



Occult Science in India and Among the Ancients: Mystic Initiations and the History of Spiritism

Louis Jacolliot

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This book was written in the 1860s, when reliable information about Hinduism was just starting to filter back to the west. Jacolliot was searching for the roots of western esoteric traditions in the far East. The high point of this book is the travelogue of his encounters in India with a fakir, who demonstrates his siddis (yogic powers) exuberantly. There is also an extensive discourse on Kabbalah, and its relationship to Eastern mystical beliefs. Jacolliot was a diffusionist, and he believed that many western esoteric traditions, specifically Egyptian, Jewish and Christian, had their origin in India.

These doctrines were known to the Egyptians, to the Jewish Cabalists, to the people of Finland, to the school of Alexandria, to Philo and his disciples, to the Gauls and to the early Christians, and, as in the case of the Hindus, they set them apart for the use of those who had been initiated. As for the ancient Chaldeans, the practice of popular magic and sorcery seems to have been the utmost limit of their attainments in this direction.

Freemasonry also seems to have its rituals originate from these ancient practices. Jacolliot was searching for the "Indian roots of western occultism" and makes reference to an otherwise unknown Sanskrit text he calls Agrouchada-Parikchai, which is apparently Jacolliot's personal invention, a "pastiche" of elements taken from Upanishads, Dharmashastras and "a bit of Freemasonry". Jacolliot also expounds his belief in a lost Pacific continent, and was quoted on this by Helena Blavatsky in *Isis Unveiled* in support of her own Lemuria.

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