

THE copy of the Book of Dzyān, of which H. P. Blavatsky speaks as the foundation of the *Secret Doctrine*, is a volume of unknown antiquity, preserved in the rock-library hewn out of the side of a ravine in which two of the Masters live. It contains a single symbol on each page, and, when this is held in the hand of a qualified pupil, the scene indicated by the symbol rolls up before him as a living picture.

Descriptions of these pictures have been made from time to time, and one of these seems to be dealt with in the interesting note given below from the pen of Signor Giovanni Hoffman, Professor of Chinese and Japanese in Rome, and the author of a Manchurian grammar, who has been good enough to allow it to be printed in the *Theosophist*. He adds the information that Tzian's work, *Yu-Fu-King*, or "The Book of Secret Correspondences," is spoken of by Ma-tuan-lin in the book *Wen-King-tung-hao*, bk. 211, p. 27. [Ed.]

Professor Hoffman writes:

Researches regarding the book of the *Secret Doctrine*, on the origin of the mysterious manuscript traced in ideographic characters on palm leaves, and, according to Madame Blavatsky, the source from whence she drew her *Secret Doctrine*; what here follows is that which I have learnt, as the result of my own researches.

Magic and Alchemy were both practised in China even before the time of Lao-ze, contemporary of Con-fu-ze; and these studies were revived by the Emperor Huang-ty, who reigned 2697 years B. C.

In the fourth century of our era, a Taoist or disciple of Lao-ze, the founder of the Tao, whose own name was Ly-tzian, retired to the mountains—probably of Tibet—in order to devote himself to meditation, and he relates that during his meditations the shade of the Emperor Huang-ty appeared to him and confided to his care a book entitled *Yu-Fu-King*, or *The Book of Secret Correspondences*, with the injunction to impart its contents to the Taoists. Ma-tuan-lin, the celebrated historian of the Thang dynasty, speaks of this book and of the apparition which appeared

to Tzian (in Tibetan Dzyan); but he adds that the work is but "incomprehensible gibberish, without head or tail."

I maintain that Tzian must have communicated the secret of this his doctrine to the tzianite priesthood—a purely taoistic one, inasmuch as it teaches the idea of "The Being" and "Non-Being" (The Absolute) which is the fundamental principle of the Lao-ze Cosmogony, of which I spoke in the introduction to my lectures on the Chinese language at the Royal Institute of Languages at Naples, and this is also diffusively mentioned by Professor Puini in his great work *Buddha, Confucius, and Laoze*, published in Florence in 1878—that is, ten years previous to the date at which Madame Blavatsky published her *Secret Doctrine*.

She has therefore the merit of having re-arranged the shapeless mass of the aphorisms of Dzyan or Tzian; but the doctrine exposed in these applies entirely to the Lao-ze School, and in no wise to the vedic, as she wished it to be believed.

In China we find the most ancient source of Science and Religion, one far anterior to that of the *Vedas*; and certainly even the Pythagoric Arithmetic is but a plagiarism of the ancient Chinese arithmetic, while the gymnosophistic Masters of Pi-ta-guru (Pythagoras) teach that the Science of Numbers was communicated to them by a people inhabiting the north of the Alpine plains of Tibet—therefore, by the Chinese.

This is in fact what I have clearly shown when speaking of the morphological origin of our own numbers, which still bear all the traces of their Chinese outlines.

I am delighted to hear that there are people competent to interest themselves in so important a question, and to contribute my own modest quota from pure interest in the cause of truth.

The Tarot is an inexhaustible source of religious, scientific, archæological, philosophical, historical, esoteric and magical knowledge; and on each of these subjects provides matter to furnish books of revelations which each day become still more voluminous and complete.

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