



teozofija v sloveniji



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WHAT'S IN THE NAME?

Why the Magazine is called "Lucifer"

Prispevki k raziskovanju zgodovine Teozofskega gibanja - v izvirniku

What's in a name? Very often there is more in it than the profane is prepared to understand, or the learned mystic to explain. It is an invisible, secret, but very potential influence that every name carries about with it and "leaveth wherever it goeth." Carlyle thought that "there is much, nay, almost all, in names." - "Could I unfold the influence of names, which are the most important of all clothings, I were a second great Trismegistus," he writes.

The name or title of a magazine started with a definite object, is, therefore, all important; for it is, indeed, the invisible seedgrain, which will either grow "to be an all-over-shadowing tree" on the fruits of which must depend the nature of the results brought about by the said object, or the tree will wither and die. These considerations show that the name of the present magazine — rather equivocal to orthodox Christian ears — is due to no careless selection, but arose in consequence of much thinking over its fitness, and was adopted as the best symbol to express that object and the results in view.

Now, the first and most important, if not the sole object of the magazine, is expressed in the line from the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, on its title page. It is to bring light to "the hidden things of darkness," (iv. 5); to show in their true aspect and their original real meaning things and names, men and their doings and customs; it is finally to fight prejudice, hypocrisy and shams in every nation, in every class of Society, as in every department of life. The task is a laborious one but it is neither impracticable nor useless, if even as an experiment.

Thus, for an attempt of such nature, no better title could ever be found than the one chosen. "Lucifer," is the pale morning-star, the precursor of the full blaze of the noon-day sun — the "Eosphoros" of the Greeks. It shines timidly at dawn to gather forces and dazzle the eye after sunset as its own brother 'Hesperos' — the radiant evening star, or the planet Venus. No fitter symbol exists for the proposed work — that of throwing a ray of truth on everything hidden by the darkness of prejudice, by social or religious misconceptions; especially by that idiotic routine in life, which, once that a certain action, a thing, a name, has been branded by slanderous inventions, however unjust, makes *respectable* people, so called, turn away shiveringly, refusing to even look at it from any other aspect than the one sanctioned by public opinion. Such an endeavour then, to force the weak-hearted to look truth straight in the face, is helped most efficaciously by a title belonging to the category of branded names.

Piously inclined readers may argue that “Lucifer” is accepted by all the churches as one of the many names of the Devil. According to Milton’s superb fiction, Lucifer is *Satan*, the “rebellious” angel, the enemy of God and man. If one analyzes his rebellion, however, it will be found of no worse nature than an assertion of free-will and independent thought, as if Lucifer had been born in the XIXth century. This epithet of “rebellious,” is a theological calumny, on a par with that other slander of God by the Predestinarians, one that makes of deity an “Almighty” fiend worse than the “rebellious” Spirit himself; “an omnipotent Devil desiring to be ‘complimented’ as all merciful when he is exerting the most fiendish cruelty,” as put by J. Cotter Morison. Both the foreordaining and predestining fiend-God, and his subordinate agent are of human invention; they are two of the most morally repulsive and horrible theological dogmas that the nightmares of light-hating monks have ever evolved out of their unclean fancies.

They date from the Mediæval age, the period of mental obscuration, during which most of the present prejudices and superstitions have been forcibly inoculated on the human mind, so as to have become nearly ineradicable in some cases, one of which is the present prejudice now under discussion.

So deeply rooted, indeed, is this preconception and aversion to the name of Lucifer — meaning no worse than “light-bringer” (from *lux, lucis*, “light,” and *ferre* “to bring”) — even among the educated classes, that by adopting it for the title of their magazine the editors have the prospect of a long strife with public prejudice before them. So absurd and ridiculous is that prejudice, indeed, that no one has seemed to ever ask himself the question, how came Satan to be called a *light-bringer*, unless the silvery rays of the morning-star can in any way be made suggestive of the glare of the infernal flames. It is simply, as Henderson showed, “one of those gross perversions of sacred writ which so extensively obtain, and which are to be traced to a proneness to seek for more in a given passage than it really contains — a disposition to be influenced by sound rather than sense, and an implicit faith in received interpretation” — which is not quite one of the weaknesses of our present age. Nevertheless, the prejudice is there, to the shame of our century.

This cannot be helped. The two editors would hold themselves as recreants in their own sight, as traitors to the very spirit of the proposed work, were they to yield and cry craven before the danger. If one would fight prejudice, and brush off the ugly cobwebs of superstition and materialism alike from the noblest ideals of our forefathers, one has to prepare for opposition. “The crown of the reformer and the innovator is a crown of thorns” indeed. If one would rescue Truth in all her chaste nudity from the almost bottomless well, into which she has been hurled by cant and hypocritical propriety, one should not hesitate to descend into the dark, gaping pit of that well. No matter how badly the blind bats — the dwellers in darkness, and the haters of light — may treat in their gloomy abode the intruder, unless one is the first to show the spirit and courage he preaches to others, he must be justly held as a hypocrite and a seceder from his own principles.

Hardly had the title been agreed upon, when the first premonitions of what was in store for us, in the matter of the opposition to be encountered owing to the title chosen, appeared on our horizon. One of the editors received and recorded some spicy objections. The scenes that follow are sketches from nature.

I.

A Well-known Novelist. Tell me about your new magazine. What class do you propose to appeal to?

Editor. No class in particular: we intend to appeal to the public.

Novelist. I am very glad of that. For once I shall be one of the public, for I don't understand your subject in the least, and I want to. But you must remember that if your public is to understand you, it must necessarily be a very small one. People talk about occultism nowadays as they talk about many other things, without the least idea of what it means. We are so ignorant and—so prejudiced.

Editor. Exactly. That is what calls the new magazine into existence. We propose to educate you, and to tear the mask from every prejudice.

Novelist. That really is good news to me, for I want to be educated. What is your magazine to be called?

Editor. Lucifer.

Novelist. What! Are you going to educate us in vice? We know enough about that. Fallen angels are plentiful. You may find popularity, for soiled doves are in fashion just now, while the white-winged angels are voted a bore, because they are not so amusing. But I doubt your being able to teach us much.

II.

A Man of the World (in a careful undertone, for the scene is a dinner-party). I hear you are going to start a magazine, all about occultism. Do you know, I'm very glad. I don't say anything about such matters as a rule, but some queer things have happened in my life which can't be explained in any ordinary manner. I hope you will go in for explanations.

Editor. We shall try, certainly. My impression is, that when occultism is in any measure apprehended, its laws are accepted by everyone as the only intelligible explanation of life.

A M. W. Just so, I want to know all about it, for 'pon my honour, life's a mystery. There are plenty of other people as curious as myself. This is an age which is afflicted with the Yankee disease of 'wanting to know.' I'll get you lots of subscribers. What's the magazine called?

Editor. Lucifer — and (*warned by former experience*) don't misunderstand the name. It is typical of the divine spirit which sacrificed itself for humanity — it was Milton's doing that it ever became associated with the devil. We are sworn enemies to popular prejudices, and it is quite appropriate that we should attack such a prejudice as this — Lucifer, you know, is the Morning Star — the Lightbearer,...

A M. W. (interrupting). Oh, I know all that — at least I don't know, but I take it for granted you've got some good reason for taking such a title. But your first object is to have readers; you want the public to buy your magazine, I suppose. That's in the programme, isn't it?

Editor. Most decidedly.

A M. W. Well, listen to the advice of a man who knows his way about town. Don't mark your magazine with the wrong colour at starting. It's quite evident, when one stays an instant to think of its derivation and meaning, that Lucifer is an excellent word. But the public don't stay to think of derivations and meanings; and the first impression is the most important. Nobody will buy the magazine if you call it Lucifer.

III.

A Fashionable Lady Interested in Occultism. I want to hear some more about the new magazine, for I have interested a great many people in it, even with the little you have told me. But I find it difficult to express its actual purpose. What is it?

Editor. To try and give a little light to those that want it.

A F. L. Well, that's a simple way of putting it, and will be very useful to me. What is the magazine to be called?

Editor. Lucifer.

A F. L. (After a pause) You can't mean it.

Editor. Why not?

A F. L. The associations are so dreadful! What can be the object of calling it that? It sounds like some unfortunate sort of joke, made against it by its enemies.

Editor. Oh, but Lucifer, you know, means Light-bearer; it is typical of the Divine Spirit —

A F. L. Never mind all that — I want to do your magazine good and make it known, and you can't expect me to enter into explanations of that sort every time I mention the title? Impossible! Life is too short and too busy. Besides, it would produce such a bad effect; people would think me priggish, and then I couldn't talk at all, for I couldn't bear them to think that. Don't call it Lucifer — please don't. Nobody knows what the word is typical of; what it means now is the devil, nothing more or less.

Editor. But then that is quite a mistake, and one of the first prejudices we propose to do battle with. Lucifer is the pale, pure herald of dawn —

Lady (interrupting). I thought you were going to do something more interesting and more important than to whitewash mythological characters. We shall all have to go to school again, or read up Dr. Smith's *Classical Dictionary*. And what is the use of it when it is done? I thought you were going to tell us things about our own lives and how to make them better. I suppose Milton wrote about Lucifer, didn't he? — but nobody reads Milton now. Do let us have a modern title with some human meaning in it.

IV.

A Journalist (thoughtfully, while rolling his cigarette). Yes, it is a good idea, this magazine of yours. We shall all laugh at it, as a matter of course: and we shall cut it up in the papers. But we shall all read it, because secretly everybody hungers after the mysterious. What are you going to call it?

Editor. Lucifer.

Journalist (striking a light). Why not *The Fusee*? Quite as good a title and not so pretentious.

The "Novelist," the "Man of the World," the "Fashionable Lady," and the "Journalist," should be the first to receive a little instruction. A glimpse into the real and primitive character of Lucifer can do them no harm and may, perchance, cure them of a bit of ridiculous prejudice. They ought to study

their Homer and Hesiod's Theogony if they would do justice to Lucifer, "*Eosphoros and Hesperos*," the Morning and the Evening beautiful star. If there are more useful things to do in this life than "to whitewash mythological characters," to slander and blacken them is, at least, as useless, and shows, moreover, a narrow-mindedness which can do honour to no one.

To object to the title of Lucifer, only because its "associations are so dreadful," is pardonable — if it can be pardonable in any case — only in an ignorant American missionary of some dissenting sect, in one whose natural laziness and lack of education led him to prefer ploughing the minds of heathens, as ignorant as he is himself, to the more profitable, but rather more arduous, process of ploughing the fields of his own father's farm. In the English clergy, however, who receive all a more or less classical education, and are, therefore, supposed to be acquainted with the *ins* and *outs* of theological sophistry and casuistry, this kind of opposition is absolutely unpardonable. It not only smacks of hypocrisy and deceit, but places them directly on a lower moral level than him they call the apostate angel. By endeavouring to show the theological Lucifer, fallen through the idea that

"To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell;
Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven,"

they are virtually putting into practice the supposed crime they would fain accuse him of. They prefer reigning over the spirit of the masses by means of a pernicious dark LIE, productive of many an evil, than serve heaven by serving TRUTH. Such practices are worthy only of the Jesuits.

But their sacred writ is the first to contradict their interpretations and the association of Lucifer, the Morning Star, with Satan. Chapter XXII. of *Revelation*, verse 16th, says: "I, Jesus ... am the root ... and the bright and *Morning Star*" (ὀρθρινὸς "early rising"): hence Eosphoros, or the Latin Lucifer. The opprobrium attached to this name is of such a very late date, that the Roman Church found itself forced to screen the theological slander behind a two-sided interpretation — as usual. Christ, we are told, is the "Morning Star," the *divine* Lucifer; and Satan the *usurpator* of the *Verbum*, the "infernal Lucifer." "The great Archangel Michael, the conqueror of Satan, is identical in paganism with Mercury -Mithra, to whom, after defending the Sun (symbolical of God) from the attacks of Venus-Lucifer, was given the possession of this planet, *et datus est ei locus Luciferi*. And since the Archangel Michael is the 'Angel of the Face,' and 'the Vicar of the *Verbum*' he is now considered in the Roman Church as the regent of that planet Venus which 'the vanquished fiend had usurped'." *Angelus faciei Dei sedem superbi humilis obtinuit*, says Cornelius à Lapide (in Vol. VI. p. 229).

This gives the reason why one of the early Popes was called Lucifer, as Yonge and ecclesiastical records prove. It thus follows that the title chosen for our magazine is as much associated with divine and pious ideas as with the supposed rebellion of the hero of Milton's "Paradise Lost." By choosing it, *we throw the first ray of light and truth* on a ridiculous prejudice which ought to have no room made for it in this our "age of facts and discovery." We work for true Religion and Science, in the interest of fact as against fiction and prejudice. It is our duty, as it is that of physical Science — professedly its mission — to throw light on facts in Nature hitherto surrounded by the darkness of ignorance. And since ignorance is justly regarded as the chief promoter of superstition, that work is, therefore, a noble and beneficent work. But natural Sciences are only one aspect of Science and Truth. Psychological and moral Sciences, or theosophy, the knowledge of divine truth, wheresoever found, are still more important in human affairs, and real Science should not be limited simply to the physical aspect of life

and nature. Science is an abstract of every fact, a comprehension of every truth within the scope of human research and intelligence. "Shakespeare's deep and accurate science in mental philosophy" (Coleridge), has proved more beneficent to the true philosopher in the study of the human heart — therefore, in the promotion of truth — than the more accurate, but certainly less deep, science of any Fellow of the Royal Institution.

Those readers, however, who do not find themselves convinced that the Church had no right to throw a slur upon a beautiful star, and that it did so through a mere necessity of accounting for one of its numerous loans from Paganism with all its poetical conceptions of the truths in Nature, are asked to read our article "The History of a Planet." Perhaps, after its perusal, they will see how far Dupuis was justified in asserting that "all the theologies have their origin in astronomy." With the modern Orientalists every myth is *solar*. This is one more prejudice, and a preconception in favour of materialism and physical science. It will be one of our duties to combat it with much of the rest.

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Occultism is not magic, though magic is one of its tools.

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Occultism is not the acquirement of powers, whether psychic or intellectual, though both are its servants. Neither is occultism the pursuit of happiness, as men understand the word; for the first step is sacrifice, the second, renunciation.

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Life is built up by the sacrifice of the individual to the whole. Each cell in the living body must sacrifice itself to the perfection of the whole; when it is otherwise, disease and death enforce the lesson.

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Occultism is the science of life, the art of living.