

# THE HIGH COUNTRY THEOSOPHIST



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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY  
AND ITS FUTURE  
by Geoffery A. Farthing

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Towards the end of the 19th century, even though their colleagues in the 'Brotherhood' did not feel that the time was opportune, i.e. that humanity generally had not progressed spiritually enough even though a few may have done so, two Masters of the Wisdom were allowed to make the attempt to make available to mankind in general some of their occult knowledge concerning the nature of existence and man's being. Up till then this had been kept secret.

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The Theosophical Society, founded in New York in 1875, was formed originally as an association of people interested in spiritualism and psychic phenomena. Its early objects reflected this but they were soon to become, after a few changes, as they are now, with an emphasis on brotherhood.

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The Headquarters of the Society was removed to Bombay in 1880 and then to Adyar in 1883. Although the Masters were emphatic that the Society was not to be a school of Occultism or Magic and that their sole purpose was to benefit mankind at large, they nevertheless in various ways let it be known not only that they were possessed of occult knowledge and power but that they were able and willing to make some of it available to suitable candidates.

This was to be done principally in the writings of H.P. Blavatsky, but some information was given directly by the two Masters concerned



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## Editor's Note

We believe that this month's lead article, "The Theosophical Society and Its Future," is one of the most important that we have had the privilege *and duty* to publish.

Our first awareness of its existence came when we received an extensive commentary on it from Dallas Tenbrook. We felt it would be unfair to both our readers and its author if we were to print only the commentary. After some inquiry, one of our readers in California wrote to Geoffery Farthing, requesting a copy be sent to us.

Geoffery Farthing is a former General Secretary of the English Section of The Theosophical Society (Adyar).

We understand that he wrote the article (here reprinted verbatim, with his permission), with the intention of having it placed on the agenda of the General Council Meeting at Adyar in December last. This, apparently, was not done.

As to its content and purpose, in the author's words, the "Manifesto":

Outlines the history of the Society, its present position and, based on these, some recommendations for action necessary for its future effective survival.

It also outlines the importance of the members' reforming their attitude towards Theosophy, as given us by the Masters, to ensure that at least a nucleus of them knows what Theosophy is so that they can fulfil their responsibility "to let [it] be known that such a thing as theosophy exists ...", and to popularize it.

HCT readers' commentary is welcome and will be printed, beginning with that of Dallas Tenbrook, next month.

Other theosophical publications have the author's permission, hereby, to reprint the article as herein given, verbatim and unexpurgated. Digitized text is available from editor HCT.

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in their letters to A.P. Sinnett.

Some of this knowledge was distinct from that contained in any extant literature at the time, with the exception of some older and/or obscure 'occult' writings. These were mostly unintelligible without the necessary 'keys'.

It was claimed, however, that the knowledge contained in the new outpouring was the source and origin of all philosophical and religious knowledge, in its pure form. The old scriptures and philosophical writings had been 'contaminated' by human interpretation, additions and alterations. They had to a large extent departed from the pure original and had distorted their meanings.

The first major attempt at elucidation of this ancient knowledge was the writing of *Isis Unveiled* by H.P.B. published in 1877, a work of enormous erudition in which 1,330 other works, some of great rarity and antiquity were quoted from. It is known that several Masters had a hand in it, providing H.P.B. with much of the information it contains.

This Ancient Wisdom was later more fully and specifically described in *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, from which he wrote two books: *The Occult World* and later *Esoteric Buddhism*.

This latter, although by no means complete or wholly accurate, is important as being the first systematic formulation, in outline, of what was later to become known as Theosophy. The books were published in 1884 and 1885. From 1875 onwards H.P.B.'s almost continuous output of articles and letters contained aspects of the teachings. These writings are now collected together and

edited in fourteen volumes of Collected Writings

H.P.B. was with the Theosophical Society in India for about two years during which time her phenomena and contacts with the Masters were amply demonstrated. A number of people, however, even at Headquarters did not accept these manifestations as genuine. Furthermore, the phenomena were completely beyond the credence of the local church missionaries.

Some letters purporting to come from H.P.B. addressed to members of the staff at Adyar clearly gave the impression that H.P.B.'s phenomena were based on deception. After a lengthy enquiry by an investigator from the Society for Psychical Research who relied much on adverse witnesses and a hand-writing expert he declared H.P.B. to be a fraud.

This was in a document adopted by the S.P.R. which later became known as the Hodgson Report. It has been repudiated since by a number of investigators, latterly even by the S.P.R. One tragic outcome of the report was that H.P.B., who in any case at the time was in poor health, was advised to leave Adyar.

After leaving India, H.P.B. traveled to England via Germany and Belgium. During this time she was occupied as and when health and other circumstances permitted, in writing *The Secret Doctrine* which was published in 1888 in London.

This was her most important theosophical work. It is an exposition of all of the Ancient Wisdom that the Masters were then prepared to make public. It is an enormous work in which 1,100 other works are referred to and in which ancient (and modern) religions and philosophies are explained and form a background to an immense system of knowledge of the whole universal scene and man in

it.

H.P.B. was miraculously kept alive by her Master on two or three occasions of dire illness, to complete the work which was followed two years later by *The Key to Theosophy*.

On a number of occasions it was stressed that H.P.B. was the Masters' sole agent. With her departure from Adyar their influence there ceased. One consequence of this was that most of their Chelas 'disappeared' (including Damodar who never returned to the Society from Tibet).

We also have her positive statement that, should she for any reason cease to act as the Masters' agent, there would be no more contact with them (see *M.L.* 136, 2nd and 3rd editions).

All this seems to have been forgotten or ignored later. A number of people both within the Society and without, e.g. Alice Bailey, later claimed to have contact with the Masters and to have received communications from them.

These communications, some of them very copious and impressive, were, however, received psychically or 'channeled': very importantly they were all uncorroborated.

Communications through psychic mediums was not the method used by the Masters. These facts, the nature of the message and the special position of H.P.B., are of prime importance in the consideration of what followed in the early 20th century, of the present state of the Society and its successful launch into the 21st century.

ANNIE BESANT

In the latter years of H.P.B.'s life a significant event was that Annie Besant was welcomed with open arms into the Theosophical

Society by H.P.B. who saw in her an exceptional and able helper. She was later admitted to H.P.B.'s Inner Group of twelve.

A reference to Annie Besant in *The Mahatma Letters* indicates that she was known to the Masters; however, there is no reference to her ever becoming a chela, although she did receive in 1900 what seems to be an authentic letter from the Masters. There is no other evidence, apart from her own inferences, that she had any contact with them.

Had Annie Besant been a chela her 'magnetization' by [Chakravarti], ostensibly to 'align her principles', described in an eye witness statement (1895) by Dr Archibald [Keightley], would have severed any relations she may have had with her Master.

After H.P.B.'s death Annie Besant let it be inferred, in assuming the "Outer Headship" of the E.S., that she was in touch with the Masters.

She also introduced Co-Masonry into England and associated it with the Theosophical Society, which, however, had been founded quite independently of any other organization. All international Presidents since have, however, held high office as Co-Masons.

H.P.B. expressly stated that 'we do not meddle in politics . . .' yet Annie Besant's prime interest in India was political.

This is not in any way to say that she did not do an immense amount of good in establishing schools and colleges and altering social practices, but these activities are not specifically theosophical.

Politics aims to change systems for the benefit of people; Theosophy aims to change people themselves for the long-term benefit of

humanity itself.

It is undeniable that in the early years of her membership of the Society, Annie Besant was a powerful voice in the cause of Theosophy and its dissemination. This seems to have been foreseen by H.P.B.

However, from the time of her 'magnetization' by [Chakravarti], it appears that, possibly still under his influence, she to a large extent espoused Hinduism. This is evident in her later writings to such a point that a major reference to Theosophy in the Encyclopaedia Britannica is under the heading of Hinduism.

Apart from [Chakravarti] there is not much doubt that Annie Besant was later also much influenced by C.W. Leadbeater. He obviously prevailed upon her in the matter of the Liberal Catholic Church and in the Krishnamurti incident.

#### C.W. LEADBEATER

C.W.L. joined the Society in 1883. He did not, unlike Annie Besant receive a welcome from H.P.B., nor was he admitted to her Inner Group. He was given some instruction by a regular chela at Adyar for a period and developed his clairvoyance but there is no reference that this relationship continued. He did receive a reply to his early communication with the Masters but there is no corroborative evidence that he ever had any more contact with them after these introductory letters. It also came to light that his veracity is much in question: his statements, for example, about his age, his family in South America, and his implying that he had been to Oxford as an undergraduate were discovered later to be false.

In the light of what the Master K.H. said about God, religion and the priestly caste in

Mahatma Letter X, had Leadbeater been a chela he could never have allied himself with the Liberal Catholic Church and certainly he could never have allowed himself to be made a Bishop and thereafter always dress as such. The Masters had said "Our chief aim is to deliver humanity of this nightmare ... etc. " (A personal God of Theology) (M.L.X, 2nd and 3rd editions).

This is important in the light of C.W.L.'s later claims of an intimate and continued relationship with not only one but a number of Masters, even up to the highest in the Hierarchy from whom he claimed periodically to have received instruction in such matters as the upbringing of Krishnamurti.

In the light of some of these supposed contacts e.g. Comte St. Germain, Jesus, etc. the association of the Liberal Catholic Church with the Society was justified.

However, both the Church and the CoMasons were representative of past dispensations. They both had their roots in ceremonial magic, the practice of which H.P.B. did not endorse on account of the possible dangers involved. In a letter which Damodar wrote to Sinnett, Masonry and Rosicrucianism were specifically forbidden (M.L. Old Edition No. 142A, Chronological No. 14A).

During the founding of the Society it had been proposed that the Society might become Masonic. This was specifically decided against. Other behaviour of the then leaders is also questionable.

In view of H.P.B.'s sundry comments about Masonry (into which she was admitted on account of her knowledge of it, but never formally 'initiated'), having lost its secrets, how came it that the Leaders of the Society not only espoused Co-Masonry but the Egyptian Rite

which C.W.L. together with a colleague in Australia had devised and which is still widely practiced by some members in the E.S.?

### KRISHNAMURTI

Krishnamurti was 'discovered' by C.W.L. in 1909. After many difficulties, including law suits, he and his brother were brought up by the Society. He was hailed as the future mouthpiece of the Lord Maitreya He was even seen as a second coming of the Lord.

He was unusually gifted but it was C.W.L.'s 'insights' that initially established him in his role. The Lord Maitreya himself is supposed to have instructed C.W.L. in his upbringing and training. He was brought up and groomed in the fashion of an English gentleman, a far cry from a Hindu 'Avatar'.

Those who had his upbringing and education in hand, notably C.W.L. and Dick Balfour-Clark, were very much second generation theosophists. Krishnaji therefore probably never knew anything of the H.P.B./Masters teachings.

It is also very doubtful whether Krishnaji himself ever had a first-hand 'Master' experience although he did describe once having seen three Masters in a vision. Had he had a real experience, however, he could neither have forgotten it nor thereafter have doubted their existence and later have repudiated them.

Furthermore, as Krishnaji's teachings of freedom, self-reliance, non-dependence on authority and institutions and so on, are all virtually in proper accord with the 'Master' Theosophy, there would not have been any reason for him to repudiate it, nor his connection with the Society.

His loss was that he never became acquainted with the sea of theosophical

knowledge which would to a large extent not only have justified his views but provided him with relevant data for use in his teaching, e.g. the difference between the personality and the individuality, the essential idea of Unity, and had he been interested, the proper nature of the Self, the total cosmic structure and processes.

His 'launching' was a reversion again, as in the case of the Liberal Catholic Church and the Co-Masons, to the traditional old dispensation of an authoritarian regime.

The second coming of the Christ was at that time (1920's) being regarded as imminent whereas, according to the Masters and theosophical teaching, such a 'second coming', i.e. the advent of an Avatar, was not expected for millennia. In any case the severance of the Society from the Masters made such a 'coming' into it extraordinarily unlikely.

The arrogance of those who professed to be able to elect Krishnaji's twelve disciples was an example of the distorted view of themselves that those leaders had. Surely an 'Avatar' would have been quite capable of electing his own disciples.

In any case in the nature of Karma his upbringing and earthly surroundings would have all been in proper accord without the interference of C.W.L.. Many things are puzzling about Krishnaji's upbringing: one was that from reports kitchen staff at Adyar were changed because they were of the wrong caste. In a Society which specifically allows no such distinctions this is hard to understand.

The recognition of Krishnaji's spiritual development from a clairvoyant examination of his aura when he was so young undoubtedly demonstrated C.W.L.'s possession of that faculty but this does not corroborate his claim to have received messages from the 'King of the World.'

The 'finding' of Krishnaji, his upbringing and then adoption as a vehicle for the Lord-Maitreya was virtually the culmination of the

'split' from Master Theosophy.

Krishnaji's repudiation of this position was a serious blow to Annie Besant who obviously believed absolutely sincerely in her announcement of the New Coming. C.W.L.'s reaction to this repudiation seems to have been more limited and far less painful than Annie Besant's although he suffered a loss of stature that he would otherwise have had as the finder, sponsor and educator of this new divine vehicle.

After Krishnaji's withdrawal from the Society, Annie Besant also suffered a gradual diminution in stature and thereafter her health failed progressively.

## SECOND GENERATION THEOSOPHY

The fact that neither Annie Besant nor C.W.L., after maybe one or two initial incidents, was actually in touch with any Master although they may have genuinely believed they were has serious implications when considering what they said and did when they assumed positions of authority.

The whole tenor of the Society thereafter was one of make-believe! It became a pantomime, largely devised and orchestrated by C.W.L.: a fairy story, but with a thread of truth running through it.

Except for passing references to H.P.B. as 'our revered teacher', her literature as such was seldom referred to or studied. There was, however, a flood of literature purporting to be 'theosophical' from both Annie Besant and C.W.L., and later from others.

C.W.L.'s writings were largely coloured by his own real or imaginary clairvoyant insights and his interpretations of them.

It is noteworthy here that, in the H.P.B./Masters literature there is very little reference to, and no diagrams of, the Chakras so much featured by later writers. What little there is in \*\*\*the papers to the Inner Group (incorporated by Annie Besant into her Vol III of the S.D. )

Whereas the Annie Besant and C.W.L.

literature can be criticized from a purely theosophical point of view, much of what Annie Besant wrote was significant spiritual instruction. It was, however, of the conventional, classical religious type, derived largely from the Indian scriptures but with a Christian and a 'theosophical' flavour.

She had reviewed *The Secret Doctrine* at the time of its publication; this must have made a lasting impression on her but apart from acknowledging her debt to H.P.B., she seldom, if ever, specifically referred back to its teaching, or to that in *The Key to Theosophy*.

C.W.L. seems never to have read either of these books. He puts himself in a very false position as an 'occult' author in the Introduction to his book *The Astral Plane* where he says that his manuscript was considered so excellent as an exposition that the Masters wanted it for their archives.

It is difficult to see why this should be; much of the information given us in the book is at variance with their teaching and furthermore it is not clear, for example, which 'astral' plane he is describing, the H.P.B. or the A.B./ C.W.L. one, the former being the 2nd plane of Nature and the latter being the 4th.

There is also no mention of the 'etheric double' in the H.P.B./Masters classification of the human principles. It is to this double that C.W.L. ascribes many of the qualities that H.P.B. attributes to her astral body.

The changes of numbering of the principles where Kama (emotion, desire) was put 2nd instead of 4th is important. An aid to the understanding of the Secret Doctrine is analogy and correspondences.

In the Masters' literature Kama as the 4th principle is emphasized in the evolutionary stages of development in the 4th Round, the 4th Race, the 4th Substance, not the 2nd.

One example of the extent to which the members of the Theosophical Society, from senior members to the newest, were 'infected' by

C.W.L. is exemplified by Jinarajadasa's acceptance of the fact that C.W.L.'s Astral Plane manuscript had in fact been transmitted magically to the Masters.

Obviously also Jinarajadasa's statement that he, in common with others, had had several initiations about which he knew nothing except what C.W.L. told him, again raises the question of C.W.L.'s veracity.

As the years progressed the divergence between the H.P.B./Masters teachings and the second generation Theosophy widened; even basic information was changed, e.g. the introduction of the 'etheric double' (with four 'etheric' states of physical matter), the alterations to the classification of principles and planes, and the C.W.L. account of the after-death states which is quite different from that of the Masters, etc.

The divergence of the two systems became clearly apparent with the publication of *The Mahatma Letters* in 1924/5. It was unfortunate that, for a number of reasons, their publication had been delayed till then.

Apart from 'occult' material in them, these letters set a background of specific purpose to the founding of the Society. This was closely related to the Masters being regarded as one tier of membership in the Society, with their accepted Chelas as a second and the ordinary members a third.

To begin with this was the case but it obviously ceased to be so on H.P.B.'s death (if not before). An attempt to reintroduce it by edict later was obviously spurious.

The Letters also describe in some detail the conditions that were essential for a relationship between the Masters and their chelas. These conditions were very stringent, particularly

regarding honesty and straightforwardness. In the period after H.P.B.'s death and with the withdrawal of the Masters once again into obscurity, instead of direct guidance from or association with the Master, even if it were visiting him in the Astral, the practice grew up of this being done indirectly.

For example, people were taken to the Masters in their astral bodies for initiations etc., but about which next day they knew nothing apart from what they were told. In one or two places the Masters do say that this can happen in the matter of training but not by proxy. Further, initiations are matters of enhancement of waking consciousness and this can occur only when certain conditions created necessarily by the pupil, not someone on his behalf, have been met.

## THE PRESENT

Regardless of the state of the Society, thanks to the Masters' insistence and help, and the sacrifices of H.P.B., the world and particularly the Society have a voluminous and authentic Initiate-Master-inspired literature.

The Society itself is now a world-wide organization of an idealistic and benevolent nature, inspired by the idea of universal brotherhood, but the second and third objects are interpreted very loosely and widely to include anything from U.F.O's to what is generally extra-ordinary and sensational.

All this, however, against a background of what might be termed 'religion' or spirituality, mostly by way of, for example, the Eastern exoteric scriptures and various ideas on Theosophy, methods of yoga and meditation. There is also in some places a strong adherence to the Liberal Catholic Church and of the theosophical movement.

In some places, notably Africa, the Theosophical Society is identified with the Theosophical Order of Service. Charity is impressed on every member through the brotherhood idea; there are however hundreds of charitable organizations to work for and there can be nothing special about the 'theosophical' one to warrant its association with the Society.

Similarly the Round Table is an admirable organization but again nothing in it is specifically theosophical.

Theosophical Science groups while keeping interested members informed of current scientific matters have seldom if ever related science to anything specifically associated therewith in the classical theosophical literature. Because some scientific members have found faults and inconsistencies in 'scientific' statements in the literature they have abandoned the whole grand theosophical system, demonstrating at least a lack of a sense of proportion.

Where older Lodges have survived, and in Section central libraries, books on Theosophy on display or listed in catalogues, are mostly those of the second generation writers. Their contents on the whole are taken to be Theosophy without question.

A few individuals try to correct this situation but their influence generally is very small. Only a scattered and desultory interest is paid to the classical 'theosophical literature of the H.P.B./Masters era. The idea is widespread that the jealously guarded freedom of thought of members can mean that anyone's views or opinions about 'theosophy' can be put out as such.

This was certainly the case in the early days of the 20th century. It was almost vehemently stressed then that there was no such thing as a definite 'theosophical' system of thought,



knowledge or teaching. The great fear was of 'dogmatism'.

This word, however, was, and still is in places, wrongly applied. A dogma means an obligatory belief and no such thing is imposed on Theosophical Society members. This does not mean that there are not authoritative statements of fact such as those given us by the Masters, who claim to know what they speak or write about, i.e. they are not speculating, voicing opinions or advancing theories.

All beliefs concerning Theosophy and the Theosophical Society ought seriously to be questioned against what can easily be discovered of the original teachings and intentions for the Society. A serious perusal of *The Key to Theosophy* will do this.

What is said above about 'make-believe' in the Society also applies to the E.S. The implied connection of it with the Masters through the Outer Head is an example. There is in fact no such connection.

Furthermore, the implication by secrecy, or even privacy, that it possesses some esoteric knowledge which it can impart to members is also 'make-believe'. It makes an appeal to would-be aspirants to chelaship and imposes some preliminary disciplines but omits the necessity for hard work in studying and assimilating the eternal verities of Theosophy as given by the Masters.

## THE FUTURE

First the Adyar Society must take an honest look, fearlessly, at the present position against the background outlined above.

Loyalties to past leaders, to their personal influence and their teachings, must become

secondary issues. This means an acknowledgment that all that happened to the Society as a result of C.W. Leadbeater's influence on it, directly or indirectly, his influence on Annie Besant and his enduring influence by way of his writings, is suspect. It must be recognized that these writings are 'theosophically' defective and misleading.

Annie Besant's influence, by reason of her long term as President, must also be very objectively assessed. Whatever her personal integrity she was obviously misled and mistaken, witness the Krishnamurti fiasco, her espousal of Co-Masonry as part of the Theosophical Society and her handling of the Judge 'case' with its disastrous results.

For most members a change of mind or basic beliefs will at best be painful and at worst difficult if not impossible. This means that only a section of the existing membership can, in the first instance at any rate, be expected to make any radical change, and this section will necessarily include E.S. members who will obviously have their loyalties but they will also presumably have acquired some self-reliance and have learned to think independently.

Some members already have or will have difficulty with the question of their membership of the Liberal Catholic Church and CoMasonry in the light of their longstanding association with the Society. Many of these institutions have in fact been regarded as 'theosophical,' even theosophy itself.

However, it is necessary that the Society should formally declare that henceforth neither of them is really any part of, or has any special association with, the Theosophical Society.

This does not mean that members are not free to join the Liberal Catholic or any other Church, or become Masons or members of any

other institution they wish, provided that they are not inimical or antithetical to Theosophy, and still be members of the Society.

The Society has its own special message to promulgate. This message only exists in the writings of H.P.B. and in the Mahatma Letters. This message in its completeness (as far as it was given out) is unique.

The future direction of the Society must therefore include:

1) The eradication of the 'make-believe' Leadbeater influence - in all departments including literature, and severance from the Society of all other organizations, i.e. the Liberal Catholic Church and Co-Masonry.

2) A thorough examination of all literature purporting to be 'theosophical', and a brave declaration, and no further promotion, of any which is not wholly consonant with the original teachings. This is no proscription but all books purporting to be theosophical which strictly are not should be clearly labelled or marked that they are the author's views on the subject and not necessarily authentic. Members are, of course, free to read what they like but they can be warned, if not guided. The section in any Theosophical Society library purporting to be theosophical literature should be segregated from other material offered, be clearly marked and the books given prominence on book lists, catalogues, etc.

3) The retention and promotion of the three objects of the Society plus an active promotion of Theosophy as given by the Masters.

5) Commercialism in any form, i.e. book selling or publication as such, without specific reference to the promotion of a knowledge of Theosophy, is not part of the legitimate activities of the Society. 'Fringe' literature can be obtained

in ordinary bookshops or from other organizations, e.g. the Arcane School, the Anthroposophical Society, etc. This recommendation is made with our second object specifically in mind. Study of comparative religion is encouraged by the Society but it does not have to publish or supply the books.

6) Professionalism in the society should be examined. Whereas 'goods and services' must obviously be paid for, Theosophy as such cannot be sold. Should exponents be paid? If so, to what extent?

7) Serious study of the 'prime' literature, whatever else is done in Lodges, at Centres, etc., should be encouraged and all facilities provided. Facilities should be provided for meditation - quiet and solitude if possible. Meditation should, however, be 'theosophical', i.e. classical (Patanjali), H.P.B. Diagram, or just silence, not according to local gurus and amateurs with 'special' methods, and NEVER for money.

8) The Society will obviously need a group of students dedicated to the study of the literature and to the dissemination of what they discover both in the writings, and in themselves, as they progress. This can be supplied by some of the existing members of the E.S. At present there are no 'esoteric' leaders or teachers in the Society; it will therefore in this respect have to 'lift itself up by its own boot-laces' as the expression has it.

There is no justification for secrecy within the E.S. or the Society but on occasion private members meetings could be efficacious for discussion, exchange of information, mutual encouragement, etc. There is obviously now no corporate connection with the Masters so that that 'make-believe' can be dispensed with. The E.S. study should be confined to the Master or H.P.B. writings. The Society has no other Initiate-

inspired literature.

Where the E.S. members feel they need inspirational literature apart from books like *The Voice of the Silence*, *Light on the Path* and some of the classical mystical works like *The Bhagavad Gita*, as this is a personal matter they should be free to discover their own. Discrimination as to what is consonant with theosophical teachings will grow. Let students beware of self-styled teachers and of themselves posing as such. They will know when they really are qualified - they will have been 'authorized'. Let none pretend.

9) The Society's relation to 'computerization', the Internet, etc., needs serious examination and Sections given guidelines.

#### ABOUT THEOSOPHY

H.P.B. used the words Occultism, Esotericism, Esoteric Science, etc., as synonymous with Theosophy. In *The Secret Doctrine* she states several times that some of the teaching given there had never been made public before. These statements indicate that the teachings included more material than was contained in any published religious or philosophic literature.

This distinction has been almost entirely overlooked. The great Hindu scriptures have been taken virtually to be Theosophy. Initiated Brahmins know this is not the case but they keep their esoteric knowledge to themselves.

This was the position when H.P.B. made some of that knowledge public: it was much resented even -by Subba Rao whose Master incidentally was the same as H.P.B.'s. All extant scriptures are exoteric even though in their mystical content they reflect much of what is in Theosophy.

Such treatises as *The Bhagavad Gita*, the

Puranas, many Sufi writings and other world acknowledged scriptural writings are beautiful and inspiring, potentially capable of leading aspirants on to the highest experiences.

Neither they nor Hinduism nor Buddhism, in their published form, are 'esoteric', nor of course is the now published *The Secret Doctrine* except that its prolonged study changes our modes of thinking and understanding, giving us insights we could otherwise not get.

What do the theosophical writings include that others do not? While the differences might appear superficial in themselves, in their totality they are not.

For example, the Hindu system is fivefold, as far as the human principles and the skandhas are concerned, whereas the theosophical system is sevenfold. The planes of Nature are sevenfold, with each having a corresponding level of consciousness.

In Theosophy Karma is a comprehensive Law applying universally, not just to human beings by way of reward or retribution. Theosophy contains the vast evolutionary scheme by Chains, Globes, Rounds and Races which process by analogy applies to all manifest things, e.g. all those 'things' comprising the kingdoms of Nature. Incidentally, properly there are no 'things'; every 'thing' is a life.

Some 'esoteric' systems of the past, notably the original Kabala, had reflections, in some instances almost exact, of the theosophical scheme, but they were neither so comprehensive nor so explicit. In *The Secret Doctrine* for example, H.P.B. relates much of the theosophical teaching to the principal world religions and explains much of their symbolism and practices.

Some of this is also dealt with in *Isis*

*Unveiled* wherein the student can find exciting insights and many explanations of even obscure ancient writings. It is a mine of information leading up to the comprehensive and relatively systematized exposition in *The Secret Doctrine* of as much of the Ancient Wisdom as could be published then.

All this knowledge was in addition to that of the ‘mystical’ information and teachings in exoteric literature. The outpouring of information and teaching given in *The Secret Doctrine* pushed forward the boundaries of knowledge several steps beyond what was then otherwise available to the layman.

To a very large extent this has been ignored by the wadd and much more sadly even by the majority of members of the Theosophical Society, who according to The Key have the special responsibility “of letting it be known that such a thing as Theosophy exists.” They cannot possibly do that if they themselves do not know what it is.

The Maha Chohan uses the expression “to popularize a knowledge of Theosophy.” Where this has been heeded at all it has been taken to mean the rendering of the vast and erudite teachings of Theosophy into a form suitable for assimilation by the general populace.

Quite obviously this cannot be done and any attempt to do so must at least oversimplify the grand concepts and at worst dilute them until their profundity and inner meaning is completely lost. Such an attempt to ‘popularize’ Theosophy in this way, to make it appeal to people who otherwise cannot comprehend it, is virtual sacrilege.

This, however, is a tactic used to increase membership of the Society. The Society’s three objects are popular, for anybody to subscribe to, but apart from letting it be known as widely as possible that it exists, Theosophy itself cannot be

popularized.

This is something that has to be accepted when considering the future of the Society. We must never forget the nature of the original writings. No attempt was made even in *The Key to Theosophy*, to ‘simplify’ or ‘dilute’ the subject matter. They were written to appeal to the ‘highest minds’, who in turn, as far as possible, would disseminate their content to others, i.e the grand ideas would percolate down and so influence all society.

A consequence of the virtual substitution of the original literature by that of the second generation writers has meant that there has been very little follow-up material in the H.P.B./Masters vein. There is, however, enough to introduce the subject to intending students.

To comprehend Theosophy one has to make a serious and prolonged effort. In Bowen’s Notes “Madame Blavatsky on How to Study Theosophy,” H.P.B. explained to him, “This mode of thinking is what the Indians call Jnana Yoga” and then mentioned the likely experiences that may arise.

But nothing can happen without the effort. The Theosophical Society was founded at the instigation of the Masters with a sublime object in view: the salvation of the whole human race by a ‘popularization’ of their teachings. Surely we can attempt to do this to the limit of our capacity. Let us try!

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HCT Editor’s Note: The foregoing text was electronically scanned and digitized from the author’s manuscript. Errors in spelling were corrected as indicated in brackets, i.e., [Keightley] for “Keighly.”

## Letters Received

David Reigle writes from Cotopaxi, Colorado:

On the cover of the April 1997 HCT at the beginning of the article, “Who Are the Nirmanakayas,” is an important quote from *The Voice of the Silence*.

Despite the importance of the idea expressed, the quote unfortunately reflects some serious blunders which Theosophists should be aware of if they are to interact effectively with the increasingly Buddhism-savvy world. The quote is:

“Om! I believe it is not all the Arhats that get of the Nirvanic Path the sweet fruition.”

“Om! I believe that the Nirvana-Dharma is entered not by all the Buddhas.”

The last sentence is in the original asterisked to this note:

Thegpa Chenpoido, “Mahayana Sutra,” “Invocations to the Buddhas of Confession,” Part I., iv.

Many readers have understood this to mean that this sentence comes from a book called Thegpa Chenpoido, or “Mahayana Sutra.”

In fact, this is not a title or proper name of any book, but is rather a generic name.

Thegpa Chenpo(i) is Tibetan for the Sanskrit word “Mahayana,” and do is Tibetan for the Sanskrit word “Sutra.”

Mahayana means “Great Vehicle,” and refers to Northern Buddhism. Sutra in Buddhism refers to texts which are considered to be the words of Buddha.

So a Mahayana Sutra or Chenpoi do is

a Northern Buddhist text giving the words of Buddha. There are many Mahayana Sutras.

The source of the confusion may be seen in Emil Schlagintweit’s *Buddhism in Tibet*, 1863, where the above-quoted sentence is translated as follows (p. 127):

I believe that the body of all the Buddhas does not enter Nirvana.

It is there found in the chapter he has called, “Translation of an Address to the Buddhas of Confession.” About this text he says (p. 125):

The address styles itself a Mahayana Sutra (in Tibetan, Thegpa chenpoi do).

Schlagintweit is quite aware of the fact that this is a generic name, since he gives the title on pp.123 and 126 (“Repentance of all sins”).

However, someone reading just this sentence could easily misunderstand this name as being a title or proper name; and it would appear that Blavatsky did just that.

But there is a much more serious blunder. Schlagintweit’s translation, “I believe,” which Blavatsky followed, is completely incorrect.

Schlagintweit had misunderstood the teaching on the nirmanakaya, as Blavatsky notes in the Voice (note 34 to part 3); and as a result of this he had mistranslated accordingly. He says in a note (footnote 4, p. 127):

. . . The Tibetan gsol-ba-’debs had, therefore, to be translated by “I believe,” though the dictionaries only give “to

entreat, to beg” as its signification.

In fact, the Tibetan *gsol-ba-'debs*, which here translates the Sanskrit word, *yacayami*, does mean “entreat” or “beg,” but not “believe.”

Thus in this text it is not “I believe that not all the Buddhas enter nirvana,” but rather is “I entreat all the Buddhas not to enter nirvana;” i.e., I request them to stay and work for the welfare of living beings.

Such “entreating,” of the Buddhas is an everyday practice among Tibetan Buddhists, which even the most unlearned knows well (see, for example, *Bodhicaryavatara* 3.5).

This blunder may perhaps have entered the Voice through Blavatsky’s haste in writing it.

While it does not change the import of the Voice’s teaching, one thing like this is unfortunately all it takes to cause an informed reader to dismiss the whole Voice.

Yet there is in my opinion no better treatise on the Bodhisattva path now available in any language, Sanskrit, Tibetan, or English.

It is for this reason that I entreat Theosophists not to abandon the welfare of those living beings who could benefit from the Voice if only they saw it as authentic, and therefore to do what they can to help prepare for the coming out of an original language manuscript of the Book of the Golden Precepts.

David Reigle

### **On the Alleged Tibetan Source of Alice Bailey’s writings by David Reigle**

A new magazine called *Fohat* is now launched to promote the search for truth. Meanwhile, my Book of Dzyan research proceeds in the search for *fohat*. The term *fohat* has so far not been located in Tibetan Buddhist texts where H. P. Blavatsky’s statements about it lead us to believe it should be found. I must therefore postpone any statements about *fohat* for a future occasion.

My research in the Tibetan Buddhist texts, however, has allowed me to make some observations regarding the alleged Tibetan source of Alice Bailey’s writings which may be of interest to readers of a magazine described by its editor as, “dedicated to promoting a vigilant attitude among its readership through a love of Truth.”

To get an accurate picture of what is being investigated, it must be evaluated in terms of overall wholes; that is, in terms of what characterizes it throughout, rather than in terms of isolated facts, as the latter may lead to false conclusions.

Alice Bailey’s writings include eighteen books said by her to have been received through mental telepathy from a Tibetan teacher. What characterizes these writings from the first volume to the last is the teaching of service to humanity.

This, of course, does agree with the Bodhisattva ideal of dedicating one’s life to benefiting others rather than seeking one’s own liberation, which characterizes Tibetan Buddhist writings from beginning to end. This teaching, however, also characterizes Theosophy.

Thus it could have been taken by Bailey from Theosophy, or it could in fact have come from the alleged Tibetan author of the Bailey writings.

There is a peculiar stylistic feature which characterizes the Bailey writings, something one does not usually see in English language writings. This is the habitual presentation of teachings within an outline structure using general topics, then divided into sub-topics, then subdivided into sub-sub-topics, etc., etc.; e.g.: “We will as usual divide our subject into three heads.” This is a well-known characteristic feature of Tibetan writings.

In fact, this feature is so characteristic of Tibetan writings that respected Buddhologist Prof. Ernst Steinkellner of the University of Vienna used it as the criteria to determine whether certain books were written by Indians or by Tibetans.

“Steinkellner observes that these two treatises display the analytical system used by Tibetans of all epochs to structure their texts, the “divisions” or “sections” (sa bcad), a technique he has not been able to find in treatises of Indian origin; ...”<sup>2</sup>

Certainly this stylistic evidence is as compelling as is the handwriting analysis evidence given by Dr. Vernon Harrison in his 1986 article on the infamous “Hodgson Report” to show that the Mahatmas, and not Blavatsky, wrote the Mahatma Letters.<sup>3</sup>

Theosophists who are glad to accept the latter as evidence in support of the authenticity of the Mahatma authorship of the Mahatma letters must by the same standard accept the former as evidence in support of the authenticity of the Tibetan authorship of the Bailey writings.

One of the most defining teachings of the Bailey writings is that on the five initiations, given in her first book, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 1922, used throughout her writings, and given its final elaboration in her last book, *The Rays and the Initiations*\*, 1960.

Although some of this material was first published in *The Theosophist*, including a three-part article on initiation in 1921, partly under her former name Alice Evans, this teaching really became known in the Theosophical movement through C. W. Leadbeater’s *The Masters and the Path*, 1925.

While the idea of initiation is not new, these teachings on the initiations are not found in the earlier Theosophical writings of Blavatsky, but are considered by many to have originated with Bailey. One of the most defining teachings of Tibetan Buddhism is the teaching of the path to Buddhahood in terms of five divisions. It is taught in the *Abhisamayalankara*, the single most widely studied book in Tibet.

This book is said to have been received from the future Buddha, Maitreya, when Asanga after developing the Great Compassion was able to visit him where he resides in Tusita heaven. It was memorized by the monks of virtually all the monasteries; and most of the great Tibetan teachers wrote commentaries on it, including Buzon, Dol-po-pa, Tsong-kha-pa, etc., etc.

Yet this book never reached China, the other and earlier recipient of Mahayana Buddhism from

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\* On the subject of rays, G. de Purucker in a possible Bailey reference writes: “I would that I could write at greater length upon this matter of the rays if only in order to point out the mistaken conclusions of the many astralistic and psychistic authors who have written such flapdoodle about them; but it would take a volume to untangle all the errors” (G. de Purucker, *Fountain-Source of Occultism*, 1974, p. 200). Different authors seem to agree on the general concepts of rays, but certainly not on specifics. - Editor (*Fohat*)

India. Thus for the last millennium it has been a teaching specific to Tibet.

The five divisions of the path to Buddhahood taught in the *Abhisamayalankara* are: the path of accumulation [of merit through service to others] (*sambhara-marga*), the path of application [to meditation practice] (*prayoga-marga*) the path of seeing [when for the first time one sees the truth directly] (*darsana-marga*), the path of cultivation of [higher] meditation (*bhavana-marga*), and the path of -no-more training (*asaiksa-marga*).

These five paths are not called initiations, and there seems to be no obvious connection between the Buddhist paths and the Bailey initiations, other than the mere number five.

While studying these, however, I noticed some unusual coincidences between them. For, example, the third initiation of the Bailey scheme is said to be the first major initiation:

“As I have said, the first two initiations-those of the Birth and the Baptism-are not regarded by the Hierarchy as major initiations. They are in the nature of initiations of the threshold and are simply phases of, or preparatory to, the third initiation (as occult students call it), which is in reality the first major initiation.”<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, the third path of the Buddhist scheme is said to be the first major path: “Here begins the Path proper, the Path of the Saint.”<sup>5</sup>

“The last three [paths] represent ‘the Path of the Saint’ (*arya-marga*), whereas the first two are regarded as subservient degrees.”<sup>6</sup>

But this parallel is still too general to allow any valid conclusions. There is, however, a teaching which is quite specific to Bailey regarding the fourth initiation, being not found even in Leadbeater, and is unique

enough to have aroused controversy and even ridicule. This is the teaching that “at the fourth initiation the lower vehicles go, and the adept stands in his intuitional body, and creates from thence his body of manifestation.”<sup>7</sup>

In the *Abhisamayalankara* (2.30) the five paths are correlated with the ten grounds (bhumi), which had been taught in the earlier *Dasabhumika-sutra*. All but the first of these ten bhumis are achieved on the fourth path.

So it is on the fourth path that occurs what I here give in the words of Etienne Lamotte, perhaps the greatest translator of Buddhist texts in our time:

“Now, from the eighth bhumi onward, a bodhisattva abandons his flesh body (*mamsakaya*) born from his father and mother, produced by his karmic actions, and subject to birth and death, in order to be clothed in a body born of the Absolute (*dharmadhatujakaya*).”<sup>8</sup>

With this parallel we have, to my mind, left the realm of coincidence. It should be noted that access to the *Abhisamayalankara* was opened up in the West only in 1929 with the publication of a Sanskrit-Tibetan edition by T. Stcherbatsky and E. Obermiller in the *Bibliotheca Buddhica* series from Leningrad. This was followed by Obermiller’s English language study of it. “The Doctrine of Prajna-paramita as exposed in the *Abhisamayalamkara* of Maitreya,” published in *Acta Orientalia* in 1932.

Since such journals are generally accessible only to scholars, we reprinted this text in 1984 hoping to make it more accessible to others. In any case, neither Bailey nor anyone else in the West had access to this material in 1922 when *Initiation, Human and Solar* was published.

Bailey’s information, as cited above,



could not have been taken from earlier Theosophical writings, since it is not found there; nor could it have been taken from earlier Buddhist writings, since it is not found there either. The Buddhist writings available at that time, and even in Blavatsky's time, such as R. Spence Hardy's *Eastern Monachism*, or Emil Schlagintweit's *Buddhism in Tibet*, give only the fourfold scheme of stream enterer (*srotapanna*), oncereturner (*sakrd-agamin*), nonreturner (*anagamin*), and *arhat*.

Leadbeater must be given credit for checking these sources and attempting a correlation between these four and the initiations. However, this fourfold scheme does not agree with the fivefold Mahayana scheme taught in the *Abhisamayalankara*. Although the fourfold scheme is in fact found in the Perfection of Wisdom texts which the *Abhisamayalankara* is a commentary on, the latter text did not use this scheme. This is because, according to Tibetan tradition, the *Abhisamayalankara* gives the secret meaning (*sbas don*) of the Perfection of Wisdom texts.<sup>9</sup>

Its fivefold scheme giving the secret meaning, said to have been received from Maitreya, was not known outside of Tibet and Mongolia until the publication of the work of Stcherbatsky and Obermiller.

This all points to Bailey's actual contact with a Tibetan teacher. Perhaps the biggest objection raised by Theosophists against a Tibetan source of the Bailey writings is the latter's frequent use of "God." Tibetans, like Buddhists everywhere, do not believe in God. For Theosophists, however, this is a sword

which cuts both ways; for neither do they believe in *atman*. In fact, it is not denial of God which for Buddhists defines their religion as Buddhist against all other religions, but denial of *atman*.<sup>10</sup>

Yet *atman* is taught throughout Blavatsky's writings whose source is supposed to be the Tibetan Mahatmas. Does this mean that Blavatsky's writings could not have had a Tibetan source?<sup>†</sup> If for Theosophists it does not, then they cannot say that Bailey's use of "God" precludes a Tibetan source for Bailey's writings.

Then there is the further question of whether not just a Tibetan, but a Tibetan Mahatma, could be the source of teachings using "God."

Although the vast majority of theosophists are believers in a God, many of the more serious students accept as authoritative K.H.'s clear statements from Mahatma Letter 10:

"Neither our philosophy nor ourselves believe in a God, least of all in one whose pronoun necessitates a capital H.... Therefore, we deny God both as philosophers and as Buddhists."<sup>11</sup>

Yet Rajani Kant Brahmacharin, a Hindu believer in God on pilgrimage in Tibet, tells us of his meeting with Mahatma K.H.:

"As long as I was there with the said Lama, he never persuaded me to accept Buddhism or any other religion, but only said, 'Hinduism is the best religion; you should believe in the Lord Mahadeva-he will do good to you.'"<sup>12</sup>

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† Does the objection to "God" hinge on the unlikelihood that it has a Tibetan source? Perhaps more important to Theosophists is the connotation it has in the minds of the West as a source of Truth and power external to the individual. Theosophy has gone to great lengths in its writings to disassociate itself from such a concept. Perhaps it is felt that the inclusion of Bailey into mainstream Theosophy undermines this position. - Editor *Fohat*.

If we accept this account as genuine, and Blavatsky certainly did, as she printed it in proof of the existence of the Mahatmas, whether it was K.H. or another Tibetan Mahatma, we have a Mahatma encouraging a believer's belief in a God.

Must we then conclude that these Mahatmas are at best inconsistent, or at worst invented by Blavatsky?

Most of us, I believe, would prefer to take a more charitable view and allow that a Tibetan Mahatma could himself hold very distinct views denying the existence of God, and yet give teachings to specific individuals which allow and even encourage their already existing belief in God.

For research to be valid it cannot use two sets of standards. If we hold a charitable view toward our own teachings, to be consistent we must allow the possibility that a Tibetan

Mahatma who does not believe in God, when addressing a population which does believe in God, might choose a presentation which allows and even encourages that belief.

The Bailey students, who are predominantly Christian or New Age, are less likely to undertake the study of a book which is Buddhist and at least 1,500 years old, even one by Maitreya. So I have written this article to Theosophists who in their search for truth may wish to study the actual book used in Tibet, the *Abhisamayalankara*.

The book is extremely concise and difficult, giving one technical term after another, all of which require extensive explanation. Thus Tsong-kha-pa's commentary on its mere 273 verses covers 710 folios, or 1,420 pages.

Because of its complexity, even with the flowering of Tibetan Buddhism in the West in the last couple decades, no new books on it have

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#### End Notes

1. *Letters on Occult Meditation*, by Alice Bailey, 1922, p. 325.

2. From *Salistamba Sutra and Its Indian Commentaries*, by Jeffrey D. Schoening, Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien, 1995, vol. 1, p. 26, referring to: "Who is Byan chub rdzu 'phrul? Tibetan and non-Tibetan Commentaries on the *Samdhinirmocanasutra* - A Survey of the Literature," by Ernst Steinkellner, *Berliner Indologische Studien*, vol. 4/5 1989, p. 235.

3. "J'Accuse: An Examination of the Hodgson Report of 1885," *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, vol. 53, 1986.

4. *The Rays and the Initiations*, by Alice Bailey, 1960, p. 663.

5. "The Doctrine of Prajna paramita as exposed in the *Abhisamayalamkara* of Maitreya," *Acta Orientalia*, vol. XI, 1932, reprint, Talent, Oregon: Canon Publications, 1984, p. 21.

6. *ibid.*, p. 15.

7. *Letters on Occult Meditation*, by Alice Bailey, 1922, p. 339. Note that this book, like *Initiation, Human and Solar*, was published in 1922; and both are said by Bailey to consist of material received by her (through mental telepathy) starting in the late Fall of 1919.

8. From preface by Lamotte to

*Karmasiddhiprakarana: The Treatise on Action* by Vasubandhu, by Etienne Lamotte, English translation by Leo M. Pruden, Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1988, p. 10.

9. *Doctrine of Prajna-paramita as exposed in the Abhisamayalamkara of Maitreya*, p. 7.

10. See: *What the Buddha Taught*, by Walpola Rahula, chap. VI, "The Doctrine of No-Soul: Anatta."

11. *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, chronological edition, pp. 269-70.

12. "Interview with a Mahatma," first published in *The Theosophist*, Aug. 1884, then reprinted in *Five Years of Theosophy*, 1885.

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Editor's Note: Gladney Oakley is another of the largely unnoticed and unseen small band of self motivated workers that are the vital lifeblood of the theosophical movement.

Mr. Oakley's project is cataloging and indexing the important literature of the theosophical movement. His principal on-going task is building database index of *The Theosophist* from the date of its founding by H.P.B. to the present day.

He somehow learned of the modest career of the HCT and offered to exchange his marvelous index for a complete set of HCT back issues. Needless to say we are glad to comply. Along with his latest communication he submits the following:

Introductory note by G. Oakley.

During 1995, while indexing *Lucifer & The Theosophist* I came across these two pieces.

The first, while printed in a column by HPB may have been written by Annie Besant. It can be found on page 155 of *Lucifer* for October 1889 as an anonymous contribution. It was rare that such a frank response to the stresses induced by working with such members of the audience as are here parodied were allowed to surface into the pages of a theosophical magazine, although there was another instance in 1903.

"After Hearing Mrs Besant

Miss Smyth: Oh! My dear Miss Jonesky, how glad I am you have called. I hear you went to hear Mrs Besant on Sunday. What is all this talk about your trying to get a profit out of Philosophy?

Miss Jonesky (severely): Trying to become a prophetess of Theosophy, I suppose you mean, my dear.

Miss S.: Yes, that's it. Sit down and tell us all about it.

Miss J.: Well, my love, you can't think what a sweet thing it is -- all about Altruism and Karma, and the reincarnation of the Ego and -- er -- Karma-rupa,

and Prana and Linga Sharira, er--er--er.

Miss S.: Oh! That must be nice. And what do they all look like?

Miss J.: What do which look like?

Miss S.: Why, the Prana and the Karma and the Ego and -- the other dear little things!

Miss J.: (with a very superior smile): My dear child, you don't understand. Karma is a kind of state that --er--as Mrs Besant says "presides over each reincarnation, so that the Ego passes into such physical and mental environment as it deserves."

Miss S.: Does it really, now? How exquisitely lovely! And what about the other darlings?

Miss J.: Well, the Sat or Be-ness is a sort of --er -- esoteric cosmogenesis that --er -- in fact -- differentiates Altruism, and Karma by the Linga Sharira or astral body, and is the causation of the Ego, assuming the Manas, or something of that.

Miss S.: How delightfully soothing it seems! Let us go and have some. (Exeunt enthusiastically.)"

The second piece, only a portion of which is printed below, is taken from *The Theosophist* for December 1923, p. 395. It is by Dr. Jacob Bonrggren (who published ten articles in *The Theosophist* between 1886 & 1927). It may give some comfort to theosophists in Russia, Canada, Denmark, & Boston.

"... There is no better way to separate the grain from the chaff than by threshing.

There is no better test for separating the faithful from the self-seeking than by treating them temporarily as offenders. Some technical reason can always be found.

If they are true, they will remain faithful and recognise it as only a test, as CWL and CJ did in 1906; if they are not true, they will get angry, they will look upon the severity as injustice and blow away, as all chaff does when shaken up.

For proof of this I need only mention the large

withdrawals from the Theosophical Society for purely personal reasons in 1884, 1895, 1907, and still later.

It never hurts a truly loyal soul to be excluded, no matter on what technicality, from exoteric or esoteric activity for a while. Such an one will look upon it as a welcome test and remain loyal to the end.

It does not matter in what capacity we are permitted to serve our leaders; the main thing is that we do serve them to the best of our ability, whenever and wherever we have a chance. This is something no one can forbid us. As we have in the past served our great and wonderful HPB, so we will in the present and the future serve her faithful pupil and successor as Light-bringer, our incomparable leader, AB, and that gentle prince of clairvoyants, CWL.

Jacob Bonggren

{Dr Jacob Bonggren was a pupil of HPB, who thought highly of his knowledge and steadfastness. He is an efficient and learned, and very quiet worker. We are always glad o hear from him, as he has insight. -- AB]"

closing comment by G. Oakley:

Bonggren gets it only partially right. What he gets right is the differential response on the part of ts workers (and potential members) to seeming injustice at the hands of superiors, leaders. governing bodies. He gets two portions wrong: the noumenon, the actual interior nature, of the experience; and the real origin of the seeming injustice.

## **Pilgrimage to India**

Sun. Feb. 3rd.(1985)

About 6 a.m., while it was still pitch dark, the companion of the Indian of the night before switched on the lights and turned on his transistor radio to the usual pop Indian music station.

This, added to the last night's provocation, was a little too much and I loudly told him to turn it off, as at least six others were sleeping. Temporarily, he lowered the volume, only to raise it a few minutes later. So I reiterated my complaint and eventually drifted back to sleep until daybreak at 7 a.m.

Such incidents present a dicey situation. I think one must realize that many Indians, just like many Americans (or any other nationality for that matter), are not necessarily spiritually evolved to the point of unselfish consideration of the feelings and rights of others - granted.

But the question is, when those of us who consider ourselves to be trying to live the spiritual life encounter such situations, what is the Dharmic thing to do?

In one sense, we may perhaps correctly assume that nothing that happens to us is simply by chance, but rather represents the outworking of our Karma and as such is both a spiritual test and an opportunity to lay earlier causes to rest.

And so, in retrospect, I think it was the Dharmic choice to do as I did. His Karma will be his to deal with and that is not my responsibility.

On the way back north to the YMCA this morning I overshot the turn at Jai Singh road where it intersects with Sansad Marg, and was making a right turn across the traffic lane (this is equivalent to a left turn in the US), when a speeding motor scooter I hadn't seen appeared, bearing down on me. He broadsided my rear wheel, tearing off the left pannier. The scooter never stopped -a hit and run - but fortunately I wasn't hurt at all. More divine protection from my Master.

I surveyed the damage. The pannier spring was stretched out, a bent hook, and most amazing of all, the rear wheel was only slightly bent. I am absolutely certain that a lightweight 27 by 1 inch rim would have been totalled in the crash. So I took one of the elongated springs, compressed it as best I could, cut it in half, straightened the hook and remounted the pannier and made my way the half block to the YMCA.

The desk clerk told me to wait two more hours until noon and they'd for sure have a room for me.

Meanwhile I went around back of the Y, up ended the bike and marked the bent place on the tire with a pencil. I took the wheel off, laid the rim across three bricks and jumped on the bent portion until it was much improved. Then I remounted the wheel and using close-set brake shoes as a gage and retrued the wheel with the spoke wrench. I had to loosen several dusty spoke nipples with WD-40 spray lube. The wheel is nearly as good as new - and I have a greatly heightened love and respect for

my trusty fat tired mountain bike.

I looked up Asha Biswas (the Indian woman English teacher I had met at the Y in November) and spent the remainder of the morning chatting, eating her puris and drinking her tea. She said she was thinking of me at the very moment I knocked on her door!

returned to the Y at 12:30 and got a room on the 5th (US 6th) floor and got my dirty laundry washed and had a heavenly hot shower - the first since Hardwar in December.

Monday, February 4th.

I just finished arranging all of Marty's letters in numerical order and reading them from start to finish. (1-21)

I am filled with love and gratitude to be blessed with the good Karma to have such a good and faithful friend as she on the spiritual path.

It is true as Grace Knoche says, that one doesn't need to go to Kashmir, Tibet or Shambhalla to find one's spiritual answers - but yet I think that this 3 month experience of our being physically separated has had the value of deepening the spiritual insight and reinforcing the commitment both to the spiritual life and to each other - for both Marty and me.

Last night I looked in the phone book and found a Theosophical Society listing. When I called the number, I was informed that there was to be a lecture in Southern Extension, Part 1 not far from the Aurobindo Ashram, at 7 p.m.

Since it was already 6:30, I realized that if I wanted to go, the only feasible way was to take a taxi in order to get there on time. The first taxi I could flag down was a conventional sedan, not the 3 wheel kind and it cost Rs 30 for the trip one way. He knew where South Extension was so I had him let me off there. Then I went to a shop and used a phone to make another call to have someone come and get me - who turned out to be the son of the lecturer.

The audience turned out to be me, the lecturer's son and one middle aged Indian gentleman - not exactly a large crowd. The lecturer however, whose topic was "Karma and destiny," was a good speaker who really knew his theosophical topic well and spoke largely without notes but made several quotations from H.P. Blavatsky's *Key To Theosophy*, *The Bhagavad Gita*, and the works of W.Q. Judge, turning to the appropriate passages. This turned out to be a U.L.T. (United Lodge of Theosophists) lodge, a splinter group from the Judge lineage. They base their teachings on the works of H.P. Blavatsky and W.Q. Judge.

As nearly as I can tell, the principal distinction between the ULT and the American Pasadena headquartered Theosophists, headed by Grace Knoche, is that the ULT (to quote the declaration on the program brochure) has "a basis for union which is similarity of aim, purpose and teaching and therefore has neither constitution, by-laws nor officers."

It is my personal belief, based on

some years of relevant observations, that any organization or group which is so totally unstructured as this cannot hope to be an effective instrument to serve its stated purposes. At best, it can function as a loosely knit society of like minded individuals - and would attract only those whose antipathy to structure exceeds their commitment to the common goal. And as such, I doubt if it can ever rise above being merely a forum for intellectual discussion.

None the less, it was an interesting lecture from one who was obviously well qualified and I was glad I came. But the audience of just two besides me was a mute and effective testimony to the sterility of such an organization. Contrast that with the well attended and stimulating audience participation of the Sunday morning Bhagavad Gita study group that I attended in Pasadena at the American T.S. headquarters. But perhaps it is an unfair comparison.

On the return trip, I got a 3 wheel mini-taxi for what I understood to be an agreed upon price of 20 rupees but when I got back, the driver shook me down for 25. I think I should have stuck by the 20. At least, in the future I'll make dead certain that the agreed price is understood clearly beforehand by spelling it out in numerals i.e., twenty; two zero rupees.

There is another lecture Wednesday night on "Paramatma, the highest soul", which I'll probably attend.

Just for a route finding exercise, I retraced my 55 rupee taxi tour by bicycle

this afternoon and followed the exact route both coming and going and succeeded in finding the correct house where the lecture was held. So, on Wednesday, if I decide to go again my trusty fat tired steed will save me 55 rupees. At least, it's useful to know how much taxi fare the bike has been saving!

This morning after cashing \$100 worth of traveler's checks, I went to the Punjabi government craft emporium on Ashok road and got beautiful Sarees for Marty, Eleanor and Jinny which, with the 20% sale discount came to about 1090 rupees - about \$80. They are pure silk and have embroidered designs in gold thread and I am well pleased with them. I had them put into plastic bags and then wrapped with paper and twine. I think I can put them into the nylon stuff sack with the sleeping bag so that I can carry them on board the plane with me. This, I think, completes my gift purchases. I could go on and on with gifts for more people but I must draw the line somewhere. There many others I love and care for and I hope they will not feel slighted. Also, I have about reached the limit of what I can carry.

#### **Editor's Note:**

**The comments on the ULT, in the foregoing, based on a single impression was indeed unfair. Now, ten years later, in 1997 I've learned to respect the ULT and appreciate the work they do, mainly through my aquiantance with ULT associates.**

# Submission Guidelines

## By floppy disk

3.5 or 5.25 inch (DOS format),  
WordPerfect or MS Word  
in ASCII format preferable.

## By hard copy

Laser printer preferable,  
NLQ Dot matrix OK  
Good Quality Xerox OK

## Unacceptable

Draft mode Dot matrix  
Faint printouts  
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## EDITORIAL

THE HIGH COUNTRY THEOSOPHIST is an *independent* Journal and has the following editorial objectives:

(1) To serve the greater Theosophical Movement as a forum for the free interchange of ideas and commentary in the pursuit of Truth and to facilitate various projects in furtherance of Theosophical principles.

(2) To present articles and essays consistent with source theosophy, otherwise known as the Ancient Wisdom as given by The Masters and H.P. Blavatsky, and other theosophical writers consistent with this tradition.

## OBJECTIVES

(3) To examine contemporary ethical, religious, metaphysical, scientific and philosophical issues from the viewpoint of the source theosophical teachings.

(4) To impartially examine significant events and issues in the history of the theosophical movement which have affected and shaped its present-day realities.

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