *Ouranos*. The same can be said of *Kan*. Both *Kanyā* and *Kan* are the so-called “gods of the mysteries”; it was their honour that the “mysteries” were performed in ancient Egypt, Greece and India; in the latter they are performed even today. Having seen Krishna-Nilanath with his bird’s head in the temple of Muttra, I almost mistook him Osiris with the Ibis head, the spouse and brother of Isis, whom he resembles. Finally, one of the names of Apollo of [613] Delos is *Oulios*; he is also blue and has an eagle’s head. Who borrowed from whom? Did the Egyptians borrow from the Hindus or the Brāhmanas from the Greeks and Egyptians?

All these gods are so-called “solar” gods; they are all heroes, warriors and shepherds, having their herds of cows and bulls, like Hermes, Mercury and others. In every country where they are worshipped, we find them surrounded by bulls and cows — animals, which in mythology always have a mysterious connection with the sun (*Hari*). With the modern Parsis, who are degenerate worshippers of Zoroaster, the cow and all its products are held sacred; the same applies to the bull. At sunrise the Parsi of Bombay stretches out his arms to Ormazd, the “fiery-eyed orb,” and drinks without squirming a teaspoonful of *nirang*. This is his ambrosia, the cow’s nectar. The cow and the bull were deified in Chaldea and Scandinavia, in Egypt as much as in present-day India. We find cow’s horns on the head of Isis; we see the bull killed by Ahriman; Hermes and Apollo are shepherds for the “herds of the luminary of days,” and Krishna is likewise for the herd of Vishnu (the same sun). The daughter of Brahma transforms herself into a cow to avoid the sinful passion of her father, but in spite of this metamorphosis Brahma still impregnates her. The bull Apis was held more sacred than the Pharaoh, and his life was more precious to the people than the whole kingdom. To this day, the Anglo-Indians, notwithstanding their despotism, have never yet dared to kill or even strike a “sacred bull” that may have wandered into their garden. With all ancient people the cow was the symbol of earth or nature, impregnated and vivified by its creator, the *unknowable* spirit. “The cow is the same as a Brāhmana,” we were told by a Sastrin at Muttra, in answer to our inquiries. The cow is the *vahāna* of *purusha* (spirit).

“The *Ramayana* is a fairy tale! The *Mahabharata* — a collection of most grotesque superstitions and wild phantasies,” we heard said many times. Let us see. Rama, the first incarnation of Vishnu, goes to Lanka, accompanied by *Hari*, i.e., Krishna again but in his first aspect. Rameses-Sesostris, the personification of the same sun (Osiris, Vishnu, Apollo and *tutti quanti*), sets out on an expedition to India. [614]

In the army of Rama are his allies; monkeys, bears, eagles and the entire animal kingdom. In the army of Rameses are the cynocephali,¹ satyrs and other mythical creatures. We must also bear in mind the following: To this very day many of the Rajput tribes are named according to different animal species. For instance, the *Induvansas* have a tribe of *Asvas* (horses), of *Takshakas* (snakes), of *Sasas* (hares), etc., while the *Suravansas*, at the head of which stood Rama, have even now a tribe of *Mushas* (mice), and, according to their genealogies, have had tribes of monkeys (*Bandars*) and *Garudas* (eagles). Bearing in mind these details, and noting which are of interest to an archaeologist or ethnologist, is it not a pity that, instead of trying to

¹ The *Cynocephalus* is the same species of monkeys as Hanuman; they are cousins, if not brothers.

tear the veil hiding historical facts, the Orientalists do not try to lift it a little to find out if the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* might be hiding something more important than tales about armies of animals and magicians? They should first try to disentangle this web of gods and goddesses with all their puzzling names and only then pass judgment. If one studies the “mythology” of the Brāhmanas *without prejudice*, one can easily find the guiding thread which will lead directly to the discovery of the origin of the different races — the thread now lost to the archaeologist and the historian in the impenetrable fog of confused facts and names which were distorted by the Greeks.

This is certainly not the place to prove these views. Many similar ideas have already been expressed, but all in vain; the efforts were shattered against the rock of prejudice, and no Orientalist would favour these ideas. However, even Plato said that the religion of Greece was taken wholesale from Egypt, and that its Gods, as well as those of Egypt, were all derived from the East. And not only the gods. We find in India the names of tribes, mountains, lakes and localities, and current legends about them, all of which clearly show the following: That either the Greeks and Romans, and before them the Egyptians, derived their Pantheon of gods from India, and that these people themselves, with their [615] ancestors, the *autochthones*, the Pelasgians and Etruscans, came from Asia; that the Brāhmanas “from the banks of the Oxus” first saw the light on the shores of the Nile, the Aegean Sea or the Tiber. It is impossible that such coincidences, such similarities in names, legends, and enduring customs, should be pure chance. Not a mountain, a river or a god in ancient Greece or Rome, but has a *prototype* in India, ancient or modern. We can recognize nearly every name, though as usual distorted by the Greeks. For instance, the “Sandrokottos” of Megasthenes suddenly turns out to be King Chandragupta, the grandfather of Asoka. Let us take the Pelasgians as an example. They were, some time ago, the centre of interest; but as their origin was about as difficult to discover as a buried treasure, the scientists gave it up as an unsolvable problem. But did anyone ever try to see if there were any connection between them and the ancient peoples of India, as in the case of the Greek *autochthones*? As far as I remember, people laughed at Pococke, the author of *India in Greece*. This, however, was 35 years ago, when people knew very little about the *Purānas*. If the question about the Pelasgians and the prehistoric Greeks were once more raised, the assertion of Pococke that “the primeval history of Greece and Rome is the ancient history of India,” would be vindicated. But as long as the assertions of the Brāhmanic literature are held to be mere fairy tales, the earliest history of the Central Asiatic people who settled in Europe will remain shrouded in impenetrable darkness. Most strange is it to observe the lack of attention paid to the Brāhmanic legends which still await their Champollion. Surely the *Mahabharata* deserves as much effort as was spent on the Rosetta Stone, and the day will certainly dawn when that which is called *fables and myths* in Greek will *prove to be facts and history* in Sanskrit.

Let us look squarely at the facts. They stare us “in the face,” and should be judged, if not *by the public*, then at least by some experts in philology and archaeology. For instance, prior to the “Great War,” the whole country now called Bengal belonged to the *Induvansas*, the Sons of the Moon, Buddhists long *before* Gautama the Buddha and the epoch of the reformer; in other words, Jainam-Gaya (the [616] present *Bud-*

dha-Gaya) was the capital of Palasa, the ancient name of the province of Bihar.¹ Still earlier it was called *Palivarta* and *Paliktana*, *i.e.*, the land where people spoke *Pali*, now the religious language of the Buddhists. *Pali*, as known to the Brāhmanas, preceded *Sanskrit*, which is shown by the names of these two languages. *Pali* stands in the same relation to Sanskrit, as the Slavonic to the modern Russian. *Pali* means primeval, coarse, and *Samskrita* — polished, finished and perfected.

What does history know about the Pelasgians? Historians know nothing about their tongue, belief and origin, or at least so little that they have ceased discussing them. All our information is limited to a few verses of Asius, a poet who lived some 700 B.C., and some words of Aeschylus. The first tells us that King Pelasgus, the ancestor of the Pelasgians, *grew out of black soil* and calls him, probably on that account, “God-like.”

Ἀντιθεοῦ δε Πελασγόν εκ υφικόμουσιν ὄρεσσι
Γαῖα μέλαιν' ἀνέδωκεν, ἵνα θνητῶν γένος εἴη.²

Aeschylus, on the other hand, makes Pelasgus the son of Palaichthon (*Παλαίχθων*).³ Would it not be more reasonable in view of what has been said above, to suppose, as some people have already done (Sir William Jones among others), that this mystical Pelasgus was born in *Gaya*, the capital of Palasa, or in Bihar, instead of having grown out of *Gaia* (“earth,” in Greek)? Is not Pococke nearer the truth than the Orientalist authorities? He was ridiculed for supposing that King Pelasgus was actually the son of *Palaichthon*, the “ancient fatherland” of the Greeks, *i.e.*, *Paliktana*, the country where *Pali* was spoken in ancient Bengal. On the other hand, one philologist assures us that the [617] Pelasgians derived their name from the word *pelagos* (sea), because they came to Greece by way of the sea! Another authority, an etymologist, derives the name from *πελαργός*, stork, and a third party, Wachsmuth and Müller, derive it from the words *πολέω*, to till, and *αγρός*, field. In that case the English can also be called *Pelasgians* because they too must come and go only by way of the sea, their land being surrounded by the *pelagos*. Shall we also call them storks, or migratory birds, considering their habits? There never was an agricultural people, cultivating their land, that could not claim the name of *Pelagros*.

We may be told that even the first hypothesis *est un peu trop tirée par les cheveux!* I will not deny it. But King Pelasgus had to be born *somewhere* and of *someone*. In any case, the supposition that *Pelasgus*, the son of *Palaichthon* was born in *Palasa*, the province of *Paliktana*, is far more reasonable than that he crawled out of the “black soil” like a worm after rain. Isn't it strange that notwithstanding their complete lack of knowledge about the *origin* of the people of Greece and Italy, the learned academies of Europe have always laughed at the attempts of some Orientalists⁴ to prove that the cradle of all these mysterious prehistoric peoples, the primitive as well

¹ Derived from the word *palasa* (*Butea frondosa*), a plant which covers all the hills and valleys of that province.

² [“The Godlike Pelasgus, an the wooded mountains, black earth gave up, that the race of mortals might exist.” This statement by Asius may be found in Pausanias' *Itinerary or Description of Greece*, Book VIII (Arcadia), i, 4. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

³ [In his *Supplices*, 250-51. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

⁴ Some of the best known, such as, Colebrooke, Sir William Jones, Wilson, Tod and others less known.

as the civilized, such as the Etruscans and Pelasgians, should be sought in India, among its numerous tribes. Nevertheless, after studying the genealogies of the Rajput tribal chiefs, their Rajas and Thakurs, and the ancient geographical names in their country, according to the *Purānas*, one is easily convinced that there is hardly a people in Greece, or a geographical name, that does not correspond, quite incomprehensibly so, if our hypothesis is rejected, to the names of the tribes and localities of India. Why not try then to verify our theory, which is at the same time a hypothesis upheld by some of our best known Orientalists in the world of scholarship? Especially so because in ancient Greece alone, there are many Greek names which *do not mean anything* in that language, a fact which never occurs in regard to indigenous [618] names of either people or localities. Pococke found in the geographical names of Greece a whole catalogue of such seemingly *meaningless* names unrelated to anything, if their roots are to be sought in Greek dialects; but as soon as they are compared with names in the Sanskrit language found in the *Purānas*, or with the genealogies of Rajasthan, they immediately acquire a meaning. Among such etymologically unexplainable words are the following: Stymphoea, Dodona, Chaonia, Crossaea, Ithaca, Locri, Corinthos, Ossa, Arcadia, Achaia, Boeotia, Elida, Larissa, Pharsalus, *etc.* Among the tribes of the *Suryavansas* and *Induvansas*, the *Kurus* and *Pāndavas* who, according to the *Mahabharata*, migrated after the “Great War” into the “Kukarmadesa,” the *Land of Sin*, (*i.e.*, the land of the West), we can trace nearly all the names of the ancient Greek tribes who fought on the fields of Troy. Valmiki and Vyāsa are the Hesiod and Homer of ancient India. Her *bhats* (bards) were born before those of Scandinavia, before the Provençal troubadours or the minnesingers of ancient Germany; these *bhats*, to whom people ascribed the faculty of prevision, as was the case with their European descendants, left us in their songs¹ the ancient as well as the more recent names of the compatriots who had left India and become their enemies and which later populated Europe, Asia Minor, and even a part of Africa. Thirty-six Rajput tribes, *Rajkula*, hold the key to the origin of the Greek tribes.²

Let us see if a couple of our examples will not make us wonder at certain “coincidences.” Let us begin with the tribes of “Gokulas,” from the land of Gokuladesa³ who lived from ancient times on the Jumna. They are spoken [619] of in the *Purānas* as very brave warriors, skilful in the use of the bow and arrow, and living the life of shepherds between wars. The land of the Gokulas was the scene of Krishna’s youthful love conquests over the *gopis* (shepherd-nymphs) and the abode of Nanda, his tutor. Even in our day the Gokulas are renowned for their extremely solid, round, tower-like houses, built like those of the Pelasgians.

Several Orientalists are quite convinced that the Greek Cyclops *Kuklopes*, (*Kúkλωπες*), are the Indian *Gokulas*. Ancient as well as modern etymologists speculated about them, but did not find much, though some of them came very near the truth.

¹ There are still extant 69 books of the *bhat* Chund, who was called *Trikula*, the “three-tribed one.” We have seen them. They contain 100,000 stanzas consecrated to the description of three Rajput tribes. Chund lived in the 12th century A.D.

² [This subject is further elaborated in a serious article in *The Theosophist*, Vol. II, January and March, 1881, entitled “A Guide to Greek Nomenclature.” It was written by Dayarama Varma, Secretary of the Ārya Samaja in Multan, Panjab. This article, however, *was not concluded*. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

³ Go — a cow; *kula* — a tribe; *desa* — land; pronounced *Gokuladesa*.

What wondrous things have been imagined about the Cyclops! First they appeared as “builders,” age-old architects, then as the “archers,” and finally as “miners.” From Homer to the German philologists Kruse and Bauer, from Strabo to Major Jacob, one theory after another, each one more curious than the former, was put forward. The lamp, which they wore as miners on their foreheads, was supposed to be “the reason for the fable of the One-eyed Polyphemos.” One writer asserted one thing, another some-thing else. Kruse tells us that the Cyclops got their name from the circular (κύκλος) shape of Pelasgian buildings which looked like beehives and had a round opening similar to an *eye* (*ops*).¹ This is more plausible than the hypothesis of another Orientalist who derives the term “one-eyed” from the “Greek idea of an Olympian god, supposedly closing one eye in taking aim,” with his “thunderbolt-arrow.”² But even the Kruse hypothesis is not worth much. However, if anyone wants to get additional evidence for the hypothesis of Pococke who asserts that the mythical Cyclops are the contemporary *Gokulas* of the Jumna, he should stay for a time at Mutra or Dvaraka and visit their annual shepherd-festival in honour of Krishna and his *gopis*. [620]

If he succeeds, as we did, in being present at this solemn festivity, or at the birthday of Krishna, he will witness a spectacle in which everything but the actors — costumes, stage setting, the smallest details, including the barbarous native music — has remained the same as when these religious mystery-plays were witnessed by the *Hari-Kulas*, the *Agni-Kulas*, and the *Gohil-Kulas* of Rajasthan, in the beginning of the “Black Age” (Kali-yuga), 5,000 years ago, according to native chronologists.

I will try to describe this unique and allegorical spectacle in my next letter. [621]

Instead of a couple of hours, we stayed two days at Mathura and vicinity. The Thakur sent word telling us to remain for the spring festival of the “Gokula Ashtama.”³ The day of Krishna’s birth comes in August, but it has a prologue in the spring, at the same time as the festival of *Gauri*, the Rajput Ceres.

The similarity between Krishna and the Greek Apollo, between the epithets given to the latter by the Greeks, the Romans and other European people, and the corresponding Indian names for their favourite Avatāra is so striking that it cannot fail to interest all who love ancient mythologies. I repeat, it cannot be a mere coincidence. Especially remarkable is the similarity in the names given to the sun, which is personified by both of these “*gods*.” *Hari-Krishna* is the *scorching* (destructive) sun. *Ari-Krishna*, is [622] simply the sun. Krishna, the “lord of rays” (Phoebus), and his celestial abode is called *Haripura* (Heliopolis?) or City of the Sun.⁴

¹ [Friedrich Karl Hermann Kruse, *Hellas, oder geographisch-antiquarische Darstellung des alten Griechenlandes und seiner Colonien, etc.*, Leipzig, 1825-27, Vol. I, p. 440. — Boris de Zirkoff.]

² G.A.F.Ast, *Grund. der Phil.* [It is uncertain whether the reference is to his *Grundlinien der Philosophie*, Landshut, 1807, or his *Grundriss der Philologie*, Landshut, 1808]

³ *Gokula* is the tribe of the cow (*go*); Krishna was raised by the shepherd Nanda; the *prologue* of this holiday comes in spring at the birthplace of Krishna. *Ashtama* is the first quarter of the moon.

⁴ Rajputs believe in two kinds of “Paradise,” two localities or Elysian Fields: one, purely spiritual; the other of material quality. In their songs, the bards teach the warrior that the one killed on the battlefield “by steel,” and

“The *Dii Majores*¹ of the Rajputs are the same in number and title as amongst the Greeks and Romans, being the deities who figuratively preside over the planetary system,” rightly remarks Tod.² For that reason, all the religious rituals, the dances of the *nachnis* and the mysteries, *i.e.*, the performance of scenes taken from their mythology, always have as their basis an astronomical meaning. *Bhanu Saptami*, “the seventh day of the sun,” also called the “birth of the sun” or Vishnu (the entrance of the sun into the sign of *Makara*, Capricorn, in the solar month of *Magha*, in January) is a great holiday at Udaipur. The chariot of the Sun, harnessed to eight horses, is taken out of the temple of Vishnu and brought back again, in a ceremony similar to that used on the day of the accession to the throne of a new rana. The summer solstice is called by them the “Night of the Gods,” because Vishnu (like the Sun) is resting during the four rainy months on his couch, the snake Ananta.

A description of *all* the Hindu holidays, or even of the chief ones, would require the publication of a complete library. *Sat varam aur nau tyauhar*, “nine holidays in seven days,” is a Rajput saying, which does not require any commentary. I will describe only the mystery-play we saw performed in the vicinity of Muttra.

The pastoral holiday of *Gauri*, the local Ceres, is opened by the *gopis* or shepherdesses. *Gauri* is one of the forms of *Parvati*, or *Durga-mata*, the “powerful mother,” the Hindu goddess of harvest and plenty. *Durga-mata* is similar to the *mater montana*, an epithet associated, according to [623] Diodorus, with Cybele or Vesta, in her role of “guardian of the children”; *mater montana* is called in Rajasthan *Amba-mata* (mother of the mountain) and appears here as the patroness and guardian of boys, the future warriors. The altars of *Gauri-Parvati-Mata*, “the powerful mother of the mountain,” crown nearly every high hill in Mewar, the heart of Rajasthan; it is to her that all the “temple-fortresses” of the country are consecrated. Her activities are more varied, and her duties more difficult and manifold than those of her equivalent worshipped in Rome, Greece and even Egypt, as everything tends to show that she is the prototype of Isis. Like Diana of Ephesus, *Gauri-Durgā* is crowned with a crescent; like Cybele, she has on her head a crenelated tower;³ and, under the name of *Devi-Durgā* (force, power), is regarded as the patroness of all the fortified places. She is also *Mata-Janani*, “mother creatrix,” *viz.*, is performing the duties of Juno, *Juno Lucina*; as *Padma*, “whose throne rests on a lotus,” she is the Isis of the Nile; as *Gauri-Tripura* (literally — three cities, Tripolis?), “governing three cities,” and as *Atma-devi*, “the goddess of souls,” she is of course the *Hecata Triformis* of the Greeks. In other words, *Gauri* synthesizes in herself all the goddesses of Greece and Egypt, beginning with Diana and Proserpine and ending with Isis and Astoreth. Chiefly, however, she is “Earth,” the Hindu Ceres, who appears in the mysteries seated on sheaves of

“performing his duty of honor,” will go to the “spiritual paradise” and never return to earth. The freed spark (*jyotis*) will unite itself with the parent fire, the Sun, Surya.

¹ [According to Ennius, the twelve great gods of Roman mythology, namely Juno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Neptune, Vulcan, and Apollo. Their blood was ichor, their food was ambrosia, their drink nectar. They married and had children, lived on Olympus in Thessaly, in brazen houses built by Vulcan, and wore golden shoes which enabled them to tread on air or water.]

² *Annals, etc.*, Vo. I, p. 513, ed. of 1894.

³ The whole province of Mewar and the environs of Udaipur are strewn with such ancient towers, and they are all under the guardian-ship of *Ambā* and *Guri-Durga*.

wheat in a chariot pulled by a cow,¹ and holding in her hands a *kama-kumbha*, a vase looking like a horn of plenty, from which fruit and seed are falling.

After the procession there appears *Kama-deva*, the God of love, the cupid of India, whose bow and arrow are re-placed here by garlands of flowers and a pointed bamboo stick. He hits with the latter, one of the *gopis*, the daughter of Nanda, who falls hopelessly in love with Krishna. The chorus bursts into song. This is the hymn to Kama from the *Bhavishya-Purana*: [624]

Hail, god of the flowery bow; hail, warrior with a fish on thy banner; hail, powerful divinity, who causeth the firmness of the sage to forsake him, and subdueth the guardian deities of eight regions! . . .

Glory be to Madana, to Kama; to Him who is formed as the God of Gods; to Him, by whom Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Indra, are filled with emotions of rapture!²

Then appears Guhanatha (Krishna in his aspect of “Ruler of the Cave” — *Guha* — which must not be confused with *Gopinatha*, the “Ruler of the Shepherdesses”). He is wrapped in an animal skin, crowned with *kuśa* grass, and playing on a bamboo pipe; attracted by his music, *gopis* begin to gather round him. In the first act the *gopis* are not shepherdesses, and the *Guhanatha* himself is transformed from the “god of the cave” into the “god of the mountain,” *Govardhananatha* or *Nathji* (Ruler of all the Rulers). He is crowned with a brilliant crown of rays, like Phoebus, for he is the sun itself, like Vishnu, Apollo and Osiris. The modest pipe is replaced with the *chatara*, the *six-stringed* lyre,³ on which the blue god begins to play, not a melody, but, as I thought, a *scale*, and a very monotonous one at that. But, as I was told this was a musical tune as old as the “music of the spheres,” I became resigned to it.

In front of the metamorphosed *god* appear the *gopis*, who by this time have been transformed into *sounds*.

They are the nine *raginis*; *raga* is the musical *scale*, and *raginis* (the feminine plural) are the wives of the *ragas*.

I use the word “sounds” as there seems to be no other suitable expression. This is not my fault, but the fault of the sages who invented Sanskrit music, in which, in addition [625] to its undeniable attraction, though unpleasant to my ear, a whole mythology is to be found.

Here are the proofs:

The Sanskrit inventors of music established six *ragas*, *i.e.*, scales, the names of which are, *Sriraga*, (*raga* means sir or lord), *Vasanta*, *Panchama*, *Bhairava*, *Megha*, *Nata-narayana*.

¹ Earth or *Prithivi* is symbolized by the Hindus as a *cow*.

² *Asiatick Researches*, Vol. III, 1799, p. 278: “The Lunar Year of the Hindus,” by Sir Wm. Jones. [This passage is quoted by Col. Tod in his *Annals, etc.*, Vol. I, p. 544, ed. of 1894. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

³ Music which to the European ear is really without melody, yet possessing a *full seven-note scale*. Though the monk Guido Aretinus is generally believed to have been the first to use the *seventh* note (in the 13th century), and the Greeks actually knew but *six* notes, still a seven-note scale exists in the *Purānas*.

Each of these *ragas* has five wives, and each of these wives has eight children. Every *raga*, every *ragini* and every *raga-child* has a name, attributes, personal biography, genealogy, and, if he had been born in Russia, probably would have had a special service record! However, having been born in India, each one of them received the title of a god, goddess, or godling. The philosophy of this is that every singer and musician in India who sings and plays has at his disposal 276 different *scales*, with seven notes in each; each note represents some special sound of the animal kingdom and must represent some emotion.

The animal sounds and their corresponding emotions are taken by me from an original work of the Sanskrit Musical Society,¹ because this will explain better than anything else *what it was* that Krishna *Nathji* and his *raginis* represented:

Notes of the scale	Sanskrit names	Types of animal sounds	Representing various shades of
Sa Do	Shadja	Peacock	Heroism, Wonder, Terror
Ri Re	Rishabha	Bull	Compassion
Ga Mi	Ganhara	Goat	Humour, Love
Ma Fa	Madhyama	Crane	Freedom from care
Pa Sol	Panchama	Blackbird	Disgust, Alarm
Dha La	Dhaivata	Frog	Pity, Awareness of Strength
Ni Si	Nishada	Elephant	

[626] These “sounds” representing shades of emotion were personified by the *nau raginis*² dancing in front of Krishna. They were the personifications of the “nine passions,” *nau rasas*, begotten by the melody of the god of music,³ creations of his which sprang into being by the magical power of Vāch.⁴ The performance, quite as much as the idea itself was charming. Holding each other’s hands, the *nau raginis* first dance before their creator; then another transformation takes place. The flaming god of the sun appears before the spectators, this time not *incognito*, and the *nau raginis* become transformed into the signs of the Zodiac; this is the beginning of the astronomical mystery-play with the goddess-constellations forming a circle around the Sun-god and dancing the famous *Rasa-Mandala*, the dance of the stars. The *nau raginis* and the *nau rasas* disappear once more, and the signs of the Zodiac remain. The *Rasa-Mandala* continues. The slow movements and the graceful mimicry become more lively and grow faster and faster.⁵ The mystical dance on the banks of the

¹ [Cf. *The Theosophist*, Vol. I, November, 1879, pp. 46-49: “Hindu Music,” by Bulwant Trimbuk, Honorary Secretary of the Poona “Gayana Samaj.” — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

² *Nau* means “nine.”

³ “Nine passions,” or the nine muses of Apollo.

⁴ The god of *sound*, in this case of mystical, *occult* sound.

⁵ The cymbals, the *tabor* and the *murali* (a kind of flute), nearly drove me mad; but I learned a great deal that evening. The *chobis* of Mathura have a widespread and well-deserved fame in India as singers and mimics, and

Jumna reminds one of the dance of the *almehs* in Egypt and transports one to the sandy banks of the Nile.

In the third act everything changes once more. Krishna once again appears as a shepherd, with his shepherd's hook, and around him play and sing again the gopis-shepherdesses. The *nau raginis* have once more been transformed into the *nau rasas*, the "nine passions," and try to lead, the shepherd, a *brahmacharin*, away from the path of truth. They do not succeed, however. Krishna is victorious in his virtues, and the shepherdesses — *en sont pour leurs frais*. [627]

Krishna, without paying any attention to the flirtation of the shepherdesses, continues to play on his pipe which has now replaced the six-stringed *chatara*. The cows of his sacred herd, however, being probably ashamed of the shepherdesses, scatter. The sun has set, and the stage grows dark. Then appear the ferocious Kachhis (another tribe of the Rajput) and take the cows away. The Gokulas or *Kuklopes* pursue them and try to get the cows back. When they appear, the spectator is confronted with the ferocious Cyclop-shepherds of Homer, the hairy giants who knew neither law nor restraint . . . They creep out of caves and descend from trees; on the chest of each one of them *shines like a fiery eye an enormous firefly, pinned to the animal skin* . . .

These fireflies are the only light in the cave of the shepherd or in the round tower of a poor Gokula and are used even in our day by the tribe of Nanda, the educator of Krishna. Often at night, going out to look for a lost cow or bull, the Gokulas pin several such fireflies to their turbans to have some light. Is it not here in this tribe of Gokulas that one should seek the origin and explanation of the *Greek Kukopes*? The fireflies explain perfectly the "lantern on the forehead" of the Cyclop-*miners*, and also the fact that Homer knew them to be a tribe of shepherds, *Gokulas*, whose chief and only representative was the "one-eyed" Polyphemus.

The mystery-play ended very late. The Brāhmana-*Chobis* (called thus on account of the *choba* or mace, which they carry during the performance) had besieged the tyrant Kansa in his palace, demolishing his fortress, and chasing him into the bushes,¹ long before we left the pagoda. The performance over, the "god Krishna" joined our party, and turned out to be a very young and tall Rajput who, to our astonishment, spoke English. It is to him that I owe most of the information which I obtained in Mathura. He [628] explained the meaning of many things which we did not understand in the performance, in which he played the leading role.

He thoroughly believed in Krishna, the hero, but disavowed, as we did, Krishna, the god. It is from him that we learned that the worship of the seventh aspect of Krishna — one of the seven most important ones under which he is deified in Rajasthan, *i.e.*, *Madan-Mohan*, the "divinity which intoxicates you with love" — is exclusively in the hands of the *Brāhmana-women*. *Madan-Mohan* is the shepherd who enchants the shepherdesses, named the *gopis*. At the present time, the high priestess of the blue god is very old and very strict with the temple *nachnis*, whose duty consists of play-

the base voices of the Brāhmanas, together with the contraltos and tenors of the "celestial singers" of the pagoda, were full of harmony. That is the vocal music; as for the instrumental music, however, it eventually becomes unbearable to a European listener.

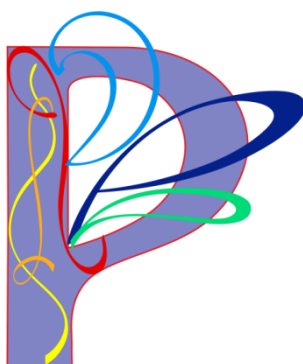
¹ Kansa is the uncle of Krishna and the usurper of his throne. Every year the Brāhmana-*Chobis* besiege his palace and allegedly kill him in the forest, whither he fled for refuge.

ing the roles of the *gopis* and courting the blue god. This severity has had its effect on her temple which suffers from a lack of “celestial musicians.”¹ They have to borrow the little singers of *heaven* from other pagodas, outside of Rajasthan.

There exist, as we said, *seven* main statues or idols of Krishna in this country; these were described by Tod, the only Englishman, I think, who was allowed to approach the sanctuary, as we were ourselves fifty years later.

These seven “miracle-working” statues were brought centuries ago by a mysterious person, Balba, who later became the high priest of Rajasthan. When dying, he distributed them among his seven “grandsons,” the progeny of his spiritual son (and adopted one), and now they are the source of enormous revenues to his descendants, the officiating Brāhmanas of the seven chief pagodas of the country.

The man who played the part of Krishna, and whose name I forget, obtained permission for us to go and see *Nonita*,² “Krishna, the child.” *Nonita* sits on a lotus, which [629] looks like a cabbage, thoughtfully holding in his hand a small cake (*peda*); these cakes are made of dough mixed with the water of the Jumna exclusively. From the time of the Afghans, who with their typical iconoclasm, threw *Nonita* into the Jumna, he rested until 1803 on the bottom of the river. When by chance he was fished out, he had still not eaten his cake and continued to examine it in the same attentive way, as though mistrusting it. I entirely sympathize with his reluctance. I will never forget the “sacred” cake which was brought to me as a token of most unusual kindness. Having eaten it, I felt sick to my stomach and a feeling of deep depression remained with me for the rest of the day.



¹ The celestial musicians or singers in the pagodas, as is well known, are always the sons of the *nachnis*, the dancing girls. This is nowhere censured, except in Rajasthan. In this country of knightly tradition, the *nachnis* are real vestals.

² It is written *nava* (new)-*nita* (butter). During his childhood, *Nonita* had a great liking for fresh butter and often stole it from his neighbours. Hence his name.