

Euthanasia: How the issue is perceived

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<http://www.jemh.ca/issues/v9/documents/JEMH%20article%20Stahle%20final%20proof%20-%20copy-edited.pdf>

And:

<http://www.euthanasia.com>

Theosophy on abortion

H.P. BLAVATSKY "Is Foeticide a Crime" *Collected Writings* Vol V:107-8

Theosophy in general answers: "At no age as under no circumstance whatever is a murder justifiable!" and occult Theosophy adds:—"yet it is neither from the standpoint of law, nor from any argument drawn from one or another orthodox *ism* that the warning voice is sent forth against the immoral and dangerous practice, but rather because in occult philosophy both physiology and psychology show its disastrous consequence." In the present case, the argument does not deal with the causes but with the effects produced. Our philosophy goes so far as to say that, if the Penal Code of most countries punishes attempts at suicide, it ought, if at all consistent with itself, to doubly punish foeticide as an attempt to *double suicide*. For, indeed, when even successful and the mother does not die just then, *it still shortens her life on earth to prolong it with dreary percentage in Kamaloka*, the intermediate sphere between the earth and the region of rest, a place which is no "St. Patrick's purgatory," but a fact, and a necessary halting place in the evolution of the degree of life. The crime committed lies precisely in the willful and [108] sinful destruction of life, and interference with the operations of nature, hence—with KARMA—that of the mother and the would-be future human being. The sin is not regarded by the occultists as one of a *religious character*,—for, indeed, there is no more of spirit and soul, for the matter of that, in a foetus or even in a child before it arrives at self-consciousness, than there is in any other small animal,—for we deny the absence of soul in either mineral, plant or beast, and believe but in the difference of degree. But foeticide is a crime against nature. Of course the sceptic of whatever class will sneer at our notions and call them absurd superstitions and "unscientific twaddle." But we do not write for sceptics. We have been asked to give the views of Theosophy (or rather of occult philosophy) upon the subject, and we answer the query as far as we know.

H.P. BLAVATSKY *Isis Unveiled* Vol. I pp. 351 and 352 (Also *Collected Writings* Vol. VII pp. 178-9, 181-2)

Reincarnation, i.e., the appearance of the same individual, or rather of his astral monad, twice on the same planet, is not a rule in nature; it is an exception, like the teratological phenomenon of a two-headed infant. It is preceded by a violation of the laws of harmony of nature, and happens only when the latter, seeking to restore its disturbed equilibrium, violently throws back into earth-life the astral monad which had been tossed out of the circle of necessity by crime or accident. Thus, in cases of abortion, of infants dying before a certain age, and of congenital and incurable idiocy, nature's original design to produce a perfect human being, has been interrupted.

(...)

What reward or punishment can there be in that sphere of disembodied human entities for a foetus or a human embryo which had not even time to breathe on this earth, still less an

opportunity to exercise the divine faculties of the spirit?

G. de Purucker *Esoteric Instructions* 12, p. 99

I might, finally point out the fact, all too often ignored or indeed utterly unknown to modern men and women, that once conception has taken place and the embryo begin its growth any attempt whatsoever to stop its growth or to destroy it is plain murder in the teaching of the Esoteric Philosophy, considered as being only a little less bad than the murder of an adult human being, and this 'little less' only because such destruction takes place before the self-consciousness of the victim has had a chance to come into flower.

Let there be no doubt whatsoever about this fact, for it should be understood clearly among all Theosophists; and this one fact alone, while finding statement here in an Esoteric Instruction, it is perfectly permissible and proper to state anywhere and at any time and to anybody as being the teaching of Theosophy — I mean that any attempt to abort, or to destroy a human embryo is considered by us as murder.

How to deal with the fact that you had an abortion many years ago, decided in ignorance, not knowing anything of Theosophy, under the illusion that you made the right choice.

Peter Harvey *Introduction to Buddhism* p. 40

"What determines the nature of a karmic 'seed' is the will or intention behind an act: 'It is will (cetanā), O monks, that I call karma; having willed, one acts through body, speech or mind' (A.iii.415).

It is the psychological impulse behind an action that is 'karma', that which sets going a chain of causes culminating in a karmic fruit...

Actions, moreover, must be intentional if they are to generate karmic results: accidentally treading on an insect does not have such an effect, as the Jains believe. Nevertheless, thinking of doing some bad action is itself a bad (mental) karma, especially when one gives energy to such a thought, rather than just letting it pass. Deliberately letting go of such a thought is a good mental karma.

Regretting a past bad (or good) action, and resolving not to do it again lessens its karmic result as it reduces the psychological impetus from the act.

However, while painful feelings at the thought of a past act may be part of its karmic result, entertaining heavy guilt feelings is seen as associated with (self-)hatred, and as being an anguished state which is not conducive to calm, clarity and thus spiritual improvement."

Nicholas Weeks' comments on Peter Harvey

So you can see there are a couple of avenues to help those who regret having an abortion. It is not the action itself but the will or intent motivating it that is the key.

1) If the state of mind of the mother was eager to kill the baby with a motive of anger at its existence, that would probably be the worst intent. A just for the sake of convenience intention would produce a less negative result in the mind, but still bad. On the other hand if the mother really did not want to do it, but felt forced to do so, that is probably the best of bad

results. There are other intentions possible on the continuum of worst to less bad, but I cannot think of a neutral result.

2) As the last paragraph says 'heavy guilt feelings' are counterproductive so they should not be indulged. A firm resolution now to think, speak & act in a pro-life manner, regarding animals, death penalty, euthanasia etc. will also mitigate the negative karma of the intentional abortion and create new good karmic results.