



**International Theosophy
Conferences, Inc.**

A large, mature tree with a thick, textured trunk and a dense canopy of vibrant green leaves. The tree is set against a clear, bright blue sky. A bright sun is visible in the lower right quadrant of the sky, partially obscured by the tree's branches, creating a lens flare effect. The bottom of the image shows a thin strip of green grass.

**Helena Petrovna Blavatsky
Through Different Eyes
With ONE Heart**

ITC 2015

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Contributions Given at the Annual
International Theosophy Conference,
The Hague, The Netherlands



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About ITC

International Theosophy Conferences Inc. is a platform where Theosophical organizations and all other earnest students of Theosophy meet. This infers that ITC won't typically function as another Theosophical vehicle, in spreading Theosophy itself. Instead ITC is committed to connect all Theosophists, supporting them in their common cause in the light of the purposes of ITC, which are:

1. To maintain the principles of the Modern Theosophical Movement presented by H. P. B. as a living power in the minds and hearts of Humanity, encouraging explorations in the light of her teachings.
2. To foster mutual meaningful intercommunication, understanding and respect among the Theosophical mainstreams, stimulating thereby continuous spiritual Unity.
3. To be a platform, supporting and sponsoring the annual international Conference of Theosophical Organizations.
4. To unite people in sharing the Philosophy of Theosophy, studying and further exploring Religion, Philosophy and Science from a Theosophical Perspective.



Group photo taken outside the ITC location in The Hague.

Introduction

In August 2015 the 17th annual gathering of International Theosophy Conferences (ITC) took place in The Hague, The Netherlands. The title of this conference was:

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky Through Different Eyes With ONE Heart

And was subtitled:

What is our understanding of H. P. B.'s writings? How do they inspire all Theosophists, those affiliated with an organization or independent, to embody and transmit her timeless message to the modern world?

The focus of the 2015 Conference was the result of the outcome of the ITC 2014 Conference where with joint efforts the “2014 Naarden Declaration” was drafted. Key elements of the declaration are:

We commit ourselves through learning, training and cross-pollination to popularize and keep the teachings alive for future generations.

Our shared and most important objective is to keep the spirit of ITC 2014 alive.

The Declaration makes clear that Theosophists are aware of the challenge they face, and the need for cooperation and cross-pollination between the mainstream organizations to fulfill their common task of bringing Theosophy into the world. In the true spirit of brotherhood they can do this through sharing, collaborating and by being open minded.

The subsequent step in this process of cross-pollination and keeping the teachings alive is to learn more from each other. This requires that we be able to talk openly about our backgrounds. If we can talk about our differences, we will make it capable to learn from each other.

It was the purpose of the 2015 ITC Conference to learn about how the different branches of the theosophical tree look at and interpret the theosophical teachings. To learn what their theosophical stance is in today's world, and how Theosophists classify their undertakings in keeping the teachings alive for future generations.

Four main questions were addressed in The Hague:

- 1 - Who we are, our mission and where do we stand now?
- 2 - H.P. Blavatsky, H. P. B. and the current Messianic Cycle
- 3 - How to grasp the essence of H. P. B.'s timeless message?
- 4 - How to keep H. P. B.'s message alive for future generations?

Speakers from the Theosophical Society Adyar, the Theosophical Society Point Loma - Blavatskyhouse, The Hague and the United Lodge of Theosophists presented their views on these questions. The questions were further elaborated on in small working groups that consisted of Theosophists from different organizations, after which the outcomes were shared in plenary sessions.

In this publication we have collected the presentations that were given, hoping that you will draw inspiration from it, learning from the different theosophical branches and that you can share these views and insights with your study groups and lodges at home. Then a next step has been taken in this joint effort to help and support each other in our task to make and keep Theosophy a living power in the world.

Tell one who had never seen water, that there is an ocean of water, and he must accept it on faith or reject it altogether. But let one drop fall upon his hand, and he then has the fact from which all the rest may be inferred. After that he could by degrees understand that a boundless and fathomless ocean of water existed. Blind faith would no longer be necessary; he would have sup-
planted it with KNOWLEDGE.⁽¹⁾

Reference

1. H.P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. 1, p. vi (Preface).

1 - Who We Are, Our Mission and Where Do We Stand Now?

Who We Are, Our Mission and Where Do We Stand Now?

Contribution by Wesley Amerman

(United Lodge of Theosophists)

What is the United Lodge of Theosophists (ULT)?

I really should start by saying that I'm not a spokesperson for ULT. ULT is an association of students of Theosophy and has no central authority, no leaders, no mandatory discipline that would require a statement from any kind of an official purpose. Rather I speak as a student after a few years of studying Theosophy and participation as an individual associate of ULT.

Well, that being said I'd like to address a few questions that come up from time to time about ULT. One of the things that we are asked even by long time associates is: How is it that you're not an organization? You do things, you hold meetings, sometimes you publish magazines, but you don't have an official hierarchy, how is that?

Well we work as, we reply that we work as an association of students. We talk to one another, we collaborate, we cooperate as best we can. We could say that ULT is a kind of school of Theosophy. It's where students get together to learn Theosophy and that is its purpose.

ULT really is based on one fundamental idea and that is that each individual human being is capable of learning for him or her self. That is really a basic principle. It is essential to understand, because it addresses issues that come up from time to time in human organizations and associations. Issues of authority, issues of organization, issues of followers and followed.

Those kinds of things are really difficulties stemming from a misunderstanding of what a human being is. If we are really souls in evolution, then we need to regard each other as fellow travelers and as fellow travelers we have to respect the ability, the right, the capacity, the obligation of what Madame Blavatsky calls 'self induced and self devised efforts'. And that's really a basis of ULT, it's the fundamental principle upon which our work is founded.

So, it really brings up the question then if that's the work then what is Theosophy? Blavatsky did not claim to invent it, she always pointed to her Teachers and they – if we read history, read what those teachers wrote – all often pointed to their Teachers. So, really the question is: what ought we to do? Should we do less than she did? If she pointed to her teachers, we

should point to ours, and as a matter of historic record, Blavatsky and her co-worker William Quan Judge were primary resuscitators, re-presenters of Theosophy for the modern world, for our modern times.

It is to them that we turn for those principles of Theosophy, found in all the world's traditions, all that has been called the perennial philosophy, the wisdom-religion, the ancient teachings. But those fundamental principles are not different in one culture or another except in their expressions, their outward form.

So what we're really asking ourselves to do – and we ask Theosophists to do this – is to look at what the inner meaning is. Let's not look at the outer form, let's look at the essence of what's within. And if we do that, then the external differences, the external forms, the organizations, the difficulties pale into insignificance. So in ULT there is an expression that what we have in common with all Theosophists, is a similarity of aim, purpose and teaching. It doesn't say an identity, it says a similarity.

And in the words of our 'Declaration of Purpose' we find a ground on which to associate, to spread broadcast the teachings of Theosophy, to learn for our selves and to share with others of similar interests.

In effect, if we wanted to describe ULT in very simple terms, we would say: it's a school of Theosophy, nothing more and certainly nothing less. It is where students of a common purpose get together and try to understand what this wonderful wisdom tradition is.

We try to learn the principles, we try to understand them and make application in our daily lives, in our work together, in our common purpose.

What we do in the ULT?

So then we said ULT is an association of students not an organization. Though we try to allow each individual to come in contact as directly as possible with the ideas, with the teachings. So, what do we need? It's nice to have a place to meet, not always essential, not always possible. We need books, we need literature, we need something in common to study. Magazines are nice web pages and are increasingly useful. But these are all external tools, these are things that come and go with the times, with the culture, with the cycle that we're in; they're all external.

What matters, is Theosophy, Theosophia, those fundamental principles that we mentioned, those are what is important. And if we start with those, that's what students of Theosophy have in common. Not just the

organizational ‘trappings’ we might say. So, in that sense then what we have are philosophical bonds, not organizational ties. That doesn’t mean that we cannot work together, that there aren’t things that students of Theosophy can do in common, can share if they wish, but it means that the fundamental basis for union is on principles, it is on ideas and ideals. It is essentially a philosophical basis.

So, we have in ULT really just a handful of written documents we might say are essential. One is the ULT Declaration, the statement of purpose. It outlines what ULT is about and why it exists. There is also what you might call our mission statement: to spread broadcast the teachings of Theosophy as recorded in the writings of H.P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge. Pretty simple, pretty straight forward.

We also find on many theosophical buildings written the phrase: there is no religion higher than truth. It’s an old, I believe Hindu expression and it’s as true today as it was thousands of years ago.

We also have in common, I think all theosophical groups have in common, the objects of the original Theosophical Society. They have in effect become, you can say, the objects of the Theosophical Movement. They represent those ideals that all students can work with, and find in common as common ground:

- Forming a nucleus for universal brotherhood of humanity without any distinction whatsoever.
- To study ancient, modern science, religion, philosophy and show the demonstration and importance of that study.
- And thirdly to look inward. To study the inner side of nature and of human beings.

We could say that those play out in three ways:

- Essential unity that we have this philosophy in common.
- We have the need to study and work for Theosophy.
- And we have the need to apply those ideas whether it’s an inner application or an outer effort in the world.

So unity, study and work are one way to look at those three objects of the movement.

Finally there is one thing – and one thing only – that associates of ULT or in order to become an associate of ULT. It is a simple statement. It says: “Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its “Declaration,” I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it

being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.”⁽¹⁾

Again, this goes back to individual initiative, individual responsibility and individual capacity to learn the philosophy and to be responsible for one’s own inner growth.

How do we study in the ULT?

How does the practical work of study happen? Why is it important that the individual study Theosophy? Well, one could say that it’s difficult to be able to share anything if you don’t understand it yourself. So we study so that we are able to explain to others. It is really the most important thing. And whether that other is a child or an inquirer or anybody else or each other — we have that as the beginning point where we really need to have a common basis.

So where we start from makes a big difference. If our definitions of Theosophy are widely variant and at odds with each other than it’s difficult to have a common purpose. It’s like people from different religions that disagree on what is the true one. If we are in that kind of a situation, that can be difficult because even terms and language can get in the way.

But we study not so much to be able to convince other people, but to show to the validity of ideas, to show the implications of ideas, to show applications of ideas. And if we can do that, we have to leave it up to each individual as the ultimate authority for what they accept and what they don’t. We cannot force people to learn, just like you can’t force a child to learn how to walk. When it starts to walk it has to try, stumble, fall down, get up, try again, fall and get up again. There is something absolutely essential about that self-induced and self-devised effort. And if it doesn’t happen, the child doesn’t learn how to walk, we don’t learn how to think and we don’t learn how to share ideas.

So, the focus in any discussion, any classroom or workshop or learning environment should be on principles and ideas — and not on the persons holding the views. Which is why my personal views on the philosophy don’t matter. What matters is: what are we taught? What is the teaching? Can we read something together, in common? Can we listen to something of value and come to understand it that way?

But it is not to convince other people that we’re right and they’re wrong, it just doesn’t work that way. What it does is, since we all grow, then what we’re really looking at are opportunities for soul growth.

You could say ‘well that just sounds intellectual’ but it is not. Ideas have power, we’ve been taught that in western tradition, since at least Plato, who said: ideas rule the world. So the ideas that people hold, do have implications, do have power, and part of our work as Theosophists, as students in Theosophy, is to make those ideas known to the world, to show their power, to show their value, to show their healing ability and their ability to explain and comfort human beings.

Because this work is really about what human beings need; it’s about how human beings live and grow. It’s about how we develop as souls, not just how we develop as personalities.

So, that’s really the work of ULT — to help and give tools so that individuals can learn and grow for themselves. We can’t impose it. If we do, then we end up with dogmas, we end up with mandatory doctrines if you will. We end up with authorities, we end up with essentially churches that tell people what they have to believe in order to be whatever faith that we’re talking about.

Blavatsky and Judge were very clear. The work of Theosophy is not in the world, so people call themselves Theosophists, it’s in the world so that human beings have the tools to take responsibility for their own growth and can share that with others. That’s really what the work of the universal brotherhood, a nucleus for universal brotherhood, is about.

Who are the people in the ULT?

We said that ULT is composed of individual associates. It’s actually quite easy to become an associate of ULT. Anyone is welcome to our meetings. They’re free, open to all, we don’t pass a collection, we don’t charge for admission. People come sometimes for months or years — never become associates.

We don’t ask, we don’t coerce, and we certainly don’t bother people about that. If someone wants to become an associate, they could do so at the very first time they walked in the door. They can become an associate of ULT by mail, they can request an associate card, we will send it to them.

It’s really an inner matter, it’s not an outer matter. So, if someone feels that they are in accord with these principles and these ideas and these ideals then they’re welcome to become an associate immediately. We probably have people that come for years and years, and never become associates. But others don’t know it, because it really is an inner private matter. We don’t check, there’s no reason to check because as we said ULT is about

individuals' inner responsibility and growth. If one says "I would like to ally myself with these ideas," then the person that takes that step, who it matters to is that individual himself or herself; it doesn't matter to us.

Now, what is an associate yet other than that? Very little actually in terms of outer events. First of all we always send out a welcome letter, but we also annually send out an ULT Day letter — just an informational letter that goes to associates. We really have nothing else that we ask them to do except what they feel that they think is important.

Sometimes new associates will ask "well can I help?" Yes, there are always things to be done. If you have a building or a property or a library or a study group, you can participate. Every lodge is different. There are some 26 lodges around the world and every lodge is a different place. They'll have a different building or rented quarters to care for, or something that needs to be done. So, the thing to do is to talk to the people who are there; that would be my suggestion, because those are the folks that know what that lodge might need.

What does the ULT do?

Well, the ULT makes available the original writings of H.P. Blavatsky, William Q. Judge. That's our primary publication focus; it has been that way since the inception of ULT.

We've had several magazines over the years. Currently there are a couple; there is *Vidya* in Santa Barbara, *The Theosophical Movement* from India. The editorial policies of these magazines are that of students — don't publish the names of the writers just like we don't publish names of speakers. We let the ideas stand for themselves. The editors of course are responsible for what is published, but the content, if it is not actual reprint of something that Blavatsky wrote for example, is meant to be informative and clarifying but not authoritative. These are student journals meant for serious inquirers into Theosophy and they're meant to inform, not to coerce. Probably none of them support themselves through subscriptions, so again, they're supported by voluntary contributions of time, money and effort. In fact all ULT lodges are supported in that way. As indicated earlier, no one has ever asked for a contribution, people come for years and won't ever be asked. But publishing magazines and publishing books does take funds and again it's done on voluntary contributions and has for over a hundred years now.

I don't know what else to say about publishing except that it is a labor

of love, and that these publications are valuable tools. Without literature in common it makes it very difficult to have a focus, so the material, theosophical writings, Blavatsky and Judge primarily provide foci of attention, they provide seminal ideas, seed ideas if you will; places to begin exploration. They are there, not to be believed but to be studied. So Theosophy, it would seem, requires students, in order to be able to share intelligently with others. It requires some study because how do we know what we haven't paid attention to? And you know it requires a certain amount of effort, its vocabulary and so forth can be difficult. So it's a challenge, but it's a worthy one. To be able to put Theosophy into the world in terms that the average person can understand, is a very valuable thing. And there has been a lot of good work done in that area, not just by ULT associates. But Theosophy as the rational explanation of things and not any particular doctrine or dogma is, I think, the most important thing.

And so we can have a student explanation based on the principles found in the literature without it being servile or parroting the teachers. We begin with principles and we figure out those applications as best we can as individual students, and that goes for magazines and publications. By keeping those publications accurate, it provides a service because then students know "hey what was the original intent?"

If we were a Shakespeare society, how useful would it be if every few years we published a different version of Shakespeare? Imagine Hamlet, that the editors thought maybe it would be better said? Well, it's been done but it's no longer Hamlet, is it?

So once we start second guessing if you will, a teacher, then we kind of set ourselves up as an authority, and we're students, so, we try to let the works speak for themselves. Students' articles and so forth are published regularly in theosophical magazines but in ULT those are not signed simply because we wish to present ideas, principles, and not personalities. And that's held up as a fairly good method of work we think, for well over a hundred years.

What do you think about ULT?

You know many years ago there was a movement called the 'Back to Blavatsky Movement', probably nearly a hundred years ago now, and I always thought it was a little odd because my only reaction was that we really ought to move forward with Blavatsky. If we look at how much she did, how much she and William Q. Judge did to present those ideas to

the world, they really represent a core, a common basis that if we understand that as Theosophy – not because they said it – but because those principles are eternal and timeless.

We start with those ideas, we start with those teachers, we move forward, we find common ground and I welcome any effort to share that common ground, that similarity of aim, purpose and teachings amongst all Theosophists, amongst all students. ULT would seem to be a good example of students trying to come together with that common understanding.

And as so far it promotes that understanding, I think it's a wonderful way. That's an individual opinion that is not an official ULT position, because we have none. But it certainly would seem to be a worthwhile thing for students to be able to get together from time to time and share ideas and to find the common ground in the teachings.

And in so far as any effort does that, I think it's worthwhile.

Reference

1. Source: <http://www.ult.org/>.

Contribution by Jan N. Kind

(Theosophical Society Adyar)

Let's see where we are from

If we know where we are from, we know where we are, and when we know where we are, we know where we'll be going, and whom we'll ultimately have a responsibility to uphold. No matter what happened over the past 140 years, it is a plain fact that we started our amazing journey together with the founding of the Theosophical Society in New York City at a series of six meetings that took place from September to November 1875. The first meeting, on September 7, was a successful lecture, after which the idea of forming a Society was proposed. The organization of the Society began at the next meeting, held on September 8. On October 30, officers were elected, with Henry Steel Olcott as its first president, H.P. Blavatsky as its first corresponding secretary, George Henry Felt and Seth Pancoast as vice presidents, and William Quan Judge as counsel for the Society. The Theosophical Society was inaugurated on Wednesday, November 17, by Olcott's official presidential address.

Henry Olcott himself regarded the people at the early meetings of the Theosophical Society more as “formers” than founders. He wrote: “The Society, then, had sixteen formers – to use the most apposite term – not founders; for the stable founding was a result of hard work and self-sacrifice over years, and during a part of that time H. P. B. and I worked quite alone in the trenches, laying the strong foundation.”

Members of the TS Adyar identify the three main founders as H.P. Blavatsky, Henry Steel Olcott, and William Quan Judge. After his two major co-founders departed for India ultimately to establish the international headquarters of the Society in Adyar, India, young attorney William Quan Judge carried on the work of advancing interest in Theosophy within the United States. By 1886, he had established an American Section of the international Society with branches in fourteen cities. Rapid growth occurred under his guidance, so that by 1895 there were 102 American branches with nearly six thousand members.

Madame Blavatsky died in May 1891, leaving Colonel Olcott and the English social activist Annie Besant as the principal leaders of the inter-

national movement based in Adyar, with William Quan Judge heading the important American Section.

During the ninth Annual Convention of the American Section in 1895, eighty-three lodges voted for autonomy from the international Theosophical Society in Adyar. Colonel Olcott, interpreted this action as secession, and revoked the charters of those lodges, whose members reorganized under the leadership of William Q. Judge. The five American lodges that had opposed the 1895 secession retained their affiliation with the international Society headquartered at Adyar.



Headquarters Theosophical Society in Adyar, India.

The Society was influential in the founding of many later esoteric movements, a number of which were started by former TS members. Some notable examples are William W. Westcott, co-founder of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn; Max Heindel, founder of the Rosicrucian Fellowship; Alice Bailey, who founded her own School; Rudolf Steiner, founder of the Anthroposophical Society; the Russian painter Nicholas Roerich and his wife Helena, founders of the Agni Yoga Society; and Guy and Edna Ballard, founders of the “I AM Movement” among others. Such movements that sprouted from the TS are not properly Theosophical organizations. Constitutionally or otherwise, they have no connection with the TS Adyar.

The Mission

For Adyar Theosophists, two resolutions passed by their General Council are crucial.

First: In order to preserve the integrity and independence of the organi-

zation, a “Freedom of the Society” resolution was passed and implemented in 1949. This resolution states that the Society remains “free of affiliation or identification with any other organization.”

The TS Adyar from 1875 onwards had the following international Presidents

Henry Steel Olcott, President-Founder, 1875-1907

Annie Besant, 1907-1933

George S. Arundale, 1934-1945

C. Jinarajadasa, 1946-1953

N. Sri Ram, 1953-1973

John Coats, 1973-1979

Radha Burnier, 1980-2013

Tim Boyd, 2014-

The relevant paragraph in that resolution reads as follows: “Since Universal Brotherhood and the Wisdom are undefined and unlimited, and since there is complete freedom for each and every member of the Society in thought and action, the Society seeks ever to maintain its own distinctive and unique character by remaining free of affiliation or identification with any other organization.”

When well implemented, that resolution prohibits any ties between the TS Adyar and other organizations such as other esoteric or spiritual movements, political parties, and commercial institutions.⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

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Part of resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society, 1949.⁽³⁾

Second: A “Freedom of Thought” resolution was implemented in 1924. Members consider this resolution important because it emphasizes a way of thinking inside the TS Adyar. A relevant paragraph in this resolution is as follows: “Approval of its three Objects is the sole condition of membership. No teacher, or writer, from H.P. Blavatsky onwards, has any authority to impose his or her teachings or opinions on members. Every member has an equal right to follow any school of thought, but has no right to force

that member's choice on any other member.”

The term *authority* used in that statement is polysemous. Merriam-Webster's dictionary, among other definitions gives the following relevant senses for it: power to influence or command thought, opinion, or behavior and person in command.⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

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Part of resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society, 1924.⁽³⁾

For Adyar Theosophists, H. P. B. does or should provide expert guidance in theosophical matters, but not as an official decision-maker, domineering and commanding all thought, opinion, or behavior. She is someone to respect and to consider very seriously, but not to follow blindly. She was the one who opened up windows, reintroducing what had long been forgotten at the peak of nineteenth-century materialism, when it was thought that all mysteries had been discovered and unveiled. She brought light into the darkness of that era.

Another segment of the TS Adyar is the Theosophical Order of Service (or TOS), which was founded in February 1908 by Annie Besant. Its formation was in response to the wish of a number of members of the Theosophical Society to organize themselves for various lines of service and actively promote the first object of the Society: “To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour.”

The TOS currently (in 2015) has branches in some twenty-five countries. In some of them it is a separately constituted, legally registered body, and in others it operates as an autonomous department of the Theosophical Society. Since 2014 its international secretary has been Nancy Secret.

Where does the TS Adyar stand now?

By the early twenty-first century, the TS Adyar was represented in sixty-eight countries, through Sections, Regional Associations, Presidential agencies, or Lodges directly connected to Adyar, with a membership of some 26,500 and 982 lodges, 171 study centers, and 4 federations, pub-

lishing some thirty-nine magazines.

Theosophical schools exist in the Philippines and at Adyar, in addition to seven theosophical publishing houses and six science groups.

There is an Esoteric School of Theosophy, with restrict but not a secret membership, administered separately from the Theosophical Society but open to TS members after two years active membership, who are willing to abide by some basic conditions directed towards a life of sincere altruism and harmless living.

The largest TS section is the Indian one, followed by the USA, England, and Australia. The TS Adyar is democratic, with officers, board members, General Secretaries and an International President, elected by the membership. Some officers at the headquarters in Adyar are appointed by the International President.

The Theosophical Society is international, but it is not strongly centralized in organization. The national societies (or “Sections”) are typically incorporated, each in its own country, so legally each Section is independent of the others, although united in purpose and spirit.

As the Freedom of Thought resolution is respected and followed, members of the TS Adyar study various authors, representing different currents inside the TS. No particular author is recommended above another one, although the works of H. P. B. for many are the starting point. Many courses are available in various languages to help students to find their way in H. P. B.’s writings, and in lodges many regularly come together to study *Isis Unveiled* or *The Secret Doctrine*. Next to other authors, two distinguished English Theosophists contributed significantly to the study of H. P. B.’s works: Ianthe Hoskins and Geoffrey Farthing. *The Voice of the Silence* for almost all members of the Adyar TS is H. P. B.’s most important publication.

Many Adyar Theosophists have found that the writings of Gottfried de Purucker, Boris de Zirkoff, and Geoffrey Barborka, but also Robert Crosbie have helped in understanding the core teachings. Other members are attracted to the oeuvre of clairvoyant authors like C.W. Leadbeater and Geoffrey Hodson.

The literary output, volume-wise of Annie Besant was phenomenal, she wrote much and her work is still in demand. Publications like *Thought Power* and her early work *The Ancient Wisdom* are still widely read, and many consider *In the Outer Court* to be one of her finest works.

The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett are also studied intensively in Adyar

circles. Joy Mills, who lives in Krotona, California, contributed greatly to the study of those letters and gave many courses on them.

Other Adyar Theosophists find inspiration in, and are attracted to the writings and teachings of, Jiddu Krishnamurti, who was a speaker and writer on philosophical and spiritual subjects. In his early life he was prepared by Besant and Leadbeater to become a new World Teacher, but later he rejected that idea and withdrew from the TS. A small book that is still in print and read by many is *At the feet of the Master*, which Krishnamurti wrote when still very young, published under the name of Alcyone.

The works of William Q. Judge are also widely available in many Adyar Theosophical libraries or bookstores. Perhaps due to the fact that translations didn't materialize in regions such as Africa, the middle- and far-East, and eastern Europe, he is less well known than others. That Judge is not well-known everywhere is perhaps due to the fact that he died relatively young.

Conclusion

In the year of this writing, 2015, Tim Boyd is International President. The TS Adyar can be compared to a large house with many rooms. Some students follow exclusively the teachings that came through H. P. B.; others supplement those with the writings of later authors such as Annie Besant, C.W. Leadbeater, C. Jinerajadasa, Sri Ram, and I.K. Taimni — to name just a few. For yet others the works of Krishnamurti are essential in their journey towards truth, but the overall principle remains the Freedom of Thought Resolution.

Whatever their organizational membership, all Theosophists should reach out and come together as we do on the ITC platform, realizing that wisdom cannot flourish when no action is taken.

In the beginning of this presentation it was mentioned that Olcott preferred not be called a “founder” but a “former.” All Theosophists can look at themselves as formers of the Theosophical Movement, as well as affiliates of a particular organization.

Sri Ram, at one time the international President of the TS Adyar, in a talk delivered to the Australian Section in March 1970 defined the Adyar stance in a crystal clear manner, he said: “The TS was not founded as a movement to teach people to be good in the conventional sense — that is, not rob, murder, or deceive. The TS was founded with the exalted

purpose of promoting the spiritual regeneration of humanity. We have to understand what such regeneration means and how we can help it to become a reality.”



Bookshop at the Olcott Center, Theosophical Society Adyar in Wheaton, USA.

The author needs to point out that the above write-up is entirely based on *personal* observations and that the article as such ought to be read as a *personal account*, therefore the various statements made in it do not necessarily convey the official stance of the TS Adyar.

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Who We Are, Our Mission and Where Do We Stand Now?

Contribution by Herman C. Vermeulen

(Theosophical Society Point Loma - Blavatskyhouse, The Hague)

Spirit, soul and body of the Theosophical Society Point Loma - Blavatskyhouse

The TS Point Loma is a well-known organization, maybe not that large in numbers, but I hope we are convincing in what we do.

If you want to understand an organization, you need to split it up in a number of levels. Therefore, why wouldn't we use the threefold division we use so often for every living being, after all, a society like ours is indeed a living entity. So firstly we have a *spirit*-part: that is the Source from which all theosophical organizations sprouted. Secondly we have a *soul*-part, which represents the character of the organizations, i.e. the way in which the Theosophia is interpreted. And thirdly we have the *body*-part, the outer organizations, i.e. the means, the tools and the instruments. The spirit is identical in all theosophical societies, but they are different in their respective souls and bodies.

First a few words about our common spiritual Source. Our origin is the Hierarchy of Compassion, known as the Lodge of Wisdom and Compassion, with its Messengers, its Masters and Chelas. One of these Chelas, H.P. Blavatsky, started in 1875 a new cycle by bringing out Theosophia named as "Theosophy" into the world. This is our common Source, base and shared starting point.

Main characteristics

We come to the core question: what are we? This infers that we have to speak about our soul, our mental attitude and the specific characteristics we carry. We ought to realize that these specific characteristics have their roots in our past, and the way we look at that past. As we see it, our line of succession is as follows: H. P. B., William Quan Judge, Katherine Tingley, Gottfried de Purucker, Arthur Conger, William Hartley, Dick Kok and me. Consequently I am the last one in that line. 'Last' meaning of course, that I am still alive. You'll notice that we start with H. P. B., without mentioning other people that were involved in setting up the organization.

It was H. P. B. who brought the message and represented the direct line with the Loge of Wisdom and Compassion, and that is clearly what it is all about. When she started her public work in 1875, she came to break the molds of mind, especially in the West. She brought an overwhelming quantity of Wisdom to us, through all her publications, all these ideas and at the time, remember, it is the end of the 19th century, she thoroughly innovated the outlook on science, philosophy and religion.

Theosophical Society Point Loma, line of succession

H.P. Blavatsky	1875-1891	New York, etc.
W.Q. Judge	1891-1896	New York
Kath. Tingley	1896-1929	Point Loma
G. de Purucker	1929-1942	Point Loma, Covina
A.L. Conger	1945-1951	Covina
W. Hartley	1951-1955	Covina
D.J.P. Kok	1958-1985	Blavatskyhouse, The Hague
H.C. Vermeulen	1985-	Blavatskyhouse, The Hague

At first H. P. B.'s message was received by a lot of people in a purely technical manner. They appreciated the explanations given and were eager to get a better understanding of the phenomena she was able to produce. It soon became clear that many didn't grasp anything of the ethical and moral implications of those wondrous phenomena. H. P. B. however quickly learned her lessons from this and before too long she started to focus more on *compassion*, on the ethical point of view.

Around 1888 one of the most decisive events in the Theosophical Society took place. Not only did she publish her masterpiece *The Secret Doctrine* but H. P. B. started to structure the SOUL of the TS, in order to safeguard its future. In that year she started the Esoteric School ("ES"). That was a crucial moment in the history of the TS, because there was need for a core of members having the right mentality, working together as the fingers on one hand, and forming the backbone of the TS in bringing Theosophy to the public. Much more was expected from ES members than from the regular members. It was a small group, but there was the need for a very *strong* and *determined* circle of students who were willing to sacrifice their lives to bring out the teachings, and keep these teachings alive.

H. P. B. from then on was really working towards a different type of mentality: not only reading, not only studying, but next to that, students would need to be willing to *do* something for the TS, to be a living exam-

ple of that ES mentality.

The main characteristic of the Theosophical Society-Point Loma is based on the impulse instigated by H. P. B.: the start of the ES in 1888. It is that SOUL we try to keep alive and want to keep in our minds. This does not mean that we are aiming for an ES structure in our society. We should keep in mind that the ES structure in the TS Point Loma tradition was closed in 1947 by its leader at that time, Arthur Conger. Subsequently we do not have an ES structure, but we do fully focus on the ES *mentality*, a principle which we like to push forward. No, we do not want any ES *structure*, instead we want to work towards, and promote an ES *mentality*, and that, in our opinion, is a totally different approach. Our main characteristic is *compassion*, as that was the principal thought behind the founding of the ES.

We should look at the ES Pledge in the light of compassion. H. P. B. published the Pledge in her public magazine *Lucifer*, with the objective to show all its articles, telling what was going on around the founding of the ES. People were invited to apply so that they could become a member.

The conditions and the Pledge to be taken for becoming a member of the ES were published in her magazine *Lucifer*, in an article “The Meaning of a Pledge”, and she gave more information in the next volume.⁽¹⁾ The pledge of the ES is the basis for our organization. To *study* the Pledge and to *see the consequence* for our daily life must be the first steps before we can take the Pledge.

Now we shall consider the Pledge articles 4, 5, 6 and 1, as they contain guidelines for our way of Working.

Working in groups

Let us take a look at article 4: “I pledge myself to maintain a constant struggle against my lower nature, and to be charitable to the weaknesses of others.”

For the TS Point Loma this means: working *in groups*, since that is the only way to become a proper instrument in the hands of the Masters. It means: co-operating as colleagues, training and supporting each other, never working as an isolated solitary individual; by working in groups we all have to overcome aspects of our lower nature. We *are* working in groups because we really like to share ideas with each other and to inspire each other. We have learnt that by doing this, our efforts to bring Theosophy to the world have a much greater effect.

Article 4 of the Pledge of the Esoteric Section written by H.P. Blavatsky

I pledge myself to maintain a constant struggle against my lower nature, and to be charitable to the weaknesses of others. ⁽¹⁾

Priority one: public work

Let us now turn to article 5: “I pledge myself to do all in my power, by study and otherwise, to fit myself to help and teach others.”

We need to ask ourselves: “What is the most important thing in our Society?” “What is our priority number one?” The answer is: *public activities, propagating Theosophy*. If we make a planning and if we have to choose between closed study meetings for members or public activities, then public activities come first: in terms of manpower, in terms of energy and in terms of really being actively involved in those activities.

Likewise, when we study, we never study for the sake of study. We always study *together* to prepare ourselves to teach Theosophy to others. That means that we must train ourselves first to become *translators*. By studying, we ourselves may understand the material, but the people out in the street, who never heard of Theosophy, need a type of “bridging” translation, to get a clear idea of the theosophical teachings and what you are able to do with them.

I do not mean a moving away from the principles. No, the principal teachings are the core. What I mean is: helping people in applying them. We like to quote W. Q. J. [William Quan Judge; eds.] from his article “Friends or Enemies in the Future”: “The fundamental doctrines of Theosophy are of no value unless they are applied to daily life.” ⁽²⁾

Article 5 of the Pledge of the Esoteric Section written by H.P. Blavatsky

I pledge myself to do all in my power, by study and otherwise, to fit myself to help and teach others. ⁽¹⁾

An organization of co-workers

Now we come to article 6: “I pledge myself to give what support I can to the Theosophical movement in time, money and work.”

As to this aspect, I look at our organization as consisting of *co-workers*, and not of members. Obviously this particular way of looking at our organization and its membership is relative; commitment clearly depends much on the possibilities of an individual and these are not the same for all. A consequence of this approach is that we don’t like to see

members turning inactive. If by any chance a period of inactivity continues for some time, contact is made with the person involved, asking if we can be of any help by offering opportunities in removing and overcoming apparent obstacles. If indeed this person has lost interest, a reconsideration of membership is kindly requested.

The result is that in our organization we have a high percentage of active members, or better said, active co-workers, and that is, in our opinion, what it is actually all about. In the TS Point Loma it is not the quantity that counts, but the quality.

Article 6 of the Pledge of the Esoteric Section written by H.P. Blavatsky

I pledge myself to give what support I can to the Theosophical movement in time, money and work.⁽¹⁾

Living the Theosophia

Now we turn to article 1 of the Pledge: “I pledge myself to endeavor to make *Theosophy a living power in my life*.” [emphasis by H.C.V.]

We always present Theosophy in such a way that it becomes applicable in daily life, never as some interesting theory. Please realize that if Theosophy has turned into a *living* power inside of us, when we truly live it, that this is the best way to promote it. Just imagine if we would only study, but that our daily lives are not a reflection of the teachings, what strength or depth will our words have, if we say to someone that he or she can solve his or her problems in life by doing this or that? Our words won't have any impact at all, because we are not a living example of Theosophy, hence the most important thing is to be a *living expression* of the principles.

Most people know that here in the Netherlands, if you want to become a member, it will take you two years. Generally speaking, you'll have to follow two courses, entitled “Thinking differently” and “Wisdom of Life.” After having done these courses, one is offered the opportunity to become a member.

This path towards membership has proven to work very well. People are aware of what type of organization they step into, and what kind of mindset exists in the organization. Those who enter do know about our public activities and all the work and effort we put into it. They sympathize with, and support our attitude; otherwise they would not have joined.

It is evident that we like to have active co-workers. If you look at the percentage of active members in organizations or societies in the Nether-

lands, most of the time the average figure is between 5% to 10% maximum. But in our case, this figure is much higher: more than 70% of our members is active.

Article 1 of the Pledge of the Esoteric Section written by H.P. Blavatsky

I pledge myself to endeavor to make *Theosophy a living power in my life.*

[emphasis by H.C.V.]⁽¹⁾

TS Point Loma and the social problems in the world

Another important issue. We believe that our work, spreading Theosophy, should have a direct social effect and we take that task seriously. We really like to – you may say – “inject” society with theosophical ideas, so that these ideas start to live in each one’s own way of thinking.

From that point of view, the TS Point Loma is not so much active in giving *material* support to society. We rather show people how to fish but we do not fish for them. This does plainly not imply that if we “as an organization” hand out certain instructions, members for themselves are not involved in all kinds of social activities. Of course they are. If you are living Theosophy then one of your first responsibilities is to ask yourself “What shall I do amidst all the social and other problems in this world?”

Social fertility

Every member should be a living expression of the theosophical principles in daily life. He or she is expected to apply the teachings in any practical form, in any social organization. One sees quite often that members are either a member of Amnesty International or Animal Support or Animal Rights for example, or develop other but similar activities. But as a rule of thumb we are of the opinion that the TS Point Loma, as a theosophical vehicle, has to put its efforts and means into spreading Theosophy; this is the way we look at it.

The organization has a social aspect and encourages members to apply Theosophy in daily life and we have booked some good results by doing this.

We have started and supported some Dutch organizations to get a broader view on organ donation and recently we had a fine joint-venture with an Islamic group, helping them to understand the concept of religion in a much broader and universal way. This cooperation resulted in some interesting meetings in which many ideas and thoughts were exchanged.

Each member a spiritual center

Another point is that we look at each member as a center. You'll find this idea in one of the small and helpful publications of William Quan Judge. So it is surely not a new idea, but it is a very important idea, because if you want to be an inspirational source for all your fellowmen, you'll have to know from your own experience what Theosophy means, and how it works out in your personal life. Next to this, anyone *can be* a spiritual center, because each one of us is able to open up his self to the Higher Self, allowing this inspiring stimulus to flow into the society.

William Quan Judge, in this context, is a very good example. While he was working alone in the United States, he asked the Masters many times for support: "Help me, send me a chela." He never got one and he received no answer at all. Because of this he grew a bit angry and said to himself: "OK, if I don't get support, I'll do it myself." From that moment on, he received support.

This is exactly what we should need to realize. If we do not open up our self to the *Self*, written with upper-case letter, we don't get support. First we need to open up, to become active on a higher level, and then we can expect support from, let us say, the higher spiritual influences that are.

That is a lesson that we all have to learn. Instead of sitting and waiting until help arrives, the initiative is entirely ours. The first step is to be made by us and it doesn't matter how simple, primitive or clumsy it may appear, that is irrelevant. If you reach out to your fellow human being and you start to promote Theosophy and, most importantly, live it yourself – if you start something *on that level* – then support will come your way.

This is a *key principle* because, as you know, we often hear in theosophical circles that the public doesn't demonstrate much interest and that we do not get new members, and so on. Do not sit and wait, no, you have to go out and search for the people. Make contact with them.

One of our lodges started off in a pub. There, while holding a glass of beer, we talked about Theosophy and the problems of daily life. That later developed into one of our best lodges, so do not look at the outer, material ambiance.

Succession of leadership

Hierarchy is one of the fundamental principles in Nature. Maybe not in name, but in practice we find it everywhere.

Our succession of leadership is an important topic, because for as far as

I know, we are almost the only theosophical organization that honors the leadership idea. In relation to leadership, we sometimes are confronted with curious situations. Some people say: “Herman C. Vermeulen is ashamed to be the leader. That’s why he doesn’t talk so much about it.” How does this idea arise? I can assure you that these people never got in touch with me, they never wished to exchange their thoughts, through a phone call, emails or letters, and that’s how they came to this erroneous conclusion. For those people, let me state it loudly and clearly, for now and times to come: I am very proud to be the leader of the Theosophical Society Point Loma, period.

How do I fulfill this responsibility? Well, let me explain. Being the leader certainly doesn’t mean that I am the boss, a dictator. No, at all times I try to be an inspiring source *within* the organization.

When Judge became *President for life* during the Boston Convention in 1895, leadership was first introduced in our organization and it was laid down in our Constitution. Later it was further implemented by Katherine Tingley, and this situation is up until now current and factual.

Look at what Katherine Tingley realized, put into practice. During the years of her leadership our organization flourished. In 1898 she moved the International Headquarters to Point Loma, California. Please realize that the Point Loma region at that time was not developed; only bush and nothing but bush, for as far as the eye could see. She started with a few well-motivated people to establish a center with buildings, offices, printing facilities and you name it. At the height of that period some 500 to 600 people were living there, forming one united organization. That is the reason why we still call ourselves the Point Loma Society, although our headquarters is now located at the Blavatskyhouse, The Hague, in the Netherlands.

As to leadership, you’d need to consider one thing: the succession of leadership is more than stepping into a historical line; the process is dual. Firstly to pass on our spiritual heritage, the fruits of the past. Secondly, to maintain the connection with the source we originate from. I do not mean the original books or publications, but our real source: the Lodge of Wisdom and Compassion.

That is an essential fact. One might think that from a historical point of view we are this or that, but that is not the main thing. The main thing is to realize that we have to be connected to that source. We have to focus on the *spiritual* succession and not on the historical facts. Historical facts

may be useful, but they are not the principal starting points.

Responsibilities flowing from the spiritual succession

Being a leader in a spiritual succession is being like a fountain-source. Which responsibilities flow from that? Firstly, we should harvest the work already done by the TS Point Loma. Secondly, an important task is to further *explore* the teachings. We cannot be just content and happy with having them, and “put them in a safe.” No, we should study the teachings, trying to understand them more profoundly, and we should share our deepening theosophical insights with the outer world. Thirdly, we, at the TS Point Loma, believe that it is important to *preserve* the original line of theosophical publications. If we would come to the conclusion that the original publications are no longer suited to function in our present time, and are not well-received any longer, then we’ll have the duty to write other ones: *not* by changing the original texts, but by writing new books and articles based on the original teachings. Then we are able to explain the teachings in such a way that they fit in with, for instance, modern discoveries or present-day problems, so that readers will understand them better. At the same time we can direct our readers to the sources, so that they can study these original texts by themselves.

How do we see leadership?

What is our view on the theosophical line of leaders? We see each successor as a spiritual focal point, and such a spiritual focal point is *the combination of a leader and his co-workers*, like a beehive. If you have ever looked into a beehive, then you will know that the queen is not a queen in the sense of “commander”, i.e. sitting on a high throne and acting bossy. No, the queen is one of the special bees having a very heavy and complex task. She is continuously assisted by her co-workers to get all the eggs in the right place. Then the workers take care of their growth and development. The symbolic idea behind the beehive describes exactly what I intend to be, and what the other leaders in our line have been in the past.

It is quite normal that if there is something to do, it makes no difference to me at what level that is. I will be involved as well, instead of looking from a distance at what is going on. In any case, with my technical background – I worked for many years for the European Space Agency – it is hard for me to stay away from the action.

I always tell my co-workers, when we talk about modern technology:

“Whatever it is you are doing is fine, but please do it so that I’ll understand it as well, meaning that when there is an urgent problem and you are at home or unreachable, I still have the opportunity to solve the risen issue.”

My main point is: being the leader is not acting as the boss, but being a source of inspiration. One of my important tasks is helping my co-workers to overcome their limitations, stimulating them to bring out their best insights, so that they are making steps forward as dedicated, productive and active workers for compassion, in our service for the world. That is one of my most important duties.

I consider myself fortunate to be in the good company of Lao Tzu. What he says about leadership comes straight from my heart:

To lead people, walk beside them. (...) As for the best leaders, the people do not notice their existence.⁽³⁾

So, if all goes well, I prefer to be a background figure and you won’t see me in the limelight.

The objectives of our society

The Point Loma Society has the following objectives:

1. To diffuse among men a knowledge of the laws inherent in the Universe.
2. To promulgate the knowledge of the essential unity of all that is, and to demonstrate that this unity is fundamental in Nature.
3. To form an active brotherhood among men.
4. To study ancient and modern religion, science, and philosophy.
5. To investigate the powers innate in man.

They differ somewhat from the original objectives, first drawn up in 1875. Already during Blavatsky’s lifetime, alterations were implemented. We have elaborated them somewhat, by expanding the three points to five. However, when you compare them, you will see that there are no basic differences.

The mission of the TS Point Loma

About our mission: I think Dr. De Purucker expressed that excellently:

But the main purpose was to give to mankind a religio-philosophical and scientific explanation of life’s riddles, based on the natural fact of Universal Brotherhood, which would bring about a moral and spiritual revolution in the world.⁽⁴⁾

I wish to stress the following. The explanation of life issues, questions of life, is still greatly needed. The central key to that explanation is “the natural fact of Universal Brotherhood.” All that exists is interrelated. If you want to understand the great laws of the Universe, you should need to understand how these laws function, i.e. how the Cosmic Beings interact and, so to say, lay down a Dharma or Law for the lower levels of the Cosmos. We actually do exactly the same in relation to our body; through our mental faculties, we lay down the laws for the beings that form a part of our body.

As you probably know, the works of Dr. De Purucker are a great source for us, because they improve our understanding of *The Secret Doctrine* and the deeper meaning of the Theosophia. That’s why we are often called ‘Purucker-fans’, which is true indeed.

Our organization: a means, not a goal in itself

I come to my conclusion. The Theosophical Society Point Loma, our body, our outer organization, is just a means and not a goal. It ought to be adjusted continuously. When we realize that today’s world is changing quite fast, and if we want to stay in contact with all that is around us, we can only do so by adapting ourselves in the way we present the teachings.

If you go back to the period of our former leader Mr. Kok, we used to give our lectures wearing a tie. In 2015 though, when you deliver a talk in Rotterdam for example, wearing a blue suit and a tie, you might have no connection with the audience. The listeners would think: “Who is that person? Where does he come from?” “Why does he look like this?” The speaker would be labeled in no time. Nowadays, you go to a talk in your jeans and sweater or whatever casual clothes you choose.

The “body”, the “instrument” needs adjustments all the time in order to fulfill our mission. We are to bring Theosophy in a way that corresponds with our times, in a manner so that it will be easily adopted by those who knock. That involves a great challenge, because we must adapt our means *without doing any concessions* to the original principles. That is a real task, which lies before us, that is what we always have to keep in mind.

I will finish by saying: *you will know the tree by its fruits*; it is up to you to judge and see for yourself.

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2 - H.P. Blavatsky, H. P. B. and the Current Messianic Cycle

Contribution by James Colbert

(United Lodge of Theosophists)

Herman C. Vermeulen was instrumental in inviting me to give this presentation on the Messianic Cycle from the viewpoint of the United Lodge of Theosophists. In his invitation, he wrote the following: “So please keep in mind that in the whole framework of the Conference we expect a presentation that will represent the ULT vision, rather than a personal view, although I know that there is no official ULT vision, as Gene [Eugene Jennings; eds.] expressed it: *ULT has no central authority, no spokesperson, no governing body. ULT represents a set of principles and ideals, as found in its Declaration.*” [emphasis by J.C.]

“So it is the challenge for you to come up with what is the general view or understanding in ULT.” So true. But in responding to the challenge, I want it to be known it is not true that I have been a member of ULT since its founding in 1909, but it’s fairly close. I was first brought to Theosophy School for children at the Los Angeles ULT at the age of five.

This presentation we will do in three parts. 1. Focus will be given to the Messianic Cycle, the zodiac, and the Milky Way. We will then give attention to what was found about Great Teachers, Avatars, and cycles as given by H. P. B. 2. Our second part will be information about ULT and this student’s perspective on the principles of ULT. 3. Finally, we will give some of the implications of ULT principles and the Messianic Cycle.

The Messianic Cycle

This cycle many agree is about 2,150 years. Blavatsky, in her article “Esoteric Character of the Gospels” has a footnote, which provides information as to the great cycles occurring at a similar time: “There are several remarkable cycles that come to a close at the end of this century. First, the 5,000 years of the Kaliyuga cycle; again the Messianic cycle of the Samaritan (also Kabalistic) Jews of the man connected with *Pisces* (Ichthys or “Fishman” *Dag*). It is a cycle historic and not very long, but very occult, lasting about 2,155 solar years, but having a true significance only when computed by lunar months. It occurred 2410 and 255 B.C., or when the

equinox entered into the sign of the *Ram*, and again into that of *Pisces*. When it enters, in a few years, the sign of *Aquarius*, psychologists will have some extra work to do, and the psychic idiosyncrasies of humanity will enter on a great change.”⁽¹⁾ In other words, around the time of H. P. B.’s life, there were two great cycles being completed: the first 5,000 years of Kali-yuga and the Messianic Cycle of approximately 2,150 years. A great being is associated with the time periods. The question is, is H. P. B. that great being and should we consider her in this way? My task is to consider this question from the standpoint of a ULT student.

Brief understanding of the Messianic Cycle in relation to the Zodiac

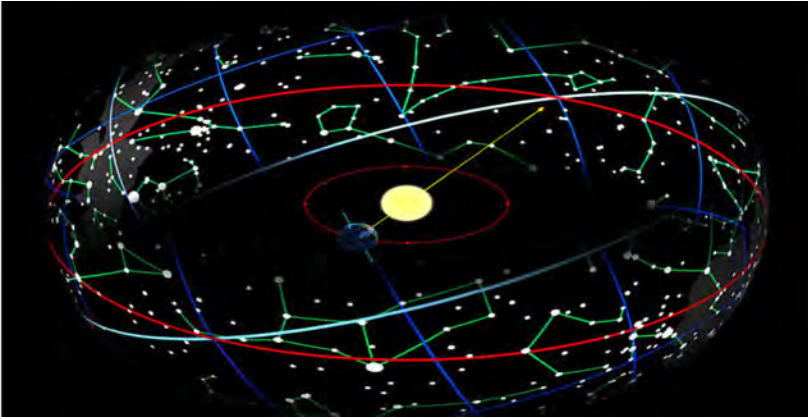
In approaching this topic I thought it important to understand what the Messianic Cycle is. I wanted to first have an understanding of the zodiac and just why constellations have been designated for different parts of the sky. An outline of a very simple explanation is something like this:

The earth spins around its axis in a 24 hour cycle. Sometimes, if you pick a certain point, the point is facing the Sun (daylight) and sometimes it is not (night). Although it is spinning the earth is also going around the Sun. Staying at a certain point on earth, if we were to look at the Sun, or beyond the Sun, or the stars beyond, it would look like the Sun is moving through different arrangements of the stars. This, of course, would not be the Sun moving as it is actually the Earth moving around the Sun. It takes a year for our Earth to circle the Sun. At different times of the year we would see different arrangements of the stars — called constellations.

Our Earth is at an angle relevant to the plane of the Ecliptic (the plane through the Sun and the Earth), which is why we experience the four seasons of the year as we come closer or further away from the Sun. The earth, in addition to being at an angle, wobbles very much like a top when it spins.

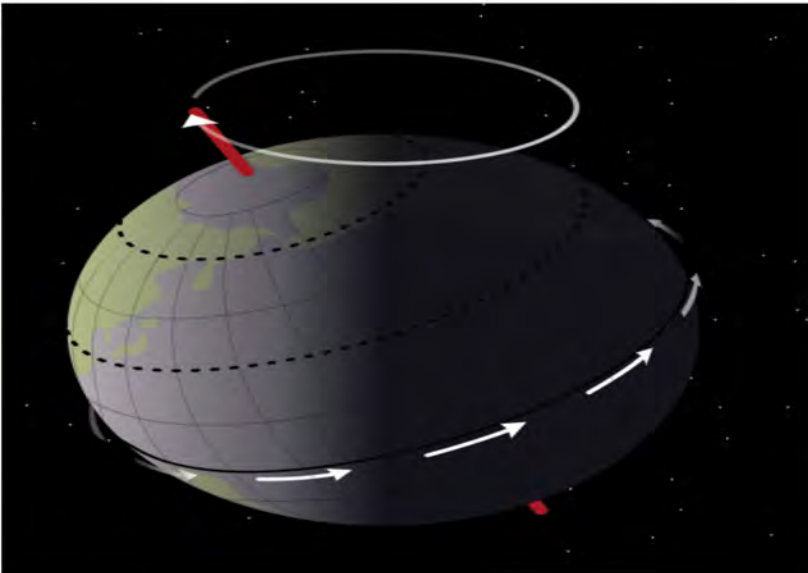
Depending on where we are at in the “wobble” we are exposed to different sections of the sky. It takes, according to astronomers, approximately 26,000 years to complete a wobble as the Earth goes around the Sun. In other words, we are associated with different segments of the sky (constellations). The last segment we were directly associated with was Pisces. The segment for Pisces completed the cycle of 2,160 years. We have now moved to the age of Aquarius.

Why does the earth wobble? According to most astronomers it is due to

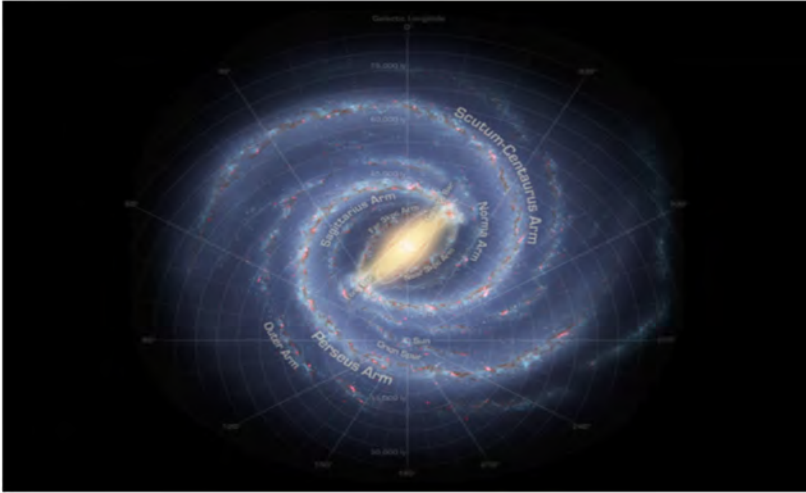


The earth moving around the sun (red circle) as we see different constellations in the sky (shown in green).

the gravity of our moon and the Sun pulling on the earth. However, there may be other reasons for this including an electro-magnetic explanation having to do with Fohat (according to one of our fellow theosophical students). Another explanation, according to a scientist would be the effects of the movement of the galaxy. Our solar system is a part of the Milky Way galaxy, which is also moving around a central point.



The “wobbling” effect as the earth turns.



The Milky Way.

The movement of our galaxy is having an effect on our planet. I thought this was interesting simply to show how these enormous cycles intersect. The Messianic Cycle is one segment of the Earth's wobble as we see the constellations in the sky. The purpose is to show there are great cycles in the universe. This is in reference to the Messianic Cycle. Many terms have been used for this including Avataric, Krishna, and the Budhas. The question is to determine H. P. B.'s role as associated with the Messianic Cycle from the standpoint of the United Lodge of Theosophists.

These cycles, according to the theosophical teachings, are associated with great beings. It is important to note that the teachings are — all is being. Everything comes about through the mind of being. Each one in his own universe and we create with our minds that which then brings about manifestation.

The Messianic Cycle, or to use the name Messiah, has other names including Avatar, Angels, Kumaras, and many more. William Q. Judge, taking his material from H. P. B.'s *The Secret Doctrine*, comments on Planetary Spirits (referred to as the highest Kumaras). They are the informing Spirits of the Stars and of the planets. The Planetary Spirits appear on Earth as Avatars only at the beginning of every new human race and at the junction or close of the two ends of the small and great cycles. Their mission is to strike the keynote of Truth, but once that has been done they disappear from Earth until the following Planetary Manvantara. From

there, the Truth is then generated from generations of adepts.

There is a wonderful article found in *Theosophy* called “The Teachings on the Avatars”. Much of the material can be found in *The Secret Doctrine*. To quote the first paragraph:

THE *Avatâra* is a divine incarnation. It is the descent of a god or some exalted Being, who has progressed beyond the necessity of rebirths, into the body of a simple mortal. Krishna was an avatar of *Vishnu*. The Dalai Lama is regarded as an avatar of *Avalokiteswara*; the Teshu Lama as one of Tson-kha-pa, or *Amitabha*. All these are but different terms used by different peoples to indicate one and the same LOGOS, the Divine *Christos*, the *Anima Mundi*. It is the “Word made Flesh” in every religion, in India a Proteus of 1008 divine names and aspects, from Brahma-Purusha down through the Seven divine Rishis ... to the divine-human avatars.⁽²⁾

There are listed seven great Avatars who are to come to each of our races. We are considered to be in the fourth round, fifth race. Five of the Avatars have come which have included Krishna and Buddha. Two have yet to come. The seventh is given as the Kalki Avatar.⁽³⁾

The “White Horse Avatar”, which will be the last manvantaric incarnation of Vishnu, according to the Brahmins; of Maitreya Buddha, agreeably to Northern Buddhists; of Sosiosh, the last hero and Saviour of the Zoroastrians, as claimed by the Parsis; and of the “Faithful and True” on the white Horse (*Rev.* xix., 2). In his future epiphany or tenth avatar, the heavens will open and Vishnu will appear “seated on a milk-white steed, with a drawn sword blazing like a comet, for the final destruction of the wicked, the renovation of ‘creation’ and the ‘restoration of purity’”. (Compare *Revelation*.) This will take place at the end of the Kaliyuga 427,000 years hence. The latter end of every Yuga is called “the destruction of the world”, as then the earth changes each time its outward form, submerging one set of continents and upheaving another set.

The United Lodge of Theosophists

1. The primary emphasis of ULT is to study the original teachings of H.P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge.
2. There are, interestingly enough, a number of characteristics of ULT and ITC that are similar. Robert Crosbie, the founder of ULT, writes about his vision for ULT: “Local Lodges could be formed using the name and promulgating the basis of union, recognizing Theosophists as such, regardless of organization; open meetings; public

work, keeping Theosophy and Brotherhood prominent; intercommunication between Lodges, free and frequent; comparing methods of work of local Lodges; mutual assistance; furtherance of the Great Movement in all directions possible; the motto: “Be Theosophists; work for Theosophy.”⁽⁴⁾

3. H. P. B. and W. Q. J. [William Quan Judge; eds.] are seen as co-teachers. Although W. Q. J. writes of himself as a student of H. P. B. there are other suggestions he was of the brotherhood himself. Again, Robert Crosbie writes: “These writings [Judge] should be sought for, and studied, in connection with those of H.P. Blavatsky. That study will lead to the conviction that both were great Teachers – each with a particular mission – that each was sui generis, that their work was complementary, and that neither of them had, nor could have, any successor.”⁽⁵⁾
4. Impersonality. There are no officers, or corporation bylaws for ULT. This is to get away from “authorities.” None of the speakers are announced by names nor were the articles written for *Theosophy Magazine* ever signed. This is true to this day as you will find on the websites there are no names.
5. Some consider it a semi-esoteric body, which is suggestive that it gives focus to an inner life found in each student.
6. There is never applause for the speakers or any other forms of recognition.
7. Each ULT, found in different parts of the world is totally independent. In other words, there is no central source which controls the activities of other ULT centers.
This includes financial considerations. Each ULT must be self sufficient. There is often a financial organization associated with each ULT center to handle the practical aspects of a center. However, there is no control by this organization over the activities of the ULT center.
8. Books for sale are primarily on or written by H. P. B. or W. Q. J. There are no abridgements. Emphasis is given that the books written by H. P. B. and W. Q. J. are in their original form. It is understood that some of the original printing plates were available for the publications of these books.
9. Gives focus to the Three Objects of the Theosophical Movement. Although the three objects were originally associated with

the Theosophical Society, it recasts them as the three objects of the Theosophical Movement. In the pamphlet entitled *The United Lodge of Theosophists. Its Mission and Its Future*, it is written, “What, then, is the ground of unity among students of Theosophy in U.L.T.? It is agreement on the Objects of the Theosophical Movement and on the proposition that the teachings of Theosophy are the best available guides to an understanding of those Objects and to the planning of work in their behalf.”⁽⁶⁾ The Objects are then listed.

10. Independent devotion. There are no authorities in ULT suggesting how we are to interpret or practice the original teachings.
11. ULT does not take part in opinions or dissensions among its associates nor does it take part in political or social movements as an association. However, all associates are free to do so as individuals.

Implications on the Messianic Cycle from the orientation of ULT

Rationale of some reasons why H. P. B. may be the Messiah or Avatar for the Messianic Cycle.

One can appreciate H. P. B.’s importance with the realization she brought the Western and Eastern cultures together. Karma and reincarnation were hardly known in the West. Now they are a part of the zeitgeist. Buddhism, Hinduism and other Eastern cultures were unknown. Similarly, the West to the East. Today, within a hundred miles of this writer there are Buddhist and Hindu centers attended by thousands. H. P. B.’s pivotal role in history will someday be recognized.

She warned, “Had the formation of the Theosophical Society been postponed a few years longer, one half of the civilized nations would have become by this time rank materialists, and the other half anthropomorphists and phenomenologists.”⁽⁷⁾ Actually, this has happened. Both Russia and China have adopted a Communism directly related to the dialectical materialism of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. Blavatsky’s reference to anthropomorphism is assignment of human attributes to a personal God (our world still lives with this) and the reference to phenomenologists is the psychic pull so prevalent in the “New Age.”

Blavatsky calls for the affirmation of Universal Brotherhood. She proclaims that one of the essential causes lined up against brotherhood is a selfishness that is “daily strengthened and stimulated into a ferocious and irresistible feeling by the present religious education, which tends not only

to encourage, but positively to justify it.”⁽⁸⁾ She goes on to say, “Now, I state openly and fearlessly, that the perversity of this doctrine and of so many others *Theosophy alone* can eradicate.”⁽⁹⁾ And, she explains how eradication can come about. “Simply demonstrating on logical, philosophical, metaphysical, and even scientific grounds that:

(a) All men have spiritually and physically the same origin, which is the fundamental teaching of Theosophy.

(b) As mankind is essentially of one and the same essence, and that essence is one – infinite, uncreate, and eternal, whether we call it God or Nature – nothing, therefore, can affect one nation or one man without affecting all other nations and all other men. This is as certain and obvious as that a stone thrown into a pond will, sooner or later, set in motion every single drop of water therein.”⁽¹⁰⁾

She further states: “In order to awaken brotherly feeling among nations we have to assist in the international exchange of useful arts and products, by advice, information, and co-operation with all worthy individuals and associations (...)”⁽¹¹⁾

And, “Hurt a man by doing him bodily harm; you may think that his pain and suffering cannot spread by any means to his neighbors, least of all to men of other nations. We affirm *that it will, in good time*. Therefore, we say, that unless every man is brought to understand and accept *as an axiomatic truth* that by wronging one man we wrong not only ourselves but the whole of humanity in the long run, no brotherly feelings such as preached by all the great Reformers, pre-eminently by Buddha and Jesus, are possible on earth.”⁽¹²⁾

She sets a tone, rather a template, which included all subjects of thought. Astronomy, physics, chemistry, psychology, anthropology, religion, philosophy, mathematics, biology, and referenced her citations, in Greek, Latin, French, Sanskrit, and much more. She evidently was planting the seeds of an ancient philosophy in every area of modern thought. The seeds ripened. Theosophical ideas have permeated the world in all areas. Karma and reincarnation are now the subject matter of television shows. Interestingly, the first cremation was held in the United States by herself and other Theosophists. Now this is very common. If one examines the description of God in the church it has migrated from a man in the sky, the statements are more close to what Blavatsky described as impersonal or the Absolute.

Some implications – based on the ULT principles – which may be related which are suggestive

Two ULT principles

IMPERSONALITY

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INDEPENDENCY

Each ULT, found in different parts of the world is totally independent. In other words, there is no central source which controls the activities of other ULT centers. There is often a financial organization associated with each ULT center to handle the practical aspects of a center. However, there is no control by this organization over the activities of the ULT center.

1. Blavatsky would seem to remove herself as a person totally responsible for the theosophical teachings. She writes in her Introductory to *The Secret Doctrine*: “But to the public in general and the readers of the “Secret Doctrine” I may repeat what I have stated all along, and which I now clothe in the words of Montaigne: Gentlemen, “I HAVE HERE MADE ONLY A NOSEGAY OF CULLED FLOWERS, AND HAVE BROUGHT NOTHING OF MY OWN BUT THE STRING THAT TIES THEM.” Annie Besant wrote an article called the “Theosophical Society and H. P. B.” which was followed by an article by H.T. Patterson, “Comments on the Theosophical Society and H. P. B.” There it was written, and would she not say: “First Humanity and then the Theosophical Society, and last myself.” H. P. B. interjecting an editorial comment, states “Most decidedly so, such has been always my principle, and I hope it is that of my friend and colleague, Col. H.S. Olcott, our President.”
2. A central idea of ULT is impersonality. To view H. P. B. as an Avatar or Messiah would be a kind of glorification of H. P. B., which would be contrary to her statements.
3. A principle of ULT would be an anti-authority approach. Wisdom needs to be awakened in each individual rather than accepting it because a teacher is a “great being.” From the pamphlet, *The United Lodge of Theosophists, Its Mission and Its Future*, “(..)

H.P. Blavatsky, from whom all that was known of such beings initially came, had insisted that the only authority in her books was their inherent reasonableness, however extraordinary the conclusions to which they may lead.”

4. H. P. B., in many places indicates there were Masters of Wisdom (real beings) who directly communicated to her much of the theosophical teachings.
5. There is the suggestion that it may have been other beings behind the physical presence of H. P. B. and W. Q. J. In a talk recorded from Robert Crosbie that describes instances where great beings take on the body of one who is leaving that frame, he states “There have been two such occasions within our time. H.P. Blavatsky was one. The tenant occupying that body really left it when it was wounded unto death on the field of battle, and another Entity by agreement took it. That incoming Entity was one of ‘Those who know,’ one of Those who had reached perfection, and who used that body for the purposes of the work of the great Lodge of Masters in the world.”

THE ONLY AUTHORITY

(...) H.P. Blavatsky, from whom all that was known of such beings [Masters; addition by J.C.] initially came, had insisted that the only authority in her books was their inherent reasonableness, however extraordinary the conclusions to which they might lead.⁽¹³⁾

From this standpoint it was some other being, other than H. P. B., that would represent the being associated with the “Messianic Cycle.”

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3. H.P. Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, lemma “Kalki Avatar”, p. 170.
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11. Ibid., p. 29.
12. Ibid., p. 31.
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Contribution by Barend Voorham

(Theosophical Society Point Loma - Blavatskyhouse, The Hague)

You never really get a general idea about H.P. Blavatsky, lesser even of H. P. B., when you study her as a single phenomenon, because H. P. B. can only be understood in a much broader, yes, in a more universal perspective. If you can't manage that, then it will be like trying to unravel the appearance of a single mushroom that, after a night of rain, suddenly appears in an autumnal forest. But a mushroom is just the fruit of a big underground network of fungus. In the same way H. P. B. is a product of the Universal Hierarchy of Wisdom, Compassion and Peace. Without that Hierarchy there is no H. P. B. at all.

Hierarchy of Wisdom and Compassion

That Hierarchy of Wisdom forms the Light side of the Universe. Compassion is its main characteristic. It reaches into the heart of the Universe. That hierarchy is represented as a tree whose roots are in heaven. It is referred to as *Aśwattha* in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. Gods, Dhyān-Chohans, all conscious divine and lofty beings are the stem and branches. The Masters, the Teachers of H.P. Blavatsky, are parts of that tree here on earth. Throughout the long history of man we were helped, inspired and taught by representatives of that Universal Hierarchy.

As taught in *The Secret Doctrine*, it were the Mānasaputras – the Sons of Manas, sons of Mind – who overshadowed the human vehicles eighteen million years ago. When the right time arose, they kindled in us, like one candle lighting another, inflaming our minds. We became self-conscious beings, awakened by the gods.

That was perhaps the first help – at least as far as we know – coming from the Lodge of Wisdom and Compassion; the first encouragement to continue our evolutionary journey. And do not think lightly of this. For those divine beings helping us meant that they became active in regions which were far beneath their normal state of consciousness.

This story has been told in many myths. Prometheus, the Greek titan who gave humanity fire – the blazing intellect – was chained by Zeus to the rock Caucasus. And wasn't the serpent in Genesis – symbol of the

Mānasaputras – ‘punished’ for giving humanity the capacity to think? His legs were taken from him, so he had to swing crawling on the ground. All symbols that these divine beings descended to a for them far inferior realm.

We are talking about the third Root Race, which lived millions of years ago. In that distant epoch there was intuitive knowledge for everybody. There was a natural respect and acceptance for those beings who know more than we do, just like young children respect their parents. And with the help of those divine beings and their direct pupils the loftiest societies were erected.

But eventually man descended more into matter. In the fourth Root Race selfishness, desire and greed became the main characteristics. Men focused on living in their personalities. They lived in the illusion that they were separated from others. The divine wisdom was more and more abused for selfish purposes.

The Mysteries

So there came a time that knowledge had to be veiled. The Mysteries were installed. No longer was everybody allowed to receive the teachings. Only those who proved to be pure and unselfish had the right to be initiated in those schools of wisdom and compassion.

In the *Collected Writings*, volume 14, in the chapter “The Origin of the Mysteries”⁽¹⁾ H.P. Blavatsky gives abundant evidence and many quotes from all the sages of antiquity, how highly esteemed these Mysteries were. They exerted an uplifting influence on society. For although only those who had proven to be unselfish were allowed to enter the Greater Mysteries, there were also the so called Lesser Mysteries, which ensured by means of myths, parables and rituals, that the spiritual light of mankind was not extinguished.

Those Mysteries, or Mystery Schools, were in all parts of the world. And supporting all of them was the force of the Lodge of Wisdom and Compassion. All arts, all knowledge, genuine religion, philosophy and science had the Mysteries as source.

Some 1500 years ago, in the 6th century of the Christian era, seven initiates of the Mysteries of old Greece, asked Justinian, the Christian emperor of Byzantium, to close the last open school in Athens.⁽²⁾ The Mysteries were profaned and heavily degenerated. And better than letting them rot even more, those holy men pleaded to close them. Of course they knew that on the inner planes the Mystery School can never be closed and for

those who knock rightly at the door, it will always be opened. But in the outer world the school had disappeared.

Then the dark night of the Middle Ages fell down upon us in Europe. During centuries man was not free to think. The dogmas of the church, which are the totally misunderstood teachings of the avatar Jesus, were represented as the absolute truth, and to doubt whether they were true, was punished by torture and stake.

At the end of the 15th century there was a small but bright light burning in Florence. Ficino and Pico della Mirandola – who by the way was according to H. P. B. a chela of the Masters – made tentative attempts to revive the knowledge of the Mystery Schools. But it was not until 1875 – some 1300 years after the closing of the Mysteries in Europe – that a serious attempt was undertaken to re-establish the old Mystery Schools. The Theosophical Society was founded. For the TS was meant to be the cradle of a new epoch, where ideas about life and death, about the hierarchical structure of the universe and especially about the Oneness of all beings would be commonly known again like in the old days.

Preparing the founding of the Theosophical Society

The preparation of the founding of the TS was very well planned. The Asian born Master Koothoomi, studied some years in Europe to learn the European way of thinking. He learned to speak English and French fluently. But the Masters needed a messenger. In *The Mahatma Letters* we read that they searched for nearly a century until they found “the only opportunity to send out a European *body* upon European soil to serve as a connecting link between that country and our own”.⁽³⁾ Blavatsky was not perfect, but she was the best available messenger.

So, long before 1875, yes I presume even before 1831, the year Helena was born, the foundation of the TS was already planned. For when she was still a young girl she had already had some kind of contact with Master Morya. When she was twenty and she met for the first time her Master in the flesh in London, she recognized him as the man she had seen many times in her dreams. He asked her to participate in the project, telling her that it would bring her innumerable suffering. The love for humanity and for her Guru was so great that she could not refuse.

The next 24 years were years of training. She travelled all over the world. She succeeded to enter Tibet. There are many mysteries about that period. Blavatsky herself did not give any details about those years. Esoter-

ically you can say that during those years she revived all those Mysteries from the past. All the esoteric schools which did not function anymore in the outer world, had to pour out their spiritual influences again. Therefore she visited amongst others the Druses in Lebanon, the various schools in Asia. That's why she studied the Voodoo rites in New Orleans and the old religions of Egypt and so on. The most mysterious part of those wandering years were those in Tibet. There something in her constitution was changed, or rather, something was put aside. That was necessary in order to fulfill the great work she had to do. We'll talk more about that later.

Cycles

But first we want to dwell on 1875. Why was the Theosophical Society founded in that year? Would another time have been appropriate as well? Now, the Masters always work along with Nature. They know Nature better than we do. They can fathom the deeper movements in Nature and know the major and minor cycles, which are often hidden for us. And if you want to start a movement you had better do it at a cyclic auspicious time. That is to say: at the beginning of a cycle, or sometimes halfway through, or at the end, which is the beginning of the succeeding cycle. Compare it with our habits. A good time to start something is the beginning of the day (at dawn) or at the winter solstice on the 21th of December. At that time the solar forces enforce the decision and there is a far greater chance to succeed.

Now, at the end of the nineteenth century there were various cyclic important moments, such as the start of a new Messianic Cycle, a cycle of 2160 years. It was the dawning of Aquarius. The previous cycle, which stood in the sign of Pisces, was launched by the Avatāra Jesus. Moreover, the first 5000 years of Kali-yuga ended in 1897. Finally, the last quarter of a century is always the most spiritual and is therefore a good reason to launch a spiritual movement. There were also other cyclical important facts of which we know practically nothing.

So there was a very good reason for the Masters to send H. P. B. to New York, to let her meet Colonel Olcott and William Quan Judge, and to start the Theosophical Movement.

The TS was very much needed

The TS was very much needed, for humanity was entering a dangerous evolutionary period. The religious belief in the western world was

extremely dogmatic and led increasingly to superstition and prejudice; on the other hand, science was so materialistic, that scientists simply denied everything the senses could not observe.

The Maha-Chohan, the Master of the Masters, describes this situation as follows: mankind is divided into two classes, a superstitious one preparing for itself long periods of temporary annihilation or states of non-consciousness; and a materialistic one indulging its animal propensities with the deliberate intention of submitting to annihilation pure and simple in cases of failure, to millenniums of degradation after physical dissolution.⁽⁴⁾

So the time was ripe for a theosophical view. Although among the masters themselves there was doubt whether the new attempt of the Lodge of Wisdom and Compassion would possibly be successful, 'consent was given'.⁽⁵⁾ That means that the Maha-Chohan gave his blessings, which is very important.

The difference between H.P. Blavatsky and H. P. B.

A vehicle, a messenger – i.e. a link between the Masters and the world – was needed for that new attempt. And, as already mentioned, human beings suitable for such a tremendous task, are extremely rare. Blavatsky had that needed strength of will, that unquestionable devotion towards her Master and a great compassionate heart. But that was not enough. She had to exercise her will, she had to master her nature. But for such an important task still more was necessary. She was prepared to function as the instrument of the Hierarchy of Wisdom and Compassion, of which the Chohan was the head here on earth.

Blavatsky was a compassionate, wise, unselfish, loyal and courageous high chela of the Masters. She had activated in former lives her spiritual and divine nature. But H. P. B. was even more than that. H. P. B. was the voice of the whole Hierarchy of Compassion. She was their direct agent. We are talking about Tulku now. Tulku is a Tibetan word, which literally means: taking a human form on earth. It is similar to the Sanskrit word Avatāra.

There are various kinds of Tulku, but right now we just want to discuss that specific Tulku that H. P. B. was. In her case there was a high Master of the White Lodge, who sent out a part, or a ray of himself, to take embodiment in a chela, a messenger that this Master was sending into the world. That combination of Master and chela – that kind of Tulku – may last a lifetime or perhaps just a single day. The messenger, such as H. P. B., is a

transmitter of the spiritual and divine powers of the Mahatmas into this, our world. When H. P. B. spoke, acted or wrote, it was not the chela who was acting, it was the Master's mind speaking and working through her.

So H.P. Blavatsky was the chela, a far advanced chela, one who was already initiated in the Gupta-Vidyā, the Universal Theosophia, so that she could serve the Master as a useful instrument to work in this outer world. And H. P. B. was a Master speaking through that vehicle, yes, in fact it was the voice of the very Lodge of Compassion and Wisdom.

Read the first lines of *The Secret Doctrine: The Author – the writer, rather –*, thus she begins. So, the Author – mind you: it is written with a capital A – is the Master; the writer is the chela, the vehicle of which the Author makes use.

Or think about the dedication to herself she wrote in her personal copy of *The Voice of the Silence*:

H. P. B. to H.P. Blavatsky, with no kind regards.⁽⁶⁾

Only the fact that H. P. B. was a Tulku can explain these mysteries. H. P. B. embodied the life of a Master. The higher essence of this Master was at times incarnated in her. Only when that influence was withdrawn, the Tulku became nonexistent.

Becoming such a Tulku is a work of white magic. A great part of the intermediate nature of the constitution of the chela has to be put aside. For how can a Master work through the chela, if the intermediate part – that what we usually call the soul – is active and propagates its own opinions and ideas. How can I – for instance – be the spokesman of somebody greater than I, when I mix up his ideas with my own opinions. I have to silence my own opinions, my own intermediate part, if I want to be a pure channel for the one of whom I am the spokesman.

In the case of H. P. B., she was not just the spokesman, she was the transformer of a divine influence, flowing out of the Heart of the Universe to our human community. The intermediate part of the high chela, whose task was so overwhelming great, had to be silenced, yes had to be put aside almost completely. During her stay with the Masters in Tibet this occult 'surgery' – as I may call it – took place. Nevertheless, not everything of the chela was put aside permanently, for sometimes she had to formulate the thoughts in her own words.

Try to grasp just a bit of this process of Tulku and you get an idea of how great the sacrifice of Blavatsky was. Imagine for a moment what it

would be like if you silenced your own soul so that someone wiser and nobler than you, can make use of your vehicle. In a certain way you lose your “me”, you lose who you are. Of course you lose it only temporally, but nevertheless this loss will give a lot of instability in your consciousness.

H. P. B. — the Mystery

Do you understand now the mystery H. P. B. was? Can you imagine that for most of the people she was a riddle? Even members of the TS thought she was an unfit link between them and the Masters. Master Koothoomi, when trying to explain to Sinnett her situation by saying that she did not have the possession of the seven principles of consciousness, called her a psychological cripple.⁽⁷⁾ And from a technical point of view she really was. But it was voluntarily. She knew what she was doing when she accepted the ungrateful task, that, according to the Master, “lay her low and desolate in the ruins of misery, misapprehension, and isolation”.⁽⁸⁾

You may ask, who was this Master who worked through her. Some think it was her own Master, Morya, of whom she was a chela. Maybe there were different Masters who worked through her. She had to revive various occult traditions all over the world, schools of different Masters. But maybe there was even still a greater Being working through H. P. B. There is a very interesting letter of Master Koothoomi to a chela, Mohini, who alludes to this. H. P. B. went from Nice to Paris in 1884, and Mohini M. Chatterji who was in Paris, received, the following letter.

When Upasika [Upasika was how the Masters called H. P. B.; B.V.] arrives, you will meet and receive her as *though you were in India, and she your own Mother*. (...); and if Colonel asks you why, you will answer him that it is the interior man, the *indweller* you salute, not H. P. B., for you were notified to that effect by us. And know for your own edification that One far greater than myself has kindly consented to survey the whole situation under her guise, and then to visit, through the same channel, occasionally, Paris and other places where foreign members may reside. You will thus salute her on seeing and taking leave of her the whole time you are at Paris — regardless of comments and *her own surprise*.⁽⁹⁾

Please, note: Mohini should treat H. P. B., with the utmost respect, because the interior man in H. P. B. is somebody who is far greater than even Koothoomi himself. That interior man is therefore in our view the Master of Master Koothoomi, the Maha-Chohan to whom the Masters asked permission to set up the TS and he agreed. Being the head of the

Masters on earth he is directly linked to more developed beings. In fact he is a ray of the Dhyāni-Buddha of the planetary chain of the earth, that Wondrous Being that H. P. B. calls the Silent Watcher, the ever-living-human-Banyan.⁽¹⁰⁾ It was that same divine force that 2,100 years ago inspired the man who was born in Syria and who is known as Jesus Christ.

Even Theosophists don't really understand the utmost importance of H. P. B. H. P. B. was not just a high chela of the Masters, was not even a combination of a high chela and a Master, in fact she – or rather it – was the force that originated in the Dhyāni-Buddha of our planetary chain, emanating through the chief of the Masters, the Maha-Chohan, who transformed it, so that that lion-heart-woman could bear it and fulfill that very important work on earth, that must give direction to the great Orphan,⁽¹¹⁾ as the Master called humanity. So the more you ponder about H. P. B., the more you get an idea about the compassionate structure of the universe.

After the death of H. P. B.

Do you think that when H. P. B. died in 1891 the Masters left humanity alone? In my opinion that would be absurd. Even an ordinary man does not give up his project when it is not yet accomplished. Of course the Masters knew the Tulku would cease to exist as the Chela Blavatsky died; and of course they knew that the TS would not be immediately a 100% success, nor that it would be a 100% failure. The first impulse had taken place but the work needed to continue.

H. P. B. herself speaks frankly about another disciple sent by the Masters, who may be more informed and far better fitted to explain the Gupta-Vidyā, or the Secret Doctrine.⁽¹²⁾

We, from the Point Loma tradition, think that disciple really came and that his coming was planned long before the founding of the TS. If you read the books of Gottfried de Purucker you have a far better understanding of the teachings that H. P. B. started to teach. He lifted up the veil a bit more. He was part of the great plan of the Masters.

Whether you believe it or not that he was sent by the Masters, it is a fact that the Masters, after the passing of H. P. B., were still occupied with the work. Annie Besant received a letter from Koothoomi in 1900, nine years after the passing of H. P. B.⁽¹³⁾ And William Quan Judge and Katherine Tingley asserted that they had contact with the Masters. So there is proof that in the beginning of the 20th century they were still involved

in the cause. That cause is the foundation of a new Mystery School. That school finds its origin in the spiritual part of the earth and has branched to all parts of the world.

So the Theosophical Society, or the Theosophical Movement, is not just an organization of well-intentioned well-meaning men and women. It is not just a philanthropic club that was founded in 1875. The TS is the forecourt of a Mystery School. You can reach the Masters through the TS.

How inspiring is this picture. We all can be a part of the oldest organization on earth, which is rooted in the Silent Watcher of our Planet, whose life, compassion and influence are transformed by the Masters and their chelas to us. So we can be integrated parts of the Hierarchy of Compassion, cooperate with the Masters for the spiritual welfare of humanity, by making Theosophy a living power in our lives.

Theosophy is therefore not just a philosophy, a theory like so many others. It is the truth, expressed in human language, about the order of nature, about the meaning and purpose of life. It gives plenty of food for thought for centuries to come, not just for the new Messianic cycle, but for many centuries thereafter.

Theosophy is able to turn the tide of materialism, dogmatism and the foolish ideology of selfishness, and above all it can give perspective and hope for a loftier future, where people are more and more aware of their inextricable links with each other and realize that brotherhood is a fact in nature. H. P. B. sacrificed her life for this.

Only by applying Theosophia humanity is able to take the impending turning point in the current cycle. The immense work of the Masters and H. P. B. at the beginning of a new cycle was badly needed. Without the knowledge of the Ancient Wisdom it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to develop the right abilities to go along with the upward flow.

So, what a responsibility lies in our hands to continue our work! How thankful we should be for the knowledge that flowed from the Heart of the Universe, through the Masters and H. P. B. to us! We can express that gratitude best by, unitedly, spreading Theosophy among our fellow men.

We are privileged. We can continue the work and cooperate on our plane with the Masters.

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Contribution by Olga Omlin

(Theosophical Society Adyar)

How do you see H.P. Blavatsky and H. P. B.

Various sources and people speak about Helena Petrovna Blavatsky in many different ways. For some she was an incredible being, a messenger who brought the light of Divine Wisdom to the world driven by deep compassion for suffering humanity. To others she was a destroyer of religion and a woman with a fiery temper.

In the eyes of aristocratic society she was a challenge with all her personality rebelling against rules and social conventions. H.P. Blavatsky described herself; “I hated ‘society’ and the so-called ‘world’ as I hated hypocrisy in whatever form it showed itself.”⁽¹⁾

She was as human as each of us. Her niece Nadezhda Zhelihovsky wrote that her aunt liked to invent stories for fun. In Russian culture family is highly valued, and I believe it was the same or similar for Helena Petrovna. She wrote in one of her letters to A.P. Sinnett; “My aunt Mme Witte swore before the image of some St. Flapdoodle that she would *curse me* on her death-bed if I permitted any Memoirs to be published, so long as all my relatives are yet living. (...) It is *impossible* to say truth without incriminating people that I would not accuse for the world, now that they are dead and gone. Rest it all on my back.”⁽²⁾

Even though H.P. Blavatsky was the first Russian woman who became an American citizen, she remained devoted to her home country. In a letter to her sister Vera, she wrote about her experience during the naturalization ceremony; “A nice scrape to get into, but how am I to manage to no longer love Russia or respect the emperor? It is easier to say a thing than to act accordingly.”⁽³⁾

It is said that H.P. Blavatsky had an amazing power to attract people and that she was patient and persevering in her service to the Master and Theosophy. She was very sincere and she easily trusted others, giving most the benefit of the doubt. The sincerity of her soul can be seen in her indifference to the public opinion about her.

And perhaps this courageous and confident spirit gave her the strength to carry on the mission of revealing the sacred teachings underlying all

religions, to help awaken spiritual consciousness of humanity, and to become the first in her attempt to give a synthesis of science, religion and philosophy, which can be found in many of her writings and mainly in *The Secret Doctrine*.

Yet, H.P. Blavatsky was extraordinary even as a child; perceptive, sensitive and surrounded by unusual phenomena. It is not easy to even vaguely perceive how challenging it must have been for Helena Petrovna to grow up being such an unusual child, and later becoming a center of attention, curiosity and attacks from all corners of the world. Her first attempt to establish the Theosophical Society was closely connected with various phenomena. On the one hand, it was done to show that matter was not what science in those days thought of it and, on the other hand, to argue the spiritualists' belief in solely the spirits of the dead. She challenged the world to realize that "the unseen" was not a criterion for Spirituality. Nevertheless, she regretted her approach later as it generated in some misunderstanding that Theosophy has primarily to do with psychic development. She was unafraid to admit a mistake in judgment and move on.

From her very personal letters to her sister Vera one can see Helena's hope to be understood in the deepest sense. She wrote: "Do not be afraid that I am off my head. All that I can say is that someone positively inspires me — more than this, someone enters me. It is not I who talk and write; it is something within me, my higher and luminous Self, that thinks and writes for me. Do not ask me, my friend, what I experience, because I could not explain it to you clearly. I do not know myself! The one thing I know is, that now, when I am about to reach old age, I have become a sort of storehouse of somebody else's knowledge. ... *Someone* comes and envelops me as a misty cloud and all at once pushes me out of myself, and then I am not "I" any more — Helena Petrovna Blavatsky — but someone else."⁽⁴⁾

And that Inner Being was a driving power in H. P. B.'s theosophical work and the constant influence on the unfoldment of her life. As she expressed it, "For the Divine Spiritual "I" is alone eternal, and the same throughout all births; whereas the "personalities" it informs in succession are evanescent, changing like the shadows of a kaleidoscopic series of forms in a magic lantern."⁽⁵⁾

She was absolutely devoted to the Master and to the cause of Theosophy. Often ill, and in many ways flawed, H.P. Blavatsky was still the best instrument the Adept Hierarchy could find. She went through all sorts of discomforts, and never really knew what was ahead of her. Through all

her works she emphasized that it is by our own merit, not with the help of a Guru that we can work out our way to the unity with our Inner Divine Essence. And on that ground near the end of her life she established the Blavatsky Lodge in London that became the headquarters of the TS in Europe, and the Esoteric Section that was inspired by the Masters.

As she wrote in her letter to the Indian Members of the Theosophical Society, “Thenceforth let it be clearly understood that the rest of my life is devoted only to those who believe in the Masters, and are willing to work for Theosophy as they understand it, and for the T.S. on the lines upon which they originally established it.”⁽⁶⁾

We may wonder if the teachings of Theosophy given in *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy*, *The Voice of the Silence*, *Isis Unveiled* et cetera are still relevant to the present world. Now thanks to the selfless efforts of pioneer-theosophists we are all familiar with the ideas of karma and reincarnation. Nevertheless, we are facing many of the same temptations. Some are drawn to psychic phenomena “which are but another form of materialism”⁽⁷⁾ wrote H. P. B. Or we may desire to accumulate more and more information even in the form of theosophical knowledge. But knowledge can only be transformed into Wisdom through a daily practice, through contemplation, meditation and selfless service rooted in kindness and compassion.

As H. P. B. emphasized in her address to the American Convention in 1889, “Therefore it is that the Ethics of Theosophy are even more necessary to mankind than the scientific aspects of the psychic facts of nature and man.”⁽⁸⁾

The world inherited from this Russian woman a huge resource of practical spiritual and intellectual teachings. She pointed out the direction of the comparative study of science, religion and philosophy. She inspired her motherland Russia to explore its spiritual roots in the East. All of this humanity is yet destined to rediscover.

A while ago an inquirer on Facebook asked in regards to a posting on Founders’ Day, if we worshiped the founders of the Theosophical Society? It is sad to see such a misinterpretation of our gratitude towards the Founders’ great effort to carry forward the work of the Elder Brothers for the benefit of all humanity.

How do you see the Masters?

And who are these Elder Brothers, the Mahatmas or the Masters as

H. P. B. referred to them and whose willing instrument she chose to become?

H.P. Blavatsky puzzled the Western scientific world with the information about the Brotherhood of the Masters of the Wisdom who possessed knowledge of contemporary scientific discoveries and also of those that had yet to be made, their ability to “precipitate” letters and inspire ideas via thoughts. For some westerners a concept of Mahatmas revealing some ancient truths to the “developed” world was curious, others named it to be false.

Nevertheless, Initiates can be traced through the history of mankind. They inspired and encouraged new religious views or insights and founded various philosophical schools. No matter how we name and understand Them, They are spiritually evolved individuals who chose the Bodhisattva Path – the path of self-sacrifice, altruism, divine kindness and compassion – incarnating perhaps for many lifetimes to help suffering humanity. By Them theosophical truths have been given through H. P. B. They were the inspirational force behind the founding of the Theosophical Society.

In “Mahatmas and Chelas” H. P. B. writes: “And whoever therefore wants to see the real MAHATMA, must use his *intellectual* sight. He must so elevate his *Manas* that its perception will be clear and all mists created by *Maya* must be dispelled. (...) This perception of the *Manas* may be called “faith” which should not be confounded with *blind belief*. “Blind faith” is an expression sometimes used to indicate belief without perception or understanding; while the true perception of the *Manas* is that enlightened belief, which is the real meaning of the word “faith.” This belief should at the same time be accompanied by *knowledge, i.e.,* experience, for “true *knowledge* brings with it faith.”⁽⁹⁾

This idea is implied in the third object of the Theosophical Society Adyar — to investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man. And in my perception, the word “man” used here means Manu or Manas which is the thinking principle and the human soul.

Studying *The Mahatma Letters* gives a glimpse of their characters, views and vision. They are beyond the personal Karma and do not express any favors. To quote H. P. B., “(...) although the whole of humanity is within the mental vision of the MAHATMAS, they cannot be expected to take special note of every human being, unless that being by his special acts draws their particular attention to himself. The highest interest of humanity, as a whole, is their special concern, for they have identified

themselves with that Universal Soul which runs through Humanity, and he, who would draw their attention, must do so through that Soul which pervades everywhere.”⁽¹⁰⁾

The Masters are interested in the present but their main concern is the future; “(...) and every mistake is so much more accumulated wisdom for days to come.”⁽¹¹⁾

They are the embodiment of Love and Holiness. But their real holiness may be completely different from what our preconceived idea of holiness is. They see things as they are and speak in very clear terms. They do not tell anyone how to act, but give only a direction of progress, of possibilities. They understand our strengths and weaknesses and never give up on us.

Their aim is Universal Brotherhood for which the TS is a testing ground. In the Letter No. 4 Master Koot’ Hoomi writes: “The term “Universal Brotherhood” is no idle phrase. (...) It is the only secure foundation for universal morality. If it be a dream, it is at least a noble one for mankind and it is the aspiration of the *true adept*.”⁽¹²⁾

Reading *The Mahatma Letters* and *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom* compiled by C. Jinarājadāsa one cannot help but feeling devotion and reverence for them. However, it has nothing to do with worship. The Masters need co-workers to help them in their tremendous work to guide the spiritual development of humanity and not a single effort for the sake of the TS is ever in vain.

The Masters can influence human evolution only so far. We ourselves must move away from the realm of materialism, into the realm of spirituality. “The Masters do *not guide* the Society, not even the Founders; and no one has ever asserted that they did: they only watch over, and protect it.”⁽¹³⁾ wrote H.P. Blavatsky.

Realizing how challenging a path of spiritual transformation may be, the Masters suggested the necessity of a gradual dissemination and assimilation of theosophical teachings. Because of our egoistic, self-defensive animal-human nature resisting any change, a radical interference could do more harm than help.

As H. P. B. wrote in her *Letter to the 1888 American Convention*: “According as people are prepared to receive it, so will new Theosophical teaching be given. But no more will be given than the world, on its present level of spirituality, can profit by. It depends on the spread of Theosophy – the assimilation of what has been already given – how much more will be revealed, and how soon.”⁽¹⁴⁾ The Masters want us to realize for

ourselves the Plan of Manifestation emanating from the Divine Mind, by exercising the faculties of our own Higher Principles.

In their letters the Mahatmas wrote about the Path of Discipleship, which is open to anyone willing to serve the spiritual needs of humanity as a whole. It is the Path that allows one to become an instrument of Light, a path that brings confidence and trust in the Laws of the Higher Life, that all is well and the deeper understanding of our true nature.

The Master K. H. wrote: “To accept any man as a chela does not depend on my personal will. It can only be the result of one’s personal merit and exertions in that direction. *Force* any one of the “Masters” you may happen to choose; do good works in his name and for the love of mankind; be pure and resolute in the path of righteousness (as laid out in *our* rules); be honest and unselfish; forget your self but to remember the good of other people — and you will have *forced* that “Master” to accept you.”⁽¹⁵⁾

How do you see the Messianic Cycle?

The idea of progressive appearance of the Adepts during the long history of mankind does not belong to a particular esoteric teaching or religion. H. P. B. explained in *The Secret Doctrine* that human beings will be guided towards “a correct comprehension of ancient Wisdom” until they are spiritual enough to continue on their own.

The concept of Messiahs is common in various religious traditions. For example, it is expressed in the idea of the *Kalki* Avatar, the *White Horse Avatar* or Maitreya Buddha, a Savior who will appear at the end of this cycle, which is Kali-yuga, and would bring back the Golden Age to the Earth. The deeper meaning of such doctrines, beyond the literal, needs to be explored especially in their relevance to our times and life today.

In “The Cycle Moveth” H.P. Blavatsky stated that periodically in the last quarter of every century messengers were sent westward. They are people endowed with spiritual intuition who have the key to the secrets of nature.⁽¹⁶⁾ It seems that their appearance is triggered by spiritual crises of humanity. What is their mission according to H. P. B.? — to remind mankind of its Divine Nature and spiritual evolution.

According to H. P. B. the appearance of such messengers as Saint-Germain and Cagliostro was not much appreciated in the 18th century that was characterized by the prevailing *mere scientific learning* and the lack of *soul perception*. But the spiritual stagnation itself produced

a wave of longing and discontent with pure materialism, which, in its turn, inspired mediumistic manifestations, and culminated with the spread of Spiritualism in the 19th century. This historical evidence is a wonderful example of the power of thought!

However, this wave towards psychic phenomena was clouding the minds of the people in the West. The Masters chose H. P. B. to become a messenger in order to reveal the true meaning of the latent powers and Divine Wisdom within us.

In my understanding, the Messianic Cycle represents the evolution of our Consciousness, which is the realization of the Unity of Life, that everything around and within us is endowed with a power which is the Light of the Spirit. Such realization will manifest itself in the world in the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity.

“On the day when Theosophy will have accomplished its most holy and most important mission – namely, to unite firmly a body of men of all nations in brotherly love and bent on a pure altruistic work, not on a labor with selfish motives – on that day only will Theosophy become higher than any nominal brotherhood of man. This will be a wonder and a miracle truly, for the realization of which Humanity is vainly waiting for the last eighteen centuries, and which every association has hitherto failed to accomplish.”⁽¹⁷⁾

I believe that in the present cycle of spiritual evolution our main aspiration must be Universal Brotherhood that has been in the vision of the Masters and the main Object of the Theosophical Society. Perhaps, if each one of us is more vigilant and assertive in choosing thoughts of Unity, and in becoming an example of true Brotherhood in their own lives, we will be able to attract more attention and interest to Theosophy. It is not the intellectual side of It that is missing in the life of mankind, because now like never before we have access to almost any information, but deep within we are longing for that Love, Compassion and Wisdom that goes beyond any physical form, time and space. Theosophy teaches self-reliance because the only True Teacher is within us. The light of our Spiritual Intuition is the best guide on the Path of Self-knowledge and Unity.

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3 - How to Grasp the Essence of H. P. B.'s Timeless Message?

How to Grasp the Essence of H. P. B.'s Timeless Message?

Contribution by Jacques Mahnich

(Theosophical Society Adyar)

1888 — a productive year

- Benjamin Harrison elected President of the U.S.
- Oscar Wilde wrote *The Happy Prince, and Other Tales*.
- Van Gogh painted “The Yellow Chair”.
- Tchaikovsky composed his Symphony No. 5.
- Nikolas Tesla invented alternating current induction motors.
- Heinrich Hertz produced and detected radio waves for the first time.
- Georges Eastman introduced the first commercial roll-film camera.

And ... Madame Blavatsky published her Magnum Opus, *The Secret Doctrine*, almost 1,500 pages in two volumes (1st volume on October 20, 2nd volume at the end of December). She explained what it was and why it was revealed:

(...) the SECRET DOCTRINE is not a treatise, or a series of vague theories, but contains all that can be given out to the world in this century.⁽¹⁾

This work

I dedicate to all True Theosophists,

In every Country,

And of every Race,

For they called it forth, and for them it was recorded.⁽²⁾

And she added:

For the Esoteric philosophy is alone calculated to withstand, in this age of crass and illogical materialism, the repeated attacks on all and everything man holds most dear and sacred, in his inner spiritual life.⁽³⁾

This enormous work – a three foot high pile for the original manuscript – was written by H. P. B. during the period 1884 through April, 1887. Col. Olcott remembered that the work had already started as early as 1879.⁽⁴⁾

Since, many new editions were released, adding materials and creating

controversies about their genuine origin. The 1893 “Third and Revised Edition” brought a third volume, and the 1938 “Adyar Edition” split the 1893 Edition in six volumes. More recently (1978), Boris de Zirkoff edited the original text – two volumes – adding an index and bibliography volume. He wrote:

H. P. B.'s *magnum opus* is intended to present a wholly coherent outline of an *ageless doctrine*, [emphasis by J.M.] a system of thought based upon *occult facts and universal truths inherent in nature* [emphasis by J.M.] and which are as specific and definite as any mathematical proposition.⁽⁵⁾

As a curiosity, in 2011, Cambridge University Press published the Volume III of the 1893 Edition, as part of its Cambridge Library Collection, with authorship as: *H.P. Blavatsky edited by Annie Besant*.

In 2014, part of the original manuscript of *The Secret Doctrine*, known as “The Wurzburg Manuscript” was published, thanks to Eastern School Press, Colorado, U.S.A.

Before *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. B. had already published (1877) the two volumes of *Isis Unveiled*, a first glimpse in Esoteric Philosophy. Several others were to be published in her later years — *Practical Occultism* (1888), *The Key to Theosophy* (1889), *The Voice of the Silence* (1889), and *The Theosophical Glossary*, which would be published in 1892. In fact, H. P. B. never stopped writing during the years since the foundation of the Theosophical Society (1875). Her *Collected Writings* (14 volumes) is the compilation of all her other writings — letters and articles.

At this time, work is still in progress to publish materials which were not yet recovered, like some unpublished letters from H. P. B.

And all of that is just the emerged part of the Eternal Wisdom iceberg which immersed parts are all the traditions, religions and philosophies of the world, exoteric and esoteric. *The Secret Doctrine* by itself calls for more than 1,200 quotes from these traditions.

So, we are left with the Blavatskypedia, about 13,000 pages written by H. P. B., from which we will try to get the essence of her timeless message.

General Overview of her message

First of all, she talked about THEOSOPHY, the *timeless Divine Wisdom* which always existed and which *supports the development of Life* in a world system. She defined it as:

Theosophy is, then, the archaic *Wisdom-Religion*, the esoteric doctrine once

known in every ancient country having claims to civilization. This “Wisdom” all the old writings show us as an emanation of the divine Principle; (...).⁽⁶⁾

She explained the reason for its revelation in a circular printed in the Fall of 1888, announcing the publication of *The Secret Doctrine*:

The purpose of the present work is to lay before the thinking people so much of this “Hidden Wisdom” as it is thought expedient to make known at present to men in general.⁽⁷⁾

It is important to understand how she presented her initiative. She said: These truths are in no sense put forward as a *revelation*; nor does the author claim the position of a revealer of mystic lore, now made public for the first time in the world’s history.⁽⁸⁾

The aim of this work may be thus stated: to show that Nature is not “a fortuitous concurrence of atoms”, and to assign to man his rightful place in the scheme of the Universe; to rescue from degradation the archaic truths which are the basis of all religions; and to uncover, to some extent, the fundamental unity from which they all spring; finally, to show that the occult side of Nature has never been approached by the Science of modern civilization.⁽⁹⁾

So, in one phrase, we have the key points which will help us capture and understand the essence of her message:

- To present what Nature (the Universe) is made of — the evolving system of our world.
- To explain the position and role of Man in the Evolution scheme.
- To uncover the fundamental unity from which all religions have sprung.
- To reveal some key characteristics of Nature, unknown to Science.

Knowing Madame Blavatsky’s life through her biographers, one may wonder how such a woman could encompass all this knowledge which goes so far beyond any human beings brain capabilities. Listening to witnesses who were close to her during the early years of the Theosophical Society, and when she wrote *The Secret Doctrine*, it is apparent that she often acted as a channel, a messenger, listening and gathering most of the contents from what we call “occult sources” using “occult means” to gain access to them. She clearly explained, since early in her life, her “connection” with the Masters, these out-of-time Adepts who are the Guardians and Mes-

sengers of the Divine Wisdom. This is an important fact when we try to understand the essence of her message. In fact, her message is the message of the Brotherhood, transmitted, commented upon and explained by her.

Theosophy always existed in our world, and its essence was revealed to humanity on a regular basis. It can be traced back in the ancient times. References to its teachings are visible in all great religions or traditions of the world. This is one of the strengths of Theosophy: the common core teachings of the religions or traditions are more or less available today, and comparative studies can be made. It can provide a strong substantiation to the fundamental teachings of Theosophy. But any linear, literal comparison will not make it easily visible. Obviously, most of the ancient traditions have either been hidden, veiled or disfigured by time, copies, translations, or for manipulation of the masses. One needs to enter deeply inside any tradition to grasp the essence and eternal values hidden within. Even more so, one needs to have an as complete as possible direct experience of a tradition – learning, meditation, action – to get to the core of it. In fact, encouraging the study of comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science is the second declared object of the Theosophical Society, and a lot of such activities were performed by Theosophists for the last century. A tremendous amount of material exists which may be useful to get public attention and understanding.

When Madame Blavatsky does not talk about THEOSOPHY, she talks about THEOSOPHISTS. This is her other most preferred subject. Why is it so important to her? *Because Theosophy does not exist without Theosophists.* It is as simple as that ... *even today.* It may be useful to recall what she wrote, talking about the Theosophical Society:

The Society is a philanthropic and scientific body for the propagation of the idea of brotherhood on *practical* instead of *theoretical* lines.⁽¹⁰⁾

Action is the name of the game. So, what are Theosophists, according to H. P. B.? A living body of workers dedicated to the *implementation of the Divine Wisdom* in the *day-to-day life*. And this day-to-day life shall include being and acting in our world with all its dimensions. This should be the playground of Theosophists. And how do we become a Theosophist?

The first step is usually knowledge acquisition. At this stage of our evolution we are developing the mental, intellectual organ, and it is one of the most practical means of transmission/communication between men. It is not the only one, and it is not the most efficient. We know and often

talk about the channel of the heart, which is less mental and more in tune with higher realities. It does not distort the communication as much as the mental, but it needs special skills to be used. It needs *tuning* between the transmitter and the receiver, like any radio transmission. So, most of the time, we start with intellectual learning. Our world traditions have developed these skills since at least 3 to 4,000 years, and we spend usually our twenty or thirty first years of life learning and developing the intellectual capabilities. To learn what Theosophy is, a large library of texts were elaborated, starting with H. P. B.'s ones, and enriched by many other Theosophist writers which were involved in the spreading of the message around the world. Most of the successive presidents of the TS Adyar have written many books and have been lecturing around the world. And it proved very useful because one of the main difficulties when encountering H. P. B.'s writings is their enormous diversity and complexity. Anyone who plunges head first in her *The Secret Doctrine* is usually drowning very quickly. Therefore, to reach the masses, the need for simplification was obvious, and these people made a tremendous effort to translate the key concepts of the Wisdom religion into simple words anyone could understand. Here are some examples:

Annie Besant (1847-1933), the second president of TS Adyar, wrote many such books, which are still used as primers for new students in Theosophy: *An Introduction to Yoga, Thought Forms, Evolution of Life and Form, Christianity, Christian Esoterism, The Basis of Morality, Man and His Bodies, Reincarnation, After Death Experiences, The Origin of Theosophy, Mysticism, The Bhagavad Gita, Discipleship, Psychic and Spiritual Development, The Nature of Thoughts, The Spiritual Life, Avatars, The Emergence of a World Religion, The Hatha-Yoga and Raja-Yoga of India, The Mysteries, The Ancient Wisdom, Karma, The Noble Eightfold Path, Initiation, Superhuman Men in History and in Religion, The Meaning and Method of Spiritual Life, The Path of Discipleship, The Theosophic Life, The Masters, The Brotherhood of Religions, Dharma, The Doctrine of the Heart, Gurus and Chelas, Nature's Finer Forces, ...*

Charles Webster Leadbeater (1854-1934), a controversial character in the history of the Theosophical Society, wrote also some primers for beginners: *An Outline of Theosophy, The Chakras, A Textbook of Theosophy, The Inner Life, Man Visible and Invisible, The Masters and the Path*. But he is

mostly known for his treatises on Occultism, Freemasonry and the Liberal Catholic Church which have colored and somehow modified the original teachings: *The Hidden Life in Freemasonry, Some Glimpses of Occultism, Secrets Revealed, The Hidden Side of Lodge Meetings, Thought Forms (with A. Besant), Dreams, Invisible Helpers, Clairvoyance, The Life after Death, The Influence of Surroundings, ...* One of his most famous publications, together with A. Besant, is the *Occult Chemistry*, a chemistry treaty describing the structure of elemental atoms as seen through Clairvoyance.

Sri Ram (1889-1973), who was the devoted assistant to Annie Besant, then President of the TS Adyar (1953-1973), devoted his writings to the human implementation of Theosophy in day-to-day life: *A Theosophist Looks at the World, An Approach to Reality and Man, Man, His origins and Evolution, Thoughts for Aspirants, Life's Deeper Aspect, ...*

I.K. Taimni (1898-1978), an influential scholar in the field of Yoga and Indian Philosophy, published books on Eastern Philosophy, including theosophical interpretation of the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*. He also wrote an essay on the theosophical view of the World: *Man, God, and the Universe*.

Many other authors have added their understanding, interpretation and acted as facilitators for the transmission of the essence of H. P. B.'s message to the world. This transmission to the world of Theosophists is supported by Schools of the Wisdom, Seminars, Summer schools, Research Groups, throughout the world. As of today, TS Adyar has 26,000+ members, close to 1,000 lodges, and 171 centers. The implementation of this knowledge in our world at large is made by public lectures, participation in public organizations, and mainly by the development of service activities. Here the TOS is the Light Bearer, bringing an active support to those who need it, embedded inside the core values of Theosophy.

What do we regard as the core of her message?

THEOSOPHY — *What Nature (the Universe) is made of — the evolving system of our world*

To understand correctly the meaning of the model of the world H. P. B. presented to us, there is a preliminary requirement clearly stated in the Proem of *The Secret Doctrine*. We call it the three fundamental proposi-

tions that we all know:

- an Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE,
- the eternity of the Universe, and the Law of periodicity for its manifestation,
- the fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Oversoul, and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic Laws.

With that in mind, H. P. B. then leads us throughout the genesis of the Universe and of its components (*The Secret Doctrine*, Volume I, Cosmogony), according to the first stanzas of the *Book of Dzyan*, the “very old Book”. This is the basis, the foundation for a coherent and all-encompassing presentation of the eternal and cyclic movement, the “play” of the One, illustrated by the Days and Nights of Brahma in the old Indian Tradition.

THEOSOPHY — *What is the position and role of man in the evolution scheme?*

The second Volume of *The Secret Doctrine* (Anthropogenesis) gives us a comprehensive description of the various phases of the development of Man on this planet for the last 18,000,000 years. This is another riddle for our limited intellectual mind. The evolution of Man here goes way before what any modern Science has determined, and we look back to old Traditions to identify some traces of this story. Apart from the facts which are presented here, and for which a dedicated University would be needed to study the details, H. P. B. gives us a broad picture of the genesis and the evolution of Man. We understand this evolutionary road and the current status of our development as the continuation of other nature’s kingdoms, not the end of Evolution but another step in Nature’s road to the blossoming of the Divine. This gives us a framework inside which we can better understand who we are and why we are here, and what are our roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis the other kingdoms of nature. The teachings of the constitution of Man and of the gradual development of the various layers also help us to understand our behaviors. A vivid example is the current never-ending and always-increasing human quest for more pleasure, more consumption, and less care for others and for Nature herself. This is the power of desire, a very strong force in Nature which was developed by the animal kingdom and which, when no more controlled and reoriented by higher values becomes destructive — for Man.

THEOSOPHY — *The fundamental unity from which all religions came*

H. P. B. wrote:

There is, and can be, but *one absolute truth* [emphasis by J.M.] in Kosmos. And little as we, with our present limitations, can understand it in its essence, we still know that if it is absolute it must also be *omnipresent and universal* [emphasis by J.M.]; and that in such case, it must be underlying every world-religion — the product of the thought and knowledge of numberless generations of thinking men.⁽¹¹⁾

What does it tell us ?

(...) all religions divested of their man-made theologies and superlatively human ecclesiasticism rest on one and the same foundation, converge towards one focus: an ineradicable, congenital belief in an *inner* Nature reflected in the *inner* man, its microcosm; on this earth, we can *know* of but one Light—the one *we see*.⁽¹²⁾

So, she told us that the core message of the Wisdom Religion, source of all human religions, is still available inside the current streams of the world religions, provided we can undress it from its man-made shell. And H. P. B. showed us how they were disfigured and how they can be read.

THEOSOPHY — *The key characteristics of Nature, unknown to science*

This is probably the most controversial part of her message, if we read it as it was written some 130 years ago. She had already filled a complete volume of *Isis Unveiled* on these matters, and she dedicated Part III of Volume I and Volume II of *The Secret Doctrine* to the subject. It emphasizes the importance of science for her. So, why is it so controversial? First of all, H. P. B. had no scientific culture and she never claimed any. Then, we need to remember that she was living in a world where materialism was at its top with the positivists leading the frenzy. Finally, science made so much progress since this time that many of her sayings are not easily reconcilable with today's scientific knowledge. But to reconcile the key characteristics of Nature as explained by the Wisdom Religion with Science remains a key part of what Theosophy can bring to the world today.

THEOSOPHY — *A system of practices for the student on the evolutionary path*

At the same time H. P. B. was explaining what the core teachings of

THEOSOPHY are, and where we stand, as human beings, inside the current chain of evolution on Earth, she devoted a great deal of energy to provide us with a system of practices for our self-transformation. And this is the most important part of her message. If we look at the current state of our world, we can see that the level of knowledge freely available has never been so high. Millions of books are now reachable, covering all intellectual, philosophical, traditional, religious and scientific streams. And our human world has never been in such a bad shape. We may be at one corner of our human evolution, pushed by a strong acceleration towards transformation of the mental/desire driven attitude. This was also probably the feelings of H. P. B. at her time when she wrote:

It means that the world has become mortally sick of the dogmatism, the arrogance, the self-sufficiency, and the spiritual blindness of modern science (...) which (...) requires, as the price of its services, the sacrifice of man's immortal soul.⁽¹³⁾

So, she provides us with Instructions to her inner circle of students, and she transmitted to us this inspiring piece of Wisdom — *The Voice of the Silence*. Written in the language of the heart, it gives essential path instructions which can be traced back in the Buddhism and Hinduism Traditions.

Getting to the core, layer by layer

To go deeper and deeper inside the teachings, we have to walk through various layers of increasing complexity. From the top (Stanzas of Dzyan), it is almost impossible to get a clear and understandable picture. Madame Blavatsky provides us with the commentaries of the Stanzas, which shed some light, like, in the Tibetan Buddhism tradition, the Tanjur commentaries to the *Kanjur* — the Buddha's words. Then, she added her own commentaries, supported by many quotes to the then-available scholar's publications. *The Transactions from the Blavatsky Lodge* and more recently the *The Unpublished 1889 Instructions* added many clues to the main themes. We have here a sum of knowledge which can keep us busy for many lives.

After what we can call the “original teachings” of H. P. B., we also have the multiple interpretations of Theosophists. All tried to add their contribution for the sake of a better understanding. Some of them stayed faithful to the original, some other ones departed from the original, cre-

ating debates and separatism between Theosophists. If we take a look at this phenomenon from some distance, we can see that this behavior is but the repetition of so many human groups who, starting from a single truth, degenerated in multiple half-truths, to end up sometimes in no-truth at all. Most of the religious or philosophical movements have demonstrated this. How can we work with that diversity? We have two approaches that can be complementary: first, our intellectual capabilities, which are able to discriminate and identify what is coherent, consistent, versus what looks out-of-scope or inconsistent. And, even more efficient, we have the understanding of the heart, which can resonate or not with the teachings. It is important to recognize that most of the interpretations that are available in our circles were written by people who dedicated their entire life and energy for the cause of Theosophy. This deserves some recognition from our part, even if we may disagree with some of the contents. There is always something to be learnt from and we may not want to throw the baby with the bath water after all. Discrimination and heart resonance are the keys to knowledge acquisition in these matters.

Reaching the core of the teachings on the world system and the role of man in the evolution requires mainly a scholar's attitude, together with an open heart. Following the multiple tracks H. P. B. gave us in her original publications, using existing commentaries, cross-checking in the traditions of the world, we may get to that core. It is a matter of time and energy spent. We may want to remember Madame Blavatsky was working between sixteen and twenty hours a day for years!

Reaching the core of the teachings on Practices is another story. It requires much more than mere mental and intellectual skills. It calls for a real inner transformation. It is asking for a dramatic change in our common behavior. *The Voice of the Silence* brings simple and inspiring practices for this transformation. And this transformation is nothing more than what most of the inner religions call for: purifying our personalities to become channels for the Divine Light to shine in our World. Further Instructions were delivered by H. P. B., first to her Inner Circle, and then made public. Other Theosophists have also added their understanding and experiences:

I.K. Taimni wrote an extensive commentary on the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, together with some glimpses into the psychology of Yoga. His treaty on the Self-Culture is a combined presentation of the constitution of man and the relevant practices for each layer.

Sri Ram taught many Schools of the Wisdom during the years 1956 to 1964, using the three theosophical classics: *At the Feet of the Master*, *Light on the Path*, and *The Voice of the Silence*, in order for the students to awaken a deeper awareness and to start enquiry. This is another key point of H. P. B.'s core message: learn and experience on your own. Do not rely on any authority.

Practice is the most important part of her core teaching for Theosophists, for the theosophical societies, and for the human world. Self-transformation, dedication of our efforts, and practice of the Service for others, are the pillars of our capability to transmit our heritage, a living heritage, not a pile of books, to the world.

This leads us to some of the drives in our behavior on the path: belief, trust and the knowledge of unity. Let's explore them briefly.

Belief: First of all, it is a mindset with which the personality wraps into, in order to protect its ego-sense. Before any Divine thought can emerge from the heart, there is a sense of looseness, a sense of being alone in this fiery world full of dangers and miseries, a lack of understanding of our world and of our role in it. This can lead to panic, and grasping and holding on to a belief is like a life vest. But it can be harmful, and has led to dreadful, disastrous consequences for human communities (religious extremism, like the *Christian Inquisition*, or political extremism, like fascism). This is blind belief H. P. B. condemned.

There is yet another type of belief, which is a leading path to faith. On the pathway to spirituality, there is an initial phase, when the first call of the Divine is triggering our mental being with a lot of questions, interrogations, to which no "rational answer" can be found. All our lower personality, including emotions, reasoning, will, can not know the transcendent, at least at the beginning. Before we can experience the first glimpse of Divine Light shining in our heart, we need to redirect our energies toward this still unknown. Here, a belief in a set of hypotheses is useful, not as a blind binding engagement, but as a catalyst of our will and thoughts. Then, the act of Faith is the natural result of the personal experience of the Presence.

Trust: When driving at night in the middle of a dark countryside, we trust our GPS (maybe sometime we should not). When climbing on a

mountain, we trust the robustness of the rope — this is our life, which is hanging from this rope. When we enter the path of Spirituality, we also need a rope and a GPS that we can trust. This trust enables us to move forward without seeing the ground below our feet. After a while, we gain confidence when we start realizing the progress made. This is outer trust. It helps building the inner trust, the solid and powerful basis, which gives the necessary self-confidence not only to make it through the difficulties on our path, but also to be an efficient servant at the service of humanity.

Knowledge of Unity: The starting and the ending point of each of our evolution loops.

The greatest truth which any Theosophist can proclaim, the oldest but ever young, the fairest and most full of inspiration, is the truth of the One Reality from which everything springs. From that one source all life issues, and issuing flows in endless different directions, branching more and more, until we find in the full-grown world innumerable lives, each specialized in its own way, manifesting an infinite diversity of effects, qualities and powers ... When this process has reached its limit, when from the center the wave has rolled forth to the circumference of the particular manifestation, then that wave is returned to the center, and this is the further and complementary process of the reunion of all the differentiated and specialized parts to make a single whole, thus once again to re-become the UNITY [emphasis by J.M.] from which they have sprung. This is the basic phenomenon of manifestation and withdrawal.⁽¹⁴⁾

It is also the most essential Law in our Universe. The knowledge of *Unity* can start with a belief, then a faith, which would then build trust, and more than trust. It can give us an unshakable basis, solid as a rock, for our growing inner being on his evolutionary path. Feeling this Unity in our heart and manifesting it through action can dissolve any separateness, like for example between the various streams of Theosophists. We may want to plow the garden for this magnificent flower to bloom.

Conclusion — How to grasp the essence of H. P. B.'s timeless message?

Learn, meditate, and practice her teachings, here and now in all situations, all circumstances, with an inquisitive mind and an open heart.

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How to Grasp the Essence of H. P. B.'s Timeless Message?

Contribution by Erwin Bomas

(Theosophical Society Point Loma - Blavatskyhouse, The Hague)

Truth & Compassion, or how to grasp the essence of H. P. B.'s message

As was made clear in the contribution from Barend Voorham it requires effort and insight to understand who H.P. Blavatsky really was. Likewise, her message can only be understood if the receiver is ready. It is impossible to just read her writings superficially if you want to make any sense out of it. Her writings always make you, as a reader, turn inwards, and that's exactly their purpose: to make you resonate with the higher, more noble and eventually even the divine part in yourself. And in short, that is the answer to how to grasp the essence of her message. To find the Theosophia that resides in your heart.

In this presentation I will try to give you an overview of her message, what can be regarded as the essence thereof and elaborate on the way to grasp her message. And when mentioning *her* message and H.P. Blavatsky I here refer to H. P. B. and what she stood for as a messenger as was explained in the previous contribution from Barend Voorham.

Overview

It is nearly impossible to oversee the entire writings of H.P. Blavatsky in one incarnation, while grasping the whole of it requires many more, so any overview would dwarf the magnitude of her works, especially one made in a few minutes. So just as *a* way to overview her message, you could say she presents the answers to three of the most important questions of life any human being could ask himself:

1. "Who am I?"
2. "Where do I come from?", and
3. "Why am I here?", in the sense of "What is the purpose of my life?"

Her answers to those questions can all be found in the three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine*, that together also form the essence of her message, of which she writes herself that "it is absolutely necessary that he [i.e. the reader; E.B.] should be made acquainted with

the few fundamental conceptions which underlie and pervade the entire system of thought to which his attention is invited. These basic ideas are few in number, and on their clear apprehension depends the understanding of all that follows.”⁽¹⁾

The first Fundamental Proposition – in short boundlessness – presents us with the most fundamental answer to the question of who we are. First, boundlessness implies that we are part of it, since nothing can be excluded from the Boundless. Next, it implies that we potentially have boundless capabilities, since a part of the Boundless must contain everything within the Boundless itself. The part cannot miss anything or contain something that is not in the Boundless, or otherwise the Boundless would not be Boundless. But the most fundamental implication is that we are the Boundless in essence, we are in the heart of the heart of our Being the One Reality itself, and therefore we are in essence One with all beings, or rather with all Being.

Which also partly answers that second question: where do we come from? Being the Boundless in essence, we have always been and will always be. Essentially we did not start coming from somewhere and will not end at some destination either and this applies to all beings.

However, we perceive otherwise, don't we? We see things come and go all the time. There the second Fundamental Proposition comes in, explaining the cyclical manifestation of all beings. We are one of the incessantly manifesting and disappearing stars or sparks of Eternity. Eternal in essence, but transitory in each one of our infinite number of manifestations.⁽²⁾

Then the third question comes naturally: why? Why are we here, manifesting at this point in time and space, in this body, with this character, under these circumstances, etc.? In the third Fundamental Proposition this question is answered by the “obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul”, “in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law”. A pilgrimage of progressive evolution of consciousness that is identical for all souls, as above so below, and which has to be gone through by “self-induced and self-devised efforts”.⁽³⁾

So these three Fundamental Propositions present together the what, why and how of life.

The Ideal of Universal Brotherhood

Reading the Fundamental Propositions for the first time they might sound somewhat abstract, theoretical and unpractical. However, their practical application is universal. Together, they point to the fundamental

unity of all that exists. This core idea of unity provides the ethical and logical basis for the main ideal of the TS: realizing Universal Brotherhood. According to the Fundamental Propositions, Universal Brotherhood is not a nice sentiment just for dreamers, but simply a fact in Nature. Realizing the essential unity of all that is, makes one naturally practice compassion and follow the 'bodhisattva-ideal': giving up one's self for the benefit of all beings.

The three Fundamental Propositions are further elaborated in teachings such as reincarnation, karma and the hierarchical structure of the Cosmos in which everything exists within everything else.

Together they form the basis to find a solution to every problem in life. If we would live by the idea of the Unity of all life, would there be a climate problem, for instance? And if reincarnation and karma were common knowledge and practiced, would we still think any form of violence is a solution?

However, all theosophical teachings must always be seen in the light of the Three Fundamentals, which serve as touchstones to test their value and application. For example, if karma is not seen in the light of unity, it can quickly degenerate to the thought of 'you get what you deserve' instead of seeing all karma as our karma. According to H.P. Blavatsky, the Fundamental Unity of All Existence is the idea which must always be kept in the back of your mind to form the basis for every conception that arises from study of *The Secret Doctrine*.⁽⁴⁾

H.P. Blavatsky writes in *The Key to Theosophy* how her message applies to the practical brotherhood of men. She compares mankind to one body, of which injuring one single part influences the whole body. A very clear image. And sadly I must note that watching the news these days shows that this body of mankind of ours is not just annoyed by one little cut in the finger.⁽⁵⁾

One Truth, Nature of Truth

Other than answers to the most fundamental questions in life, a shorter way of representing the core of H.P. Blavatsky's message is simply by stating that she was a signpost for the road to Truth. She was a messenger of the Theosophia, which is synonym to Truth, as she herself also writes in *The Key to Theosophy*,⁽⁶⁾ and which was in the first paragraph of the letter of the Maha Chohan that we have studied last year at ITC. But Theosophia, that can be regarded as Truth, is not the same as *Theosophy*, which

has been transferred to us in the form of teachings and writings. Because Divine Wisdom, cannot be put into words. As Blavatsky supposedly said herself: It [i.e. *The Secret Doctrine*; E.B.] is not meant to give any such final verdict on existence, but to LEAD TOWARDS THE TRUTH.⁽⁷⁾ However, when we surpass the illusion of form, the Heart of the message, its ultimate source, is the Divine Truth itself.

Before we can answer the question of how you can know if her message is true and how to grasp it, we first have to explain how Truth is seen from the theosophical perspective. Because that is one of the philosophically elegant aspects of the first Fundamental Proposition. Stating that there is One Reality anteceding all manifestation, it makes clear that there is One Truth throughout. A Truth that is eternal: what is true now, has been true and will always be. A Truth that is omnipresent and universal, that it always applies to everything, so there cannot be any situation that is in contrast with it. But also a Truth that is boundless, so *it is never possible to grasp it in its fullness by any manifested and thus limited being*. This prevents any form of dogmatizing and always leaves the way open to grasp more of the Truth.



'The Blind Men and the Elephant'. Japanese woodblock print from the 'Manga' of Katsushika Hokusai, 1817.

So as the Truth is boundless, there is no individual manifested being, not even the highest god, that is able to grasp the total Truth. All manifested beings can only perceive their part of the Truth that is always relative. But these relative truths are complementary. We see that all can add to the understanding of the Truth, like the blind monks, each holding

a part of the elephant, and they can build up a more complete image if they work together rather than each working separately based on a piece of the Truth. Isn't that what we are doing at ITC?

Objective idealism

According to the first Fundamental Proposition, the One Reality or One Absolute Truth antecedes all manifestation. So all things perceived by us, including ourselves as manifested beings, are in a sense illusory. That does not mean they do not exist, but that the essence of their existence escapes our perception, however real their phenomena are to us. In philosophy it is called objective idealism and is associated with a.o. Plato and the German philosopher Von Schelling. H.P. Blavatsky presents us the following example:

To the untrained eye of the savage, a painting is at first an unmeaning confusion of streaks and daubs of color, while an educated eye sees instantly a face or a landscape. Nothing is permanent except the one hidden absolute existence which contains in itself the noumena of all realities.⁽⁸⁾



Hans Böhler 'Boy with Blue Jacket', 1913 in Leopold Museum Wien (Photo Erwin Bomas).

But H.P. Blavatsky shows a way out: “Maya or illusion is an element which enters into all finite things, for everything that exists has only a relative, not an absolute, reality, since the appearance which the hidden noumenon assumes for any observer *depends upon his power of cognition.*” [emphasis by E.B.]⁽⁹⁾

Another famous example of this from the old *Vedas* is someone perceiving a piece of rope in the dark as a snake. The first reaction of fear is as big as if there really was a snake. So the world of *Māyā*, of illusion, is real as long as the perceiving consciousness identifies with it. As long as the cognizing consciousness has not yet discerned what is illusion from what is reality.

And Blavatsky adds: “As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached “reality”; but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, *and blended our own with it*, [emphasis by E.B.] shall we be free from the delusions produced by *Maya*.”⁽¹⁰⁾

The inner divinity

Here we have a key to how to grasp her message, the Unity of all that is: we must identify with the whole, the apex of the Hierarchy we are part of, the absolute Consciousness. In the words of H.P. Blavatsky:

(...) for the essence of Theosophy is the perfect harmonizing of the divine with the human in man, the adjustment of his godlike qualities and aspirations, and their sway over the terrestrial or animal passions in him.⁽¹¹⁾

That man in essence is a divine being has also been the central thought of the ancient World-Religions and World-Philosophies. But it has not been presented and proved to the West in such an accurate, logical and consistent whole, demonstrated and shown by people that reached unity in some degree with their inner god, as since 1875.⁽¹²⁾

To sum up: the core of H. P. B.'s message can be regarded as the Fundamental Unity of all that is and the path to realization thereof,⁽¹³⁾ or in other words, the unification with the divine that we are in the heart of our being.

Belief, confidence, Unity

Now the question: if it is true that H. P. B. was a messenger of truth, how do *we* know that was the case? From the foregoing we can conclude that this depends on our own state of consciousness. It is for this reason that in the first Fundamental Proposition a reference is made to the *Mandukya Upanishad*, in which also several states of consciousness are

mentioned.

According to our states of consciousness or levels of understanding, we can identify several levels to grasp the truth, be it the message of H. P. B., or of any other messenger of the Theosophia or just any other person stating something as being true. Here we shall distinguish belief, confidence and Unity.

Belief

If one bases one's understanding of a message just on account of the authority of others, without consciously thinking it through or properly investigating it oneself, we speak of belief or faith. Truth is then placed outside oneself. It is just judging on the outer appearance, like accepting the message of a politician because of his charisma, convincing way of speaking or charming behavior. Unfortunately, this passive level of accepting truth is still quite common. Not only in the outer religions, but also in politics, or simply sales. There are so many examples of injustices being done on a large scale by people that followed others on blind faith, that I do not feel the need to pick one out.

In *The Key to Theosophy* H.P. Blavatsky writes about faith that it is a word that “is not to be found in theosophical dictionaries”.⁽¹⁴⁾ She even calls it ‘intellectual suicide’, as we will show later.⁽¹⁵⁾ This does not mean to say that you should not trust others, the question is only: trust based on what?

Confidence

Now beyond belief there is the level of confidence. We can build up a growing confidence in a statement or message on the way to grasp Truth directly by unification with our inner divinity. By using our faculty of thinking self-consciously and independently, we can take a truth as a hypothesis, test parts of it, see if it is logical and consistent with other things we have experienced as facts and discover its value in the practice of life.

It is not without reason that the three fundamental pillars of the Theosophia are called propositions. They are meant to be regarded as such, which means that they always need to be proven and checked for their universality. One must not think lightly about this. Our whole society is based on assumptions or hypotheses, a lot of which are questionable. Think of the idea or rather illusion of possession or the illusion

of borders or boundaries anywhere in time and space, or, perhaps even more dangerous, the false idea of man as a selfish being. Selecting the right assumptions to base one's vision of life on is a very important step towards realizing an ideal like Universal Brotherhood. And the Fundamental Unity of All Existence proves to be the most universal, ethical and logical hypothesis, it has and it will continue to do so.

As H.P. Blavatsky says: "Therefore, we say, that unless every man is brought to understand and accept *as an axiomatic truth* that by having wronged one man we wrong not only ourselves but the whole of humanity in the long run, no brotherly feelings such as preached by all the great Reformers, preeminently by Buddha and Jesus, are possible on earth."⁽¹⁶⁾

This confidence is built up in several phases. The first is being open to new truths. As the one Truth is boundless, there are always new perspectives to be found that can add to it. It is like counting sides of a globe, the number of perspectives are endless.

Being open to a new truth also means that you can never have fixed definitions or dogmas. That is why W.Q. Judge says that "As for the Theosophical Society, the moment it makes a hard and fast definition of Theosophy it will mark the first hour of its decay. Inasmuch as Theosophy is the whole body of truth about man and nature, either known now or hereafter to be discovered, it has the "power of growth, progress and advancement," since every new truth makes it clearer."⁽¹⁷⁾

Also any prejudice or skepticism must be overcome to confide in a new truth. But moreover, an unselfish attitude is needed that prevents us from denying those truths that might at first sight conflict with our own personal interests. All of this does not mean one should be uncritical. As the apostle Paul says: examine everything carefully (prove all things); hold fast to that which is good.⁽¹⁸⁾

So it does not mean losing all that you have learned as being true and valuable in a logical and ethical sense. Paradoxical as it may sound, being open to a new truth requires you to lift yourself up above the highest and broadest vision that you can think of. We already talked about the importance of selecting the right assumption, not just any assumption. You have to go *beyond* the knowledge you already have. This is what is meant by "the wisest is he that knows he does not know anything." The more one knows, the more one knows about the things that are still unknown. It is like a discovery, the more we discover new space, the bigger the boundaries go to beyond to find even more. So we go from universals to particulars.⁽¹⁹⁾

And as with exploration, the following phase is to define the most important ways or fields to investigate further. New ways or fields that might connect together later. In this step, we go from the total overview to overseeing the key parts, like the chapters in a book, or the organs in a body.

Then the next phase is to investigate and experience for oneself if something is true step by step. You might regard this as the scientific level of gaining confidence. If it is not possible to investigate a truth in its entirety, parts of a truth can be checked.

H. P. B. formulated this again very well in *Isis Unveiled*: “Tell one who had never seen water, that there is an ocean of water, and he must accept it on faith or reject it altogether. But let one drop fall upon his hand, and he then has the fact from which all the rest may be inferred. After that he could by degrees understand that a boundless and fathomless ocean of water existed. Blind faith would no longer be necessary; he would have supplanted it with KNOWLEDGE.”⁽²⁰⁾

For most of the theosophical doctrines it applies that we as average human beings cannot check their value in their entirety. But by checking parts of it we can build up growing confidence in them. Think for instance of the real, or better put, illusory nature of matter as discovered in the field of quantum mechanics, thereby corroborating H. P. B.'s writings from years before.

The last phase is to see if the separate, checked parts of a truth still form one logical and consistent whole and to make sure they do not contradict each other. You might call this the philosophical level of gaining confidence, about which H. P. B. wrote: “It is only by means of the philosophy that an intelligent and educated man can avoid the intellectual suicide of believing on blind faith; and it is only by assimilating the strict continuity and logical coherence of the Eastern, if not esoteric, doctrines, that he can realize their truth.”⁽²¹⁾

This phase in particular lends itself for cooperation, for joint study. In cooperation one can create and uphold a spiritual atmosphere more easily, strengthen focus, and add perspectives for a broader and quicker understanding. To cite H.P. Blavatsky once more: “Union is strength and harmony, and well-regulated simultaneous efforts produce wonders. This has been the secret of all associations and communities since mankind existed.”⁽²²⁾

Why do I put so much emphasis on the level of confidence? This level

of understanding or grasping theosophical teachings is necessary for most of us human beings, as we have not yet reached the higher states of consciousness like the messengers of the Theosophia, the Masters of the Lodge of Wisdom and Compassion and their chelas such as H.P. Blavatsky that already have reached union with their inner god in a more or less degree. So grasping the truth by growing confidence is for us a very important way. Especially here at ITC.

Unity

The highest level of grasping truth is the ideal, the essence of H. P. B.'s message that we mentioned just before. This level can be regarded as religious, in the original meaning of the word *religare*: to consciously unify with the divine in oneself. All the Founders of world-religions had reached unification with their inner god in more or less degree, and pointed to Unity as the core of their teachings. It is the level of Truth that can be experienced by blending the perceiver with the perceived, so we speak of Unity. This can only be experienced by *becoming* Truth itself. It is the way to find Reality by giving up one's self to find one's Self, to become one with the Inner Divinity. Something that goes far beyond direct perception with our outer senses. In the words of Plotinus "the liberation of the mind from its finite consciousness, becoming one and identified with the infinite."⁽²³⁾

It is by initiation that this experience of Unity can be quickened, as the higher parts in ourselves already have learned all that is to learn within our human hierarchy. Even temporarily unifying with our higher Self gives us a direct experience of the Truth that is already residing there. Of course any realization of unity will always be relative, as there are no final destinations in the Boundless. Let us never crystallize our thought by putting an end somewhere.

Compassion

You might say: H.P. Blavatsky was a messenger of truth and taught us how to grasp it. But in a more specific and applied way you can also say: she taught Compassion and how to practice it. Because Truth is not something outside of us. Truth is constantly realized by all beings composing Nature with their essentially divine free will. Reality is what *we* make of it. And as compassion is the habit of the divine – that identifies with all that is, with the One Unity – it is the Law of Laws ruling Nature

as Theosophia teaches.⁽²⁴⁾ The Law of Laws, the divine habit and the Theo-Sophia, the self-conscious Wisdom of the Gods are one. You might call it the divine practice and theory that go hand in hand.

And as we are in our Heart the divine, we can follow that habit here and now. We can practice compassion according to the widest and noblest vision of ourselves. By fulfilling our duties in a spirit of self-forgetfulness, we are already expressing unity on our level, we are an instrument or vehicle for the Lodge of Wisdom and Compassion, we are united in the Hierarchy of Compassion, we are working with Nature. And we have H.P. Blavatsky's life as a perfect example of this.

How to grasp the essence of her message, how to realize Unity? We can start here and now, by realizing first, who we are: divine in essence; secondly, where we come from: the Heart of the Heart of the Universe; and thirdly, by fulfilling why we are here: realizing Universal Brotherhood, following the habit of our inner god, practicing compassion.

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How to Grasp the Essence of H. P. B.'s Timeless Message?

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Contribution by Eugene Jennings

(United Lodge of Theosophists)

General overview and core of H. P. B.'s message

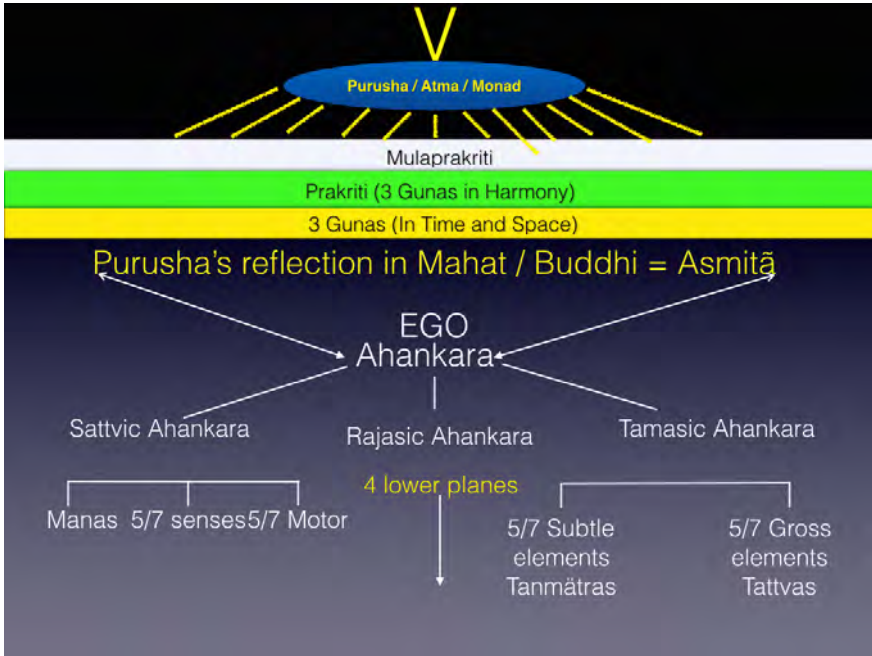
The inspiration and nature of this talk revolves around a saying in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*:

With those who worship me, renouncing in me all their actions, regarding me as the supreme goal and meditating on me alone, if their thoughts returned to me, O son of priest, I presently become the savior from this ocean of incarnations and death. Place then thy heart on me, penetrate me with thy understanding, and thou shalt without doubt hereafter dwell in me. But if thou should be unable at once steadfastly to fix my heart and mind on me, strive then, oh, and Jaya, to find me by constant practice in devotion. If after constant practice thou art still unable follow me by actions performed for me; but if thou art unequal even to this, then, being self-restrained, please hold a works failures and successes alike on, abandoning in me the fruit of every action. For knowledge is better than constant practice, meditation is superior to knowledge, renunciation of the fruit of action to meditation; final emancipation immediately results from such renunciation.⁽¹⁾

The gist of this statement reflects the idea that there are several levels of truth. In one's search for ultimate understanding, one can "grasp" that truth as an absolute transcendent reality, or if unable to grasp that, as the unity, if unable to grasp that, as a unity in diversity, and if unable to grasp that, as a diversity in which reality exists in every drop of the ocean of life, and if unable to do this, using grosser means such as study, reflection, and expression in and through words. Understanding the Essence of the theosophical Message is essentially, just like that.

To this student, Essence refers to the primordial condition and truth of all things, which are No-such-things as objects, forces, energies or thoughts, but only the "One Thing". Message is a form of communication and as such can only refer to a vibrational pulse or phase of that reality, as it is, and as it manifests. Timelessness speaks to Eternity.

The title of our presentation speaks directly then, to that which is the Eternal, Primordial condition of Absolute Darkness, which is Voidness,



Non-Ego and Darkness, (as expressed by H. P. B. in *The Secret Doctrine*) along with its inherent and Coeval Truth, which is Law or Reality. It is this, which communicates itself *directly*, in an omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient manner to all Living Beings, or through its reflection, which is that vibration. If we were only able to fully embrace this through direct realization, understanding, and experience, re-becoming one with it, we would simply say, that thou art, and that is truth. So when we point to the representative image of darkness, it is that darkness which is the only Reality, Essence, and Message of Truth. The direct realization of this is the most *inward Becoming and Being* of this Message. To realize and achieve this makes our ideal of Universal Brotherhood a *must*, to be actualized in time, space, and action. It is to be honored by continuous effort with the goal of keeping such a harmony alive in all cycles.

If we are unable to “Be”, retrospectively knowing, and embodying this, we must step down to a more concrete symbol which represents the timelessness of her message, as well as what that message is. In *The Secret Doctrine*, this is reflected in the symbols of the plain Disc, the Disc with a central point, and finally that Disc with its point having become a diameter. That is it! Within these symbols, and the stages they represent, is

contained the total truth of her timeless message.

Skipping several steps of descent and concretization in the interest of space and time, if the language of symbols cannot be fully appreciated and resonated with, then the domain of words is used. In *The Secret Doctrine* page 11, an occult catechism asks, what is it that ever is, ever was, and is ever coming and going? The answer given is “The Great Breath”. “Then, there are three Eternals?” “No, the three are one. That which ever is is one, that which ever was is one, that which is ever being and becoming is also one: and this is Space”.⁽²⁾ And it is this threefold representation of Reality, both in its manifest and un-manifest condition that holds the germs of all things that arise through it, directly and indirectly, as well as its fruits.

Finally we would say, if this is not a recognizable and comprehensively understandable response, then it's objective representation could be found in the three fundamental propositions of Theosophy, which deal with Deity, Law, and Evolution. Since these Fundamental ideas, as representative of the essence of her teachings, have been eloquently spoken on by the first two speakers we need not go into them further. We would only add that it is *we ourselves who ARE these three fundamentals*, in time and space, (and even Transcendently), whose actions are checked by the law of our being in all we think, say and do. This is the Law, inherent in the fabric of our Being, identified specifically as karma, working itself out through the necessity of re-embodiment or reincarnation.

Contained in the symbols of the essence of our three fundamental ideas (teachings) are deity, periodicity, karma and reincarnation, monadic evolution, the three halls of our initiatory path, the three states of our sleeping life, the after death states, the three qualities, the seven-fold principles and vehicles we use as embodied soul, the seven spiritual forces and intelligences of great cosmos, the seven pāramitā's, the six schools of Indian philosophy synthesized by the seventh, which is the wisdom religion, and so many other physical, psychic, noetic, and spiritual laws and facts to be remembered from within our spiritual nature.

Another aspect of the essence of her teachings, in a very concrete manner, is reflected in the three objects of the Theosophical Society as represented during H. P. B.'s lifetime. These can be summed up as universal brotherhood, the study of ancient and modern sciences, philosophies, and religions (such a study results in a trans-cultural, and trans-scientific, integrated understanding of all aspects of humanity to date), which reflects the truth of the unity in diversity, if we are able to appreciate the deeper

message. The third object is the study or investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical (and spiritual) powers latent in mankind. The fullness of this knowledge relates to the complete evolutionary cycle and path of humanity. This path is one, which is traversed much more rapidly for the initiate, who is consciously aware of his or her purpose in life.

These six ideas (the three fundamentals and three objects), synthesized and made real through altruistic service, when applied to all the principles and planes of our being as well as nature's, gently unfold in time, the true essence and foundation of her timeless message, as well as the process of ever becoming, flowing from within it, called evolution. This is the true Science of the Spiritual Soul, as manifested in the symbolic "10,000 things" of the *Tao Te King*.

To summarize, her timeless message and teachings deal with the unity of Life, reflected in universal Brotherhood. It deals with the Oneness of Life, the Universal Law of Eternal Equilibrium, manifested and working itself out through cycles of giving and receiving, as reflected in compassion and altruistic service, which generate the greatest harmony; and, a realization of the sameness of all spiritual Beings, and teachings in their essence and heart, their path, and the unfolding of the soul powers latent in every such Being. This only occurs through the process of living a consciously spiritual life, in the service of life without distinctions or differences concerning life, race, kingdoms, creeds, sex, castes, etc. As our teachers have told us, "live the life to know the doctrine".

Her message also presents to us an understanding of the stages whereby transcendental Oneness and/or Absoluteness, give rise to pre-cosmic oneness, which becomes cosmic duality. This duality is Subject embracing Object, and Universal Consciousness identifying itself as "this versus that" or the development of the Ahamkaric sense of entified Being and Life. Thus it is One Consciousness, working through form and forms, which manifests in the need for understanding all its illusionary appearances of other. This necessitates the exercise of compassion, empathy, love, kindness, and tranquility in our dealings with all of life, represented as such other, which is actually SELF.

From the Dhyān-Chohans, downwards through the great galactic and solar systems within which they will and work, as intelligible force and power, to the smallest elemental particle of life, there is no point with which the essence of her timeless message does not deal. Nor is there any point in space in which that timeless message is absent.

From the paradigmatic image of cosmic truth, down to the vibration of that truth within the heart of our Being, we find over and over, the echo of her timeless message in every aspect of subjective and objective life, en-istence or ex-istence.

Getting to the core layer by layer

How do we get to the core of her message? By study, by listening, by search, by living the life prescribed by our Great Teachers, by living the life indicated by the three fundamentals, and by the carrying out of the three objects through the activities of our daily lives. By humility, proper meditation, contemplation, and successfully moving through the various stages of “samāpatti, Samādhi, and sanyama”. These latter stages must be continually saturated with correct dispassion and continual exercise, while engaging in altruistic and compassionate service. Over and over this must be done, until “IT” becomes the natural default state of one’s mind. With this *as a base*, the experiential knowledge and ideas that arise in the field of mind, both during and post meditational sessions, are constantly checked against the teachings as provided by H. P. B. and those associates whom her great teachers recognized as disciples (as well as others and their works, to whom she made reference!). Using this approach, in studying, working and applying the teachings metaphysically and concretely, from universals to particulars, and at times from particulars to universals, we establish the foundation for our cognitive and intellectual transformation, leading to a correct experiential understanding of these great perceived and assimilated abstract truths.

It is when we engage in correct practice, with dispassion and continual exercise that we progress. Having no interest in the fruits of our endeavors, ever striving, watching the signs, we move gradually towards the pinnacle of “Truth”. In time, this latter, we also come to transcend. Regarding this step, Patanjali tells us in book II, aphorism 27, that we reach the perfection of spiritual cultivation, which is of seven kinds, “up to the limit of meditation”. That limit of meditation, having a seed, is Dharma Megha, the meditation technically called *Dharma Megha*, cloud of virtue, takes place from this absolutely perfect discriminative knowledge. It is from this peak that a level of realization concerning the proper nature of the “Soul” takes place that leads to liberation. It is a liberation from the limits and ignorance of matter and māyā, but not duty. Once this final renunciation takes place, due to dispassion, one fully comprehends the teachings, as he

or she has become them. This allows for conscious communication with those Elder Brothers and Sisters whose business and care is Humanity. Such communication has as its only reward, work! A work for the welfare, spiritual and otherwise, of humanity.

What allows such a realization of this Essence of all teachings?

What and where are the instructions for living such a life, and becoming such a path, such that one knows through realization, assimilation and becoming? In ULT, we use as a base of study, in addition to those works of H. P. B. and Judge, the following instructional texts; *The Voice of the Silence*; *Bhagavad-Gītā*; *Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms*; *The Dhammapada*; and certain other texts to which she refers, such as reflections from the *Upanishads* and the *Tao Te King*, to name one.

Embracing these core teachings, and following where they lead, making an inexhaustible effort to Realize the truth, The Message, The Messengers, and Ground from which these arise, one slowly but surely becomes the path itself, the wisdom of that path, the fruit of such a path, as well as the Eternal Cause of, and supporting such a Path.

Belief, Trust, Unity, Knowledge

If one believes they are “new to Theosophy”, then the encounter with the teachings will require belief. But this belief must be based on rational understanding, and experience. From the experiencing of these truths in everyday life, one comes to have trust in them as guidelines for living. For the deeper metaphysics and Esotericism often hinted at by H. P. B., one perhaps must trust in that which appears reasonable and intuitively right or appealing to the inner sense, although not fully understandable. However, if we have made our point, there *are* teachings, a *path*, and *science of the Spiritual Soul*, which can be directly known or experienced. The way has been recorded for ages in the inner sanctuaries of true lodges, as well as in the works of the Sages. When we “Live the Life” of the teachings, as given, and contained in those few spiritual works mentioned, then we come in time, in degrees, to “Know the Teaching”. As such, our life becomes one of *experiential Divine Knowledge and Unfolding*. We then become one of the custodians of the Sacred Wisdom contained in *The Secret Doctrine*, or, to say it another way, the embodiment of Bodhi, as Knowledge.

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Lifelong Study in *The Secret Doctrine*

Interview with Joy Mills

(Krotona School of Theosophy)

Can you tell us, with your intensive study of many years in *The Secret Doctrine*, if the Theosophia as presented in it is an open system or a closed system?

When you ask whether Theosophy is an open or closed system you are using language or a concept that is not really basic to *The Secret Doctrine*. We have been told for example, that only a portion of the veil has been lifted. There are further principles perhaps, further development of the system which has not been revealed. And if this is only a part then it is difficult for us to say, to categorize into open or closed. What we have been given are certain fundamental principles, and she is very clear about that, that these are propositions, working propositions that apply to everything in the manifested universe. And it is for us to develop our intuition, to understand deeper levels, deeper layers of the truth that has been given to us.

And why do we come to it, why do we approach it? It's not that it is easy to understand in all of its details. But what is our purpose? It is to come closer to the great wisdom tradition of the ages, to understand the basis on which the whole Universe is constructed and all of it is within it. It seems to me that one should approach *The Secret Doctrine* in a spirit of inquiry and a spirit of reverence that we have been given here in these two volumes all that could be given at that particular time. And a purpose of it was not for self-gratification, not that I will know more than you know but the purpose was to help us understand the operation and functioning of an entire system — a manifested universe. The purpose is that we can become Bodhisattvas, that we can become enlightened beings and share that with all of life.

I always suggest in any class in *The Secret Doctrine* that one begins with at least a meditation on *The Voice of the Silence* which brings one spiritually, psychologically, mentally in harmony with the purpose of the Great Ones, of the Adept Brothers. And I use the term Adept Brothers because fundamentally one is working with one's brothers, all mankind in the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity. One needs to realize, why

am I studying this, in order to be a lamp, a light for others, to help others on the way and that way is known as the Bodhisattva Path. Once one has that clearly in mind that this is the reason, this is the purpose of my study, once that is clearly in one's heart, the reason or studying, then you can approach *The Secret Doctrine* either consecutively from page one to page whatever or you can take up separate concepts, ideas that point in the direction of understanding *The Secret Doctrine*.

I always think of one of the deeper students of *The Secret Doctrine* Geoffrey Barborika. And Geoffrey always wanted to begin with the second volume because it dealt with humanity. And yet, when he wrote *The Divine Plan* which is a marvelous work, I think a very helpful work, he put it in terms of the doctrines that are presented through *The Secret Doctrine* and he began with the beginning. And I have always said one needs at least to read it through, let it work inside you. You may not understand all the words, all the concepts that are being given but let it work inside you. Then go back and use it as a reference or take a thread and follow that thread through the two volumes. Because what happens at the macrocosmic level happens in one's life on the microcosmic level, but always in mind is the purpose to be a lamp, a light to other seekers, those who are seeking the truth. And so one lives it, one is consumed by it. And that I think is what we have to follow.

What is in your opinion the most important part of *The Secret Doctrine*?

To me the most important part and the part I always start with in a class are the three fundamental propositions. If H. P. B. had given us nothing else than those three fundamental propositions we would have enough for a lifetime. They point to service, they point to an understanding of the entire philosophy that there is One, One Immutable source of all – that is the first fundamental proposition – One Immutable, non-changing source of all existence. That this appearance of universes is periodic, is cyclic and one sees those cycles in terms of one's life, in terms of one's very being, and that there is a Path, the essential doctrine, the pivotal doctrine of *The Secret Doctrine*. And she is clear on this, It meets no special privileges in man, save those ones by his own effort and merit. We must deserve It and how do we deserve It — is walking the Path, how do we deserve It — by living the life. And she says later in *The Secret Doctrine* in volume one, if you would come to the wisdom you must live it. Your life must reflect it.

Is *The Secret Doctrine* still up to date?

These are universal principles, these three propositions. She is not telling you to accept them, she is just saying supposing this was so — that is what a proposition is. And if nothing else had been given to us but those three fundamental propositions particularly the last one the pivotal doctrine of *The Secret Doctrine* that meets no special privileges, save those that we win by our own effort and our own merit. By walking the path we become exemplars to others who may be seeking.

What are the aids or means to understand *The Secret Doctrine* better?

First and foremost is the development of one's own spiritual intuition. Brood over it, ponder it, live it, try it out, does it fit you. There are many aides, I have mentioned earlier Geoffrey Barborika's *The Divine Plan* which I still think one of the most helpful works. Read as widely as you can and apply those three propositions to what you are studying, to any aspect of it.

What other questions do you like to answer from your many years of studying the Theosophy?

I think that the greatest aid is one's own developing intuition. H. P. B. is clear on this. These are not principles that she has given us, they are not principles that are outside us, they are within us, they are engraved in our very lives. Does it change your life? What has it done to you? Who are the Adepts? Why is it called The Brotherhood and They refer to Themselves as Brothers? — because everything in the manifested universe is kin to everything else.

4 - How to Keep H. P. B.'s Message Alive for Future Generations?

How to Keep H. P. B.'s Message Alive for Future Generations?

Contribution by Sabine Van Osta

(Theosophical Society Adyar)

Preparing for this brief article, I did a bit of research on what H. P. B. had to say on the term “future generations”, by using the search function in the digital version of *The Secret Doctrine* and it was clear rather quickly that this type of search was not the thing to do. Because, when H. P. B. talks about future generations, she generally has in mind the time span of a few manvantaras, rather than the time span I preferred to have in mind for this article, i.e. the next 10 to 100 generations at the most, if only for modesty's sake.

So, when we ask ourselves the question of how to keep H. P. B.'s, that is the theosophical message, alive for future generations, we first focus on the younger generations of our time now. Youth of today, young minds of today are the next link towards the future generations, those who are and will also provide for the carriers of the minds of tomorrow. And so the question is: how to present theosophical principles and thought, practice and life style to them so that they understand and embrace them, and by doing so lay the corner stone for a world population that knows how to live in harmony with the universal laws that govern earth, the solar system and universes alike.

Indeed such a question is worth pondering upon as it invites to a series of reflections on how to make available the teachings to those future generations starting with the younger generations, teens and twens, of today. And to be able to do that, it is key to verify:

- what the current young generations are exposed to in terms of input of information — which is a lot;
- how they learn to deal with the massive load of information they need to digest day after day — or how they fail to do so because of the extreme pressure and other factors;
- what is coming our way in terms of new technologies that have the potential to further impact the way humans deal with information, even more intensively than the internet has done so far.

When we look at these questions, we for sure come up with interest-

ing elements, indicators as to the way ahead in the presentation of the *Theosophia* that our organizations wish to bring under the attention of the today's and tomorrow's audience.

Young generations of today

A United Nations paper on Youth and Information Technology, published around 2012 highlights a number of interesting data, which depicts a first tension field in the life of young minds of today. Some highlights:

Almost half the world's population is under the age of 25 and nearly a quarter are aged 12 to 24. Of those aged 12-24, nearly 40% live on less than two dollars a day.

Youth employment is in crisis according to the ILO, which estimates that some 75 million are out of work as of 2012. That accounts for 41% of total global unemployment, and is not likely to recover until beyond 2016.

By end-2013, mobile-cellular subscriptions will reach a penetration of 89% in developing countries. [which figure in 2014 has already slightly increased; addition by S.V.O.] Internet user statistics are also surging, with 2,7 billion (39% of world population) expected to be online by the end of the year, [all regions combined; addition by S.V.O.].⁽¹⁾

Another study, this time by the Pew Research Center, published by Amanda Lenhart, also comes up with a number of meaningful findings on youth, — this time more specifically American youth and their relation to mobile phones and the internet, out of which I just picked a few trends at random:

- Fully 88% of American teens aged 13 to 17 have or have access to a mobile phone of some kind, and a vast majority of older teens (73%) have smartphones. About a third of teens (30%) have a “basic” cell phone that is not a smartphone. About 15% of teens have both types of phones. Of teens with a smartphone, 21% also have a basic cell phone. On the flipside, half of teens with a basic phone also have or have access to a smartphone. A typical teen sends and receives 30 texts a day.
- Fully 87% of American teens aged 13 to 17 have or have access to a desktop or laptop computer, and 58% of teens have or have access to a tablet computer.
- Teens ages 13 to 17 are also going online frequently. Aided by the

convenience and constant access provided by mobile phones, 92% of teens report going online daily — with 24% using the internet “almost constantly,” 56% going online several times a day, and 12% reporting once-a-day use. Just 6% of teens report going online weekly, and 2% go online less often.

Of course, we can be of the opinion that phones and computers are not that important, that we definitely should not lead our lives on them, that real life is happening outside of those devices and outside online life, but, if a very interesting part of the audience is spending an important part of its life in front of one or other device and we still wish to reach them, then we're probably better off to at least be present in that arena, to let them know that we exist and what we have to offer in a language they understand. With the figures mentioned above on teens and the internet, no use telling that in many cases there is not so much time left to read books, when you are busy sending and receiving an average of 30 texts a day. Needless also to stress what impact it has on e.g. language, concentration and social interaction. If, in this respect we would only consider the consequences of game play, to name but another example.

And in terms of impact on also the mental life of man, there are still a few more elements during the next decades, especially when we see what is coming to us in terms of advanced information technology, things like smart glasses, smart data, wireless energy transfer, brain computer interfaces, screenless displays, smart houses and wearable electronics, all things that are now making their way and being pushed by the marketing scene into the consumer markets of tomorrow, into our lives.

You could say that finally, all of this is only impacting that part of the world which can afford all these devices and people who are exaggerating their use. But then, we would not be Theosophists as to know that “we”, more specifically our mental carriers do not stop where our body stops. Our mental bodies actually surrounds our physical bodies quite widely. Even more so, we know very well we actually are swimming into one big mental pool, fed and made up a.o. by the mental components and input of all of us. Imagine this vast sea of an unimaginable variety of vibrations our own mental bodies are broadcasting to each other, let alone the mental body of the planet itself.

This is at the same time the weakness and the strength of the current situation in the world, the same reason why H. P. B. could say in

an encouraging note: do not be afraid of your difficulties. Do not wish you could be in other circumstances than you are. For when you have made the best of an adversity, it becomes the stepping-stone to a splendid opportunity.

And furthermore she said:

It is an occult law, moreover, that no man can rise superior to his individual failings, without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of which he is an integral part. In the same way, no one can sin, nor suffer the effects of sin, alone. In reality, there is no such thing as 'Separateness'; and the nearest approach to that selfish state, which the laws of life permit, is in the intent or motive.⁽²⁾

And we are in need of this type of knowledge because we have not yet touched upon all the elements that influence the mental lives of future generations. With 1,2 billion youth between 15 and 24 in the world and about 20% of the World's youth experiencing a mental health issue, the United Nations declared the theme of International Youth Day of 2014 as "Youth and mental health". It seems that young minds of today are under serious pressure, and hardly – and understandably – capable of handling this pressure, i.e. managing it by a.o. organizing moments of genuine resourcing and regeneration.

In too many cases, they regrettably seem to seek relief – often helped by circumstances, peers and sometimes even influential adults –, via routes of escape which only lead to more trouble, isolation and their downfall, going from game play up to substance abuse.

Some astonishing facts on the latter can be learned from the website *www.dosomething.org*: more teens die from prescription drugs than heroin/cocaine combined; occasional or even regular substance abuse is often not considered as harmful (be it marijuana, steroids, crack or cocaine) and it is clear that an important number of youth get the substances through prescriptions that were not intended for them. On the other hand, it was found that teens that consistently learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are up to 50% less likely to use drugs than those who don't.

What are all these facts around youth, information technology and electronics, and substance abuse tell us? They only give a snap shot of the mental environment in which many young people grow up today. What do these fields have in common? And what can we learn from all this in

terms of presenting theosophical teachings, practice and life style, like we said earlier, so that young people understand and embrace them?

Our contribution under these circumstances

Phones and internet clearly have to do with communication and linking up with peers, with friends albeit in a surrogate manner. Moreover, communication nowadays goes very fast and therefore also very superficially.

Substances on the other hand have the ability to drive, one way or another, ones attention toward the individual inner atmosphere and a certain type of inner experiences. Another factor that is being reported by them is the feeling of oneness or inner clarity as the case may be. Clearly and evidently, there is a very strong appeal of these inner experiences to make so many young people force a way into their inner being, harming their subtle human constitution sometimes beyond repair in this lifetime. Clearly young people wish to know, to experience ... what? ... that what our teachings are all about, but unfortunately many prefer the unsafe route over the safety offered by the *Theosophia*, the timeless wisdom, as we present it and which respects the natural course of human inner development.

Since H. P. B.'s time, the world's society has changed a great deal. So, for instance, we need to understand that we Theosophists are not the only ones in this world to offer bits and pieces of the timeless wisdom and some of its practices to the world. This element alone should inspire us to the necessary modesty and also to awareness in relation to the whole of the spiritual landscape of today's world and to our respective positions and contributions to the whole of the theosophical movements as they developed from 1875 onwards, each with its own energy, focus and color embellishing the theosophical rainbow.

And despite many a critical note during our existences, the theosophical movements always wish to provide and are recognized for thorough, knowledgeable information on the wisdom tradition and occult sciences, with an open mind, following as much as possible scientific investigations and progress of whatever discipline they may come and above all faithful to the ethical core without which Theosophy would not be what it was, is and always will be. We will need to push ahead with that specific mixture of reliable and well established content on the one hand, and an attractive, alluring, dynamic and youthful presentation on the other hand. To what end? Basically, to rekindle the spiritual flame in every human being up to the extent that each individual accepts it, not in a superficial way – this

type of rekindling is already done by many – but in the profound way that we are familiar with, the way we are known for, addressing not only mental understanding, but genuine intuition and higher spirituality, which is not sensationalistic but which goes straight to the heart and essence of any human being. To let all who are interested, to know and feel that deep down we are all searching to reconnect with our core which is bliss and happiness. Not the happiness of which there is much talk in mainstream media, but the one to which is hinted in *The Idyll of the White Lotus*:

There are three truths which are absolute, and which cannot be lost, but yet may remain silent for lack of speech.

The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendor has no limit.

The principle which gives life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.⁽³⁾

The state of the world shows us very clearly: there is still more than sufficient room and reason to exist for all the theosophical movements, and it cannot be excluded that for some projects a combining of strengths and forces might just be the way ahead for bringing the message to the future generations in the form they are able to assimilate and digest. And when we say “making available to future generations” we definitely are no longer talking about books nor even just video recordings of lectures alone. In the framework of what is coming to us and on how young minds are being shaped today, we better think in terms of visuals, – short and brainy 3D animated video clips – illustrating the basics of man’s inner subtle life, media downloadable and playable on mobile devices, striking the key notes of our teachings in only a few seconds, e-books for all those who do not have the time to go to a bookshop or to sit at home reading books, but who want to have access and read books wherever they are at whatever moment of their choosing. This last way of communicating could be especially targeted to professionally active people, those who are currently raising families, bringing up their children, having jobs, and wanting to stay in touch with the *Theosophia*, the profound current of

wisdom which can form the backbone of their activities during the day and which at the end of the day – their duty done – is like a meditational balm to an often agitated mind.

Coming back specifically to the young generations, we could think in terms of trying to accomplish compulsory practical Theosophy and meditation classes in schools, or even supporting those initiatives of our choice that try to channel all the young energy of today in constructive, uplifting projects. *www.dosomething.org* was mentioned earlier and we should also mention here the Golden Link Schools in the Philippines led by Vic Hao Chin Jr., a highly inspiring and very good example of how to guide young people towards a theosophical, a sustainable life style in which respect for life, meditation, yoga, vegetarianism, balanced self-development, but also genuine social cohesion, friendship, love and compassionate service are key. Education there is based upon a few elementary principles of which one is that failure does not exist or as Ralph Waldo Emerson has put it: our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising up every time we fail.

Whatever the lines of action our respective theosophical movements choose, whatever common project would see the light of day, let us too be guided by the principles which we make known to the world: that our respective projects and futures have a growth and splendor with no limits but the ones we allow, that we too are our own law givers, and that our success in passing on the theosophical message to the future generations will be dependent mainly upon the heart and endurance with which we stand in the world.

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How to Keep H. P. B.'s Message Alive for Future Generations?

Contribution by Joop Smits

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What do we think we could recollect from H. P. B.'s message, imagining that we could reincarnate 2,000 years from now?

What will be the situation in our next incarnation, e.g. 2,000 years from now? Will it be possible to recollect H. P. B.'s message? And if so, what conditions are necessary?

Esoteric character of H. P. B.'s message

Before I elaborate on this, I would like to quote what Mme Blavatsky pointed out in *The Key to Theosophy* on the esoteric character of Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion:

The Wisdom-Religion was ever [an esoteric; addition by J.S.] one, and being the last word of possible human knowledge, was, therefore, carefully preserved. It preceded by long ages the Alexandrian Theosophists, reached the modern, and will survive every other religion and philosophy (...)

The best proof you can have of the fact is that every ancient religious, or rather philosophical, cult consisted of an esoteric or secret teaching, and an exoteric (outward public) worship. Furthermore, it is a well-known fact that the mysteries of the ancient comprised with every nation the “greater” (secret) and “Lesser” (public) mysteries (...).⁽¹⁾

Mme Blavatsky leaves no doubt as to whether the esoteric teachings *will survive* up to our next incarnation — and beyond. However the key question is whether those esoteric teachings – in the mean time – have been kept *pure* and *available in the world*. And this can only succeed if we, her followers, undertake the appropriate efforts to ensure this will be the case.

Esoteric teachings and the development of our consciousness

What is the *function* of esoteric teachings for the development of our consciousness? Esoteric teachings are only an impulse from outside.

What one receives from outside in the way of transference of ideas, of thought, is merely the outward stimulus or stimuli arousing the inner vibration prepar-

ing for the reception of the light within.⁽²⁾

Mme Blavatsky explains that it is the stage of development of our own inner nature which determines what we perceive from ideas presented to us by others. She gives as an analogy the example of a telegram which may have started out as the message was intended, but managed to get bungled up and misinterpreted by the telegraph operator at some intermediate station:

In the normal or natural state, the sensations are transmitted from the lowest physical to the highest spiritual body, *i.e.*, from the first to the 6th principle (the 7th being no organized or conditioned body, but an infinite, hence unconditioned principle or state), the faculties of each body having to awaken the faculties of the next higher one, to transmit the message in succession, until they reach the last, when, having received the impression, the latter (the spiritual soul) sends it back in an inverse order to the body. Hence, the faculties of some of the “bodies” (we use this word for want of a better term) being less developed, they fail to transmit the message correctly to the highest principle, and thus also fail to produce the right impression upon the physical senses, as a telegram may have started for the place of its destination faultless, and have been bungled up and misinterpreted by the telegraph operator at some intermediate station.⁽³⁾

Conditions determining recollection of H. P. B.'s message

Now back to the question: *what do we think we could recollect from H. P. B.'s message in our next incarnation?* In our view, our possibilities depend on the following two conditions:

1. The state of the reincarnating student: what is our state of spiritual development at the end of our present life? And consequently, what is the inner wisdom we could activate in our next incarnation?
2. The environment of the reincarnating student:
 - Has the core of H. P. B.'s message – the teachings – been kept pure and is it available?
 - And are there teachers who are integral parts of a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood?

The combination of these two conditions determines the possibilities or impossibilities for recollecting H. P. B.'s message. And of course these two conditions are not ‘independent’, but interrelated as they are determined by karmic causes and effects.

How can we have a positive influence on those two conditions in the future — in the here and *now*? We have to train ourselves *now, in the present*, to learn to comprehend the keys of the esoteric teachings for the main purpose to be a teacher who can inspire and co-operate with others *now*. Then we can expect that we incarnate in conditions where we can continue to be a teacher and can continue and strengthen the co-operation with others which we have started in this incarnation.

Reincarnating student: memory of past lives and further development of convictions

If the reincarnating student is in the condition that esoteric teachings and teachers are available, how will the process of re-building and further development of his convictions or philosophy of life start in his new incarnation?

As I just mentioned, the inner state of the student was determined by himself in previous lives. What can he remember of this inner wisdom and knowledge? Plato states that in fact knowing or knowledge is nothing else but *remembering*.⁽⁴⁾ The process of *remembering*, however, is not confined to the reincarnation process. It takes place continuously each and every day. For example, imagine that you are studying a certain issue — in your work or in Theosophy. You have pondered upon the issue for some time and then you put it aside. After some time, you revisit the issue, but in the meantime your insights and experiences have grown. So you can approach the same issue, but this time you are a little bit more 'mature'; maybe your insights have grown broader and deeper.

In our memory, we can distinguish *three levels or planes*: spiritual, mental and physical/astral.

At the *spiritual plane* we can distinguish our *intuition*. Our intuition is the ability to directly perceive truth. We can call it the inner knowing of the heart of our being. Mme Blavatsky explains that memories which we call *remembrance* and *recollection* are entirely confined to the physical brain. While *reminiscence* is related to our spiritual part: our *intuition*. It is an intuitional perception apart from and outside our physical brain. *Reminiscence* comprises searching for the kind of memory from our spiritual part which Mme Blavatsky called the *memory of the soul*.⁽⁵⁾ In his new incarnation, the student especially needs to further and strengthen the development of his *intuition*.

At the *mental plane* we can distinguish our *conscience*. Our conscience is related to the spiritual thoughts and experiences we had in the past. They form our frame of reference which warns us if we want to do something that we shouldn't do. It is our ethical consciousness. In his new incarnation the student will re-build and further develop his convictions also partly at the mental level by using his own mind to determine what is true and what is not. He will build up *confidence* in certain concepts he learned from others in society, but will make his own independent judgment.

At the *physical/astral level* we can distinguish our *instinct*. Our instinct is related to the animal part of our nature. E.g. taking appropriate actions when driving a car, meanwhile concentrating with your mind on some intellectual issue.

At the birth of man, the so called *skandhas* unite again in order to form his personality. In Theosophy skandhas have the general significance of bundles or groups of attributes of character, such as bodily form, sensations, perceptions and moral tendencies, which together form the finite parts of any being. In his new incarnation, the student will re-build and further develop his convictions also partly at the physical/astral level by letting his inner feelings speak. He embraces certain *beliefs*, which are based on the authority of others. Various contributors at this conference have explained the aspect of *belief* in relation to the quest for truth.

Memory of past lives and further development of convictions

PLANE/SPHERE	MEMORY OF PAST LIVES	DEVELOPMENT OF CONVICTIONS
Spiritual	Intuition (reminiscences)	Intuition – direct perception of truth: inner knowledge (<i>heart</i>)
Mental	Conscience	Confidence – independent inner judgment (<i>mind</i>)
Physical/astral	Instinct	Belief – depending on the authority of others (<i>inner feelings</i>)

What do we think we could recollect from H. P. B.'s message?

One of the first things the reincarnating student will face is whether the truth-concepts he encounters in his new life comprise the idea that Religion, Philosophy and Science are considered as ONE, which is characteristic for Theosophy.

- *Religion*: truth-concepts focusing on the realization of the spiritual unity of all living beings — the purpose of life. In his quest for

truth the student will have to test whether the religious concepts he encounters are *universal*.

- *Philosophy*: truth-concepts which focus on the interconnectedness of all beings and on the benefits for the development of all living beings. The student will have to test whether the philosophical concepts are *ethical*.
- *Science*: scientific theories show which facts confirm the philosophical and religious truth-concepts. The student will have to test whether the scientific theories are *logical* and *consistent*.

The touchstone of the truth-concept of H. P. B.'s message consists of the three Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine*. This truth-concept meets the requirements of being *universal*, *ethical* and *logical*.

- *The concept of Boundlessness*

The consequences of this concept are amongst others that:

- Everything in the universe is alive — a universal fact.
- All beings are interconnected and interrelated — the basis for ethics.

In one word: *compassion* as the key for realizing harmony.

- *Cyclicity*

The periodic manifestation of all beings — also a universal fact.

- *The progressive evolution and fundamental identity of all beings — as above, so below*

Also a universal fact which will form the basis of future logical and consistent theories of the natural and social sciences, and ethical philosophical principles for the harmonious development of man, society and nature.

Conclusion

So: *What do we think we could recollect from H. P. B.'s message?* It is *this general image, the key-notes* of the universal, ethical and logical WISDOM-RELIGION we should be able to *recognize* – regardless of the truth-concepts we encounter – and *recollect* in the era when we are born again.

How to become a teacher in the footsteps of H.P. Blavatsky?

The next question is: *How to become a teacher in the footsteps of H.P. Blavatsky?* Master K. H. wrote the following on the objective of the

Theosophical Society:

The first object of the Society is philanthropy. The true theosophist is a philanthropist who “not for himself but for the World he lives”.⁽⁶⁾

In line with this objective are the first two of the five goals of the TS Point Loma:

1. *To diffuse among men the knowledge of the laws inherent in the Universe.*
2. *To promulgate the knowledge of the essential unity of all that is, and to demonstrate that this unity is fundamental in Nature.*

So it is obvious that we need people to take up the task of teacher in the world, otherwise it is not possible to diffuse Theosophy among men and to show the essential unity of all that is. But in order to become a teacher, you first have to be trained as a student. However, teacher and student are only ‘relative’ qualifications.

Everybody is continuously both a teacher and a student in relation to his fellow men. It all depends on the situation — irrespective of whether it concerns Theosophy or not. There are a few aspects – without being exhaustive – I would like to explore in order to get some sort of broad outline of how to become a teacher in the footsteps of H.P. Blavatsky.

Object of The Theosophical Society as formulated by Master K. H.

The first object of the Society is philanthropy.

The true theosophist is a philanthropist

who “not for himself but for the World he lives”.

Master K. H.⁽⁶⁾

The student/pupil

Let us first look at the basic principles which apply to the student or pupil in relation to esoteric teachings. The true pupil *receives* only to *give* — and in turn he gives up his life in order that others may live. In the words of *The Voice of the Silence*: “Give up thy life, if thou would’st live”. H. P. B. adds the following explanation: “Give up the life of the physical *personality* if you would live in spirit”.⁽⁷⁾ Such is the Occult Law.

All growth is from within; all inspiration is from within. So study and reflection is *key*. All Esoteric Schools have taught as the very fundament of their being: “*Man , know thyself!*”. Therefore a student should first try

his utmost to solve questions himself, and appeal to his intuition.⁽⁸⁾

H. P. B. told us that when you have discovered a truth yourself, you are entitled to be told so and to have the truth further explained.⁽⁹⁾ In the course *Thinking Differently*, we ask our students to ponder upon the questions themselves first, before discussing it with other students and the course leader.

Further growth of the student, and making himself *moral suitable for receiving esoteric teachings* is done by following one of the old rules: 'live the life you should live' and you will know the Truth, because you will recognize her. She will come to you naturally. This spiritual knowledge will bring modesty, compassion, courage and all the noble virtues.⁽¹⁰⁾

One of the obligations of the pupil in the Esoteric Schools is according to the *Book of Discipline* in the Schools of Dzyan (Rule nr. 5): "As the limbs defend the head and heart of the body they belong to, so have the disciples to defend the head and the heart of the body they belong to (*in this case Theosophy*) from injury".⁽¹¹⁾

The teacher

Then let us have a look at the teacher. H. P. B. describes the mission of a teacher as follows:

The mission of any teacher of esoteric truths, whether he stands at the top or at the foot of the ladder of knowledge, is precisely the same: as above, so below.⁽¹²⁾

And she continues:

I have only orders to strike the *keynote* of the various esoteric truths among the learners as a body.⁽¹²⁾

So going in the *footsteps* of H. P. B. means we should *at least* continue to strike the *keynotes* of the various esoteric truths. Please note that everybody has his own unique *relative* position on the 'ladder of knowledge' and everybody is at the same time teacher and pupil. In *The Voice of the Silence* we can read:

Give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim, and seek out him who knows still less than thou; who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a Teacher, hope or consolation, and — let him hear the Law.⁽¹³⁾

If you consider yourself as a potential teacher somewhere at the 'foot of

the ladder of knowledge,' it is useful to study the principles which apply to *Teachers of esoteric truth* in relation to their disciples, their Chelas, and take them as a 'frame of reference' from which you can learn. The teacher has accepted the following consequences and responsibility of taking up the role of Teacher:

- The Teacher temporarily has *denounced* all chances of his *own* evolutionary progress. But the teacher accepts this in view of the goal to help humanity. This is the *Bodhisattva ideal* he has made as the goal of his life.
- The extraordinary, mystical relationship between Teacher and pupil which H. P. B. described in [the article; eds.] "Practical Occultism" as follows:

From the moment they [the teachers; J.S.] begin *really* to teach, from the instant they confer *any* power – whether psychic, mental or physical – on their pupils, they take upon themselves *all* the sins of that pupil, in connection with the Occult Sciences, whether of omission or commission, until the moment when initiation makes the pupil a Master and responsible in his turn.⁽¹⁴⁾

With regard to *teaching*, the following principles are – amongst others – of importance:

Iti maya srutam (Sanskrit)

The meaning is: 'Thus have I received it: I can no otherwise pass it on'. Theosophist Katherine Tingley has compared the failure to give as we have received to water, which becomes stagnant when not carried off, and which thus breeds death and moral disease. If you have received love and compassion, will you lock it up in your own hearts and hold onto it, or will you be like the sun shedding its glory on all? So it is the duty of a teacher to teach. Wisdom flows from the top downward. The teacher passes on his wisdom to a pupil who becomes the next teacher. This is the idea of the spiritual hierarchy in nature and the Succession of Teachers or *Guruparamparā*.

Independence of the pupil

A true teacher gives knowledge and the means to check this knowledge independently. The pupil is encouraged to build up his own inner image of the truth. The true teacher teaches with sincerity, devotion and compassion: there is no pushing or manipulation. This therefore stimulates

the development of inspired and wise future teachers and leaders in the Theosophical Movement.

No payment for esoteric education

The knowledge of the purpose of life, as indicated in esoteric teachings, is the heritage of all mankind.⁽¹⁵⁾ H. P. B. said: rather die in the gutter than receive one cent for spiritual i.e. esoteric teachings. For this reason we have no entrance fee for public lectures at the TS Point Loma; we only suggest giving donations.

Only guidelines, no rules of conduct

And finally: there are no strict rules of conduct, only guidelines and principles, as it trains the pupil to think and act independently.

Examples of teaching principles

- 'Iti maya srutam': 'Thus by me heard'
- Independence of the pupil
- No payment for esoteric education
- Only guidelines, no rules of conduct

Conclusion

How to become a teacher in the footsteps of H.P. Blavatsky? We should study and try to *live* the principles which apply to teachers and pupils of the Esoteric Schools.

How to keep these core ideas of the message alive?

Here we are at the last question: *How to keep these core ideas of the message alive?* We should never forget that Theosophy is the *hope* for mankind, because it is the most efficient philosophy to provide solutions for the difficulties of man and mankind.

“Keep the chain unbroken” was the last wish of Mme Blavatsky before she died. To answer the question of keeping the core of her message alive and passing on the theosophical attitude, knowledge and wisdom to the next generations, again three levels can be distinguished: spiritual, mental and physical/astral.

Spiritual level

The only way Theosophy can survive in the coming centuries is that it

is kept *pure*, is *well comprehended*, *explained* and *applied* by the members of the Theosophical Movement. This requires from the members:

- Continuous study of the theosophical teachings: *to study ancient and modern religion, science, and philosophy*; one of the goals of the TS. The focus should be on the *universal* (Atmic) and *ethical* (Buddhic) aspects in order to be able to translate the substance of the teachings to the fundamental causes and solutions for the difficulties mankind is facing.
- Trying to the utmost to *live* Theosophy.

This includes development of such virtues as self-discipline, self-forgetfulness, patience et cetera. In short: all the virtues, which are described in the Buddhist Pāramitās. It comprises studying and evaluating *your self* in a Buddhist way.

You will only be able to comprehend more of the esoteric teachings – and hence preserve them in a pure way – when you will succeed in *enhancing* your *character*. This also relates to one of the other goals of the TS: *to investigate the powers innate in man*. After all, study, discipline and living the life according to the teachings precedes the Mysteries.

It is clear that it is very ineffective to disseminate Theosophy on your own; now and in the future. Imagine how little Mme Blavatsky could have achieved, if she wouldn't have had a nucleus of hard working members around her. That is why one of the goals of the Theosophical Society is: *to form an active Brotherhood among men*. It is a matter of serious consideration how such a *nucleus* of a Brotherhood can be formed and can be the most effective for its purpose. Of course in one way or another there has to be some kind of 'organization', to co-operate with each other.

The co-operation can be based on *Union*: a more or less firm or loose aggregate or assemblage of diverse members. Or the co-operation can be based on *Unity*: a Union in which the bonds are so tight that it functions not as an assemblage, but as a single being, as an individual.⁽¹⁶⁾ Of course this requires from its members that they are well 'tuned' and committed to the goal in order to be able to co-operate as a whole, as a unity.

In the TS Point Loma-Blavatskyhouse we pursue to co-operate according to the model of a Unity, because it has proven to be the most effective for disseminating Theosophy. *Unity* has also often been on the agenda of international gatherings of Theosophists at ITC during the last decade. Based on Theosophy, there is general agreement about the concept of

Spiritual Unity. Therefore this Spiritual Unity forms a common basis for co-operation between our various Theosophical organizations. That is why during our international gatherings of the last five years there were very fruitful dialogues on how to give Theosophy the rightful place in the world.

The way to reach out to people who are interested in Theosophy is: inspiring them by giving the example. *Noblesse oblige*. Theosophists should practice and demonstrate Spiritual Unity firstly themselves.

Herman C. Vermeulen already gave some practical examples of the involvement of Theosophists in discussions on issues in society like ‘Organ donorship’ and initiatives like ‘Not my Islam’.

In order to keep the *chain unbroken*, it is clear that a co-operation based on Spiritual Unity is going to be crucial for keeping H. P. B.’s message alive. So if we manage to continue to build up and strengthen a *nucleus* of Brotherhood *now* – at least when the bonds are strong – that nucleus will also reincarnate *as a nucleus*.

All theosophical workers – if Theosophy is the most important thing in their *lives* – will meet each other in their next lives. So every serious attempt to form that nucleus *now* will bear fruit in about 2,000 years.

Mental level

We should make every possible effort to disseminate and transfer pure Theosophy to the next generation, who in turn will have to transfer it to the following generation. The dissemination of pure Theosophy comprises the following:

- To keep Theosophy complete, unbiased, without neglecting one part. There should be a balance between the technical teachings and the ethical teachings: expounding teachings and ethics as the two inseparable sides of a coin.
- ‘Translation’ of the theosophical teachings into pure and simple thoughts that can be understood by anyone in any culture, using *modern* language without losing the correct meaning.

So no presentation of ‘dogmas’ but helping people to comprehend the teachings. Only then is there a chance that people will recognize Theosophy as being identical to their own inner wisdom. Remember that there are millions of people who, if they could grasp some of the pure theosophical teachings, would definitely would like to join us. The main issue is how to open their eyes and make them understand what the Theosophi-

cal Movement *is*. An old expression says: “God and *one* [emphasis by J.S.] man can conquer the world”.⁽¹⁷⁾ So let us be optimistic.

- Demonstrate the *practical application* and implementation of the theosophical concepts in science, philosophy, religion, social issues and art in all possible ways. Support e.g. the initiatives of serious seekers for truth whether scientists, philosophers or religious leaders.
- An appropriate balance between: presenting the teachings and respect for the *free will* of students who are interested in Theosophy. So no attachment to the ‘result’!

Physical/astral level

To keep H. P. B.'s message alive we also should ensure that the teachings will be available in their original form for the next 2,000 years. So we have to think how they can remain accessible in print, digital form etc., also in the future. This, of course, is a field where co-operation between theosophical organizations is a necessity.

Summary

The Esoteric Teachings will always continue to exist. However, all means on the physical plane like books, hard discs et cetera are no guarantee for this. The guarantee depends on human beings who actually *live* and *are* the teachings and who are able to bring the teachings out from the inner planes into the outer world.

1. What do we think we could recollect from H. P. B.'s message, imagining that we could reincarnate in 2,000 years from now?

We should be able to recognize and recollect the *general image, the key notes* of the universal, ethical and logical WISDOM-RELIGION.

2. How to become a teacher in the footsteps of H.P. Blavatsky?

We should study and try to *live* the principles which apply to teachers and pupils of the Esoteric Schools.

3. How to keep these core ideas of the message alive?

We, the members of the Theosophical Movement should seek ways to co-operate at spiritual, mental and physical/astral level to ‘Keep the chain unbroken’. Thus we can pass on the theosophical attitude, knowledge and

wisdom to the next generations.

Finally, imagine how the world could look like 2,000 years from now *if* the Theosophical Movement has been successful — it would be very much like the flavor of the image H. P. B. sketched at the end of *The Key to Theosophy* of the future of the Theosophical Society in the 20th century:

- The general condition of men's minds and hearts will have been improved and purified by the spread of the teachings.
- The next impulse will find a numerous and *united* body of people ready to welcome the new torch-bearer of Truth.
- ... and earth will be a heaven in comparison with what it is now!⁽¹⁸⁾

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How to Keep H. P. B.'s Message Alive for Future Generations?

Contribution by Carolyn Dorrance

(United Lodge of Theosophists)

Predicting the future is very hypothetical at best. Sometimes our predictions are just fantasies of what we would like to have happen. When we get a little slip in a Chinese fortune cookie that says Wisdom and Prosperity are coming to you soon, we want to believe that prediction of the future, but does it ever come true? Imagination can be a source of real insights, but it also can become a diversion from reasoned truth.

In seeking to link present facts with the past and with future events, Theosophy does offer an advantage because Theosophy teaches that everything in existence is law-governed. Effects are contained in causes; whatever unfolds in the future is the result of what has happened in the past. This universal law operates on multiple levels of manifestation and shows its connections in vast cycles of karma. Therefore studying the past and the present can reveal, although not mechanically, possible or probable developments in the future. The current concept of Big History used by academic historians is useful in identifying the universality of cycles in history.

As historians and anthropologists push back the datelines of world history by millions of years, it becomes easier to imagine 2,000 years ago and speculate on 2,000 years into the future. Most of the ideas expressed in current religious theologies and philosophies emerged about 2,500 years ago in an era called the Axial Age or the age of The Great Transformation. We have been working with those ideas for several centuries and now debate if they should continue to be the foundation of our thought or whether they need some expansion of ideas such as Theosophy offers. Do we need a fresh infusion of ideas to revitalize The Great Transformation for the sake of future generations? Students of Theosophy are focused on the rich impulsion of core ideas offered in the 1875 cycle, but of course we want to know if these ideas will be alive and influential far into the future.

What do we think we could recollect from H. P. B.'s message, imagining that we could reincarnate in 2,000 years from now?

What ideas would you want to find visible in society if you did reincar-

nate within 2,000 years? The following suggestions are not drawn from some official or published list, but are the fruit of one student's understanding of Theosophy as presented at a United Lodge of Theosophists.

The first foundational idea would be that of the Ancient Source which provides continuity of knowledge. Indeed that is what historians are finding out — there is continuity of knowledge transmitted down through the ages. What we learn today will be part of the ancient source 2,000 years from now. The spiritual wisdom and enlightenment that has been talked about so clearly in this conference would be true and fresh and flowing through our consciousness.

A second idea is duality. Duality, we are taught in *The Secret Doctrine*, is necessary for manifestation. You have to have an interaction of spirit and matter, of light and darkness for forms filled with intelligence to emerge. Furthermore, the process of learning needs the operation of duality. Why is this so important? How much trouble is caused by people pushing some one idea or one point of view or by assuming that there is one god, one law. It can really lighten up the psychology of a dialogue if you recognize there is inevitable duality in all perspectives and questions. There must be contrast — even conflict in order for us to learn and periodically bring about more harmony so that another duality can emerge.

A third source of core ideas is that of the Three Fundamentals, the axioms said to be the starting point for the pursuit of Truth. We won't go into them because we have had so many presentations explaining them, but they certainly would have to be recollected ideas in the future so that we have the framework for a fundamental understanding of how what exists emerges and of the countless operations of Law through many cycles of manifestation right down into very particular events occurring now.

A fourth core idea is the spiritual pilgrimage that all monads are on and that in time gives opportunity for greater knowledge, greater wisdom and fulfillment of spiritual evolution in self-conscious realization of the immortal Self. Each life is a step in a very long journey. The soul periodically needs fresh energy and expanded understanding over countless lives to fulfill the goals of evolution.

The four Golden Links that are presented by H.P. Blavatsky in *The Key to Theosophy* are other valuable seeds for thought and recollection. The fact of universal unity and causation is currently expressed as a mantra of interdependence. Its recognition and practice is an improvement on centuries of selfish, separative conflicts. One hopes that 2,000 years from now

the idea of unity and human solidarity and the idea of a great chain of causation would be deeply and widely understood and applied in practice. The psychology in human behavior would reflect then the knowledge that nothing is outside the chain of causation.

The idea of human solidarity is rooted in the idea that we all share the same spiritual source of our being, the Higher Self, the spark of the divine that enlightens our lower vestures and makes possible the spiritual path. Recognizing that solidarity is what is going to draw us together so that peace and non-violence prevails in the future. Hopefully, 2,000 years from now we will recollect and have mastered the idea and practice of human solidarity.

The other Golden Links are karma and reincarnation, central ideas taught by Theosophy. Karma is widely referred to in contemporary society. So we would hope that by 2,000 years from now, a much more exact and multi-layered understanding of karma would improve the way we make choices and enhance progress, individually and collectively, towards spiritual and ethical living. We would discover that karma is not just about if you hit me I'm going to hit you, but it offers a much more sophisticated approach to action. We can really become masters of karma and not victims of its inexorable consequences.

The tough idea we all know in trying to spread the teaching of Theosophy is reincarnation. That's the reality that people tend to resist. Hopefully, in 2,000 years that resistance will be replaced with the widespread recognition that multiple lives offer multiple opportunities to learn, correct mistakes that weigh down our karma and discover the hidden potentials for ethical, intellectual and spiritual growth. So that's an idea we need to find ways to communicate more effectively, because a recognition of reincarnation does have a very great impact on understanding yourself, your relationships, your possibilities, the purposes of life and your do's and don'ts list.

Another powerful idea Theosophy in its current cycles has emphasized is the potential of mind (*manas*). The human mind is capable of abstraction, is capable of developing ethical principles. We can use the mind with its capacity for thinking things through (*dianoia*) to choose actions that promote harmony and universal brotherhood.

In 2,000 years will we be exemplars of self-examination, moral discipline and self-determined correction? Will thoughtful non-violence naturally prevail in the society of the future? If moral thinking prevails,

compassion for all that lives is more likely to flourish.

The Dalai Lama is currently explaining how compassion is shared and valued in all religions. In 2,000 years will this quality of the spiritual heart be so instilled naturally, that we don't have to present compassion as an "idea"?

Idea number seven is put down as the mystery idea to emphasize that this list is incomplete, and students should feel free to add other ideas for shaping the future. Also, the idea behind all ideas, the Higher Self (Atma) is mysterious, beyond tight definition or description. By its light and inspiration we could recollect H. P. B.'s message and give it fresh vitality in the cultures shaping evolution 2,000 years from now.

How to become a teacher in the footsteps of H.P. Blavatsky?

It will be answered from the perspective of the literature and study methods established in the United Lodge of Theosophists. ULT was founded in Los Angeles in 1909 by Robert Crosbie and the students attracted to his study groups. Mr. Crosbie is not well known, but those who worked with him saw him as the quiet man, the steadfast man with integrity. When W.Q. Judge met him on a visit to the Lodge in Boston, he said: "Crosbie, you are on my list!" After moving to Los Angeles in 1908, Crosbie asked the key question — what can I do to spread the teaching of Theosophy in this sprawling, urban city filling up rapidly with a great diversity of immigrants. His first answer was to ask his neighbors to his home for informal study classes. He had few resources but a dedication to Theosophy and the mission of H. P. B.

When this study group gave more formal foundation to their efforts to spread Theosophy, Crosbie used some ideas expressed by Mr. Judge to write a Declaration. A core principle stated in it was that Theosophists were all those "engaged in the true service of mankind, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization." Crosbie wanted to really de-emphasize organization and the election of leaders. He wanted to avoid getting into battles about sectarian differences and interpretations of certain parts of *The Secret Doctrine*.

His writings are available in a collection of essays, letters and talks published in *The Friendly Philosopher* and in *The Eternal Verities* published in *Universal Theosophy*. What is striking is the lucid readability of his writing offered in a language of common sense. Crosbie recognized that in order to speak to and persuade people to listen to theosophical

ideas and think about them, he had to present them in ordinary language used by common people. The following examples from Crosbie's writings show some difficult philosophical depth, but there is so much language that people could understand even if they did not understand the deeper source of the truths expressed.

We must give up the idea that we are poor, weak, miserable creatures who can never do anything for ourselves; for as long as we hold that idea, so long will we never do anything. We must get the other idea – that we are Spirit, that we are immortal – and when we come to realize what that means, the power of it will flow directly in and through us (...).⁽¹⁾

Theosophy presents a larger view in showing that man is not his body, because the body is continually changing; that man is not his mind, because he is constantly changing his mind; that there is in man a permanency which is the identity throughout all kinds of embodiments. There has been no change in our identity from childhood up to the present day. The body has changed; the surroundings have changed; but the identity remains the same and will not change from now on through all changes of body or mind or circumstance.⁽²⁾

Now, if you are hearing this teaching for the first time, wouldn't you have some recognition of questions about identity or the proposition that everything that exists is always changing? Wouldn't Crosbie's teachings evoke some memory of ideas you have wondered about? Everybody has some reaction to strong statements about how human beings are sinners.

Crosbie's method of teaching is more like an invitation to a conversation during which the contributions of every reader or participant in a study group are welcome. The conversation is not obscured by heavy use of Sanskrit terms such as *Atman*, *Brahman* or *purusha* and *prakriti* nor with difficult to grasp metaphysical propositions. Crosbie did pick up some new terms from 19th century philosophers such as Hegel and Bergson. Terms such as consciousness, creative evolution, emanation expanded the scope of philosophical thinking while keeping most of the language grounded in common experience. This focus does not mean that Crosbie was abandoning the language in *The Secret Doctrine* or the terms in *The Key to Theosophy*.

His methodology emphasizes that students should feel comfortable with their early contact with Theosophy. Invite them to share their experience, so their minds can move into an understanding of core concepts such as karma. Start with asking students if they can remember some experience

Method and message of Robert Crosbie

LANGUAGE

- Common speech of the era (modern, urban, democratic attitudes)

LOCALITY

- Local study groups - self determination

LEADERSHIP

- Leaders rise to acceptance (ascriptive)
- Impersonality
- Ripeness is all



of recognizing the connection between a cause and an effect. Then expand the questioning by asking why there is such a connection. Gradually, Crosbie thought, the student's ordinary tools of observation and experience move into a process of reasoning. As the reasoning capacities develop, the student's mind becomes a repository of true ideas. The many false ideas that we try to guide our life with can be expunged. The complexities of an idea such as karma become an open-ended and multi-layered focus for contemplation and practical discipline.

This approach to understanding Theosophy is relevant, because it fits deeply into the habits and values of American culture. Individualism and the quest for self-definition encourage a desire to give your opinion and share your experience with others. Being asked a question awakens a student's mind and draws them into a conversation. They become engaged. The students have an experience that builds confidence by discovering their capacity to think about things that they never thought about. They also gain self-confidence through the sensitive experience that they are connected to the other people in the study group. Thereby, building a nucleus of brotherhood, a core purpose of the Theosophical Movement, is supported. Fellowship surrounds and penetrates the educational efforts Crosbie developed.

If you read the books of the various gurus who came over to America during the 1950s and 60s to teach about yoga and consciousness-raising, you find that they used an intellectual framework and vocabulary similar to what Robert Crosbie developed. Thus, the core idea of the spiritual path, central to their Hindu and Buddhists traditions, was transferred into youthful, contemporary consciousness and values. Thereby the Theosophical Movement and Crosbie's teaching methods facilitated this transition during the 20th century.

Another feature of Crosbie's methodology is that he does not organize the teaching into some strict, topical, formal organization such as you find in Judge's *The Ocean of Theosophy*. Instead, Crosbie brings up core ideas repeatedly. Partly this contrast is due to the fact that his writings are based on talks and letters, but he understands that repetition is important to effective learning. In Japanese education, learning a lesson includes three repetitions — a lecture, an audio-visual application and an opportunity for dialogue.

So that was Crosbie's method, very much in the Socratic teaching mode. If you go to the annual Study Group in the Los Angeles Lodge in late August, you find that that method is being demonstrated very effectively. Should not Crosbie's method be a major way to answer the second question — How to become a teacher in the footsteps of H. P. B.?

How to keep the core ideas of this message alive?

It has been partially answered by the answer to the second question. In addition to an effective teaching method, Theosophists should take advantage of the informal, locally based organization of United Lodge of Theosophists. There is no central organization, no hierarchy, no central authority setting rules and policies. Each Lodge is self-governed; each determines what texts it studies, what topics are offered, who gives talks. Lodges share understandings of the aims and purposes of each Lodge as expressed in the *Declaration* written by Robert Crosbie. There is an expectation that leadership is natural and ascriptive. Leaders may have to teach some boundaries to behavior within a Lodge, but they must trust in associates and encourage their creative experiments in how the teachings of Theosophy might be disseminated. The social context in which the work of a local Lodge takes place varies, so diversity in how the message is spread should be expected and welcomed. For example, the Los Angeles Lodge has expanded its reach by successfully publishing Spanish language translations of theosophical books. Locally published journals such as *Vidyā* give fresh attention to both the original writings of H. P. B. and Judge as well as to the talks of contemporary students. Websites are popping up around the world. Get-togethers inspire mutual efforts. Whatever the activity, the motivating energy is provided by dedicated students of Theosophy. "Ripeness is all" said Shakespeare, but the seed of ripeness is the dedication to the teachers and the teachings deeply embedded in the spiritual heart of each student committed to the study and dissemi-

nation of Theosophy.

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Our world is in great need of Theosophy

Theosophists from all four corners of the globe realize more and more that a vibrant and committed Theosophical Movement is instrumental in bringing the ancient teachings, that were gathered and reintroduced to us by H.P. Blavatsky in the late nineteenth century, to the minds and hearts of our fellow human beings.

Ever since the foundation of the Theosophical Society in 1875, the modern Theosophical Movement was faced with many challenges. Nowadays and worldwide, a number of theosophical organizations do exist. Each one of these organizations, all by themselves, have developed and adopted typical ways of working for mankind. The *raison d'être* of each of these organizations lies profoundly in the living power of the theosophical teachings as they were presented by H.P. Blavatsky.

Theosophists are aware of the challenges they are faced with, and the need for cooperation or cross-pollination among the mainstream organizations to fulfill their shared task in bringing Theosophy into the world.

It is this weighty comprehension that has become the main motivation for the organizing of the yearly ITC conferences. ITC, i.e. International Theosophy Conferences, Inc. This yearly event is providing a platform whereby Theosophists inspire and support each other to become better workers for the cause of Universal Brotherhood.

Since 2010 all lectures and panel discussions of each one of the ITC conferences have been broadcasted "live" via the internet; the publication of the ITC 2015 conference however is going to be the very first one, being a printed reflection. The 2015 conference was entitled:

"Helena Petrovna Blavatsky Through Different Eyes With ONE Heart"

It was subtitled:

What is our understanding of H. P. B.'s writings? How do they inspire all Theosophists, those affiliated with an organization or independent, to embody and transmit her timeless message to the modern world?

During ITC 2015 Theosophists from the mainstream organizations shared their views and values on what they consider to be the essence of H. P. B.'s message, the mission they see for their own particular organization and the Theosophical Movement as a whole, submitting means of keeping the teachings alive for future organizations.

This publication assembles all these valued contributions. The result is a unique document that brings into practice of what was put forward in The Hague: an open and honest exchange, inspired by the collective desire to establish the practice of Universal Brotherhood.

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