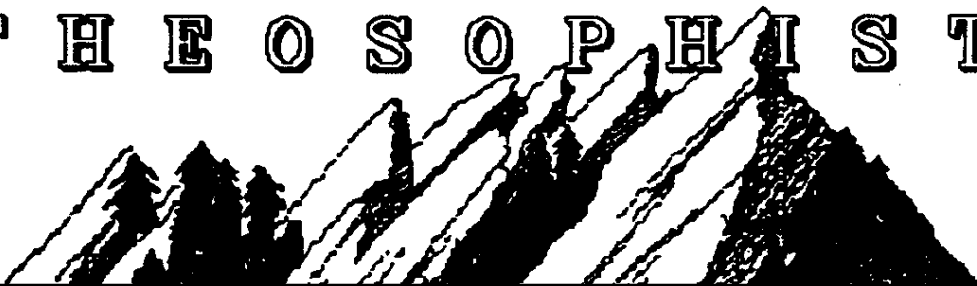


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What is Theosophy? A contemporary Look

... Theosophy is the reality of the universe, things as they actually are, as far as human consciousness can encompass them. In the broadest sense, theosophy has been expressed countless times throughout the ages by individuals and the many religious, scientific, and philosophic systems of mankind. All of us must discover this aspect of theosophy ourselves – in our life and thought. Since the end of the nineteenth century, theosophy has become synonymous with one of its contemporary restatements: the principles associated with The Theosophical Society. ... The purpose of the Society is to investigate the hidden laws of nature, to show that brotherhood or oneness is a fact in nature, and to investigate the powers innate in man.

Although the Society quickly became identified with a particular group of ideas, it has no dogmatic code of beliefs and no specific membership requirements beyond recognition of the principle of universal brotherhood. Among the basic ideas are: the oneness and universality of life, consciousness, and substance; brotherhood as a fact in nature; reincarnation; karma; the many facets of our being – material, psychological, and spiritual – and what happens to them after death; evolution as the unfolding from within of divine potential; spiritual development as opposed to psychism and the occult arts; and the path of altruism and compassion. These ideas can be found in all the world’s major religions and form the spiritual heritage of mankind.

Where did these theosophical ideas come from? Rooted in nature itself, they were experienced and formulated long ago by human beings advanced far beyond the average, and shared by these sages with their fellows and disciples. Some of these great people are remembered as mystic figures or as founders

of schools of thought; most, however, remain unknown. These more evolved humans not only existed in the past, but exist today and exert an influence on the rest of mankind through their lives, thoughts, and teachings. ... The key idea of the modern theosophical movement is the oneness of all life. The cosmos, solar system, planets, and all earth's inhabitants are essentially spiritual beings. They have the same divine source, and are in process of evolving forth their inner potentials. All human beings are inwardly one, forming together an integral part of the earth's being. ...

Independent Spiritual Search

The real authority for any idea rests on whether it conforms to the reality it attempts to represent, and the conclusive test of this is direct, discriminating experience. Most of us are unable to fathom the mysteries of the cosmos, or even of our own being, as our self-conscious resources scarcely reach beyond the unreliable reports of our physical senses.

So we can only discriminate by using all the available powers of mind and heart, being constantly willing to expand or abandon views as our knowledge and experience increase.

Yet we would do well to examine seriously the ideas of those who have had firsthand experience and then expressed their findings in everyday language for the benefit of others. How can we tell which accounts are valid? One test is universality; another, an appeal to the best in us, rather than to self-interest and selfishness. Certainly, the only way we can develop the necessary inner discernment is to exercise our judgment, trusting ourselves and not accepting without question any outside authority. Even though we will inevitably make mistakes, we will learn from meeting the effects of our decisions. As we grow, our understanding will deepen and we will be able to see reality more clearly.

The theosophical philosophy is not a set of beliefs which must be accepted or adhered to blindly; rather, it is a group of verbal symbols open to examination, from which a person may take what seems correct and useful to him. As with all symbols, the meaning received depends largely on the background and attitude of the perceiver. As we feel out what we each believe, we can test our findings by putting them into practice in our lives. Thus we begin to work more closely with the patterns of nature, gradually harmonizing with the whole to which we belong and in so doing we are better able to serve our fellow human beings.

[Editorial comment: Henry Olcott in his Inaugural Address expresses the attitude of Theosophical investigators: "... (we) of earnest purpose and unbiased mind, who study all things, prove all things, and hold fast to that which is good. ... We seek, inquire, reject nothing without cause, accept nothing without proof: we are students, not teachers." Implicit in HSO's statement is contained the truth that we must be students before we can teach. Also, the personality is the vessel through which the teachings of the Higher Self come. This is why we do contemplations and self-inquiry.]

Three Fundamental Propositions

In her masterwork, *The Secret Doctrine*, H.P. Blavatsky sets forth three "fundamental propositions" which underlie the theosophical philosophy.

They are, first, that there is an "Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception. ..." This Infinity – referred to as Space, the great Void or Fullness – contains, and indeed *is*, everything which

exists, past, present and future. It cannot be described or limited in any way or it would no longer be infinite.

The second proposition is that this boundless space is the field for the cyclic appearance and disappearance of numberless worlds “like a regular tidal ebb, flux and reflux,” pointing to duality and periodicity as fundamental in nature.

The third proposition states that all beings originate from the same divine source and are in essence identical with it. Further, that each of these sparks of divinity evolves by embodying, according to cyclic and karmic law, in every “form of the phenomenal world,” developing its individuality at first instinctively and later by its own efforts till it has “passed through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest” – through sub-mineral [elemental], mineral, plant, human, and beyond. This last axiom indicates that a universe is an organism composed of countless lesser organisms, all evolving toward divinity.

Taken with permission from **The Northwest Branch** of the TS (Pasadena). *What is Theosophy?*. The order of the various sub parts have been rearranged to suit the discussions in the *HCT* and are not necessarily in the same order in *What is Theosophy?* The parts excerpted were discussion on the TS founder Helena Blavatsky, which will be inserted in this magazine under the discussion of HPB and a book review.

As a Fellow Student of Theosophy, I [editor, Marty Lyman], had often wondered why did HPB place so much attention on *The Secret Doctrine*. I never really understood its connection with all the various “yogic paths.” Yes, I understand that Theosophy was placed within the context of “Jnani” yoga but how? What was the significance of this strange and complex book *The Secret Doctrine*? The answer didn’t really come until I started to study *Kashmir Shavism* and actually started to practice the various yogas or tantras.

Kashmir Shavism is a religion, philosophy, and tantric practice relatively new to the Western world. Although the religion is claimed to be very ancient, it has only been since the 1980’s that its interpretations have been expounded into modern times, and it is through the new texts that I have found similarities, which really helped explain the philosophies of *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Voice of the Silence*.

“The basic tenet of Kashmir Shavism philosophy is that the whole of creation, all the principles, worlds, and beings in the entire universe are fashioned by one Reality and that the awareness of the divinity of this nature comes through the heart called *pratyabhyna*. This recognition though the heart is more than just a mental exercise. It is not a thought but an immediate certainty, a sense of familiarity or rightness.”

Shantananda. Swami. *The Splendor of Recognition*. Page 16 This tenet, of course, is in agreement with the Theosophical teachings.

“The One Reality; its *dual* aspects in the conditioned Universe. Further, the Secret Doctrine affirms:

(b) The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane, periodically “the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing,” called “the manifesting stars,” and the “sparks of Eternity.” And “The Eternity of the Pilgrim” a wink of the Eye of Self-Existence (Book of Dzyan).

Blavatsky. H.P. *The Secret Doctrine*. Proem. Page 17

Where I see the difference lies in the fact that Shavism likes to put a “personal figure or name” to this

creation and that name is *Paramasiva*.

The Five Acts of Shiva (*panca-krtga*):

The Five Acts of Shiva is a fundamental concept where the “divine” is venerated as the One who brings about emanation (*Srsti*), maintenance (*Sthiti*), dissolution (*Samhara*), concealment (*vilaya*), and grace (*anugraha*). In comparing it with the human existence we have birth, living, dying, suffering and finally delight in True Knowledge.

Shantananda. Swami. *The Splendor of Recognition*. Page 204

“The second assertion of *The Secret Doctrine* is the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, which physical science has observed and recorded in all departments of nature. An alternation of such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a fact so common, so perfectly universal and without exception, that it is easy to comprehend that in it we see one of the absolutely fundamental laws of the universe.”

Blavatsky. H.P. *The Secret Doctrine*. Proem. Page 20

I had always been troubled that “grace” is never mentioned in Theosophy. Yet, just because it is not mentioned does not mean it does not exist. If grace didn’t exist then we wouldn’t even have known any master. It has always been the understanding that “grace” comes from something outside our self usually referred to as some personal God. The other extreme is the belief that karma is based upon immutable cosmic “law,” and to end suffering karma must be met and exhausted. This can only be done through our own efforts. The question now becomes where is there room for Grace? I challenge this question by asking if there is no grace then what is the purpose of a Bodhisattva? We break the web of ignorance through understanding, thus then we can end suffering through our own actions. A Bodhisattva helps us break ignorance through understanding, but not just at the mental level. It is also at the heart (*pratyabhyna*) level.

The Sleeping Spheres:

The Sleeping Spheres is a long lost article on the post mortem states of the human ego, written by Jasper Niemand, a close friend and active co-worker of William Q. Judge. It appeared in *The Canadian Theosophist*, Vol. 34, No. 1 for March 15, 1953.

Jasper Niemand was the nom-de-plume of Mrs. Archibald Keightley, also known in the ranks of the Theosophical Society in America as Mrs. Julia Campbell VerPlanck. It was she, Julia Campbell VerPlanck, writing under the pen-name of Jasper Niemand who was the source of much of the material in *Letters That Have Helped Me* by William Q. Judge.

The Sleeping Spheres is a first-hand report of the the author’s experience of the post-mortem view of Devachan. In Part I, she relates her view of “Sleeping Monads,” as seen from the outside, as it were. Part II is the narrative of her consciousness as she *became* the State of Devachan and re-lived her “past life review,” from the ‘inside’ in a total Near-Death experience.

We have chosen to do a verbatim (minus the introduction) reprint of the article as it appeared in *The Canadian Theosophist* so as to provide our readers with the author's own words, un-biased by our interpretations. [d.s., ed. HCT]

THE SLEEPING SPHERES PART I.

One came to me, calling me out of the form in which I dwell, and showed me the sleeping spheres.

Now the object of this Messenger who had come to me was to make clear to me some of the hidden things: things hidden, I mean, from the eye of flesh, yet not lying so remote from our ken if we only make some mental effort toward seeing. And the further idea appeared to be that if I were to see them, as it were, objectively, though with the astral organ of sight, I might be able to make this, the Devachanic State, clearer to, the thought of some of my fellows. For the sleeping Spheres are Devachanic entities. In Devachan we are not yet united with the UNKNOWN SOURCE. Hence the need, on the part of the Ego, of form-or container-of some kind. I have chosen here, arbitrarily perhaps, the name of "Sphere" for this Devachanic form.

These Spheres, than which there are none more beautiful, do not lie in any given place; they are self-contained; they have condition, but no place. When I asked my companion how this could really be so, he pointed out to me that they interpenetrated many other states of matter, cohering by means of their own vibration, just as do all other forms, of whatever kind and however ethereal, throughout the whole of nature.

I had passed from my body into the air and the airy form, and from thence into the ether. All about me lay the sleeping Spheres, delicate milky films on the golden ocean of light. Ever and anon a thrill of faintest colour trembled across their deeps, and I trembled too, for it was given to me to know that these colour-motions were, in reality, Thoughts of profound delight. Yes, these palpitating Spheres had pure joy in their own opalescent motions; joy as they throbbed in the living ether, and a joy which had great meaning. This was plain to even my understanding, which at the moment was that of the airy body only. (I presuppose my readers to know even better than myself, that the consciousness of one body differs greatly from that of another. This is true whether the different bodies are all contained together in their own outer shell, or are at the time separate from that temporary covering.)

Imagine, then, that I saw these radiant shapes, now silvery, with a bluish frost upon them, now blooming into tints so translucent that the eye of the soul alone could perceive them, and that every tint was a Thought, an experience. These fair Thoughts were the dreams of the souls disengaged from earth. Dreaming thus, the Spheres slept. How blissful the dreams! For those colours were both living Light and Intelligence; each colour was Thought; Thought of the most exalted order known to the human Mind. Thought quivered through the Spheres, changing their Consciousness; fusing them anew; quickening their higher Life; illumining their purer Light, in a world-plane whereon Light, Life, and Thought are one magnificent act of Being, and not the trivial things known to most men in this everyday world. Each Sphere thus became more and more incandescent with this three-fold LIFE, and I saw them blooming and growing, through this sweet iris-hued ebb and flow, as a flower unfolds towards greater perfection by means of assimilated sunlight. The unfoldment was divine, the peace profound. Silence, like a brooding mother, covered them over; it was only enhanced by an occasional soft semitone, the harmonious breathing of the sleeping Spheres.

Would that I need say no more!

Yet even while I watched their gracious Being, it became plain that, like flowers, they must fade. Although they were composed of atoms of living Light, Light that was itself a grand Consciousness, yet I soon observed a marked change to take place and to become prevalent in all of them. This change was at first exceedingly beautiful, and consisted of a slight rhythmic motion in the atoms of a Sphere. The atoms danced; living opals shot through with tenderest Light.

Seeing this, I could but ask myself, "What new Thoughts are in the dreams of the Spheres?" This motion was soon imparted to the Spheres themselves. They trembled into corruscations of Light and grandly awoke. From them, thus swaying, issued glories that no tongue may name, nor do words contain them. Each Sphere thus joining the choral dance emitted a choral song; music whose ordained instrument is the naked soul; music that is visible flames of sweetest, intensest desire.

All my being awoke into delicious longings in which reverence had no place. I said to my Companion: "What is the burden of this bewitching song?" Very gravely he replied: "It sings of the Life of the world."

I wondered to hear him speak so solemnly of what gave me so great delight, but when I turned again to the Spheres I felt a new perplexity. The accelerated motion had produced colours more vivid, more of the gross and solid nature of earthy pigment; the music now shrilled across the etheric spaces; there was in it the strident note of crass emerald, the bugle blare of blazing crimson. The Spheres would sleep no more. Yet I saddened now at their brilliant awakening; in my inner heart a deep voice said: "This is the end of all desire."

The music augmented in volume; the aerial dance became a mad whirl to madder-yet harmonic-sound. This sound marshalled the turbulent atoms at the spheric centers, where they set up tentative efforts towards crystallization -form. These efforts impeded the spheric motion. Laboured, troubled movements, indicative of troubled Consciousness, set in. The fair Thought of the Spheres was disturbed. Streams of red fire, strange contractive motions, throes whose every convulsion made the Spheres less ethereal, sound whose every note made the atoms more gross, until suddenly the formative nucleus at the centre shuddered forth into form -- a form which caught only a dim reflection of the original Light, a form which could not exist at all on the original plane of the Spheres.

Must the awakened Spheres hereafter bear that grotesque burden? Suspended there, fringed only with the gracious spheric hues, gross cause of the dispersal of beauteous Being, still I recognized it, still I wept as I said!: "Comes the earth-child thus forth? Surely this is Death that I have witnessed, and not Life."

My Companion answered: "That is in truth what thou hast witnessed. A death to Devachanic existence, a birth into the material Life which thou and thy blinded fellows call 'the world'. The form whose birth thou hast seen is but the model of the earthly one which it informs. It is thy lot to know more of this matter of so-called Life and Death. Another time I will again meet thee; thou shalt then undergo some experience of Devachanic Life." He disappeared, leaving me in my ethereal body adrift upon the night.

THE SLEEPING SPHERES PART II.

The Messenger had told me that, having thus seen the Devachanic life from outside, as it were, I should also go through the experience. His words had speedy fulfillment. Before recounting what befell me thereafter, two points must be made clear.

1. The experience I passed through next was my own experience; it was not that of any other as to its details. For the act of dissolution, or separation, called "death", varies in details with individuals. So do the post-mortem experiences. All die, all pass through Kāma-loka (or the place of desires), all have some Devachanic experience, even though mere materialistic minds sleep it dreamlessly away. But the details of experience are different with each human soul (Manas) that casts off a body. There are as many kinds of death, I may say, as there are souls, and not one unvarying experience for all. And why? Because it is not "death" at all, in fact. If we lived but one mortal life and then died, according to ordinary belief, the act of death might be the same for all. But as the human soul chooses now objective life and now life subjective, making now its own heaven world, choosing now its own earth-place and experience, we can see that, though all pass the portals called Life and Death, the methods and details must differ with each. At a later period, I came to a knowledge of other and different forms

of death and after-death experiences, each typical of a given type of individual, or, to put it more correctly, of soul.

2. The second point is this. My own and first experience, which I am about to recount to you, was, to me, perfectly real. I did not, at the time, compare it with the previous sight of the sleeping Spheres, nor with anything else. I was plunged in the experience itself. I did not call it “death.” I did not know it as “death”. I lived it. I was that experience itself. I knew it only as a fullness of life hitherto unguessed at, one hitherto absent even from my highest imaginings, my most vivid dream.

Yet remember this. I lost sight of non-essentials only. Never did I forget for an instant the essential fact of the Ego, the fact of identity; I had full knowledge that the subject of this experience was “I myself”. This seems a clumsy way of saying that my consciousness, though purified and uplifted, broadened also, still identified the Perceiver as “I”. To put it after another fashion: I knew perfectly well all the time that it was “I myself” undergoing this new and beautiful life. My consciousness, while it perceived the identity of Being, the identity of souls, never passed into the All-Consciousness which is all-in-all and knows no separateness.

This fact alone shows that Devachan is not the highest state. It is the subjective existence of the personal and higher Ego. It is not the impersonal, non-separate condition of that Divine and Higher Self which is a state of the Divine Ego, and not a body or form. This Higher Self is a state of the Sphere, and may occur during the lifetime of the physical body, being entered at will by the white Adept who, by exercise of the purified and universal volition, or will-energy, can enter all and any state of consciousness at will. But Devachanic existence is quite other than this highest state.

After I had passed back to the ordinary consciousness, then, and then only, was I able to compare the two events illustrated by the two parts of this article. Part I is the Seeing. Part II is the Being. Having had both experiences, I was able to complete one by the other, and to observe what point of seeing corresponded to the other point of being. For example, I saw what a change of colour, such as I had seen, meant in the life of Thought through which I passed.

It is a difficult experience to make clear to you, and my best plan will be to tell you first all that I went through, and afterwards to compare the two experiences of exterior observation, or sight, and interior observation, or being. In this way you will travel along the path taken by myself. If I were to stop at different points of my narrative for purposes of comparison, all the unity of experience will be lost and you will be confused.

Let me premise, therefore, that when this second experience came to me, the friends about me thought that I had in truth died. There were no signs of life, visible to the trained, medical observation. Rigor of the body set in and continued for hours. All the death signs were apparent. Hence those who loved me went through the experience in another form, the most harrowing form, for they thought the soul beloved by them had again passed from mortal sight upon the wings of the air, that it might be rejoined, but would not return. So they mourned for me, plunged in anguish while “I myself” was with them in a fullness of life yet unknown. Take comfort, oh you mourners! You alone suffer in your blindness. For the so called dead there is only exceeding great joy from which no beloved soul is absent, to which no sense of loss is possible.

When this experience first befell me I was lying upon my bed, whither I had been conveyed by reason of sudden heart failure. Great pain, throbs and nervous shocks vibrating deeply through my whole being, had caused me to close my eyes. A voice, well-known and well-beloved, seemed to speak to me from afar, and to pierce through a thick fog in my brain, a fog like an enveloping, down-pressing mist, with which the brain-matter struggled, striving to go through the motions of thinking, motions impeded by that increasing semi-material weight. I could not reply, but the voice spoke again, with an accent so imploring, so urgent, that I made a mighty

effort, as it seemed to me.

Lift my heavy swollen tongue I could not; sound would not well up into the throat; not a muscle anywhere would respond to my will. Yet once again that voice besought me, and so great was the anguish it conveyed, that I could not endure the thought of such misery on the part of one I loved. Once again I made a desperate effort; I seemed to myself to writhe convulsively, to struggle with all my body, though I am told that no motion on my part was visible to the bystander; and then, at last, I succeeded in opening my eyes, to see dark earnest eyes, soul-lighted, gazing eagerly into mine. And then I saw no more. A deep breath passed through me and left me, and I fell into Thought. At this moment I appeared to the bystander to draw my last breath and to “die”.

It was not the same so far as I was concerned. That look from eyes I knew so well started a deep train of Thought, in which I was soon steeped, immersed. This train began with thinking of the loved comrade’s pain. Then I longed to soothe that pain. Upon this wish followed the thought that our philosophy, which we had tried to live, and which had been as a guide to our steps, must soon step in and forbid all grieving, all sorrow. Then, naturally, I thought of the times when these spiritual teachings had already supported us; on this followed remembrances of the time when I had not as yet heard of these teachings. This thought seemed to act like a sudden spring which, when touched, releases a concealed door; the whole of my life sprang out and filed before me in review, through that opened door of the brain.

Days of childhood, careless, unconscious, full of nature pleasures, joy in life and motion and the companionship of all the creatures; the human creatures like myself, and the dear animals who understood the child-life so well, it seemed: the underworld little people seen by childhood’s eyes only. Slowly the opening mind grasped more and more of the fullness of Nature, the panorama of the skies swept in, the stately march of sound and colour began. Rich delights held revel in the opening consciousness, only to be chilled by the cold dawn of self-consciousness.

The child began to feel itself apart from Nature, apart also from fellow beings who spoke what ‘it could not ratify. Misunderstood, miscalled, misapplied, was its little life. All that children thought was foolish; Life was other than it appeared to the innocent heart of childhood. Most of what was seen by a child’s clear seeing did not exist, was not so understood, nor was it seen by the wise elder people; it was only the folly of naughty children, and, if persisted in, was punishable as a lie.. The child must conform to accepted ideas, or suffer punishment. Thus children suffer with the pioneers of Truth.

The young heart and mind were docile; they strove to believe as they were bidden; they succeeded in a measure-and what then? What then? This, to wit-that the mind, developing further, observed that grown people did not act what they believed-or said they, believed. It seemed as if to think was one thing, to do was quite another thing.

A grim puzzle came before the childheart. It said, in its puzzle, in its dim recesses: “What shall I do? Shall I think true, or shall I act true?” And again: “If I say what I think and do it, I am naughty. But if I do what I am told and say what they teach me, I am good, and I want-oh-! how I want to be good. But I don’t understand it, and it isn’t true to me. And if I even do what they tell me, I must think, and then I am naughty again.” So a passionate sense of wrong sprang up in the child’s heart, a wrong it could not define or name; just a cry far down in its nature for justice and for light.

But Nature wearies. A child cannot cope with the surging tides about it: To yield is easier for the plastic un moulded nature; persistence of struggle is not for the child. So; I say, it yields, or, rather, it sinks back exhausted, and then comes the fatal time; the time when the still developing sense-mind perceives the life of sense and pleasure,, when these are tasted, understood, enjoyed. And then the lesson of thinking what one does

not act upon, of believing things which have nothing to do with our lives-the hateful lesson of not caring about the divorce of Thought and Life, but only for one's mere personal honour, only to speak the truth about, objective events, to care for true speech more than for a true life, a true soul this parrot lesson was learned, well learned, because it made life easy, it stifled care.

The child became indifferent to living a lie; indifferent to saying prayers it did not understand to a God it could not comprehend and ceased to care for, as a child will cease to care for anything which is not vital, not necessary to its inner nature, and contrary to its ideas of justice-that justice for which children care so much and to which we may nearly always appeal. The eyes of the mind widened; they took in pain, cruelty, wrong; they found that no one cared much, that most people put these things out of mind; that they were done by an all-wise, all-merciful, loving God, as punishment.

But not all were punished. The child, came to know of sins rewarded by the world and passed over by that God. It felt. It could not reason. It rebelled. Rebelled at its teachers; rebelled, at the books; rebelled at injustice; clamoured to be understood; cried out to understand. Love was all about it, but love could not soothe it. It wanted to know. The key to the riddle was missing. It was told it thought too much; told to go and play. And, child-like, it played, revolving its riddle. Child-like, it kept silence, for a child learns, soonest of all lessons, that silence is the great refuge from scorn, from mockery, from rebuke. Thus the first teaching of hypocrisy comes to the child, and it learns pretence as the only right of sanctuary left to man.

Still it wondered, still it dreamed. And then, all at once, in a day or a night a change swept over; material existence paraded its brilliant colours, its seductive sweets; the child rushed into the vortex of existence, it forgot, in pleasure, the need to understand. Life arose before it, alluring, exciting, full of strange things. Oh yes! there were death and joy and passion and new scenes and loves and hates, and all the delicate things of sense in sound, colour, taste. In Thought, too, was pleasure, Thought of Art and Poetry, and love of dreams, and ideal hopes, all blended in one swift, ever-changing phantasmagoria. Sorrows came, and were half sweet after too much rejoicing. Gladness came and rescued from grief. All was new and interesting, all, except here and there a moment, an eye-wink, a breath, as it were, a something that blew cold and chill and seemed to wither everything, a moment in which nothing seemed worth while, because nothing lasted.

And then came a new pang when the child, grown much older, discovered in itself, a horror at the idea that these things should last. It had wearied of all, turning from one to the other. How dreadful the idea that any should last long, and longer still!

So Life surged by in a swift, flashing Thought. Distinct scenes too, of danger, of illness, of loss. There were those awful moments when the heart sees the beloved ones dying, and cannot follow them into the unseen with any, certain hope. Those other moments too, equally terrible, when the unworthiness and falseness of things or persons trusted and beloved is discovered. The death of bright ideals befell. And over all, under all, the grim traits of unreality, the sense of the falsity of the whole of Life. The soul sought then some God, "for any God to hear the cry". For something real to rest upon. In vain, the world it knew was given over to change and unbelief; there was nothing to live and to die by. Slowly one rung after another of Life's ladder was passed, and hunger for something real grew greater, fiercer, more burning, more intolerable, more maddening, until Ah! the dawn of the beautiful hour when the soul found itself.

Yes, there, within the heart, above the mind, there was a something real and true. Some spiritual teaching, it may be, which explained this tangled web of Life. Some truth discovered in sorrow nobly borne for others' sakes. Some truth in duty performed for duty's sake. Some glimpse of Love unfettered by self, a love that went out to the world and gave, and gave and gave again. What can it matter? The fact remains that the heart which had yearned for something true and for some high companionship found these. It reached out for an ideal whose

very existence was denied by the intellect. The heart prophesied the Beautiful which the mind could not discover.

And why could mind not discover that Perfection? For a very simple reason which, simple as it is, has baffled whole races of mankind in turn. Because mind, Janus faced, looks forward into matter and backward into, spirit, and reports duality and not identity. For mind, the experiencer and reporter, deals only with effects. It does not sense the Cause, the Rootless Root. And this is because mind cannot of itself discover the formless, for Mind, the Mind Universal, is itself the first manifested Form. Unto the formed, all things have form; unto, the spiritual, all things are spirit. Now the Heart of Love is spiritual.

I-speak, not of Love as we know it, for that is a reflected, distorted light. I speak- of Eros, the One Ray, rather. Its reflection, pure and universal, is to be found in the heart of every human being. And the proper office of mind, the pioneer and discoverer of the objective world, is to cull experience after experience, and to offer these up to the heart, until that heart-star shall recall its ancient splendour, until it shall again see that truth and peace are not to be found in a world of reflected effects.

So the heart awoke, struggling with the vain assertions of matter, and all at once saw that itself was at once the runner and the goal, the seer and the thing seen. It came face to face with its Ideal and saw that Ideals are causes, saw that the Ideal is the only Real. Then with infinite pain it arose, and turned, back upon the world-path, and closed the eyes of the mind for a space upon the world of matter; it left the material husks and the brutish part of itself and strove to return to the Father. "Every good and perfect gift cometh down from 'above' from the Father of Lights, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The heart reached up to that unchanging Father, the Elder Light that "lighteth every man that cometh into the world". The Mahätma and that Light are not different.

Thus it was that the various scenes of Life passed very rapidly before me. In each I seemed to have a choice, and the choice appeared to be for either spirit or matter, for the formed or for the formless and unformulated, for evolution or against it, for rigidity and coagulation in a fixed, unprogressive mould, or away from the stationary to the ever-living. For the most part I appeared to understand all the varied experiences of this long, long Thought.

But here and there were some I did not understand. I had, not fully tasted them. I had, as it were, been forced to quit them too soon.

So soon as this thought came before my mind, my experience divided itself into two parts. One part was made up of the higher impulses, the clear intuitions, the brightest dreams for others' good. In these I felt a quiet certainty that I was upon the only path the soul could tread uprightly, the only path in which it could find full satisfaction, interior peace.

In the other part a voice within seemed to whisper of great deeds to be done, glories to be achieved, knowledge of life to be attained, and through my whole being flashed an impulse towards action. I must be up and doing, I must come into objective contact with everything, I must prove everything, and that proof must be external, tangible, visible to the world.

My very soul seemed to battle to and fro between these conditions, these two parts of itself. Now the outer action was everything, and now the interior certainty alone was to be relied upon. My thoughts surged to and fro, like lightning flashes.

All at once I felt I could no longer struggle; I must go forth into Life and taste and feel and do. With this, a flame seemed to sweep over and devour me. Every wish I ever had poured into my mind. Armies of wishes, myriads of desires, pressing upon me, tearing at me. More and more fiercely a bottomless, sea of cravings poured

in tumult through my brain. One interminable, mad dance of remembrance, scene upon scene, picture after picture. Germs of I knew not what woke up and ran, in uproarious riot, through the brain, until lands and ships; stars and homes; men, women, creatures, and angels; meadows and mountains; flowers, books, gems, food, fruits, garments, music, dreams; haunting eyes; snatching hands; innumerable faces; skies and herbage and growths of every clime; wars and silences; banners and colours; hopes, fears, alarms, wealth, disease, poverty, desires, danger, loves, hatreds; deaths, and lives, and all, the content of the world of forms pressed in upon the brain in one vivid lightning 'bolt' distracting, inviting, receding, advancing, and I wanted to do all and to feel all, instantaneously, with a huge, insatiable appetite, a voracious maw for the whole of Sense-Life at a single breath.

I felt a hunger that no experience could satiate; an intolerable need to fill myself full with experience. I desired to lie abroad on all the hills, to live in all the creatures. I burned to be a thousand, a million human beings all at once, and to feel the palpitant, seething whole of life through a million channels; to play every part, to feel, feel, FEEL, till every sense was asleep; till every sensuous atom should fail and yet should know itself unsatisfied while yet one single point of Life remained, untasted, unabsorbed. This was the saturnalia of Desire. I was learning that the desire for Form-Life does not cease with gratification. I was in torment in the Kamaloka, and the World-Desire made sport of me.

Yet not for long! Something within me arose and bade the wild procession cease. It was that other part of me which arose, majestic, calm. From the inner place of peace rang out all clarionwise and clear the deep "I AM" of the soul. As flee the miasmatic mists before the sun rays, so fled the troops of Desire before the sun of the soul. The deepest need of my nature manifested itself. It was the need of being, and not the desire of doing.

The noblest dreams I had ever had of principles made manifest through duty done, arose, one by one, gracious and full of peace. I remembered that what I had ever needed and never found, was The Peace. And its doors flew open before me; and It became one with me, became my own soul. For I remembered the Teachers, the Light-bringers. I recalled the Master-Soul, the One. And at this thought a clear, sweet bell smote the air, and from the invisible spaces the Companions gathered round about and looked upon the Symbol of the Shadow; the Star of the one Darkness; the mystic emblem of Unity. And I remembered that I was one with Soul and Nature, and not separate, and my soul knelt before the One, the Unity, and adored Truth in silence. And so I entered the Peace. Thus doing, I dreamed, and now I was a sleeping Sphere, calmly resting as a "delicate milky film upon the golden ocean of light", for I had unknowingly cast aside every body and was a "dweller of the Sphere", myself that Sphere.

The fret and fever were over, gone the turbulence of desire, the scintillating thoughts. In an infinite leisure I seemed to rest, to repose. Thought was all, was all in all, and my only thought was Peace. So I was Peace, in 'a state of Being where to think is to be.' Then slowly arose and expanded before me the highest and holiest aspirations of my life. First, the loved ones, whom I had yearned to know fully. And one by one I knew their souls completely. All their suppressed hopes, and loves stood out before me, crystal clear. They were what they had longed to be and not what life had seemed to make them. Here and there must they have been scattered; some as human beings on earth; some as Spheres in the ether; but to me was no distinction; all dwelt in my heart; each was myself. Dream upon dream bloomed delicately before me; I experienced each one. Of each I took my fill. That is to say, I dwelt long in thought upon every noble ideal and lived each one through to the core. I seemed to assimilate each until I became the very thought itself.

I had longed to uplift the downtrodden, and they filed before me, rich in experience, glorious through endurance, helpers of their fellows, saviours of the race.

I had desired knowledge, and the stars defiled before me, giving up their secrets for the good of future races

of men.

I had pined, as the wayfarer in the desert pines for water, for the companionship of the true, the single-hearted, the unswerving companions of the order of Pain. And behold! these were within me and were my very selves, and together in a bond of unbroken sanctity we worked, for millions yet unborn.

Great Souls aided us. Great Spirits passed through us. Great Thoughts took form within us. We Became. And to us, so becoming, was revealed the great Vision. Man does not know it. Eye hath not seen it. Mind cannot name it. It is. The silver Spheres: bowed themselves and trembled; they opened their azure veils, and seemed to become one with the Unknowable as they dreamed the mystic Vision of the Grail, sainted and holy, the Vision of Humanity redeemed and godlike, the dream of the many becoming The One.

I dare not say more. I cannot if I would. Yet oh! my comrades, know this. The highest realization of the Heaven-World is a dream of the selfless selves. We are nothing there. We have vanished! In that life at its best there is only the goal, the attainment of unity for those who suffered separation; the realization of peace for the whole of all the worlds. No one is near. No one is far. All are; all rest in the whole of nature, one, indivisible, and at peace. It matters not whether any one beloved soul travails upon earth or sleeps near at hand, 'a singing Sphere' to the Sphere-dreamer all are himself, at peace with himself.

Do you ask me, brothers, what of those who labour still upon the groaning earth? What of the cruel wrongs that still endure? I admit that we ignore them in that Heaven-World which is to us the realization of all that is ripe and fair. And so, although we have well-, earned all that dream of peace, or whatever state of bliss, becomes ours in the Dream-Land, still I say that the Heaven, World is still a state of Self. Fair as its outward and inward seeming may be, it is but an assimilation of our highest dreams. It is the highest subjective snare of souls. The Self-Existent is not found within that well-earned state of rest.

While thus these thoughts endured, they gradually came to lose all form, You must remember that now my Consciousness was that of Thought only. In Thought I lived and moved and had my being. And for a time these thoughts were definite, were realizations of previous hopes and ideals. Let me illustrate for the sake of clearness. I had, while in objective earth-life, ties of perhaps unusual strength with a number of, people, all of whom were working, in divers manners, towards a high and common ideal. On earth, we often differed, sometimes sharply; and yet the tie and the Ideal prevailed. At first, in the Heaven-World, I felt all my special comrades to be near me; those whom I best knew imparted, by their seeming nearness, a deep sweetness to my Thought. Presently I became less conscious of the identity of these friends with myself, and more conscious of that Ideal which we had shared. Thought of this Ideal expanded, until it grew greater than you can conceive, and this noble Ideal embraced all lands, all ages, all people, and all creatures, born and to be born.

As this beautiful Identity unfolded itself, Thought seemed to turn, with purity and harmony untold, towards every universal conception, in order to realize unity in all. Then all the worlds and beings became friends of my Thought. Then I knew, oh! my brothers, without discord, without separateness. Gone were those shapes of fear which hide us from one another. Gone the cruel masks which Life forces us to wear, the bodies which conceal us, the barriers between soul and soul. I saw you as you are you, Immortals, Inheritors and Rulers of a Kingdom not made with hands. Even our foes were our sterner selves only. We found Identity in difference, likeness in unlikeness; our souls looked upon one another, and with an ineffable impulse we united in The Ideal.

After this unspeakable moment the terms of consciousness changed. The universal laws began to be learned. The unattainable knowledge drew near. Thought was expressed in musical numbers; then in sounds full of a meaning never to be expressed to mortal ear, finally in colours, living, mystical, wonderful, every colour expressing a formless, spiritual Idea. And all this was myself, was yourselves, was one enraptured Ego. Yet I

never lost the sense of individuality; the dewdrop was still distinct from the shining sea. So too, I knew each soul I loved, and when I came to love all souls and each was as my own Thought to me, still I had a distinct and separate consciousness of each. Yet all were One Thought.

Dreaming thus, Truth unfolding itself in flower-like hues, I seemed to sink deeper and yet deeper into a world of pure Ideation, formless, calm, but great with a power I cannot describe. A period of Thought-immersion passed. I do not know how first began that cause which brought my dream-existence to an end. I seemed first to feel vaguely, but with dismay, that all I knew was still the effect of a Cause that still escaped me. Nothing existed in and by, itself. All I knew was the Tree of Life and of Being, of the objective and the subjective. Where was the Root? Where was the fountal well-spring of Being?

So soon as this idea moved into my mental vision I seemed to become something separate from the Thought. Thought and I were rent in twain. Instead of rest in an Ideal, I wanted the Producer of the Ideal. The Self-Existent was wanting. Mind re-awoke and I observed my Thoughts and myself as two distinct entities, or as phases of one Ego. What was wanting to this Thought? Was I so sure that Thought was all? The Cause; the Cause; I clamoured for the Cause. And a profound, Echo answered me: "Thou thyself art that Cause." I asked of that interior aerial Voice: Where shall I find my self?" And the Voice answered: "Not in the Heaven-World. Not in the world of effects and rewards whither desire for results hath brought thee".

And then I saw the truth of this, and peace became odious to me. For it was a false peace, a mirage, a deception. In my consciousness dawned a tiny point of differentiation. Thought subdivided. I became, as it were, at war with myself. I wearied of inaction. I wanted to retrace my steps. Soul, the mighty, shook off its sloth, recognized that it was in a "No-Thoroughfare," and girded itself for a return to objective action, hoping in that to find the clue to the final Cause. Then Mind, the critic and divider, again stood forth. Time followed after, coming again into view. The sense of 'Time' had been lost when unity prevailed. Separateness now awoke the consciousness of Time. From some unknown part of my being, burning points seemed to spring out, stinging me to action. Thought of action drove away the uniform peace. Pictures of deeds and men once more streamed by—a long unending blazing river of Life.

My mind seemed to leap into action. It remembered forgotten things, things left undone, experiences untasted. Rest was a weariness, peace was an insipidity to this burning warrior mind. True, a dim and distant part of myself seemed to look upon the restless Thinker in cold estrangement. My soul quivered, hesitated between the two aspects of itself, hung poised, as it were, between sleep and action.

All at once, I knew not from whence, a torrent of sound swept over, the blare of the world stung my unaccustomed sense. From some gulf far away arose the tumult of Living. I realized that I had forgotten Life in dreams. With all the strength of my being I longed to reach Life again, to feel, to work, to act, to be.

A mad shudder swept Thought away, I became conscious of myself as a separate thing. I became conscious of the starry spaces, the Spheres, the Heavenland. Out of the deeps of my being rose a cry, the cry for Life, for action. And the cry was answered. The Heavenworld disappeared. The starry spaces rolled together like a scroll. Down, down, in a red gulf, I saw the red world. Between that world and me rolled a phantasmagoria; the Life to come in all its turbulence passed, as it were, across a screen. I was that screen. I knew it all. Yet was I undeterred, undismayed; The Life-thirst was upon me. I must greedily drink the whole of Life again.

Over the gulf I leaned; I felt myself take form in one unforgettable throe, Discords shrilled through me. Clamour pervaded me. Mad forces warred and keen desires jarred me. The grandeur of action thrilled me. I could not pause. I must look again on Life. I must be my own, one separate Self again. A, second throb, and I was born into my Sphere, a form in a world whence forms must fall. I gathered myself together. Over the red gulf

I leaned. Its exhalations made my consciousness reel. Into that gulf I plunged, for I must live once more. Even as I fell, I felt a fierce keen joy, as of a conscious flame shooting into a sea of flames.

And then? Then a crash. Then, Darkness. Then an end. There was only annihilation until I awoke. Where? In the world of forms. Here, where form conceals the soul. Here, where I have lost my Heaven comrades. Here, where I find so few of you, my brothers! Here, where I put out groping hands and cannot touch you; eyes that are wistful and cannot see you for the tears. The heart calls, and hears no answer. Its call was too weak. Its faith was too small a thing. Where are you, oh my brothers? Let us not longer hide from one another. Let us look upon Life and one another as Souls set within one Universal, Eternal Soul. Then, perhaps, we shall see.

For, as in the Heaven-World the Heaven was our unity, so even here, all about us, a truer Heaven lies. If we will seek for identity and not for difference, we shall find the Heaven of fraternal Thought, and we shall find it, not in the place of dreams, but in this land where we stand, and to which we have come for one another, in order to meet one another, to experience and, know one another. Each is here for each and for all. Why do we not remember, our dependence upon one another? Each one of us is, as it were, an embrasure from which a different facet of, Life is to be seen. Learning one another, we may learn the whole of Life, we may embrace the whole of Existence. From that whole and from it alone, the secret of the Unmanifested is to be gathered.

For know this. Minds may differ; they differ as to formulae. Formulae are the forms of the Mind, the pictures cast upon the Screen of Life by various orders of minds. But hearts do not differ. The heart always ignores the differentiations of formulae, or forms, and relies upon the underlying unity, the identity of aim or of Nature. "One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin." In these feelings of a substratum of identity the highest secrets are locked up. In them is a key to a higher place than the Heaven-World, the Svarga Land. That place is the Land of the Divine Darkness, the Causal Fountain. It is the home of the Self Existent. It is where Non-Being, or the Ideal, has not yet gone forth into manifested Being.

Need I say more? I think not. You will have seen that the atoms of Desire inherent in the Sphere woke up from their latent, subjective condition and vibrated newly toward another Life, a birth into the manifested worlds again. For the subjective current had died away. The cycle of objectivity had reawakened. Under the play of this new force the Life-atoms felt the breath of their lower fires and tended to the lower world. Desire of objective Life bred objective form, and form bred need of objective action, and by this path I returned from the Heaven-world. Yes, I returned, still seeking the Root of Being.

I awoke. I was lying in my bed. The winter wind blew over me. The house I had re-entered, that house I call my body, was stiff and stark. I awoke in the outer skies; I was drawn towards the chill body by a vital cord, as it were. The body was hideous. It was shrunken, emaciated, drawn. I loathed to enter such a dwelling. The sun was rising redly over the empurpled trees of the great wide park. I hesitated. I thought to take the path of the sun. I could not come in contact with that form like a shrivelled monkey. All at once, I saw the Messenger beside me. He touched my forehead. My eyes unclosed. I saw that this hideous parchment body lay across the knees of one who wept bitterly, who, weeping, upheld it to the rays of the rising sun, and called upon the Sun of Life, and called upon the hidden Sun of Souls, and wept bitterly.

"Wilt thou re-enter?" said the Messenger. "I will re-enter," I answered. "For what reason?" asked the Messenger. Fiercely I turned upon him. "To quench one human tear, will I re-enter," cried I. The Messenger bowed his head, "Enter in the name of the Lords of the Law, and mayst thou be blessed in thy pilgrimage towards the hidden Sun," he whispered. He withdrew, and shuddering, I re-entered that horrid form as one enters the darkness of the mother's womb. A shock, a shudder; and then I felt no more, I knew nothing.

I awoke. I was again conscious of the bodily environment. Like a heavy weight it surrounded me. My dulled

ears heard a low sound. The sound grew a little louder. It was a curious sound; commingled gasps and sobs, with a note as of laughter. Someone was weeping for joy. Someone rejoiced to regain me. I looked down upon the comrade weeping with bended head. And I too wept in that cramped house, my body. I wept to feel that my Soul and I were twain. God-the One Life had joined us together, and man, the human mind, desirous of new experience, had put us asunder.

My comrade wept for joy. I wept, but for sorrow. The comrade was glad to rejoin me. I was sad, for in the Heaven-World we had been wholly one; in the world of forms we must know some separation. Here we were twain. Here we were shut away from one another by bodily environment and differentiation of mind. In the Heaven-World I had leaned upon the twin-soul, I had become one with all souls amidst unnumbered glories; here must I vainly seek the beloved souls beneath the garb of form! Form, which hides us from one another! Mind, whose differences prevent our recognizing one another! How bitter the thought! I had tasted at least a higher form of union in the Heaven-World, and with that memory still freshly upon me, the highest form seemed but dull, gross earth.

So we wept together; one for joy, one for sorrow. He, because he had regained me in the flesh. I, because I lost him in the flesh. Slowly we came to look, each upon the other's grief, and to understand each the other. Repentant, he cried: "I have dragged thee back to earth". Repentant, I moaned to him "I would have cut thee off from experience and from duty, because I longed to roam the heavenly fields with thee". As each entered upon the feeling of the other, the heart of pity made us one again.

The Messenger stood before us. He spoke thus: "Do you not see that in Compassion and in duty done for duty's sake alone, lies the path to the Self-Existent? All else is Desire of Results and lands you in the World of Effects. The Sphere blossoms forth into objectivity and indraws into the root of subjectivity, but Permanence is only found when the human heart desires no results, but hungers for the Self-Existent Cause alone."

He vanished. We clung together, and the Truth came home to our minds. In the heart of Compassion only, in duty done for the sake of all, in pure Renunciation of result for self, thus alone can mankind escape the snare of the Heaven-World, the exalted dreams of an exalted Egoism; thus alone can the soul know itself, pure as the first dawn, strong as the Eternal; thus alone can mankind become the indivisible One Self, thus only can the sleeping Spheres become the universal Sphere, the Ring "Pass-Not"-the Manvantaric Goal, the Root, the Unity.
Jasper Niemand.

Book Review:

Blavatsky. Helena P. *The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky, Volume 1* (May 2004, 0-356-0, \$29.95cl).

Helena P. Blavatsky (1831-1891) is widely celebrated as the leading esoteric thinker of the nineteenth century who influenced an entire generation of artists and intellectuals and introduced Eastern spirituality to the West. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky brought to public attention the main concepts of the theosophic tradition in order to provide an antidote for the materialistic thought of that day. She was a Russian woman who came to the United States in the 1870's after spending twenty years traveling the world, learning about spiritual traditions firsthand and developing and disciplining her inner powers. In New York City in 1875 Helena Blavatsky, Colonel Henry S. Olcott, William Q. Judge, and about a dozen others founded The Theosophical Society, which quickly grew into an international organization. It is to several modern sages or advanced human beings that H. P. Blavatsky traced the main outline of the teachings she transmitted.

The Northwest Branch of TS (Pasadena). *What is Theosophy?*

The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky, Volume I contains all the known letters that H. P. Blavatsky wrote between 1860 and the time just before she left for India 1879. Among the letters are the controversial and colorful letters sent to the director of the Russian secret police offering to join their ranks. Also documented are her attempts to begin a Society of Spiritualists in Cairo, Egypt and the tragic and at time comedic troubles she experienced in doing so. You will receive a behind-the-scenes look at the establishment of the Theosophical Society and of the heated debates, both internal and external, surrounding its emergence. And you will experience H. P. Blavatsky's infectious enthusiasm as she corresponds about beginning her first published work, *Isis Unveiled*. This is the first of a four planned volume being presented as the H. P. Blavatsky Collected Letters Series.

This book is a must for the history buff and would provide interesting reading if not enlightening information for the general inquirer of Theosophy. John Algeo and his staff did an excellent job of providing the useful background information to set the stage for the letters. The history presented is unbiased and set in a logical time sequence. The readers may find the history of how this project was started very interesting. Blavatsky's letters give a first hand experience of how Helena thought and what she had to experience.

This volume would not be useful to a yogi, as it does not go into any detail as to what HPB did or was experiencing from a yogic standpoint. We do look with interest to the other volumes, as this became more of a focus of and for her work in later years.

Willy Schmit writes from The Hague, Netherlands

First of all I give my best wishes for the New Year. I can imagine your delicate situation regarding Dick's health and the future of your periodical. I can also perceive the commitment of your good friends in America and elsewhere, in which I join.

It is already some time ago that I received your November/December issue, nevertheless I should like to share with you some elucidations on subjects coming up therein, such as on prayer and the significance of the mantra.

On pages 2 and 3 of the HCT are inserted some parts from *The Key To Theosophy* in which H.P. Blavatsky gives an explanation of what Theosophy has to say about prayer:

"... prayer is not only a pleading or petition, but also is an invocation or incantation. The mantra, or any rhythmically chanted prayer of the Hindus has precisely such a meaning. ..." In your commentary you say: "H.P. Blavatsky was not a Hindu, nor a follower of the Hindu Religion. What she did not understand was that a mantra that has been enlivened by one who knows the True Self can impart that knowledge through that mantra."

To me, HPB not understanding an enlivened mantra is unlikely. What H.P. Blavatsky says about the mantra in *The Key to Theosophy* is meant for those interested, not familiar with the teachings. Therefore her statement concerning the mantra is quite sufficient in this case. One has only to turn to the fourteen volumes of the Blavatsky *Collected Writings* to become convinced of her extensive knowledge of *Brahma-Vidya*, (Wisdom of Brahma or the Divine), which encompasses Hinduism, Buddhism and any other 'ism.' Moreover, her Master was a Hindu and it was from the Masters that she received the assignment to bring back to the Hindus their own, original religion. For many years she lived in India and being an occultist she know about the deeper significance of the mantra. Turning to Vol. IX of Blavatsky *Collected Writings* we find the lengthy article: *Conversation on Occultism* page 120-1:

"It is in the ancient Sanskrit and the language that preceded it that mantrams are hidden. The laws governing their use are also to be found in those languages, and not in any modern philological store. ... all adepts have the power to translate a strictly regular mantram into any form of language so that a single sentence thus uttered by them will have an immense effect on the person addressed, whether it be by letter or word of mouth. ...

Student: Is there no way in which we might, as it were, imitate those adepts in this?

Sage: Yes, you should study simple forms of mantram quality, for the purpose of thus reaching the hidden mind of all the people who need spiritual help. You will find now and then some expression that has resounded in the brain, at last reducing such a result that he who heard it turns his mind to spiritual things.

Student: I thank you for your instruction.

Sage: May the Brahmamantram guide you to the everlasting truth. Om.”

On pages 251-2 of the same volume, in the article: “*Occultism Versus the Occult Arts*” we read:

There are four (out of the many other) names of the various kinds of Esoteric knowledge or sciences given, even in the esoteric Puranas. There is (1) Yajna-Vidya (knowledge of the Occult powers awakened in Nature by the performance of certain religious ceremonies and rites); (2) Mahavidya (the ‘great knowledge’ the magic of the Kabalists and the Tantrika worship, often Sorcery of the worst description); (3) Guhya Vidya (knowledge of the mystic powers residing in sound or ether, hence in the Mantras that are chanted prayers or incantations and depending upon the rhythm and melody used, in other words a magical performance based on knowledge of the forces of nature and their correlation); and Atma-Vidya (knowledge of the Soul, the true wisdom by the orientalisists, but which means far more. This last is the only kind of Occultism that any theosophist who admires Light on the Path, who would be wise and unselfish, ought to strive after.”

In *Isis Unveiled* part I, XXXVIII:

“When the officiating Brahman invokes aditya – who, in her cosmic character, is the goddess-sun – he simply commands that potency (personalified in some god), which, as he asserts, ‘resides in the Mantra, as the sacred vach.’”

One could ask: “How could HPB have translated and expounded the slokas in *The Voice of Silence* without acquaintance of the powers of the inner man?”

Returning to the question of prayer as expounded by G. de Purucker in *Studies of Occult Philosophy* page 481-3 “*Prayer and Petitioning*’ you state in the first paragraph on page 6 that: *some Theosophists believe as Purucker does, that prayer is either useless or harmful but not helpful.*” Therein the word ‘petitionary’ is left out. That makes a great difference. I put a question mark after the word ‘some’ and also after the word ‘believe,’ because this is not the **belief** of G. de Purucker and ‘some Theosophists,’ but an exposition of the teachings of Theosophy.

In the second paragraph you state that G. de Purucker gives contradictory explanations. I quote:

It is interesting to note that in the beginning of the discussion, the author says that our prayers can have no effect upon the course of events, but in his conclusion he says that we should not pray because we have no right to interfere with the course of events.”

What does the article say? **Petitionary** (underlining by me) prayer, to us Theosophists, is not only wrong, but, if we may use ordinary human terms, is a spiritual impertinence.”

To me [Willy Schmit], it is quite clear that we, the composite beings as we are, with the Divine as our ‘Father in Heaven’ at the top, with the human aspect in between and the astral, vital, corporeal at the bottom, as personalities, as human humans, cannot influence with our ordinary selves, the **Divine**. In order to reach the latter, the Divine, we must have to abandon the personality, the synonym of limitation, which asks for discipline, for training. The following paragraphs of the article give us an extensive explanation of how we can fulfill this purpose.

The influence spoken of at the end of the article deals with the intermediary principle, the psychic, and it is evident that this psychic part of us can influence the psychic sphere of others. We have only to think of the many expositions of hypnotism, suggestion, glamour, etc. etc.

It is my sincere opinion that we have to invoke the warrior in ourselves, and in doing so we have begun to form a link with our higher nature. Every human being is in the possession of mind, will (a cosmic force, of which each entity can take its part, according to its level of evolution, as I learned), of discrimination, we can make choices and we have intuition – only, they have to be developed.

I hope that the above may be useful for our joint study of Theosophy.

Kind regards, Willy Schmit

In what ways do the theosophists act?

They act in formal ways as centers, libraries, presses, internet databases, bookstores and study groups. Some write for and publish magazines and books. Some lecture, carry on correspondence, provide interviews, organize discussions and presentations. Others translate the literature, transcribe book text to the internet, manage and work in those centers, presses and stores. But always there is a vast work going on, as in a movie production – *behind the scenes*. Any reporter or writer who writes an article or presents a broadcast touching on theosophical themes is, in fact, self enlisted in the effort. Any manager who paves the way to open doors for others to work through is a worker in the cause. Any person who speaks openly of universal brotherhood via various molds of structure is also self enlisted. To read and to be seen reading books and periodicals concerning so-called new thoughts is also potent activity. A display of thought provoking books in one's personal home, to be viewed by visitors, is productive work. Workers are plentiful and worldwide and not all of them call themselves theosophists.

Some student/workers are members of formal organizations which is of great help to those of us involved in the staging events. I would suppose that most student/workers promoting the ideas of brotherhood are not members of any formal theosophical group or clan, yet they work on. Some give of their time, energy and fits without expectation. Through these actions there is personal growth and change. We simply **TRY**. We work while *trying* to cultivate *not* looking for results or excitedly delivering announcements that we somehow grasp and possess a firm truth as opposed to a “thought of truth,” a “picture,” or an “idea.” ...

We work to bring a realized peace to the future. Some call this peace an all inclusive “universal brotherhood.” Anyone who delivers a good thought toward others is a worker. Anyone who accepts diversity within our wholeness is a worker. Anyone who can *try* to meet in discussion with others without prejudice and without domineering demands on the thoughts of others is a worker. Anyone who fails realizes, of course, that every being who treads this path of life will, by the very fact of his human nature, fail again and again alongside successes. This is self realization. This is every changing mind. This is a true scientific method.

John Rau. *Kali yuga Rag*. January 2004

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