

**A DICTIONARY OF  
SOME THEOSOPHICAL  
TERMS**

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A Dictionary of Some Theosophical Terms by Powis Hout

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**POWIS HOULT**

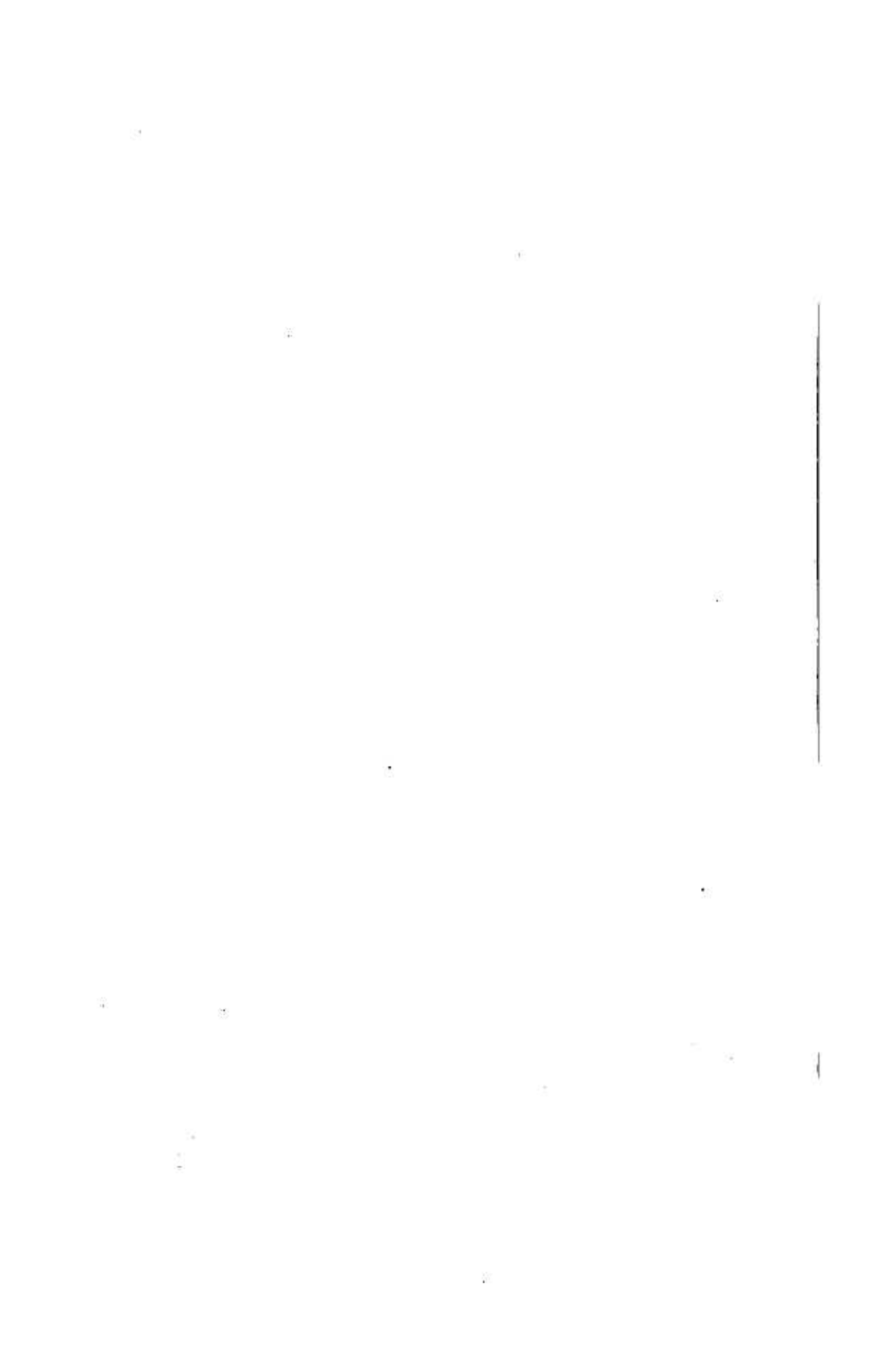
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COMPILED BY  
POWIS HOULT

LONDON  
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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

VERY shortly after completing the MS. of *A Dictionary of Some Theosophical Terms*, the author passed somewhat suddenly away from the sphere of physical labour. The manuscript was kindly placed in our hands by his Executrix, but it was not found practicable to issue it at an earlier date. Thanks to a fund recently handed to us for this purpose, we are now able to produce it at a price which will place it within the reach of all students of Theosophy, and we feel sure that it will be found a most useful and handy book of reference, and will help to supply a long-felt need in the literature of the Theosophical Movement.

Under the regrettable circumstances of its posthumous appearance, the proof-sheets have not had the advantage of the author's corrections, but they have been very carefully verified with the MS., and it is hoped that but few errors will be noted.

In view of the interest which is being shown in the Rosicrucian, or Western, form of theosophy, which is more particularly associated with the name of Dr Rudolf Steiner, it has been thought useful to add a brief appendix giving some of the German terms used by this writer and the English equivalents which have been finally adopted by Mr Gysi, who is responsible for the appearance of Dr Steiner's works in English. Students will thus be enabled to correlate the human "Principles" as given by Dr Steiner with the classification adopted in earlier theosophical writings.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING  
SOCIETY.

June 1910.

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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

IN compiling a work of this nature perhaps the most difficult, and certainly the most invidious, part of the task is the selection of the terms:—which shall be included?—which excluded?—and anyone who may do me the honour to look into this endeavour of mine, and appraise it as a whole, will doubtless find very much that exception may be taken to on this head. I shall be asked, “How is it that we find a heading for the *Akshita Philosophy*, but Judaism or Islamism is not so much as mentioned? How is it that the Gods *Varuna*, *Śhiva*, and *Vishnu* are to be found in the Dictionary, whereas we search in vain for *Mars*, *Venus*, or *Neptune*?” I shall be told that there has been no governing principle in the selection of the terms treated; that the book is haphazard in construction, and lacking in system and logic.

And to this indictment I confess at once I have no direct answer. I escape, if I am to escape at all, by the method of disappearance from the plane where my logical critic lives and moves about so formidably. For, in truth, the principle by which I have been mainly guided in this matter of selection is not that of logic, but simply what I conceive to be the needs of those who are likely to consult a work of this kind. Nearly all the terms herein contained are such as are used by the writers of our modern theological literature. Had I made any attempt to complete the different categories to which these terms belong, my modest production must have swelled prodigiously, becoming a Dictionary of Mythology, Philosophy, Comparative Religions, Occultism, and I know not what, save that it would have been far beyond my capacity to bring forth. Consistency, then, in the selection of the words to be treated of, has been by no means so much my aim as conformity to the good old utilitarian maxim, “The greatest good of the greatest number.” No one can be more conscious of the incompleteness of the work than myself; but then, completeness

is, in any case, unattainable when the subject has no bounds. Please observe, I have entitled the book, "A Dictionary of *Some* Theosophical Terms," thus humbly hoping, not to disarm my logical critic, but, at least, to take away a little bit from the forcefulness of the thrust of his weapon. I may say that, in general, names of persons, human or divine, are not included.

In referring to Sanscrit terms, it should be remembered that there are differences amongst writers in the methods of their transliteration into the Romanic character:—(a) The letter ष, after a consonant, is pronounced as our W (the Nāgarī only having one character for the semi-vowel), and hence there are some who prefer to use the W in preference to the V; e.g., *Sattwa*, *Swarya*, etc. In the Dictionary the meaning of all such words will be found under the "V" spellings.

(b) The nasal sound indicated in the Sanscrit by the dot above the line (the *anusvāra*) is sometimes represented in the Romanic character by M, and sometimes by N, according to the writer's predilection. I have adopted the N—e.g., ऋ, *Ahañ*; at the same time giving a cross-reference where the M spelling brings the word into a different place.

(c) The final R or S of a word, when these letters pass into the aspirate (the *visarga*), may be replaced by Ī in the Romanic character—e.g., *Bhūh*, *Tapah*, *Tamah*, etc.

(d) The sibilant श, many writers prefer to represent simply by accenting the letter S (thus, *Śiva*). While giving cross-references where needful, I have defined these words under the Sh transliteration, as being that more usual with theosophical writers. Thus, *Shiva*, not *Śiva*. The same remarks apply to the letter च. Thus, *Chakra*, not *Ćakra*.

(e) The four different "n"-sounds in the Sanscrit, viz. ण, न, ण, and ण, are transliterated ñ, n, ñ, and n respectively, as in Jñāna, Prāṇa, Shāṅkara, and Indra.

I beg gratefully to acknowledge assistance received from Dr Khedkor. The printed matter from which I have received help I can scarcely name—it would mean the catalogue of a small library.

In conclusion, I have taken every care in the preparation of the volume: it has been a work of my spare hours for several years. But that it should be free from "sins, negligences, and ignorances" is surely too much to expect when the number of words and the variety of subjects treated of are considered. All

that I ask is that when any of those things which I have done that I ought not to have done, and which I have left undone that I ought to have done, are found by students of greater learning than anything I can pretend to myself, they will not, on that account, forthwith condemn my production. With Dr Johnson I would say, "In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed."

P. H.

*Abbreviations*:—*Arab.*, Arabian; *Gk.*, Greek; *Eg.*, Egyptian; *Heb.*, Hebrew; *Ir.*, Irish; *Lat.*, Latin; *Sans.*, Sanscrit; *Tib.*, Tibetan.

*N.B.*—For compound words, it has not been thought necessary to repeat the name of the language to which they belong: this will always be found at the beginning of a series.

Reference to pages of *The Secret Doctrine* (*S.D.*) is to the third edition of that work.