

HELENA P. BLAVATSKY on HUMANITY

THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY, p.217

THEOSOPHIST. Theosophy considers humanity as an emanation from divinity on its return path thereto.

THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY, p43-7

ENQUIRER. But how does Theosophy explain the common origin of man?

THEOSOPHIST. By teaching that the *root* of all nature, objective and subjective, and everything else in the universe, visible and invisible, *is, was, and ever will be one absolute essence, from which all starts, and into which everything returns.* This is Aryan philosophy, fully represented only by the Vedantins, and the Buddhist system. With this object in view, it is the duty of all Theosophists to promote in every practical way, and in all countries, the spread of *non-sectarian* education.

ENQUIRER. What do the written statutes of your Society advise its members to do besides this? On the physical plane, I mean?

THEOSOPHIST. 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 (provided, however, add the statutes, "that no benefit or percentage shall be taken by the Society or the 'Fellows' for its or their corporate services"). For instance, to take a practical illustration. The organization of Society, depicted by Edward Bellamy, in his magnificent work "Looking Backwards," admirably represents the Theosophical idea of what should be the first great step towards the full realization of universal brotherhood. The state of things he depicts falls short of perfection, because selfishness still exists and operates in the hearts of men. But in the main, selfishness and individualism have been overcome by the feeling of solidarity and mutual brotherhood; and the scheme of life there described reduces the causes tending to create and foster selfishness to a minimum.

ENQUIRER. Then as a Theosophist you will take part in an effort to realize such an ideal?

THEOSOPHIST. Certainly; and we have proved it by action. Have not you heard of the Nationalist clubs and party which have sprung up in America since the publication of Bellamy's book? They are now coming prominently to the front, and will do so more and more as time goes on. Well, these clubs and this party were started in the first instance by Theosophists. One of the first, the Nationalist Club of Boston, Mass., has Theosophists for President and Secretary, and the majority of its executive belong to the T. S. In the constitution of all their clubs, and of the party they are forming, the influence of Theosophy and of the Society is plain, *for they all take as their basis, their first and fundamental principle, the Brotherhood of Humanity as taught by Theosophy. In their declaration of Principles they state:—"The principle of the Brotherhood of Humanity is one of the eternal truths that govern the world's progress on lines which distinguish human nature from brute nature." What can be more Theosophical than this?* But it is not enough. What is also needed is to impress men with the idea that, if the root of mankind is one, then there must also be one truth which finds expression in all the various religions—except in the Jewish, as you do not find it *expressed* even in the Kabala.

ENQUIRER. This refers to the common origin of religions, and you may be right there. But how does it apply to practical brotherhood on the physical plane?

THEOSOPHIST. First, because *that which is true on the metaphysical plane must be also true on the physical.* Secondly, because there is no more fertile source of hatred and strife than religious

differences. When one party or another thinks himself the sole possessor of absolute truth, it becomes only natural that he should think his neighbor absolutely in the clutches of Error or the Devil. But once get a man to see that none of them has the *whole* truth, but that they are mutually complementary, that the complete truth can be found only in the combined views of all, after that which is false in each of them has been sifted out—then true brotherhood in religion will be established. The same applies in the physical world.

ENQUIRER. Please explain further.

THEOSOPHIST. Take an instance. A plant consists of a root, a stem, and many shoots and leaves. As humanity, as a whole, is the stem which grows from the spiritual root, so is the stem the unity of the plant. Hurt the stem and it is obvious that every shoot and leaf will suffer. So it is with mankind.

ENQUIRER. Yes, but if you injure a leaf or a shoot, you do not injure the whole plant.

THEOSOPHIST. And therefore you think that by injuring *one* man you do not injure humanity? But how do *you* know? Are you aware that even materialistic science teaches that any injury, however slight, to a plant will affect the whole course of its future growth and development? Therefore, you are mistaken, and the analogy is perfect. If, however, you overlook the fact that a cut in the finger may often make the whole body suffer, and react on the whole nervous system, I must all the more remind you that there may well be other spiritual laws, operating on plants and animals as well as on mankind, although, as you do not recognise their action on plants and animals, you may deny their existence.

ENQUIRER. What laws do you mean?

THEOSOPHIST. We call them Karmic laws; but you will not understand the full meaning of the term unless you study Occultism.

However, my argument did not rest on the assumption of these laws, but really on the analogy of the plant. Expand the idea, carry it out to a universal application, and you will soon find that in true philosophy every physical action has its moral and everlasting effect. 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.

THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY, pp.234-6

THEOSOPHIST. Look for a moment at what you would call the concrete facts of human society. Contrast the lives not only of the masses of the people, but of many of those who are called the middle and upper classes, with what they might be under healthier and nobler conditions, where justice, kindness, and love were paramount, instead of the selfishness, indifference, and brutality which now too often seem to reign supreme. All good and evil things in humanity have their roots in human character, and this character is, and has been, conditioned by the endless chain of cause and effect. But this conditioning applies to the future as well as to the present and the past. Selfishness, indifference, and brutality can never be the normal state of the race—to believe so would be to despair of humanity—and that no Theosophist can do. Progress can be attained, and only attained, by the development of the nobler qualities. Now, true evolution teaches us that by altering the surroundings of the organism we can alter and improve the organism; and in the strictest sense this is true with regard to man. Every Theosophist, therefore, is bound to do his utmost to help

on, by all the means in his power, every wise and well-considered social effort which has for its object the amelioration of the condition of the poor. Such efforts should be made with a view to their ultimate social emancipation, or the development of the sense of duty in those who now so often neglect it in nearly every relation of life.

ENQUIRER. Agreed. But who is to decide whether social efforts are wise or unwise?

THEOSOPHIST. No one person and no society can lay down a hard-and-fast rule in this respect. Much must necessarily be left to the individual judgment. One general test may, however, be given. Will the proposed action tend to promote that true brotherhood which it is the aim of Theosophy to bring about? No real Theosophist will have much difficulty in applying such a test; once he is satisfied of this, his duty will lie in the direction of forming public opinion. And this can be attained only by inculcating those higher and nobler conceptions of public and private duties which lie at the root of all spiritual and material improvement. In every conceivable case he himself must be a centre of spiritual action, and from him and his own daily individual life must radiate those higher spiritual forces which alone can regenerate his fellow-men.

ENQUIRER. But why should he do this? Are not he and all, as you teach, conditioned by their Karma, and must not Karma necessarily work itself out on certain lines?

THEOSOPHIST. It is this very law of Karma which gives strength to all that I have said. The individual cannot separate himself from the race, nor the race from the individual. The law of Karma applies equally to all, although all are not equally developed. In helping on the development of others, the Theosophist believes that he is not only helping them to fulfil their Karma, but that he is also, in the strictest sense, fulfilling his own. It is the development of humanity, of which both he and they are integral parts, that he has always in view, and he knows that any failure on his part to respond to the highest within him retards not only himself but all, in their progressive march. By his actions, he can make it either more difficult or more easy for humanity to attain the next higher plane of being.

THE SECRET DOCTRINE II, pp.55-6

And, arguing from the standpoint of science, does not even our modern human race occasionally furnish us with monster-specimens: two-headed children, animal bodies with human heads, dog-headed babies, etc., etc.? And this proves that, if nature will still play such freaks now that she has settled for ages into the order of her evolutionary work, monsters, like those described by Berosus, were a possibility in her opening programme; which possibility may even have existed once upon a time as a law, before she sorted out her species and began regular work upon them; which indeed now admits of definite proof by the bare fact of “Reversion,” as science puts it.

(...) This is what the doctrine teaches and demonstrates by numerous proofs.

Thus physical nature, when left to herself in the creation of animal and man, is shown to have failed. She can produce the first two and the lower animal kingdoms, but when it comes to the turn of man, spiritual, independent and intelligent powers are required for his creation, besides the “coats of skin” and the “Breath of animal Life.” The human Monads of preceding Rounds need something higher than purely physical materials to build their personalities with, under the penalty of remaining even below any “Frankenstein” animal.*

FOOTNOTE *In the first volume of the lately published “*Introduction a l’etude des Races Humaines*,” by M. de Quatrefages, there is proof that since the post-tertiary period and even before that time — since many Races were already scattered during that age on the face of the Earth — man has not altered one iota in his physical structure. And if, surrounded for ages by a fauna that altered from one period or cycle to another, which died out, which was reborn in other forms — so

that now there does not exist one single animal on Earth, large or small, contemporary with the man of that period — if, then, every animal has been transformed save man himself, this fact goes to prove not only his antiquity, but that he is a *distinct Kingdom*.

Why should he alone have escaped transformation? Because, says de Quatrefages, the weapon used by him, in his struggle with nature and the ever-changing geological conditions and elements, was "*his psychic force, not his physical strength or body,*" as in the case of animals. Give man only that dose of intelligence and reason with which other mammalia are endowed, and with his present bodily organization he will show himself the most helpless of creatures of Earth.

And as everything goes to prove that the *human organism with all its characteristics, peculiarities and idiosyncrasies existed already on our Globe in those far distant geological periods when there was not yet one single specimen of the now-existing forms of mammalia*, what is the unavoidable conclusion? Why this: Since all the human races are of one and the same species, it follows that this species is the *most ancient of all* the now-living mammalia. Therefore it is the most stable and persevering of all, and was already as fully developed as it is now when all the other mammalia now known had not made even their first approach to appearance on this Earth. Such is the opinion of the great French Naturalist, who gives thereby a terrible blow to Darwinism.

‘THE MIND IN NATURE’

BLAVATSKY COLLECTED WRITINGS 13, p.262-68 (*Lucifer* Vol. XIX, Sep. 1896, pp.9-14)

GREAT is the self-satisfaction of modern science, and unexampled its achievements. Pre-Christian and mediæval philosophers may have left a few landmarks over unexplored mines: but the discovery of all the gold and priceless jewels is due to the patient labours of the modern scholar. And thus they declare that the genuine, real knowledge of the nature of the Kosmos and of man is all of recent growth. The luxuriant modern plant has sprung from the dead weeds of ancient superstitions.

Such, however, is not the view of the students of Theosophy. And they say that it is not sufficient to speak contemptuously of "the untenable conceptions of an uncultivated past," as Mr. Tyndall and others have done, to hide the intellectual quarries out of which the reputations of so many modern philosophers and scientists have been hewn. How many of our distinguished scientists have derived honour and credit by merely dressing up the ideas of those old philosophers, whom they are ever ready to disparage, is left to an impartial posterity to say. But conceit and self-opinionatedness have fastened like two hideous cancers on the brains of the average man of learning; and this is especially the case with the Orientalists--Sanskritists, Egyptologists and Assyriologists. The former are guided (or perhaps only pretend to be guided) by post-Mahâbhâratan commentators; the latter by arbitrarily interpreted papyri, collated with what this or the other Greek writer said, or passed over in silence, and by the cuneiform inscriptions on half-destroyed clay tablets copied by the Assyrians from "Accado-" Babylonian records. Too many of them are apt to forget, at every convenient opportunity, that the numerous changes in language, the allegorical phraseology and evident secretiveness of old mystic writers, who were generally under the obligation never to divulge the solemn secrets of the sanctuary, might have sadly misled both translators and commentators. Most of our Orientalists will rather allow their conceit to run away with their logic and reasoning powers than admit their ignorance, and they will proudly claim like Professor Sayce(1) that they have unriddled the true meaning of the religious symbols of old, and can interpret esoteric texts far more correctly than could the initiated hierophants of Chaldæa and Egypt. This amounts to saying that the ancient hierogrammatists and priests, who were the inventors of all the allegories which served as veils to the many truths taught at the Initiations, did not possess a clue to the sacred texts composed or written by themselves. But this is on a par with that other

illusion of some Sanskritists, who, though they have never even been in India, claim to know Sanskrit accent and pronunciation, as also the meaning of the Vedic allegories, far better than the most learned among the greatest Brahmânical pundits and Sanskrit scholars of India.

After this who can wonder that the jargon and blinks of our mediæval alchemists and Kabalists are also read literally by the modern student; that the Greek and even the ideas of Aeschylus are *corrected* and improved upon by the Cambridge and Oxford Greek scholars, and that the veiled parables of Plato are attributed to his "ignorance." Yet if the students of the dead languages know anything, they ought to know that the method of extreme necessitarianism was practiced in ancient as well as in modern philosophy; that from the first ages of man, the fundamental truths of all that we are permitted to know on earth were in the safe keeping of the Adepts of the sanctuary; that the difference in creeds and religious practice was only external; and that those guardians of the primitive divine revelation, who had solved every problem that is within the grasp of human intellect, were bound together by a universal freemasonry of science and philosophy, which formed one unbroken chain around the globe. It is for philology and the Orientalists to endeavour to find the end of the thread. But if they will persist in seeking it in one direction only, and that the wrong one, truth and fact will never be discovered. It thus remains the duty of psychology and Theosophy to help the world to arrive at them. Study the Eastern religions by the light of Eastern--not Western--philosophy, and if you happen to relax correctly one single loop of the old religious systems, the chain of mystery may be disentangled. But to achieve this, one must not agree with those who teach that it is unphilosophical to enquire into first causes, and that all that we can do is to consider their physical effects. The field of scientific investigation is bounded by physical nature on every side; hence, once the limits of matter are reached, enquiry must stop and work be recommenced. As the Theosophist has no desire to play at being a squirrel upon its revolving wheel, he must refuse to follow the lead of the materialists. He, at any rate, knows that the revolutions of the physical world are, according to the ancient doctrine, attended by like revolutions in the world of intellect, for the spiritual evolution in the universe proceeds in cycles, like the physical one. Do we not see in history a regular alternation of ebb and flow in the tide of human progress? Do we not see in history, and even find this within our own experience, that the great kingdoms of the world, after reaching the culmination of their greatness, descend again, in accordance with the same law by which they ascended? till, having reached the lowest point, humanity reasserts itself and mounts up once more, the height of its attainment being, by this law of ascending progression by cycles, somewhat higher than the point from which it had before descended. Kingdoms and empires are under the same cyclic laws as plants, races and everything else in Kosmos.

The division of the history of mankind into what the Hindus call the Sattva, Tretya, Dvâpara and Kali Yugas, and what the Greeks referred to as "the Golden, Silver, Copper, and Iron Ages" is not a fiction. We see the same thing in the literature of peoples. An age of great inspiration and unconscious productiveness is invariably followed by an age of criticism and consciousness. The one affords material for the analyzing and critical intellect of the other. "The moment is more opportune than ever for the review of old philosophies. Archæologists, philologists, astronomers, chemists and physicists are getting nearer and nearer to the point where they will be forced to consider them. Physical science has already reached its limits of exploration; dogmatic theology sees the springs of its inspiration dry. The day is approaching when the world will receive the proofs that only ancient religions were in harmony with nature, and ancient science embraced all that can be known." Once more the prophecy already made in *Isis Unveiled* twenty-two years ago is reiterated. "Secrets long kept may be revealed; books long forgotten and arts long time lost may be brought out to light again; papyri and parchments of inestimable importance will turn up in the hands of men who pretend to have unrolled them from mummies, or stumbled upon them in buried crypts; tablets and pillars, whose sculptured revelations will stagger theologians and confound

scientists, may yet be excavated and interpreted. Who knows the possibilities of the future? An era of disenchantment and rebuilding will soon begin--nay, has already begun. The cycle has almost run its course; a new one is about to begin, and the future pages of history may contain full evidence, and convey full proof of the above." [*Isis Unveiled* I p.38]

Since the day that this was written much of it has come to pass, the discovery of the Assyrian clay tiles and their records alone having forced the interpreters of the cuneiform inscriptions--both Christians and Freethinkers--to alter the very age of the world.(2)

The chronology of the Hindu *Purânas*, reproduced in *The Secret Doctrine*, is now derided, but the time may come when it will be universally accepted. This may be regarded as simply an assumption, but it will be so only for the present. It is in truth but a question of time. The whole issue of the quarrel between the defenders of ancient wisdom and its detractors – lay and clerical – rests (a) on the incorrect comprehension of the old philosophies, for the lack of the keys the Assyriologists boast of having discovered; and (b) on the materialistic and anthropomorphic tendencies of the age. This in no wise prevents the Darwinists and materialistic philosophers from digging into the intellectual mines of the ancients and helping themselves to the wealth of ideas they find in them; nor the divines from discovering Christian dogmas in Plato's philosophy and calling them "presentiments," as in Dr. Lundy's *Monumental Christianity*, and other like modern works.

Of such "presentiments" the whole literature – or what remains of this sacerdotal literature – of India, Egypt, Chaldæa, Persia, Greece and even of Guatemala (*Popul Vuh*), is full. Based on the same foundation-stone – the ancient Mysteries – the primitive religions, all without one exception, reflect the most important of the once universal beliefs, such, for instance, as an impersonal and universal divine Principle, absolute in its nature, and unknowable to the "brain" intellect, or the conditioned and limited cognition of man. To imagine any witness to it in the manifested universe, other than as Universal Mind, the Soul of the universe is impossible. That which alone stands as an undying and ceaseless evidence and proof of the existence of that One Principle, is the presence of an undeniable design in kosmic mechanism, the birth, growth, death and transformation of everything in the universe, from the silent and unreachable stars down to the humble lichen, from man to the invisible lives now called microbes. Hence the universal acceptance of "Thought Divine," the Anima Mundi of all antiquity. This idea of Mahat (the great) Akâshâ or Brahmâ's aura of transformation with the Hindus, of Alaya, "the divine Soul of thought and compassion" of the trans-Himâlayan mystics; of Plato's "perpetually reasoning Divinity," is the oldest of all the doctrines now known to, and believed in, by man. Therefore they cannot be said to have originated with Plato, nor with Pythagoras, nor with any of the philosophers within the historical period. Say the *Chaldean Oracles*: "The works of nature co-exist with the intellectual [νοερω], spiritual Light of the Father. For it is the Soul [ψυχη] which adorned the great heaven, and which adorns it after the Father." [Proclus in *Timæus*, 106]

"The incorporeal world then was already completed, having its seat in the Divine Reason," says Philo, who is erroneously accused of deriving his philosophy from Plato.

In the Theogony of Mochus, we find Æther first, and then the air; the two principles from which Ulom, the *intelligible* [νοητος] God (the visible universe of matter) is born.

In the Orphic hymns, the Eros-Phanes evolves from the Spiritual Egg, which the æthereal winds impregnate, wind being "the Spirit of God," who is said to move in æther, "brooding over the Chaos" — the Divine "Idea."

In the Hindu *Kathopanishad*, Purusha, the Divine Spirit, stands before the original Matter; from their union springs the great Soul of the World, "Mahâ-Âtmâ, Brahm, the Spirit of Life;" these latter

appellations are identical with the Universal Soul, or Anima Mundi, and the Astral Light of the Theurgists and Kabalists.

Pythagoras brought his doctrines from the eastern sanctuaries, and Plato compiled them into a form more intelligible than the mysterious numerals of the Sage--whose doctrines he had fully embraced — to the uninitiated mind. Thus, the Kosmos is "the Son" with Plato, having for his father and mother the Divine Thought and Matter. The "Primal Being" (*Beings*, with the Theosophists, as they are the collective aggregation of the divine Rays), is an emanation of the Demiurgic or Universal Mind which contains from eternity the idea of the "to be created world" within itself, which idea the unmanifested LOGOS produces of Itself. The first Idea "born in darkness before the creation of the world" remains in the unmanifested Mind; the second is this Idea going out as a reflection from the Mind (now the manifested LOGOS), becoming clothed with matter, and assuming an objective existence.

FOOTNOTE (1):

See the *Hibbert Lectures* for 1887, pages 14-17, on the origin and growth of the religion of the ancient Babylonians, where Prof. A. H. Sayce says that though "many of the sacred texts were so written as to be intelligible *only to the initiated* [italics mine] . . . provided with keys and glosses," nevertheless, as many of the latter, he adds, "are in our hands," they (the Orientalists) have "a clue to the interpretation of these documents *which even the initiated priests did not possess.*" (p.17.) This "clue" is the modern craze, so dear to Mr. Gladstone, and so stale in its monotony to most, which consists in perceiving in every symbol of the religions of old a solar myth, dragged down, whenever opportunity requires, to a sexual or phallic emblem. Hence the statement that while "Gisdhubar was but a champion and conqueror of old times," for the Orientalists, who "can penetrate beneath the myths" he is but a solar hero, who was himself but the transformed descendant of a humbler God of Fire (*loc. cit.* p. 17).

FOOTNOTE (2):

Sargon, the first "Semitic" monarch of Babylonia, the prototype and original of Moses, is now placed 3,750 years B.C. (p. 21), and the Third Dynasty of Egypt "some 6,000 years ago," hence some years before the world was created, agreeably to Biblical chronology. (Vide *Hibbert Lectures on Babylonia*, by A. H. Sayce, 1887, pp. 21 and 33.)