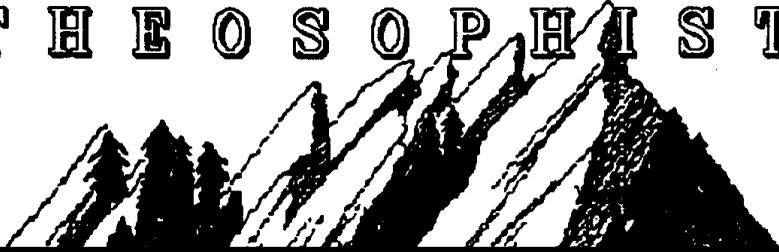


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Student.-I am very much puzzled about the present age. Some theosophists seem to abhor it as if wishing to be taken away from it altogether, inveighing against modern inventions such as the telegraph, railways, machinery, and the like, and bewailing the disappearance of former civilizations. Others take a different view, insisting that this is a better time than any other, and hailing modern methods as the best. Tell me, please, which of these is right, or, if both are wrong, what ought we to know about the age we live in.

Sage.-The teachers of Truth know all about this age. But they do not mistake the present century for the whole cycle. The older times of European history, for example, when might was right and when darkness prevailed over Western nations, was as much a part of this age, from the standpoint of the Masters, as is the present hour, for the Yuga-to use a Sanskrit word-in which we are now had begun many thousands of years before.

And during that period of European darkness, although this Yuga had already begun, there was much light, learning, and civilization in India and China. The meaning of the words "present age" must therefore be extended over a far greater period than is at present assigned. In fact, modern science has reached no definite conclusion yet as to what should properly be called " an age," and the truth of the Eastern doctrine is denied. Hence we find writers speaking of the "



Golden Age,” the “ Iron Age,” and so on, whereas they are only parts of the real age that began so far back that modern archaeologists deny it altogether.

Student.-What is the Sanskrit name for this age, and what is its meaning?

Sage.-The Sanskrit is “ Kali,” which added to Yuga. gives us “ Kali-Yuga.” The meaning of it is “ Dark Age.” Its approach was known to the ancients, its characteristics are described in the Indian poem the Mahabharata. As I said that it takes in an immense period of the glorious part of Indian history, there is no chance for anyone to be jealous and to say that we are comparing the present hour with that wonderful division of Indian development.

Student.-What are the characteristics to which you refer, by which Kali-Yuga may be known?

Sage.-As its name implies, darkness is the chief. This of course is not deducible by comparing to-day with 800 A.D., for this would be no comparison at all. The present century is certainly ahead of the middle ages, but as compared with the preceding Yuga it is dark.

To the Occultist, material advancement is not of the quality of light, and he finds no proof of progress in merely mechanical contrivances that give comfort to a few of the human family while the many are in misery. For the darkness he would have to point but to one nation, even the great American Republic.

Here he sees a mere extension of the habits and life of the Europe from which it sprang; here a great experiment with entirely new con-

ditions and material was tried; here for many years very little poverty was known; but here to-day there is as much grinding poverty as anywhere, and as large a criminal class with corresponding prisons as in Europe, and more than in India. Again, the great thirst for riches and material betterment, while spiritual life is to a great extent ignored, is regarded by us as darkness.

The great conflict already begun between the wealthy classes and the poorer is a sign of darkness. Were spiritual light prevalent, the rich and the poor would still be with us, for Karma cannot be blotted out, but the poor would know how to accept their lot and the rich how to improve the poor; now, on the contrary, the rich wonder why the poor do not go to the poorhouse, meanwhile seeking in the laws for cures for strikes and socialism, and the poor continually growl at fate and their supposed oppressors. All this is of the quality of spiritual darkness.

Student.-Is it wise to inquire as to the periods when the cycle changes, and to speculate on the great astronomical or other changes that herald a turn?

Sage.-It is not. There is an old saying that the gods are jealous about these things, not wishing mortals to know them. We may analyse the age, but it is better not to attempt to fix the hour of a change of cycle. Besides that, you will be unable to settle it, because a cycle does not begin on a day or year clear of any other cycle; they interblend, so that, although the wheel of one period is still turning, the initial point of another has already arrived.

Student.-Are these some of the reasons why Mr. Sinnett was not given certain definite periods of years about which he asked?

Sage.-Yes.

Student.-Has the age in which one lives any effect on the Student; and what is it?

Sage.-It has effect on everyone, but the Student after passing along in his development feels the effect more than the ordinary man.

Were it otherwise, the sincere and aspiring students all over the world would advance at once to those heights towards which they strive. It takes a very strong soul to hold back the age's heavy hand, and it is all the more difficult because that influence, being a part of the student's larger life, is not so well understood by him.

It operates in the same way as a structural defect in a vessel. All the inner as well as the outer fibre of the man is the result of the long centuries of earthly lives lived here by his ancestors. These sow seeds of thought and physical tendencies in a way that you cannot comprehend.

All those tendencies affect him. Many powers once possessed are hidden so deep as to be unseen, and he struggles against obstacles constructed ages ago.

Further yet are the peculiar alterations brought about in the astral world. It, being at once a photographic plate, so to say, and also a reflector, has become the keeper of the mistakes of ages past which it continually reflects upon us from a plane to which most of us are strangers. In that sense therefore, free as we suppose ourselves, we are walking about completely hypnotized by the past, acting blindly

under the suggestions thus cast upon us.

Student.-Was that why Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do?"

Sage.-That was one meaning. In one aspect they acted blindly, impelled by the age, thinking they were right.

Regarding these astral alterations, you will remember how in the time of Julian the seers reported that they could see the gods, but they were decaying, some headless, others flaccid, others minus limbs, and all appearing weak. The reverence for these ideals was departing, and their astral pictures had already begun to fade.

Student.-What mitigation is there about this age? Is there nothing at all to relieve the picture?

Sage.-There is one thing peculiar to the present Kali-Yuga that may be used by the Student. All causes now bring about their effects much more rapidly than in any other or better age. A sincere lover of the race can accomplish more in three incarnations under Kali-Yuga's reign than he could in a much greater number in any other age. Thus by bearing all the manifold troubles of this Age and steadily triumphing, the object of his efforts will be more quickly realized, for, while the obstacles seem great, the powers to be invoked can be reached more quickly.

Student.-Even if this is, spiritually considered, a Dark Age, is it not in part redeemed by the increasing triumphs of mind over matter, and by the effects of science in mitigating human ills, such as the causes of disease, disease itself, cruelty, intolerance, bad laws, etc.?

Sage.-Yes, these are mitigations of the darkness in just the same way that a lamp gives some light at night but does not restore daylight. In this age there are great triumphs of science, but they are nearly all directed to effects and do not take away the causes of the evils.

Great strides have been made in the arts and in cure of diseases, but in the future, as the flower of our civilization unfolds, new diseases will arise and more strange disorders will be known, springing from causes that lie deep in the minds of men and which can only be eradicated by spiritual living.

Student. -Admitting all you say, are not we, as Theosophists, to welcome every discovery of truth in any field, especially such truth as lessens suffering or enlarges the moral sense?

Sage.-That is our duty. All truths discovered must be parts of the one Absolute Truth, and so much added to the sum of our outer knowledge. There will always be a large number of men who seek for these parts of truth, and others who try to alleviate present human misery. They each do a great and appointed work that no true Theosophist should ignore.

And it is also the duty of the latter to make similar efforts when possible, for Theosophy is a dead thing if it is not turned into the life. At the same time, no one of us may be the judge of just how much or how little our brother is doing in that direction. If he does all that he can and knows how to do, he does his whole present duty.

Student.-I fear that a hostile attitude by Occult teachers towards the learning and philanthropy of the time may arouse prejudice against

Theosophy and Occultism, and needlessly impede the spread of Truth. May it not be so?

Sage.-The real Occult Teachers have no hostile attitude towards these things. If some persons, who like theosophy and try to spread it, take such a position, they do not thereby alter the one assumed by the real Teachers who work with all classes of men and use every possible instrument for good. But at the same time we have found that an excess of the technical and special knowledge of the day very often acts to prevent men from apprehending the truth.

Student.-Are there any causes, other than the spread of Theosophy, which may operate to reverse the present drift towards materialism?

Sage.-The spread of the knowledge of the laws of Karma and Reincarnation and of a belief in the absolute spiritual unity of all beings will alone prevent this drift. The cycle must, however, run its course, and until that is ended all beneficial causes will of necessity act slowly and not to the extent they would in a brighter age. . As each *Student* lives a better life and by his example imprints upon the astral light the picture of a higher aspiration acted in the world, he thus aids souls of advanced development to descend from other spheres where the cycles are so dark that they can no longer stay there.

Student.-Accept my thanks for your instruction.

Sage.-May you reach the terrace of enlightenment.

(Appeared originally in *The Path*, April, 1888)

B.C.W. IX, 99-104

**SECRET DOCTRINE QUESTION
AND ANSWER SECTION
CONDUCTED BY GEOFFREY A.
BARBORKA**

Readers of The Canadian Theosophist are invited to participate in this feature by sending their questions c/o The Editors to be forwarded to Mr. Barborka.

Question. In reference to the Question and Answer Section published in the July/August issue, specifically to the answer given to Question (b) on page 64, col. 2, here is a comment and a question:

To say that the personality becomes the Initiate and the Mahatma (together with the Higher Ego) is doubtless true in a sense. But this hardly goes with the admonition to give up the personality -a passing flash?

Answer. The opportunity now provided to add to the response referred to is welcomed. This may be done by reference to certain passages in *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, for they aid in clarifying the complex problem involved in considering the "personality" of a Mahatma or an Adept. (For it was stated: "for ease of describing the category, the Adept will here equated to a Mahatma.") Here is the citation:

If you would go on with your occult studies and literary work-then learn to be loyal to the Idea, rather than to my poor self. When something is to be done never think whether I wish it, before acting. I wish everything that can, in great or small degree, push on this agitation. But I am far from being perfect hence infallible in all I do; tho' it is not quite as you imagine having now discovered. For you know-or think you know, of one K.H.-and can

know but of one, whereas there are two distinct personages answering to that name in him you know. The riddle is only apparent and easy to solve, were you only to know what a real Mahatma is. (pp. 323-4)

The next citation is somewhat lengthy but it is given in full in order to demonstrate that the personality---or what is referred to in the citation as the outer man -is definitely involved in the category of a Mahatma's existence, although subordinated by the inner man (i.e. the Reincarnating Ego). Particular attention should be given to the four categories, designated by the letters (a) to (d):

. . . you should be posted on certain facts-and very important facts--connected with adeptship. Bear in mind then, the following points.

(1) An adept-the highest as the lowest-*is one only during the exercise of his occult powers.* (Underscoring in original)

(2) Whenever these powers are needed, the sovereign will unlock the door to the inner man (the adept) who can emerge and act freely but on condition that his jailor-the outer man will be either completely or partially paralyzed -as the case may require; viz: either (a) mentally and physically; (b) mentally-but not physically; (c) physically but not entirely mentally; (d) neither but with an akasic film interposed between the *outer* and the *inner* man.

(3) The smallest exercise of occult powers then, as you will now see, requires an effort. We may compare it to the inner muscular effort

of an athlete preparing to use his physical strength. As no athlete is likely to be always amusing himself at swelling his veins in anticipation of having, to lift a weight, so no adept can be supposed to keep his will in constant tension and the inner man in full function, when there is no immediate necessity for it. When the inner man rests the adept becomes an ordinary man, limited to his physical senses and the function of his physical brain. Habit sharpens the intuitions of the latter, yet is unable to make them supersensuous. The inner adept is ever ready, ever on the alert, and that suffices for our purposes. At moments of rest then, his faculties are at rest also. When I sit at my meals, or when I am dressing, reading or otherwise occupied I am not thinking even of those near me . . .

From the aforesaid, you may well infer, that an adept is an ordinary mortal at all the moments of his daily life but those-when the *inner* man is acting. (pp. 180-1)

With regard to the concluding comment in the question: “the admonition to give up the personality.” The admonitions given in devotional books should be regarded as allegorical adhortations, which need not be taken literally-just as in the Bible when Paul says: “I die daily” (1 Cor. xv, 31). Thus it is written: “The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real. Let the Disciple slay the Slayer.” (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 1) Then, too, “Give up thy life, if thou wouldst live.” (Op. cit., p. 5) But a footnote is added: “Give up the life of physical personality if you would live in spirit.” (p. 75)

While from one point of view the

personality may be regarded as “a passing flash,” from another point of view the personality is not lost; in fact it is likened to a pearl on the Sutratman “the luminous thread of immortal impersonal monadship” (*S.D. II*, 513). For the remembrance of every “personality” or the recollection of the total number of lives on earth will be reviewed at the end of the obligatory pilgrimage (or the seven-Round cycle):

Yes; the “full remembrance of our lives (*collective* lives) will return at the end of *all the seven Rounds*, at the threshold of the long, long Nirvana that awaits us . . . (*The Mahatma Letters*, p. 171)

Question. Referring to the answers given in regard to the Manasaputras (in the July-August issue). In *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* H.P.B. implies that the Manasaputras and the Egos are one. Have you any comments or suggestions to offer on the passage?

Answer. First, here is the full citation:

The Secret Doctrine shows that the Manasa-Putras or incarnating Egos have taken upon themselves, voluntarily and knowingly, the burden of all the future sins of their future personalities. Thence, it is easy to see that it is neither Mr. A. nor Mr. B., nor any of the personalities that periodically clothe the Self-Sacrificing Ego, which are the real Sufferers, but verily the innocent *Christos* within us. Hence the mystic Hindus say that the Eternal Self, or the Ego (the one in three and three in one), is the ‘Charioteer’ or driver; the personali-

ties are the temporary and evanescent passengers; while the horses are the animal passions of man. (p. 56 or. ed. also *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. X, p. 255)

in this passage “incarnating Egos” obviously signify what H.P.B. usually terms the “Reincarnating Egos,” (or Higher Manas), for it goes on to say that the personalities clothe the “Self-Sacrificing Ego.” The one in three” refers to Atma-Buddhi-Manas, which become “the three in one” in the after-death states. The personalities are definitely referred to as evanescent--passing, flash-while it is the “animal passions” which a person is admonished to give up.

Oftentimes H.P.B. would use a term in what may be regarded as a dual sense; thus “Manus” are referred to as the humans in this sloka: “The Manus with minds, how are they made?” (Stanza IV, sloka 16), whereas Manus usually signify the Superior Rectors of the Earth Chain. Thus, in the above citation the Manasuputras (the ---Sons of Mind”) are equated to “Higher Manas” in the constitution of man--the Reincarnating Ego. The evolutionary goal portrayed for humanity is the ability to attain the status of a Manasaputra--and this is the significant part of the teaching; for, at heart, man in his manasic aspect is truly regarded as a “Son Of Mind.”

From *The Canadian Theosophist* Vol. 48,
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To Be Continued

FOHAT

Several months ago, Fohat was the study topic on the Blavatsky Internet. Here following, are some interesting insights arising from a focus on the second object of the T.S., i.e., The study of comparative religion. John Greschner provides correlations between the Theosophical teachings and Kashmiri Shaivism.

Fohat: The essence of cosmic vitality or electricity. It is the divine ideative energy, i.e. the prime electrical force of the universe. This electrical force emanates from divine thought and is what drives everything. Fohat imposes form upon all the atoms of the universe and is the reason why elementals exist. **The universe is embodied consciousness.**

A hint in *The Esoteric Writings of Blavatsky*, pages 403-4 given in the Blavatsky net, points us in the right direction:

“In these volumes [*The Secret Doctrine*. (ed. HCT)] it is almost revealed that the ‘sons of Fohat’ are the personified forces known in a general way as motion, heat, light, cohesion, electricity or electric fluid, and nerve force or magnetism. ... The seven shaktis respectively called Para Shakti, Jnana Shakti, etc., are synonymous with the ‘Sons of Fohat,’ for they are their female aspects. ...”

In the Proem to *The Secret Doctrine* [SD I:16], we find:

“Fohat is the `bridge’ by which the `ideas’ existing in the `Divine Thought’ are impressed on Cosmic substance as the `laws of nature’ ... and Fohat ... is the mysterious link between Mind and matter.”

It was further presented on the Blavatsky Internet that in the septenary, Buddhi represents the sixth plane and is the most refined or highest plane of manifestation. It is the plane of the Christ principle and may also correspond to the highest manifestation of force or Fohat. Evolution is best understood as an endless progression from “unconsciousness” to complete consciousness. Spirit is continually involving into matter, and matter is continually evolving back into Spirit. Perhaps matter, force and Consciousness are evolving simultaneously from a state of oblivion to a state of Cosmic Awareness.

John Greschner writes:

Greetings and Satchidananda:

Why must we forget the Truth?

We never do forget the Truth, in that we *are* the Truth, witnessing the manifested truth as maya or Fohat in constant motion. On the other hand, the ephemeral self, an illusion (maya) must come in play for this ‘game,’ the dance and lila. Otherwise it would not exist; everything would “consciously” be in union with the supreme state and there would be no activity driven by the three gunas (Sattva, Ra-

jas, Tamas)¹ of nature (Desire).

The supreme state of Self or THAT becomes the “stuff” for this dance or lila and then goes through this drama until its ephemeral self in illusion once again recognizes its True Nature. At a certain level of sadhana (spiritual practices), everything dissolves and melts. All the senses of separation are melted by the Shakti herself.

Clearly, this is in accord with Theosophical teachings. The Shakti as maya is all the globes, rounds etc. Shakti is Fohat in Theosophical terms. It is consciousness manifesting as Shakti (motion) as all the “stuff;” it is still the Pure Self. The globes, rounds and evolution could not be otherwise as it requires maya in manifested form to even exist and take place. We get to dance and go to nirvana, heaven or hell but subjectively it is just the globes, rounds - the dreams of the ephemeral subjective, dancing this way and that based on the gunas. It is the gunas which create the skandas and samskaras.

Why does maya get to create the world?

It doesn’t. There seems to be a lot of discourse on this subject, but in truth, maya is simply another term for the Shakti in differentiated manifestation. Maya is the result of the Shakti becoming “stuff,” which gives the appearance of separation and distinctness, when in fact it is not.

It is like you giving a sense of separate-ness and distinctness to each thought you have, (thought to thought to thought) even though it is the pulse of the same Shakti as Spanda² flashing forth into being as Brahma, staying awhile as Vishnu and then withdrawing into its primal pure state as Shiva.

Now imagine all these thoughts springing forth at the same time, like rays from a sun, staying in manifestation as evolving form. They would appear to be separate and distinct entities i.e. maya.

Why do we go through all this if we (Higher Self) know it exists as a simple dream state in motion?

You need the dreams of maya, the deep desires to keep the dance going and to drive it, and thus by seeking and conquering it do we become realized.

SD I:29 Stanza of Dzayan Stanza III, slokas 10-12

10. FATHER-MOTHER SPIN A WEB WHOSE UPPER END IS FASTENED TO SPIRIT-THE LIGHT OF THE ONE DARKNESS-AND THE LOWER ONE TO ITS SHADOWY END, MATTER; AND THIS WEB IS THE UNIVERSE SPUN OUT OF THE TWO SUBSTANCES MADE IN ONE, WHICH IS SVABHAVAT.

11. IT EXPANDS WHEN THE BREADTH OF FIRE IS UPON IT; IT CONTRACTS WHEN THE BREATH OF THE MOTHER TOUCHES IT. THEN THE SONS DISSOCIATE AND SCATTER, TO

RETURN INTO THEIR MOTHER'S BOSOM AT THE END OF THE GREAT DAY, AND RE-BECOME ONE WITH HER; WHEN IT IS COOLING IT BECOMES RADIANT, AND THE SONS EXPAND AND CONTRACT THROUGH THEIR OWN SELVES AND HEART; THEY EMBRACE INFINITUDE.

12. THEN SVABHAVAT SENDS FOHAT TO HARDEN THE ATOMS. EACH IS A PART OF THE WEB. REFLECTING THE "SELF-EXISTENT LORD" LIE A MIRROR, EACH BECOMES IN TURN A WORLD.

Stanza IV

1. ... LISTEN, YE SONS OF THE EARTH, TO YOUR INSTRUCTORS-THE SONS OF THE FIRE. LEARN, THERE IS NEITHER FIRST NOR LAST, FOR ALL IS ONE; NUMBER ISSUED FROM NO NUMBER.

END NOTES:

1. She gives birth to the three qualities, who are the primal cultivators of the land. Rajas or passion sows the seed, sattva or purity preserves it, and tamas or ignorance alone gathers in the harvest. *Jnaneshwar's Gita*, slokas 38-39, page 186.

2. The principle of apparent movement from the state of absolute unity to the plurality of the world. *A Concise Dictionary of Indian Philosophy*, page 298.

Man's Origin and Evolution
by Adam Warcup

Tape One, Side II

"Now the life impulse reaches "A" or rather that which is destined to become "A" and which so far is but cosmic dust.

A centre is formed in the nebulous matter of the condensation of the solar dust disseminated through space and a series of three evolutions invisible to the eye of flesh occur in succession, viz., three kingdoms of elementals or nature forces are evolved: in other words the animal soul of the future globe is formed; or as a Kabalist will express it, the gnomes, the salamanders, and the undines are created.

... The three evolutions completed: palpable globes begin to form. The mineral kingdom fourth in the whole series, but first in this stage leads the way. Its deposits are at first vaporous soft and plastic, only becoming hard and concrete in the seventh ring.

When this ring is completed it projects its essence to globe B-which is already passing through the preliminary stages of formation and mineral evolution begins on that globe. At this juncture the evolution of the

vegetable commences on globe A.

When the latter has made its seventh ring its essence passes on to globe B. At the time the mineral essence moves to globe C and the germs of the animal kingdom enter A. When the animal has seven rings there, its life principle goes to globe B, and the essences of vegetable and mineral move on.

Then comes man on A, and ethereal foreshadowing of the compact being he is destined to become on our earth. ... Man comes on globe "A" after the other kingdoms have gone on."

ML 15/94-95

In general this passage is concerned with the relationship with the seven kingdoms as they evolve through the seven stages or globes. The passage is concerned with the first round of life and the seven kingdoms evolved within them.

It is a reminder that at the outset none of these globes exist. We must build them. This passage outlines how this takes place. It culminates with the evolution of the mineral kingdom. By the time the life wave representing the mineral kingdom arrives the elemental kingdoms have built the substance out of which the mineral kingdom can work.

It is the task of the mineral kingdom to build objective form. The middle of the pas-

sage describes the sequence. In the passage “The three evolutions completed: palpable globes begin to form.” We are not talking about globes that we can touch physically. When we talk about a globe or world we are really talking about the world of experience. They are fields or spheres of experience.

A ring signifies a cycle. In this passage the seventh ring would be like the seventh race in the human kingdom. As the mineral kingdom moves through its cycle, its form becomes more concrete and less plastic. When the the seventh ring of the mineral kingdom is completed on Globe A, it has done its work and its essence is projected to globe B. It has left behind an objective world. This appears to be a progressive sequence. It is a co-operative process.

The importance of the plant and animal kingdom coming before the human kingdom is that we now have a substance in which to build form upon.

For example, when the plant kingdom has completed seven evolutionary stages on Globe A and the animal kingdom has done likewise, it is then that the human kingdom arrives on Globe A and makes use of the animal, plant and mineral forms left behind by the preceding kingdoms.

This is not as simple as it sounds. There is an adjusting process. Man will progress more quickly so that by the time the mineral kingdom is finished so will be man. This is

called the process of acceleration and retardation. The lower the kingdom the longer it takes to evolve. The higher the kingdom: the more consciousness is involved in it, the more purpose and intention, volition, presumably manifests and therefore the more quickly experience can be assimilated.

Now when it comes to round two it is different. We do not need to rebuild the forms because what we have done so far has been remembered. We will continue where we left off. Example, by the time we finish round one in man we have evolved a rudimentary human form. It may be the most shadowy ethereal form we can imagine.

There is a special a class of dhyanies that remember how far we have evolved. These beings are called shista which means literally the remainder. It is those who remain behind. They maintain form for the various kingdoms.

Out of this passage we need to remember:

1. The sequence of the arrival of the kingdoms on globe A.
2. The evolution of form ultimately is an accumulative process with the Shistas in the end remembering what we have done so far.

End of Tape One.

AN ESOTERICIST'S JOURNEY IN AMERICA
by Dr. Yuri Gorbunov
translated to English by David Keane

Part 3 Among Esotericists
of California and Arizona

Chapter 1 Jack Hart

The first time round, in 1997, I reached San Diego from Baltimore without any adventures. When in USA in 1998, I for the first time ran into them.

When I was going to the airport with my daughter, it was raining and snowing. The weather was clearly not summery. So it seemed. While waiting several hours for the plane, which was not due by evening, I received two vouchers: one for a room in a hotel and the other for supper and breakfast in a quite expensive restaurant. (I would tell my compatriots in confidence, that it all cost the North-West Company \$118, and would remark that such a fine hotel, as that in which I rested that night, would not today see the parallel in the Ukraine.)

In the morning, when a hotel minibus was taking me to the airport, it was fresh, and the cool morning sun was shining. Thin patches of snow lay here and there on the green grass, but the road was dry. The flight to San Diego took several hours.

In San Diego, it was warm summer weather. The people were dressed in summer-wear. Palms, flowers in beds, unusually clear violet and yellow plantations of flowers on the side of hills along which curved wide highways with many-storied concrete structures, were

there to gladden the eyes. The city shone with cleanliness and overflowed with prosperity, truly a characteristic of all southern resort cities.

In poor countries, much is written and with pleasure about the necessity of revolutions. In rich developed countries, people dream of getting rich, and so they work day and night to realise their dreams. Nearly in every American airport one is able to meet persons speaking Russian. Very often they are Jews from Russia. When you begin to chat with them, they will always tell you with great pleasure, how fine they are doing on American bread and butter, and they never regret that they have left their former homeland.

Two very important meetings awaited me upon first arriving in San Diego — with Jack Hart and with a Canadian lady Margaret Little.

I had become acquainted with Jack in early April 1997, when I first arrived in San Diego for the Conference of the University of Seven Rays, upon the invitation of Dr Michael Robbins. On that occasion Jack specially came to introduce himself to me, from Meditation Mount where he was then working. We were brought together through David Keane. David had asked me to translate into Russian for Europeans, the Meditation Course which the educational centre at Meditation Mount was distributing by correspondence throughout the world. Then I had talked with Jack all day long, and we have remained very good friends. Later he had sent me a letter, in which he shared, that the Board at Meditation Mount had decided to finance the founding of a correspondence meditation school throughout Russia and Ukraine. The translation of the 18 booklets had

been financed by David Keane. Several of the booklets I had translated myself, the rest by translators acquainted with esoteric terminology. At the beginning of 1998, Jack had sent me an invitation to go on a journey to familiarize myself with California and Arizona. I of course agreed.

During the second Conference of the University of Seven Rays, Jack and I spent a whole week residing in the same room. He had arrived in San Diego from Prescott in Arizona where he was then living. He came with a friend from Canada, Paul Bura. Paul headed the Toronto chapter of the Theosophical Society, which has close links with Meditation Mount. This small, frail and elderly man was born in Western Ukraine, and until the age of 12 lived in exile in Siberia with his parents. His father was of Polish descent, and during the years of the war, his family left through Iran, going firstly to England, then to Canada. Paul learned electrical engineering, and worked at this specialty all his life until he went onto the pension. He married an English lady, and so English became his first language. He lives now in the house of his parents. They were buried on Canadian soil. Almost every year, he arrives for a regular week at Meditation Mount. Only while there is he able to relax in soul and body, and gather up spiritual strength for the full year.

Later on he confided with me, that he was anxious about his meeting with me, fearing that he might have clean forgotten Russian, which no-one had spoken with him since he was 12. As it turned out, he had not forgotten.

During the second trip, Jack and I greedily spoke about everything in the world, and never tired of things to say. As it turned

out, we had lots in common. We spoke soul to soul and nobody interfered.

The villages and little towns glistened. The American landscape differs greatly from the Russian, where you can drive for miles and miles and see only vast cultivated fields. Whereas in America, every plot of land has its own owner, and so people live everywhere. Houses are built everywhere. All around, green lawns are grown. The houses are looked after and kept clean and tidy, as with a theatrical set. I couldn't quite believe, that they were able to maintain the buildings and streets in such order and such cleanliness.

For part of the journey, Paul accompanied us making three. Once in Mexico, there were four of us. Charles Sommer a pensioner priest had joined us. Jack was acquainted with everyone. Where would we have been without him? People would come up to him, joyfully embrace him, speak with him warm words of gratitude and without complaint carry out all his questions and tasks

Jack was an extraordinary man. Of middle height, with a sunburnt bald patch, in shabby jeans, with an attractive smile and a good face. He was a very business like person, as many Americans are. And importantly, he was a vegetarian. I was interested in how he had decided to abstain from meat. He explained that once he had awoken in the morning, and an inner voice had said: "Jack, you must become a vegetarian". And so he began. He always listens to his inner voice. This voice always prompts him at the right time, when and how to make an important decision. When we ate out, Jack asked for salads. Practical and economical. As with all Americans, money is

not thrown to the winds. It is not easily gained.

When we reached Prescott, where he passed the winter having bought there a house and land, we lived together the two of us for several days. His bachelor house was clean and comfortable. He set me in the bedroom, and slept himself in the small study. I happened to notice that there were three things that he greatly respected and always took with him in the boot of the car: a portable computer, a sleeping bag and a steel tourist mug with a long hook-like handle. Even in the study, at night time he snuggled into his sleeping bag.

In the red corner of the hall stands a small rectangular magazine table with candles and ritual objects which help him to meditate. On a low round table stands a massive ceramic candlestick. He had bought it in Canada. Around the candle are placed a circle of figures of men and women, holding hands. When it is late in the evening and at the time of meditation, only the candle blazes, the shadows of the members of the circle are projected onto the wall, and it seems as though you are in the centre of this mystical circle. Around you are many people — the whole of humanity. You and they merge, forming a united purpose. In meditation, you share with them your thoughts and wishes for the Common Good. The ceramic candlestick becomes as a receiving and transmitting antenna. In the circle of people, even if they are only shadows upon the walls, everything is made easier, especially if you are a bachelor and are whiling away a cold winter evening in solitude.

The house was built on a hill. Surrounding, were patches of woods with boulder outcrops, left by the builders untouched. Early in the morning, we went up to one of the boulders.

It was huge, about 5 - 6 meters high. On it Jack had found rock-paintings of Indian hunters, who had roamed these regions as nomads, prior to the arrival of white people from the East. From the boulder, there opened up a wonderful view of the distant mountain range which even in April is covered with a snowy cap.

Prescott is located north of and within two hours drive from Phoenix. It is a small town built upon a mountain plateau. Here it is somewhat colder in the spring, than in the metropolitan areas of Arizona. From Prescott to the Grand Canyon is quite close, an hour and a half by car. We naturally paid it a visit. It is such an indescribable sight! There is simply no beauty like standing on a mountain plateau, and looking down below, where at the bottom of this deep ravine, flows a mountain river. Such a mighty force of energy had carved the gorge out of the broken plateau. It is felt so clearly during times of meditation. This stream and red cliffs, breaking off so sharply below, attract thousands of tourists from all corners of the world. The canyon is a remarkable sight of world-wide significance.

Jack had two sisters. We met with one, Sally, on the way from San Diego in Ojai Valley. We stayed with Sally at Laguna Beach. Even though she is my contemporary, she looks younger than her years. She is an artist and musician. In summer, when she moves from the warm resort to her mountain home, she teaches music there.

After dinner, she whizzes off somewhere in her sports car, and in the evening she arrives back happy and cheerful. She spent two and a half hours at the computer studio writing down music directly on a computer. Her work

was so effective this time and she told us she had composed more melodies during this short period than for a month of writing music without a computer at home. (For information: one hour's work at this studio costs \$750.US.)

At her home, classical music is regularly playing. She listens to it standing, sitting and lying down on her sofa. In the winter days at the well known resort, she whiles away the time in the company of her fluffy and clever cat. She had fallen in love with Laguna Beach at first sight, 50 years back when her parents brought her, their daughter, there for the first time. Even then she decided that that was where she would live, when she was grown up. Then when she had grown up and had the money, she bought herself an apartment there.

While staying as a guest with American families, I learned well their customs and rules. To meet Russian guests with vodka and wine is not the done thing here. If you come, that is fine. You are settled down. There is your room, there is clean bedding, there is a bathroom and refrigerator. Towards evening everyone dines together. The rest of the time, each sees to themselves. If you want to eat, you open the fridge and take whatever you want. Everything to eat is there. But no-one is going to do anything to get you ready. You can go and buy pizza or eat at a cafe. It is cheap. There are Chinese restaurants, in which you can buy a full meal for 5 to 7 dollars.

On the second day while at Sally's, there came two Mexican cleaning ladies. Even Sally's room needed tidying. Cleaning was once a week. For it, the Mexican ladies received \$25. In other houses cleaning is done by the family members themselves. And they would do the

cooking themselves. House-hold cooking is not better, but it is cheaper than in a restaurant. With Russians in America during their first year, everyone in the house does it themselves. That is how we are trained from childhood. And so in that way a month's food comes to 3 or 4 hundred dollars, no more. An old fridge, a television and furniture you could pick up in the street, for the time you not being able to buy things new. At sales, such as at supermarkets, for a hundred dollars one can dress from head to foot for the coming year. During supermarket sales, it is possible to recognize a huge number of cars standing in the car park.

In the evening Sally would play musical instruments. Then she would have a Tarot card reading at the bookshop, and we would be up late with her in fortune telling, of what to expect in the near future. It is said that she writes music for every great arcana of Tarot. I am sure that is the way she gets results.

The next day we strolled along the beach — barefoot in the cold sand, being washed by light ocean waves, and we would roll up our trousers, as in childhood. From the side, we must surely have appeared like Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, only grown up, being far from our childhood. Laguna Beach is an expensive resort, reminding us somewhat of Alushta in Crimea. Small hills come right down to the beach. From the peaks of these hills, the town rises up along the slopes of the mountain above. Behind this ridge of small mountains begins a green valley with continuous orange groves. If you were to drive north from Laguna Beach, then in a few hours you would find yourself in Santa Barbara, one of the most expensive resorts in America, widely known in Russia thanks to the television show

of just that name. The soap opera was shown every evening on Russian television for several years. Unlike the mountain resorts, Santa Barbara is spread out on a plain, in a valley by the ocean. In the centre of the town are 3 - 4 story houses, hotels, shopping centres, high quality entertainment centres, a theatre and a gallery.

I asked questions, and Jack replied. His parents had been educated at Harvard and belonged to the middle-class. At one time, they had drunk a lot. And then after they had been cured, they became activists in the Anti-Alcoholics Society of USA. His mother, for many consecutive years, was elected as vice-president of this society. His parents traveled to the Soviet Union in the 70's on the invitation of a similar society in USSR. They had then talked much of that journey. Jack dreamed of going to Russia. Like a magnet, Russia was drawing him to itself. And his dream is coming true. I am sure of it.

Jack never fretted about what he would do. He transferred through many occupations — from a sea-cook to a successful official in one of the departments of the municipality of New York. Once he came to Meditation Mount, and an inner voice said to him, “Jack, this is your place in life. Give up everything and come here. Here, you are needed.” Soon afterwards, he moved to Meditation Mount and worked there for 17 years. A skilled administrator, he joined with an elderly and predominantly female group at the discipleship centre. He laboured admirably in the field of esoteric enlightenment. Attentive, friendly and industrious, he gave forth all of himself to his work. He was deserving of great authority. He quickly resolved any questions. They knew him every-

where, in all the esoteric and theosophical societies. Honour and respect from people, such is the response for a good heart, love towards people and devotion to esoteric ideals.

It was not by accident that the Masters brought us together through the help of David Keane and Michael Robbins. In America I came specially to find Jack, in 1997 and again in 1998. But I have only just now understood this.

Chapter 2 Mexican Meetings

My second meeting happened imperceptibly. When I was saying good-bye on my first trip, after my lecture presentation under the chairmanship of the University of Seven Rays, the vice-president Mary Ann Casalino told me, that a Canadian lady had transferred a sum of money to the University, which was to allow me to attend the next University Conference. The lady had asked me not to call her by her surname. Through that grant, I was able to come to San Diego a second time. Mary Ann Casalino had introduced me to this Canadian lady on the first day of the Conference. I already knew the Christian and surname of this good, likable lady from Canada — Margaret Little. All her family studied esotericism in earnest. She had a fine daughter, who knew many languages and was a musician. She had, by the way, learnt the Russian language at University.

Out of the grant left to me by Margaret, I ordered many books, and Mary Ann Casalino sent them over to me. To her I express my deep gratitude. As a bonus from Jack's mother in 1997 and material help from other participants of the first Conference, came some equipment and furniture for my office. This book has become a reality, only through

the help rendered to me by such a fine lady as Margaret Little. She promised to help me acquire an airticket to USA the next year. She approved the plan and purpose of our journey with Jack through California and Arizona.

The aim of the trip was of course, not as a tourist. Our aim was to meet with American esotericists and healers. Many books have been written about journeys to the East, but not a single one about journeys among American esotericists. It isn't easy to write about esotericists. Who would be interested? My task, as I had formulated it to myself, was the study of esoteric organisations, in education, and theosophical training in America, where natives from the East have long been able to open various courses, schools, institutes, and construct monasteries. It has been precisely here, on American soil, that the World Theosophical Movement has arisen. American funds have financed many journeys to the East, in particular the expedition of N. K. Roerich. Rich countries have also allowed themselves to sponsor scientific-esoteric research. It is precisely this that I wanted to narrate to my compatriots. Jack understood, approved and helped me fulfill this task.

During our journey through California, we twice crossed over into Mexico. The first time was to Mexicali. Two towns — in America El Centro and in Mexico, Mexicali — extraordinarily symbolised so clearly two economic systems, two cultures, two ways of thinking, two systems contrasting one from the other in their paths of development.

The boundary between the towns is a high netting fence. On one side of the fence is a rich country with a prospering economy; on the other the reality is poverty-stricken and

squalid. Dust and poverty. It is long forgotten when last they repaired the poor roads. There is unemployment. One can see straight away it means everything, and it becomes clear why Mexicans, by any way possible, run off to the USA, finding a way through the long border. And those who have succeeded in crossing over, carry out dirty work, and happy that they have it, work as waiters, cleaners or builders.

On the trip we were accompanied by Charles Sommer, a Catholic priest and esotericist. He had close connections with the Temple of Light and the Mexican healer Margarita in Mexicali. That is where we headed.

Charles is the author of several books on spiritual subjects. He is a likable, young looking pensioner-priest. Ever cheerful, he never puts anyone down. He isn't able to say 5 words, without twice joking about things. We traveled with jokes and funny, witty remarks. From the conversation, I understood that Charles had old and enduring connections with the Temple of Light.

Mother Margarita was an obese, elderly lady. Her healing method appeared unusual to me. She is a female-priest. The Temple was built by the hands of her relatives and friends. Inside the long hall of the Temple, it is clean, lighted and comfortable. Benches stand in two rows. In the front, is a small platform with the figures of the crucified Christ and Mother Mary on the wall. Before beginning the service at 9 o'clock in the morning, Mother Margarita with some helpers leads the reception of the ill in the small room. The patients arrive at the reception by 7 o'clock. After 8 o'clock in the morning Mother Margarita enters the hall and heals several patients in the view of all who

have come for the morning service.

She was an efficient and strong healer. Her efficiency can be explained, in my opinion, in the following way. Firstly, Mother Margarita has an innate skill in working with energy. Many women of her kind have become healers. The transference of the inherent healing ability, means the opening of the channels, through which the energy of the healer heals the patient. Through the ritual of dedication and receiving, such capabilities are able to be given to any person, as for example with the Reiki system. Secondly, any temple in time can accumulate the positive energy and create the field, in which the chakras automatically begin to purify themselves in all those, who are open to the heart of God. Collective prayer and singing is a variety of meditation. Meditation also facilitates the reconstruction of the aura, filling the etheric body with fresh energy, as is directed in part through the channel of Mother Margarita. Healing happens thanks to the energetic renewal of the organism, occurring during the various rituals conducted in the Temple.

Mother Margarita does not charge money for her work. On the platform stands a money collection box. Those attending and patients throw into it small sums of money — as much as each can afford. If not money, they bring bread, provisions or gifts. All such things are likewise varieties of energy.

Not all inhabitants of the town welcome the activities of Mother Margarita. Already three times, fanatics have tried to set on fire the Temple of Light, at times so as to try and close it down, at times imagining them to have deviated from the Catholic faith. But the sick come to her everyday, and she tries to help them all, to some

with broth, to some with energy, to some with traditional folk remedies. As far as I am aware, there are no similar temples in the Russian Orthodox Church with slavich babushki (old women). The official church would clearly have found the strength and means to eliminate such sects. In a democratic country the church is not able to accomplish such actions, and so if not by word, then in practice they would be separated off from the main Church.

The second trip to Mexico was no less interesting.

Tijuana and San Diego are also separated by a high iron fence. Though no-one ever calls it the “iron curtain”, since you are able to cross the American-Mexican border, if you have registered documents of the proper kind, and then no-one minds.

We traveled to Tijuana to visit Mexican students of Meditation Mount. This small town is different from Mexicali, in that it is cleaner and appears richer. Some of the quarters have been built as American projects. Of the new Mexicans who have settled down here, there are two social population groups, a young prosperous class, and an intellectual class. Both of these cultures are educated. Both have spoken English since childhood. Both have close links with American capital or work in USA. Both try to receive American citizenship. Many already have it, though they prefer to live in Mexico. They do not call themselves by any special classification; they are Mexicans and are proud of it. They clearly see the deficiencies in the American way of living, with its psychology of a consumer society. At this time they are arming themselves with all things useful and effective that are available in American society, so to help them be established in business

and to build a new country — Mexico of the 21st Century.

In the evening we were invited to dinner by an elderly lady, who it turned out was a teacher in Theosophy and the works of Alice Bailey. Once a week a small group from the local intelligentsia, who were interested in esotericism and self improvement, arrived at her place for conversation or an evening lecture. It could be called a school for the group of local esotericists.

Her name is Refugio Paddila. How does she appear? Short and frail. Very energetic and merry. Good and wise. She has lived a long life with all her burdens and deprivations. For a long time she has reached out to Theosophy, esotericism and higher spirituality which become the requirements for every deeply believing person. She has skillfully mastered the English language, in which many of the theosophical and esoteric works are written. She expounds upon these works in Spanish, the native language of the listeners.

The difficulty in the study of esotericism has throughout the ages lain in language and esoteric terminology. All esoteric teaching makes its beginning from a single source — the Ageless Wisdom. Through translation there is lost some of the manner and style of thinking. The translator always superimposes upon the contents of the translation through his understanding of the text and through his world view. Refugio, or Cuca as she is lovingly called by her students, is able to reduce the loss through translation to a minimum. The students have mastered English, however without help from Cuca they would hardly be able to find the ability to independently master the difficult

esoteric texts.

For dinner, only Mexican food was served. This is significant. The new Mexican middle class loves everything national and adopts only American methods of conducting business. Respecting wealthy America and even receiving American citizenship, they remain Mexicans and emphasize this before foreigners.

Cuca belongs to that category of people, who without any special effort become your friend, if you would like them to be. We became friends with her, though we had been together for just several hours.

A lengthy conversation began straight after dinner, when we together with some guests meditated. During the joint group meditation it was possible to feel and understand its tuning in of energy very quickly. The energy of all participants in the meditation was pure and good. It drew us together more strongly and quickly than during the meal. I turned out to be the centre of attention. There were many questions: about Russia, about Agni Yoga, about Russian esoteric schools.

A few days later we again met with our Mexican friends at the Conference at Meditation Mount, where without fail they come every year. This is what many disciples are doing, who believe in the esoteric ideals of the Tibetan and Morya. They have all grown up as esotericists at Meditation Mount. They each feel themselves to be a small part of this pure Spring of spirituality.

To be continued

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(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.

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