

The explaining and critical view at Eckankar's anthropology according to the Islamic doctrines

Abdolreza Mahmoudi^{1*}, Maryam Shamsaei²

¹ Assistant professor of Islamic Education Department, School of Medicine, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran, ² Assistant professor of Islamic Education Department, Faculty of Medicine, Shiraz University of Medical, Sciences, Shiraz, Iran.

Correspondence: Abdolreza Mahmoudi, Assistant professor of Islamic Education Department, School of Medicine, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran. E_mail: ar.mahmoudi313@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The school of Eckankar has raised many issues on the subject of anthropology. On the issue of man's stand in the being, has introduced him as God's offspring and heir, yet an offspring and heir even with the power to mould His power, and in some cases has gone beyond; expressing his stand as God's; who through attributing being affected to God, has serious incompatibility with Islamic teachings and even with those of other revealed religions. on the issue of man's creation and human races, along with accepting Darwin's theory of species evolution, has pursued the general procedure of the theory of evolution through exaggerated, unscientific and undocumented statements in addition to mythological issues which in this paper those aspects incompatible with religious and Islamic texts are probed into, and serious critique has been done on it. on the issue of the goal of the creation of man, Eckankar categorically speaks of spiritual goals such as soul's travel, co-working with God, reincarnation, and relation with Sugmad and submission to Sugmad; The present paper probes into and criticizes various issues such as man's existential aspects, and the need to ECK and human's races from the point of view of Eckankar. The study's method is descriptive – explaining, along with critical view that has reintegrated in six parts.

Keywords: Anthropology, Paul Twitchell, Eckankar, Eck, ki- Sugmad, Mahanta, Islam.

Introduction

Every epistemic-thought system in proportion to its goals, allocates a considerable portion of its infrastructures and basics to the issue of anthropology. It is evident that anthropology has its expression in various areas. That is to say, knowledge of man's existential aspects can lead to a true understanding of God's attributes and acts, our type of interpretation of the philosophy of man's life, his stand and goals in the being, his relation to the Creator of the being, fellow human beings and the world of existence. Philosophical schools and categorically with the instrument of thought, religious people with religious teachings, mystical tempers with intuition, and empirical schools from the point of view of observation and test, have set

to analyze and interpret this mysterious being. In the meantime, the school of Eckankar is not an exception, and the general procedure of this school is that it often looks at man from a mystical point of view. However, the necessity of precise understanding of the theoretical basics of this school requires that we primarily probe into its theological teachings, thus in this part of the paper, the attention is directed to this aspect.

Method

The study's method is descriptive – explaining, along with critical view that has reintegrated in six parts.

Man's stand

In this school, sometimes man's stand is introduced as the offspring and heir to God. However, an offspring and heir even with the ability to mould God's power. In the school of Eckankar man's thoughts and ideas are considered the main cause for the realization of everything; that is to say except for man's idea, everything else is his effect.

Yaubl Sacabi, the great ECK master says: "There are three basic Truths. They are One – we are the offspring of and heir of God. Therefore, we inherit the power to mould God's power by the thoughts we think. Two-what we think, if held to, comes

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to pass in our lives. Thus we learn by experience. Three-through learning by experience, we become conscious children of God, and presently come into the “glorious liberty of the children of God”^[1].

In some statements, it has even gone beyond this, claiming that man’s stand is the same as God’s; and not only a part of it, but the totality of being God Himself. “When man finds the path of the true comprehension of truth, all of a sudden the secrets of ages are revealed to him; the secret that the simplest thing maybe that every one of us is the truth. We are the truth incarnated, the incarnation of God Himself; that is to say that each one of us is God Himself, and not a part of the great totality of the truth”^[1].

In order to pretend that such a thing is not only possible but also easy to occur, some historical texts are resorted to, which is to say that the best way to make the reader rest assured, the best way would be to resort to history.

“Ghaous Ali Shah Qulandar, a Sufi mystic once said,” Giving perfection to a disciple is a matter of a fraction of a second. A word in the ear is enough to lift a man at once from finiteness to infinity, and such a transformation is not dependent upon prayers or fasts^[1].

Analysis and critique

Man and in the totality of the universe and the Great Existent enjoys such an amazing capacity and a vast and comprehensive potential that which has made him the supreme among other creatures, the assembly and a minor world for all the attributes of perfection; to such a degree that Islamic philosophers call the world of heavens and whatever lies in there the Great Man, and man the little cosmos, and sometimes in some expressions would draw man as the constellation lying on its back, his head facing the south, his legs the north, his right side to the east, and his left to the left^[2].

On the beauty and perfection of man, Rumi says:

Oh the people going to haj, where are thou? Where are thou?

Thy Beloved is next-door.

If thou see the formless form of the Beloved.

The Beloved is here, come, come.

Why are thou lost in the desert? Why?

Thou are the lord, the house, and the Kaaba.

(Rumi, the Mathnavi the fourth chapter, lines 153-5).

When God willed to make the human soul aware of His treasury of knowledge, and show him the whole world, He knew that the world is so huge and extended and that man cannot travel the whole world, and see it, because man life is short and the world so huge. Thus in accordance with His wisdom, created for him a little cosmos as a summarizer of the Great world, and drew in that little cosmos whatever there exists in the Great world for him to watch, taking the human soul as its witness.

As God says: “And He took them as witnesses on themselves, am I not thy God? They said, “” Yes””. (a, araf, verse 172.)

Considering what was said regarding the stand and position of man, the issues raised in the school of eckankar regarding the stand of man seems to be exaggerated, since in the first place,

what was said that we are the offspring of God, even if metaphorical, is not true because the least loss would be that it misleads the readers and followers of the school, and if it means the real sense of offspring, all the more so is null and void^[3] in the second place, any kind of being affected is rationally impossible in the essence of God, because it is incompatible with the fact of God’s being the first cause^[1, 4]. thus what becomes clear is the unfounded idea that man can mould God’s power with his own thoughts. in the third place, the claim that: we are the truth incarnated, the incarnation of God Himself-that is to say that every one of us is God Himself and not a part of the great totality of the truth,^[1] is null and void. This is because the incarnation of God causes neediness which is incompatible with God’s being the first cause as accepted by Eckankar.

Results

Man’s creation

One of the issues that has been the focus of attention and study by scholars since old ages, is the issue of man’s creation, and this issue has been the origin of the advent of schools of thought and thought groups not only in the western world, but also in the Islamic one as well. What has caused the intensification of the discussions on this issue, and therefore intensified ideas regarding man’s creation, is the introduction of” the theory of evolution” in the last two centuries. So that in recent times, there occurred an apparently serious contrast between some teachings of the revealed religions and some biologists, which in particular with the dominance of scientism over their ideas, this contrast is more projected. In the meantime, the school of Ekenkar in addition to accepting species evolution, has reflected it with a more radical pen and contents undocumented in their texts. In here and observing exact quotation and brevity, some statements of the Eckankar sources are mentioned.

“The long pilgrimage out of the darkness and into the light began in the mud and in the slime, working upward into the apex of human consciousness. Something was gained from the cycles of the sensate things through birth, age and sleep, and into life again: They were born higher on the ladder of spiritual consciousness. The sea was the cradle of life. The tenacious hold on life of the molecule for existence caused it to wed with others and make a complex entity with tendencies of reaction and response to its environment, the power to move in the water, and seek food and protection. The masses of molecules developed into protozoa and finally into the vegetation of the sea, and after millions of years into plants, sponges, and flowers of the watery depths. Minerals developed in the same forms, on the land surfaces, but the first form that started evolving toward human embodiment, was the fish. The Law of ECK, moved again in ITS very mysterious way and saw the need of organs and faculties in these creatures.

Some of these strange creatures came out of the sea to find easier prey. For a million years this saga went on, with the sea-born and the sea-living moving from the water to the land.

Creatures with gills and paddles developed lungs and legs in time. Many walked on hind feet, rearing in the air with crocodile heads and gleaming teeth. In the dark, dank jungles they went, searching for food. They became stupen, duos bone-plated machines controlled only by a few lower reflexes, finding beetles as large as sparrows, and flying insects with a wingspread of thirty inches, for their hunger. Anything that walked, crawled and flew was food for their greed.

These were ancestors of the reptiles. They grew twenty feet in height and fifty feet around. The tail was massive and the skull as large as a grown ox, with broad powerful teeth six inches long. The claws on the feet were curved a little longer than the teeth. The other species of brutes were just as fearful and frightening of aspect. They seldom attacked one another because of the thick armored skin. Some were vegetarian and others flesh eaters. They were moved by voracious hunger and fear. They were torpid mountains of bone and meat with the sluggish and cold-blooded nervous system of the reptile. For millions of years these monsters ruled the earth. A few of them became the dragon species that lived on the ground.

But the smaller dragons took to the air, flying on wings. These were more dreadful than those that walked on the ground.

The ECK's experiment in dreadful creatures came to a sudden and dramatic ending. The dragons that had ruled for millions of years perished within a few centuries, unable to adapt to climatic changes. Too sluggish to migrate and having too little intelligence to understand the coming danger, they froze to death when the great ice age took place.

The ECK was now ready for another kind of creature for experiment and for the first time turned to those to whom IT had given sympathy and care. These were the creatures of fear who had lived in dread from the day of birth to the day of death. The destruction of the killer beasts came about in a harsh world, so now the ECK prepared the earth for a more noble experiment for the SUGMAD, the coming of Souls into this world.

The ECK softened and beautified the great, formidable Earth, covering the mountains with forests and scattering of wild flowers over the hills. The valley teemed with butterflies and singing birds. Lights and shadows were given to the morning and evening of the day. Now the mammals entered into the world and became the forerunners of this genus, including, man today. These were the milk-givers today that housed the unborn in their bodies, not by eggs as their fierce predecessors had done. They gave their young care after birth, for now live had entered into the world. The age prior to this was one of tremendous savagery, for often the dragons and other beasts ate their young hatched from eggs, or one another. However, this was not a gentle age by any means, for still there were the savage beasts, such as the cat family, the saber-tooth tiger and all its kin, the bear, the dog and wolf. There were giant hogs and mammoth, flesh-eaters all of them.

There were two great clans: the killers, who ate only flesh and who spent all their waking hours stalking and killing their prey, and the timid beasts that fed off the Earth. Out of these clans

came man, who originally were leaf eaters and lived in terror of their killer beasts that stalked and trapped them.

Souls that came into this lower environment had to take on the embodiment of flesh in order to exist in the vibrations of this materialistic world. But he had no place to live for he was prey to the brutality of the flesh eaters. He was not a creature with fangs, claws and muscular strength. What strength he had was not enough. He could not venture into the waters for there the beasts awaited ready to tear him apart. In the jungles were the huge serpents and deadly insects; on the prairies were the wolves.

There was not a spot on Earth for him to safely lay his head. He had only one place to live and that was in the trees. So it was in the high tree-tops of the forests that he built his home to be safe from the prowling animals that killed him for food. Not the primate, but the Soul and form of man himself. He developed an amazing agility to swing through the higher branches. For ages he was a tree-top tenant, rarely venturing to the ground. He drank water from the leaves and ate the foliage, and made his bed in a tree crotch. He scorned the endless spectacle of slaughter which went on beneath him. But the day came when he was to descend the soil of Earth and leave his distant cousins still in the tree-tops"^[1].

Next, after assigning some regions for man's resettlement, he adds: "He developed thought and the ability to use it to protect himself against the flesh killers and the environment. He found shelter in the caves and fashioned weapons out of sticks and stones. He found that the female reproduced his species and he lived in family groups. At first the female was taken by force, for man was a strange and violent creature belonging to the blood-stained and bestial past of the human race. A head man or chief was selected to supervise the family, and the tribe which gathered around him. Civilization formed in a primitive manner and there appeared in the world the first ECK Master, who was without name. He was important to the human race, because his task was to minister to their needs and give to all succor and wisdom. Primitive man believed that stones and trees were homes of the spirits who served under supernatural beings who ruled everything. Soul was not yet developed in man for it. this was the beginning of the races of man upon Earth. Within the world of the past and before the dawn of recorded history, at the western extremity of the continent of Europe, Asia and Africa, the Polarian or the Adamic race copper-skinned people dwelled. Out of the forests came man, walking upright. His first act of worship was for the luminous power that scattered darkness and evil. It was a great golden eye, like a wheel, or a halo of glory, rising majestically out of the underworld with the heat of its body spreading over the whole hungry Earth"^[1].

And following, without referring to the connection between the above issue with creation of Man and Eve, he embarks on recounting their lives and their children, and how the first civilization was formed in man's life. In addition, by introducing "Malati" as the first right Master by Sugmad, he calls him the first teacher of Divine Knowledge.

“The first Polarian man was Adorn the Rabi, and he stood on the summit of a hill. His female companion, Ede, stood back with bowed head as he addressed his Sun-God. He prayed for food, protection from pain and enemies, and well-being for his woman. He was granted everything but freedom from pain, and emotion. He knew when the danger came, for out of the forests came another creature walking upright like himself, who wanted the female. The battle was bitter but Adon won and drove off his foe. He produced a man child and another; and human history began.

Gradually the creatures gathered and formed a clan. Slowly they hacked out the forests, fought the flesh eaters and won, until a civilization was born on the edge of the rivers that flew through the continent called Asia.

Malati, the first ECK Master, was sent by the Sugmad into this world to give man his first spiritual knowledge of God”^[1].

Among the other issues which is emphasized in Creation, is that of reincarnation, presence in successive cycles, and man’s eternity and everlastingness.

“All of us whether in this cosmos or other worlds, have always been, since the everlasting has no beginning or end. As long as we live in this world of time and place, everything is rotating in an infinite cycle”^[1].

Analysis and critique

Through what has been seen in the eckankar texts regarding man’s Creation it became clear that this school and at the same time of accepting the theory of species evolution, lays emphasis on the theory through exaggerated and unscientific statements. Thus it is advisable to criticize this theory with brevity.

The theory of species evolution, although was renowned as a scientific one with Charles Darwin (1809-1882), yet before him some individuals can be mentioned who through analogical gradation of the fixity of species, paved the way for challenging the theory of species evolution. Except for Lamarck (1744-1829), other individuals can also be mentioned such as Buffon (1707-1788). He found out fossils as the remnants of extinct creatures. In addition, he has spoken of the possibility of the existence of a common ancestor to all mammals^[5].

Following him, Erasmus Darwin, Charles Darwin’s grandfather, is among the individuals who has paid attention to this theory, and ultimately the one individual who stated the theory of species evolution was Lamarck. In order to prove his theory, he resorted to two laws: 1: the vital force, through climatic conditions, brings changes in every part of the body, and makes that part grow bigger, and thus the living thing provides better for its needs. When the living thing has no further need for that changed part, that part will vanish over time, like the giraffe. 2: Children will inherit these physical changes^[6].

However, individuals such as George Cuvier (1769-1832) , who was among the scientists supporting of the fixity of species known as catastrophism , was extremely against the theory of species evolution , and in order to prove his theory mentions historical evidences such as mummified corpses which we know today, and four types of things for which no single origin can be

found ; in another word these four types have no evolutionary relation with each other which are: the Mollusca, the Arthropoda, the Vertebrata and the Radiolaria^[7].

In addition, Edward Mc. Crady and Raven generally rejected the theory of evolution regarding either plants, animals or humans during the time of Darwin himself^[8]. Others such as Alfred Russell Wallace have regarded the theory of evolution untrue regarding Man^[8].

In this brief study, it became clear that even among the western biologist thinkers, there have been renowned individuals who stood against this theory, so that Mayer who was among the leading twentieth century evolutionists, through attacking the book “The Origin of Species”, introduce Darwin’s thoughts in this book as disorientated and disappointingly disorganized, and writes: “Darwin had no correct understanding of the nature of “species””^[9].

It is already clear that Eckankar’s view on Man’s Creation was a great reflection of the theory of species evolution. Now regardless of the religious challenges posed by the revealed religions’ scholars^[8] and especially the Islamic scholars, two major methodological impediments can be mentioned for the theory of evolution which are as follows: in the first place, the supports of the theory of evolution have no evidence and reason to support their claim, so that Richard Owen an anatomist, and Darwin’s contemporary, not only considered the evidence to prove Darwin’s theory insufficient, but also believed that there was no evidence to prove that natural selection has created a new species up to now.

Allame Tabatabai, of the contemporary Islamic philosophers believes on this issue that: “This theory, has no specific evidence to prove it, and it can be assumed that generally species are separate and independent of each other without any evolution being involved to connect one species to the other one. It is true that simply a series of superficial evolutions exist regarding the state of each species, without bringing changes to their nature, and experience has seen no individual changes from one species to another one, and it has never been observed that a monkey changes into a human”^[3, 10, 11].

As other scholars have pointed out, the theory of evolution is doubtful and uncertain, since Darwin’s theory can never be proved through experience, and man is unable to test and experience issues dating back to millions of years ago^[12].

In the second place, even assuming that there was some evidence supporting the claim of the theory of species evolution, the theory lacks the most vital scientific characteristic which is “totality” , since based on what has been mentioned in the book “ Science and Religion” , this theory was discussed and criticized seriously during the time of Darwin and after , and biologists such as Edward Mc.Crady and Vanhave regarded it null and void either as it concerns plants, animals or humans generally^[8].

In addition, in this book it is mentioned that: “Some individuals such as Alfred Russell Wallace have regarded this theory incorrect regarding Man’s Creation. . .”^[8]

Human's races

The Eckankar sources has many long statements on the quality of the creation of races; some of which are similar to "The Theory of the Evolution", and at times speaks based on the teachings of some revealed religions, and yet in some other places has invented theories.

The holy book of "The Divine Law of KAY SUGMAD" has given more detailed explanations and descriptions of the process of the creation of planets, inanimate bodies, plants, animals and also the advent of human's races in comparison with the other books of Eckankar.

"The other species of brutes were just as fearful and frightful of aspect. They seldom attacked one another because of the thick armored skin. Some were vegetarian and others flesh eaters. They were moved by voracious hunger and fear. They were torpid mountains of bone and meat with the sluggish and cold-blooded nervous system of reptiles. For millions of years these monsters ruled the Earth. A few of them became the dragon species that lived on the ground. But smaller dragons took to the air, flying on wings. These were more dreadful than those that walked on the ground.

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These were the milk-givers that housed the unborn in their bodies, not by eggs as their fierce predecessors had done. They gave their young care after birth, for now love had entered into the world. The age prior to this was one of tremendous savagery, for often the dragons and other beasts ate their young hatched from eggs, or one another.

However, this was not a gentle age by any means, for still there were the savage beasts, such as the cat family, the saber-tooth tiger and all its kin, the bear, dog and wolf. There were giant hogs and mammoths, flesh-eaters all of them. there were two great clans: the killers, who ate only flesh and who spent all their waking hours stalking and killing their prey, and the timid

beasts that fed off the Earth. Out of these clans came men, who originally were leaf eaters and lived in terror of the killer beasts that stalked and trapped them.

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He could not venture into the waters for these beasts awaited ready to tear him apart. In the jungles were the huge serpents and deadly insects; on the prairies were the wolves. There was no spot on Earth for him to safely lay his head. He had only one place to live and that was in the trees. so it was in the high tree tops of the forests that he built his home to be safe from the prowling animals that killed him for food. Not the primate, but the Soul and form of man himself. He developed an amazing agility to swing through the higher branches. For ages he was a tree top tenant, rarely venturing to the ground. He drank water from the leaves and ate the foliage, and made his bed in a tree crotch. He scorned the endless spectacle of slaughter which went beneath him"^[1].

The first human race:

Pal Tochil after explaining the first phase of the Creation, writes the following on explaining the seven races of man over history: "At first he walked on four feet, then learned to stand up right, and what was a creature now became a man because he could think, and by thinking he could protect himself. Thereupon, he found a persistent pattern of behavior that set him free. Never again could his supremacy be threatened nor his foe be more than his slave, for they were the beasts of the sea, of the forest, the birds of the air and the creatures of the air. The human consciousness came into being, and man became the supreme creature upon the Earth. he developed thought and the ability to use it to protect himself against the flesh eaters and the environment. He found shelter in the caves and fashioned weapons out of sticks and stones. He found that the female reproduced his species and he lived in family groups. At first the female was taken by force, for man was a strange and violent creature belonging to the bloodstained and bestial past of the human race. A head man or chief was selected to supervise the family, and the tribe which gathered around him. Civilization formed in a primitive manner and there appeared in the world the first ECK Master, who was without name. He was important to the human race because his task was to minister to their needs and give all succor and wisdom. primitive man believed that stones and trees were homes of the spirits who served under supernatural beings who ruled everything. Soul was not yet developed in man for it to understand and know what it was seeking. But it lived in a universe where the laws of the world are different. Sundered from all things by gulfs and far dimensions, the ancient world of Polara, the Garden of Eden, loomed upon the horizon. Stretching from the greater sea

in the East to that in the West, his civilization was known for its great forest lands to the North, the steppes-dwelling creatures, and the fierce desert of the rich Eastern lands.

This was the beginning of the races of man upon Earth. Within the world of the past and before the dawn of the recorded history, at the western extremity of the continent of Europe, Asia and Africa, the Polarian or the Adamic race of pale copper-skinned people dwelled. Out of the forests came man, walking upright. His first act of worship was for the luminous power that scattered darkness and evil. It was a great golden eye, like a wheel, or a halo of glory, rising majestically out of the underworld with the heat of its body spreading over the whole hungry Earth”^[1].

“The first Polarian man was Adorn the Rabi, and he stood on the summit of a hill. His female companion, Ede, stood back with bowed head as he addressed his Sun-God. He prayed for food, protection from pain and enemies, and well-being for his woman. He was granted everything but freedom from pain, and emotion. He knew when the danger came, for out of the forests came another creature walking upright like himself, who wanted the female. The battle was bitter but Adon won and drove off his foe. He produced a man child and another; and human history began. Gradually the creatures gathered and formed a clan. Slowly they hacked out of the forests, fought the flesh eaters and won, until a civilization was born on the edge of the rivers that flowed through the continent called Asia. Malati, the first ECK Master, was sent by the SUGMAD into this world to give man his first spiritual knowledge of God. For men drifted apart, fought one another for domination over tilled lands, trade, women and slaves and what little wealth they had in precious stones. Slowly the ECK was building ITS species. Then came the race of men called the Hyperboreans, and this became the age of the same name the second root race of mankind. Hyperboreans were the clans that drifted onto land where there was perpetual sunshine. The rains fell heavily upon the forests and created the jungle growth. The north wind never touched the heart of this world and the race of man became darkened by the sun and jungle regions.

Where a Polarian man was tiller of the soil, a shepherd and hunter, his successor was a higher being who built cities and founded a civilization in the heart of the equatorial jungle. He developed weapons for fighting, and pots for holding his food. He elected a king to rule over the might empire of Melnibora. The empire lived on for a hundred centuries, ruled over by the fierce Varkas kings. They swept across the jungles and over the heat of the sands to the north, conquering the wild tribes of men with white skins. They made slaves of the conquered, forcing them to work in their fields, in their weapon shops, and in the home of their nobility. The king ruled by the formless terror called sorcery, with powers greater than anything witnessed prior to their times and for centuries to come. The Varkas used their awful powers to conquer their subjects and their foes. They cast spell upon their masses and dealt in terrible

mysteries with the dead. Some of the kings conquered time and lived for centuries. They ruled through the priests who were known as the Zuajirs^[1].

And these priest were more terrible than their masters.

They were ruthless, giving quarter to no man when captured on the field of battle. The victim was killed, or saved for a fate more fearful than anything man could believe. If he was saved for the stables of the nobleman or to work in some household, the captured was indeed fortunate. Living in secret and teaching to those who would give ears was the great Kai-Kuas, the living ECK Master of these times. He was discovered by the Varkas and slain. This was an age when man literally ate man, for he was hardly out of the jungle and felt that all life was deadly enemy. He believed that in order to survive, he must serve their god. When it rose again in the morning, its worshiper knew the sun had won over the powers of darkness and evil. along with this, it was their simple belief that the people of the north with their pale skins were evil and, therefore, must be subjected. They conquered and ruled the world as the first of the races to go out, trying to subject its fellowmen by the sword. Soon they began to lose their hold on the known world, for the ECK experimented with ITS own species and found a third root base known as the Lemurians. This new race, living in the land of Lemuria, was brown skinned with a highly developed sense toward being civilized. the Lemurians had the greatest civilization known to the world. It developed on the great continent of Mu in the midst of the western ocean, and speared around the world with many sub-empires. It was a tropical country of vast plains. The valleys and plains were covered with rich grazing grass and tilled fields. There were only low rolling hills and no mountains, for the peaks and ranges of great heights had not been forced up from the deep centers of the Earth. the air was soft, the vegetation constantly bloomed, and life for the millions of the continent’s people was gay and happy. The tribes made up the bulk of the citizens, each distinct but living under an emperor named Ra Mu. The empire was named “Then Empire of the Sun.”

Ra Mu was the representative of the Supreme Deity although he was not worshipped. The reverence of the Lemurians for their Deity was so great they never spoke ITS name and even in prayer and supplication addressed IT always through a symbol. However, Ra, the sun, was used as the collective for all that the Deity possessed as a supreme entity. The people of Mu were highly civilized and enlightened. They were gentle, peaceful, and lived together without savagery. As citizens of the great empire which stretched from rising sun to rising sun—an empire upon which the sun never set they were under the protection. The ruling race of Mu was exceedingly handsome, with brown or olive skin, large, soft, dark eyes and straight black hair. They had other races the yellow, brown and black people but these did not dominate. They sailed the seas and discovered new lands, inhabited and established colonies around the globe, built great temples, stone palaces and carved.

Gigantic monuments. Within the continent of Mu were seven major cities, where the religion, science and education centers existed. There also were many other large cities for trading and industry, for, as the center of the world as it came to be known, Mu was the land where all came for learning, trading, and commerce. The rest of the world formed her colonies. Into this world came. Geutan, the third great ECK Master who served the people of Mu and warned them of the coming destruction of the world. Civilization, it received a terrible shock. When this continent was at its zenith, the center of world. The rumblings from the bowels of the Earth, followed by earthquakes and volcanic outbursts, shook her southern parts. Gigantic, cataclysmic waves from the ocean, rolled over the land and the cities went down to destruction. The volcanoes belched out their fire, smoke and lava. The flat continent reared up and lava beds formed cones which became rocks. After this, the people of Mu gradually overcame their fright; cities were rebuilt and trade and commerce were resumed. Generations passed after this visitation, and when the phenomenon had become history, Mu again became the victim of earthquakes. The whole continent heaved and rolled like ocean waves. The land trembled and shook like leaves on a tree in a storm. Temples and palaces came crashing to the ground and monuments and statues were overturned. The cities became heaps of ruins. The land quivered and shook, rose and fell. The fires of the earth underneath flamed forth and pierced the clouds. Thick black palls of smoke hung over the land and huge cataclysmic waves rolled through the cities and plains. The terrified people sought refuge in their temples and citadels only to be driven out by the fire and smoke. During the night the land was torn apart, and down it went into the dark waters of the ocean, claiming the lives of millions of people. The waves rolled over and met in their center of the land, seethed and boiled, destroying the Earth's great civilization. A few islands were left where mountain peaks had been raised in the catastrophe. Those people who survived this terrible event became the race of the South Sea Islands. From across the world there came next into existence the Atlantean race, the fourth root race or the red race, who lived upon the continent of Atlantis in the great ocean between the eastern and western hemispheres. It grew steadily with large cities and fair lands, with tilled fields and deep valleys. The people worshipped the Supreme Deity they called Tat, who represented the four corners of the world; East, West, North and South. Atlantis replaced Mu as the center of the world and became the greatest civilization of its time with learning, trade and commerce. It had over a hundred million people living on its lands. But this world was rife with magic and its king-priests, called the Tat Tsoks, were wizards of cruelty who ruled over all with an iron hand. Castrog, the living ECK Master, came into this world to teach these olive-skinned people that the Supreme Deity was not happy with their ways and dealings in black magic. He suffered the death of the sword for his troubles, but not before warning the king that his lands

and people would soon die under the waters of the sea. One generation later the catastrophe which had sunk the land of Mu brought death to all the fourth root race, leaving only a dark, unsmiling ocean to greet the sailors who dared to cross its surface. The fifth root race, the Aryans, developed the magnificent empire of Uighur in central Asia in the Gobi Desert. It was a mighty land stretching from the Pacific Ocean across central Asia and Eastern Europe. The history of this empire is the history of the Aryan race. Its capital city was in the Gobi Desert, then a fertile land and large in the sense that it was the center of the world in its day, with a highly developed civilization. The living ECK Master, Rama, first known to the civilized world of the Aryans, came out of the high valleys of Tibet to the capital city of Khara Khota and began preaching ECKANKAR. But he was hounded out of the empire and went back into Tibet, where he founded the monastery of Katsupari in the northern mountains. From there he went into India to teach the great science of ECKANKAR to its teeming masses. The sixth root race is the yellow race, coming on the heels of the gradually fading Aryan race. It is the Mongoloid race of the East, which has its life center in the world of the North, where many do not penetrate. The ECK Master who will come into this world of semi-darkness and light will be Regnard. This race is yet to fulfill its destiny on the Earth planet. It will meet destruction by fire, earthquakes and tidal waves. seventh root race will be the golden race, and, Ibecathey dismantled the Zohar people.

They will come from afar to colonize the world after its destruction. The attempt to put colonies on this plain fails and eventually, after several centuries these people will withdraw. The ECK Master who will be responsible for the spiritual of this race will be Sepher. the SUGMAD will then withdraw all souls from planets and constellations into the heavenly worlds where they will sleep until IT has repaired the damage to the lower world planets. Those who have to return will then be sent back again to finish their spiritual development in this world.

Analysis and critique

The discussion on the zoologic or human's races although has been probed into in most sciences such as biology, sociology and psychology, however, in the discussion of anthropology of theology has its extensive position. The thing that intensified the attention to this topic in the theology, is the existence of teachings in the revealed religions concerning the human's race. Thus, the discussion on the theory of man's race in the 18th and 19th century in Europe, divided scholars into two groups. 1: A group and based on the Old and new Testament, have accepted Adam as the only origin of man's race, and have regarded the advent of races due to the climatic, geographical, and biologic circumstances such as Buffon, Kant, Goubino Mayes, and 2: the group that believed in many origins for the human's race including people such as Volf Gang Goethe, François Volte and Carl Lene.

In the meantime, Eckankar and after drawing an atmosphere of disorder governing the earth and entering into an atmosphere

more moderate and calmer, endeavors into the explanation of the seven species of mankind.

And then in explaining the first human's race after recounting the way soul belongs to the body and its development as to walk on fours, up to a scholar which the crown of creation! It calls the human's race Polarian, and thus the human race begins. But Eckankar offers no evidence for its claim. As its holy book is not like the Koran or the Bible which are in themselves sources of inspiration. So it is possible that it has used a quotation from the Holy Bible which says: "God made a garden in Eden in the east and a river came out of Eden to water the garden and it was divided into four branches, the first one is Fission, the second Jihon, and the third one Hadqel which runs to the east of Athor and the fourth one is Forat"^[13].

Allame Tabatabai writes on the word "Eden "that it is means persistence as for example they say" He stays in there", therefore it means eternal paradises not vanishing"^[3].

As regards the Hyperboreans and Lemorians, it just myth and the important question would be how much mythologies can reflect the realities? In this regard John Hills believes that "Mythologies are mirrors reflecting images from millenniums and as history and archaeologies are silent, mythologies speak"^[14].

Many sources were referred to, but no truths were found regarding this. We can point out to valuable sources such as Vedas which is based on ancient ideas and Brahams, the Upanishads, holy books of Buddha and stories called Yoranans which are the ancient sources in India^[15].

Or the Mahabharata in Sanskrit which includes eighteen books or the verses of around a hundred poets in the last centuries. Some were written 300 years B.C^[16].

The goals of Man's Creation

One of the most important teachings and achievements of the revealed religions, and schools of thought is stating the goals behind creating Man. Thus in order to achieve this work, at the same time of communicating this message to their followers, have assigned ideas, rules and regulation and a number of dos and don'ts for them. The school of eckankar has directed all its attention to Man's spiritual and individual aspects on the issue of goals, and has said little or nothing on the worldly-social aspects. The most important goals that this school has paid attention to are the followings:

A: Soul's travel.

The most important missions and duties which have been mentioned for Eckankar in its sources in particular the holy book of "The shariyat – ki - Sugmad" is the restoration of the ancient science of soul's travel.

In another word, according to the point of view of this school, Man's goal is the soul's travel to the other realms:

"The ancient science of Soul Travel. Movement of the inner consciousness, which travels through the lower states until it ascends into the ecstatic states. Here the subject feels he possesses an awareness of the religious experience of being. The awareness is achieved through a series of spiritual exercises

known only to the followers of this science. ECK: the science of total awareness that grows out of the experience Soul Travel. The subjects gains this high state of religious awareness at his own volition, via the Spiritual Exercise of Eckankar. The latter is correlated only with the movement of the inner consciousness –Soul- within the regions of time and space. The ECK goes above these regions, beyond time and space, where all is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. Hence the term total awareness.

This total awareness is the key we use we use to enter the Kingdom of God. It is a channel, a tunnel, beyond what other groups call the Christ Consciousness. This state, known to us as the ECKshar, is what we must all come to and go through to become the ECK. This spiritual state leads to a perfected consciousness from which we are able to reach the esoteric heights: we must spiritualize the mind and body by saturating ourselves with the spiritual ideal"^[1].

And then in order to explain the importance of the Soul Travel, at the same time of claiming that the revealed religions have paid a particularly great attention to this issue, regards the only way of reaching the truths and realities as via the Soul travel and setting free the Soul.

"The importance of the study in question is evident from the fact that omniscience can be obtained mainly through the release of the soul from the bondage of flesh by anyone who is still living. The method of voluntarily withdrawing soul from body constitutes the highest technique and is the main occupation of the true seeker after truth. The full realization of truth and the exact knowledge of what is going on in the other worlds can hardly be achieved without the technique, or science of separation of soul from its bondage. The release of the soul from the bondage of flesh is the main subject of true religion and education. Holy writings throughout the ages are concerned mainly with this problem. That these techniques exist is proved by the inexhaustible series of saints, prophets, and mystics throughout all ages and countries.

Holy writings contain the inner experience of these prophets, saints and founders of religions: Buddha, Krishna, Christ and Mohammad.

B: Becoming God's co-worker:

According to the school of Eckankar, among the goals of Man's Creation, is performing God's acts and duties by Man, and as an example we can look for the achievement of this goal via Christ's life. The reason mentioned for this goal in the Eckankar texts is the Sugmad's creatures being pantheism.

"God works via us, in particular if we allow ourselves to be a channel for the Truth's soul Christ advises that it is not me that who is doing this, but the Father (Truth's soul) inside me. If someone claims to be God, then he can be God, since He is all and everywhere. The Creation is a show by God so the One who speaks in the whole existence is but Him, and it is Him who speaks to Himself." (ibid, Tiger's fang, 2010, pp., 266-267.)

At time cooperation with God is so greatly projected that Eckankar is taken as synonym for God^[1].

In another place by attributing inability and incapability to Sugmad, Sugmad has to ask his creators for help to make himself known.

The Sugmad is that deity above all deities and things. In fact, IT is unable to communicate with the world of man except through ITS emanations, or rays as I have mentioned before. In another words, the Sugmad cannot be comprehended by human minds, by the intellect, nor described in words intelligible to man, so as to make ITS existence perceptible. It is necessary, therefore, in order to render ITSELF comprehensible to man, the Sugmad makes ITSELF active and creative. But it cannot be the direct creator, because being infinite, IT is without will, intention, thought, desire, or action, all of which are qualities of finite being only.

In another word, the Sugmad didn't make man in ITS image as religions teach, especially the Christian religion. So the Sugmad was compelled to create the world in an indirect manner through the ECK, the infinite light and sound which IT dwells"^[1].

In some texts it has gone beyond Sugmad's being a co-worker, but rather it has reached a type of identity; an original concept of this thought is expressed via the expression: "Tat tvam Asi" which means "Thou art that." Its deeper meaning is that each individual is the supreme Sugmad, and that there is no essential difference between the Sugmad and the individual's soul. Man is the divine spark of imagination linking his being with the Sugmad. When you reach the Sach Khand plane in the upper areas of the Far Country and behold Sat Nam, you see yourself in Him with overwhelming joy"^[1].

In addition, in explaining the above goal it mentions that: "We are all trying to reach the Mahanta consciousness, which is the highest of all states. We have self-knowledge when in this state of higher being, we can create energy at will, and handle, control, erase or recreate as we desire. At this state of affairs, Soul, instead of doing away with all the things it had been in conflict with, discovers it is capable of manipulating them. It discovers that it only thought it had to be in conflict with them. It learns judgment"^[1].

C: Reincarnation:

One of the most important and wide-ranged issues of Eckankar is reincarnation. It is inferred that reincarnation is among the goals of Creation.

"Eventually, after many incarnations, Soul is purified by ITS experiences and returns to heaven. There it is ready to serve God as a Co-worker in some spiritual mission. Soul has by then gained experience in the spiritual sense and can chose what it wishes to do either the spiritual spirito-materilastic worlds. It may become a planetary spirit, an angel, a cherub, or an agent of God; or it may take ant spiritual position as a Co-worker with God as desired.

Little does one realize that every time we acquire a new body on earth in our line of successive incarnations, only Soul Itself retains any knowledge of other lives already lived. God seems to draw a curtain on our knowledge of past lives and only let us remember what has taken place in the particular one we are living"^[1].

D: Communicating with Sugmad and surrendering to him.

Pal Tochilwrites explaining the goal as quoting from Rebazar Trazs- the True Master-: "You will surrender to that Divine spark of Sugmad inside you. From that time on, it is IT that moves you, guards you, and shall live within IT, and the rest will be of no difference for you. This is to cut dependency. The one disciplined by the hands of the transcendent Essence, will do whateverthe messenger of the Soul does, in the name of Sugmad. He will have no desires of his own, and will do nothing except the ones approved by Sugmad"^[1].

However, as regards the manner of man's communication with Sugmad it mentions that "We can communicate with Sugmad, and this communication can be achieved in two ways: either through a travelling soul or knowing the fact that we as souls can rise within seconds to planes above the realm of the mind and body up to infinity, in here we will be able to communicate with a travelling souls or directly with God"^[1].

Analysis and critique

The discussion on the issue of soul's travel and the discussion of the quiddity of the soul be will assigned to some later pages on the atmalog and the story of its developments, however, in here some issues are of importance.

In the first place, what is the purpose behind soul's travel, or the separation of the soul from the body?

In the second place, how can it be claimed that soul's travel is the only way available to reach the aimed goals?

In the third place, how is the way for this travel taken?

In the fourth place, what is the reason to claim that the Holy Scriptures and branches of sects pay attention to the travel of the soul?

In answer to the first question it was said that the goal of the soul's travel is to reach the infinite world and also get to the truth and knowledge of the other worlds. In here there are two points worthy of attention: first, do reaching the infinite world and the accumulation of knowledge by themselves bring Man sublimation? Suppose Man changes into the very infinite world of knowledge? Assuredly, not only it won't bring Man's sublimity, but also will add to his bewilderment and perplexity. Second, the mere understanding of the truth and the knowledge of the other worlds, is to serve what purpose? What sort of purpose this is which not only has not indulged the Man but also has added to his hunger, despite all the amazing advances in the fields of cosmology.

Among the most important signs of reaching the real goal or goals is that when one achieves it, Man reaches peace of mind; that is to say that there would be a proportionality and coordination between the goal and Man's nature and temperament.

The answer to the second question would be that it is clear for every cultured Man that monopoly is unique the mind only when it is mentally so, otherwise would be an exaggerated and untrue claim. Now there is no evidence to show that it is only through soul's travel that one can achieve the infinite knowledge.

As regards the answer to the question, it can be found in Eckankar's sources where it writes: "A basic principle in ECK is that, at one time or another, all bodies within the physical atmosphere must come to rest. Soul travel is based on this principle. If soul inhabits a body in this world, it should learn to leave it daily and dwell in the upper worlds, which is Its true home. Someday the body must come to rest, or die, as it known on this plane, so Soul trains the body to fend for itself. It then lives as much as possible in the heavenly worlds. These must become part of our own world. Then the living Self will dwell with God while the human part lives on earth as expressed in the old axiom: My heart is in heaven while my feet are on earth. We are a part of all things, yet as individuals, as Soul, we are accountable only to God. Someday the body will come to rest, and Soul must be prepared not to let itself be trapped in some other body in this physical environment nor in some astral shell that has no control over itself. The difference between the finished and unfinished creations is that God, the Sugmad, established the lower, finished worlds to provide a training ground for Soul. After Its creation in the heavenly realm Soul is sent to earth as an untried, inexperienced entity. On earth it is like a child who must complete his scholastic work before going out into life and being fitted into society. Eventually, after many incarnations, Soul is purified by ITS experiences and returns to heaven. There it is ready to serve God as a Coworker in some spiritual mission ^[1].

Discussion

What can be said in answer to last question is that this claim that the Holy Scriptures' and branches of sects' endeavor is soul's travel is so exaggerated and untrue, since the acts by the followers of the revealed religions proves otherwise. However, the critique and analysis of the second goal of Man Creation; that is being a co-worker with God; in the first place it must be made clear the sense of being God's co-worker. Then embark on its critique. Does it mean that there are mediators in God's creation and authorship? Does it mean to sit in God's place and create independently? However, according to the first assumption, it is vital to remind oneself that discussing the quality of God's authorship is among the ancient thoughts of Man, which entered new and complex realm with the advent of the revealed religions and schools of thought. So that at times it has divided the followers of the same religion into several sects and branches. for instance, among the Islamic theologians, the Separatists essentially have denied God's authorship after the Creation of the world, and have assumed Man to be independent in his deeds. their opposite point are the Ashaari theologians. They never assume any agent for deeds but God,

attributing affairs such as burning to the fire, assuming it a tradition and custom to God, not the authorship for the fire. in here, there is a third point of view belonging to the Emami theologians and scholars. They believe that the by-itself and independent creator is but God, yet at the same time do not deny the natural and unnatural causes as the mediators of God's creation; that is to say they assume length-wise and dependent authorship for the natural and unnatural causes. if Eckankar means mediation in the creation and the ways of God's authorship by being God's co-worker, undoubtedly this is true and runs in the world of existence. the critique of the third goal which is reincarnation, will be dealt with in the section on the purpose of reincarnation. as for the critique of the fourth goal of Man's creation which is the establishment of relationship with Sugmad and submission to Him; what is apparent in the statement in the texts by Eckankar, even if taken metaphorically, will mislead the reader where he writes: "You live in that Sugmad, and the rest will be without difference for you. This is to cut all dependency. "now, without regarding these statements and sentences, who is it that is watching the state of being effected and poverty, and will not admit of his neediness and his relationship to God?

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