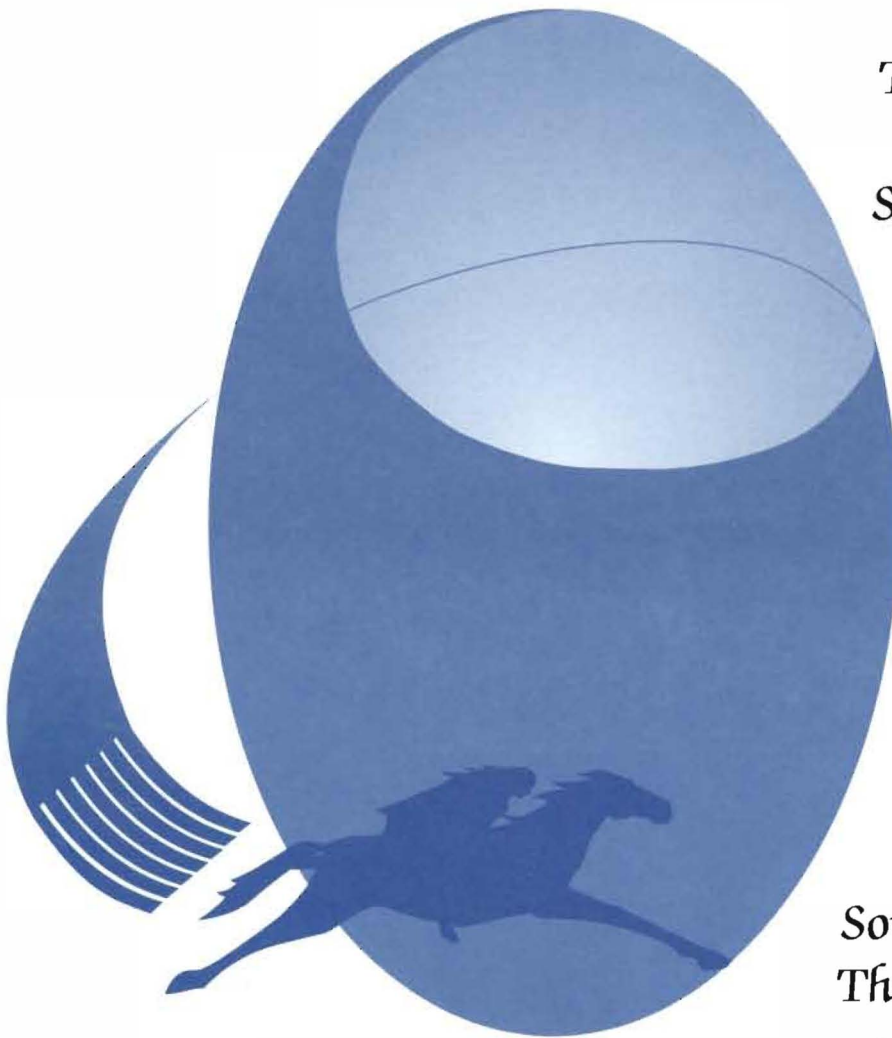


FOHAT

Volume VI, Number 3

Fall 2002



*The Popol Vuh
and The
Secret Doctrine*

*Conquering
Mental Habits*

*The Limiting
Strictures of the
Modern Academic*

*Some Theosophists,
Their Affinities, and
a Strange Plaque*

A Vehicle for the Ancient Wisdom Tradition

This magazine is an invitation for followers of all traditions to enter into a dialogue whose goal is Truth and whose means is Universal Brotherhood.

THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY CONFERENCE — CALL FOR PAPERS

The Foundation for Theosophical Studies is hosting an international conference on theosophical history on the weekend of 14-15 June 2003 at 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA, England. Previous conferences have been held in London in 1986-9, 1995 and 1997, and others in San Diego, USA and Edmonton, Canada.

Any person may offer a paper for consideration by the Programme Committee, on any aspect of theosophical history. Summaries not exceeding 500 words should be sent before 1 January 2003 to Colin Boyce, Information Officer, either by post or electronically to theosophical@freenet-name.co.uk. Presentations will normally last thirty minutes with fifteen minutes for discussion. Any audiovisual requirements should be specified.

The conference is non-residential, and only light refreshments will be served. Those presenting papers, and those attending as guests must make their own arrangements for travel, meals and accommodation. There will be a small fee for registration.

AQUARIAN THEOSOPHIST

There is a ULT publication printing some interesting historical material in a recent issue. In *The Aquarian Theosophist*, Volume II, Supplement 9 there is published some rare material taken from stenographic notes written during the last few meetings of the Blavatsky Lodge. These are the notes that Blavatsky was unable to edit before her death and are therefore not included in *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*.

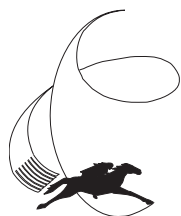
This publication may be downloaded at www.teosofia.com/AT.html.

NEWS FROM DOWN UNDER

Dr. Gregory Tillett has recently announced on Theosophy Talk that the extensive library and archives of the late Dr. John Cooper have found a permanent home in the National Library of Australia in Canberra. As the library is sorted and catalogued there will be a call to theosophists to help fill any holes in the substantial collection of theosophical journals. Dr. Gregory Tillett and the family of the late Dr. John Cooper are to be thanked for their efforts in making this generous donation for the future study of theosophy.

In other news, also from Theosophy Talk, Dr. Tillett comments in his function as the literary executor for the estate of the late Dr. John Cooper. In the ongoing saga between the estate and Theosophical Publishing House at Wheaton (Dr. John Algeo), Dr. Tillett brings us up to date on the unpublished Blavatsky Letters. Dr. Tillett writes:

We have offered complete cooperation, including the provision of copies of material, to Dr. Algeo and the TPH for the completion of the Collected Correspondence series subject only to (i) the rights referred to with regard to the first volume, and (ii) recognition of the rights to material independently collected. Apart from threats of legal action should the family proceed with publishing the first volume, no response has been received. We would prefer to see the first volume published in the near future by the TPH in the Collected Writings series, and would cooperate in any way possible to facilitate this — BUT the family will not surrender all propriety rights in and editorial control over John's original work. If Dr. Algeo and the TPH have no interest in "tampering" with the original material in a less than honest or scholarly way, I cannot understand why a cooperative and collaborative venture cannot proceed. Having dealt with a number of publishers, I have never faced the rigid and uncooperative approach being taken by the TPH.



FOHAT

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To be featured in coming issues:

**The Various Aspects and Functions
of the Sleep State**

Discord and Harmony

Deluded victims of distorted truth, they forget, or never knew, that discord is the harmony of the Universe. (ML, 401)

Our Universe is a cacophony of competing forces motivated by the thoughts of all sentient beings. This competition gives rise to the fire of pain which compels us over time to abandon material goals for those of an ever more ethereal nature. As the dissonance of one plane becomes too much, we must find peace and harmony by lifting ourselves to a more spiritual domain, which we begin to populate with new demons of our own making until such time as we must again move. This sometimes conscious, sometimes unconscious movement is evolution. Without the unchanging and unmoving god within, sitting at our centre in total harmony, we would not have the inspiration to reevaluate our troubled lives, adopting those new priorities that promise peace and harmony.

Our world today reflects a forgetting of the spiritual. We can see this reflected in the various arts, including music, which are meant to inspire us. Artists no longer try to embody spirituality and all it implies. Instead we view paintings divested of any sort of form, music that moves to the beat of base emotions or the dissonance of scrambled intellects. The artist no longer tries to inspire but rather to make us react. The heart has been removed from the artistic world and has been replaced by the intellect of the critic. The world is becoming painful to look upon and painful to listen to. All paths of inspiration are being destroyed leaving us with very little hope for escape. It is through the fires of life that we learn, but we need a path by which to escape those fires when they become too hot; we are being given the illusion that such a path no longer exists.

In this issue Karin Smith explores the genesis of Man and the path of learning in her article, "*The Popul Vuh* and *The Secret Doctrine*". Karin, in a wonderful exposition of the Mayan's sacred book shows us the wisdom that it possesses and how it relates to *The Secret Doctrine* and consequently to the Spiritual thread that runs through all the sacred texts of the ancients. The Mayans demonstrate their understanding of Man's prehistory and the importance of the development of Mind.

Dara Eklund looks more closely at the mind in her article "Spiritual Ambush: Confronting Cyclic Impressions and Their Return". This article, based on a talk given at Pasadena in April of this year, focuses on the cyclical return of tendencies and how to eventually overcome them. Dara illustrates wonderfully the dance of karma where we create the thoughts that later become the causes for new incidents. Awareness of this dance coupled with an understanding of the nature of the mind, an understanding that Dara helps to illustrate for us, gives us the tools for overcoming tendencies developed in our past. Dara shows the play of discord and harmony within the various principles of man and how

an awareness of this can help to bring a greater peace into our lives.

In his article, "The Limitation of the Professional Historian", Robert Bruce MacDonald looks at a particular case of dissonance as is found in the world of the modern academic. Just as the spiritual man looks at the synthesis of the Universe, from spirit to matter, and tries to understand Self in terms of this synthesis, the path of the man of matter is to latch on to one particular in his world, feeling that he can somehow be fulfilled by pursuing that particular. This particular can be symbolized in some sense as the personal god of this man trapped in matter. By analogy we can see how the academic is motivated by his god, "objective truth." Objective truth, unfortunately, starts from particulars and tries to understand the whole in terms of its parts. He analyzes his world into little particulars and then tries to build worlds out of those particulars—the "objects" of fact. Consequently, we arrive at very different pictures of the world, all materially based, with one picture being at odds with the next and no path to reconciliation. The world of the academic is a dissonant one where reputations are made and lost on your ability to present a credible story and undermine the credibility of your fellows. Mr. MacDonald shows how little credibility the creation of one story possesses when you bring it into a Spiritual context.

At the bottom of all this is the theme of love. Kandalavala compiles for us in "Love, Sweet Love" a collection of quotes on the great universal power of love. Love in its sublimest sense is the affinity or attraction between the enmattered ego at one pole and the Absolute or Deity at the other. Fohat plays its role in having this universal force played out in uncountable ways. One way we see this force played out is in John Robert Colombo's article "Strange Plaque". Mr. Colombo details for us an incident that the materialists would call coincidental. He describes how a group of historically minded theosophists were somehow brought (by affinity?) to the location of a theosophical artifact and how this strangely located artifact led to questions best pursued by those who love the challenge of unearthing the past. John Robert Colombo details for us what was found, what questions arose out of its finding, and how far those questions were able to be answered.

It is our affinity to the Absolute that we must cultivate. We are each a part of the same whole. Look for the good in each other, for that will give us a greater understanding of our own essential nature than will pointing out each other's flaws. By dwelling on the noble and good we will become ourselves more noble and good and inspire others to do likewise. May we all find the peace and harmony that dwells at the centre of us all.

The Popol Vuh And The Secret Doctrine

Karin Smith

The creation of man

*The Popol Vuh*¹ is the account of genesis in the Ancient Book of the Quiché Maya, the history and spiritual beliefs of these people in Central America. It is a book that has fascinated many a scholar and archeologist, for in its graphic description of the beginning of Creation, how the Heart of Heaven created the universe, they describe also their lives, show how their gods taught them right from wrong and the path they should lead. This book shows the similarities which exist between their teachings and those of *The Secret Doctrine* which reflects the knowledge of many nations in antiquity.

"There was nothing standing; only the calm water, the placid sea, alone and tranquil. Nothing existed" (81). It is interesting to note that for them space was "calm water" as in the Stanza III of Dzayan, "The darkness that breathes over the slumbering waters of life" and H.P.B explains: "In all Cosmogonies 'Water' plays the same important part. It is the base and source of material existence" (SD I, 64).

"Only the Creator, the Maker, Tepeu, Gucumatz, the Forefathers, were in the water surrounded with light" (81). Gucumatz is the 'feathered serpent', a symbol used throughout Mexico with many meanings, the most common being the idea of wisdom, Wise Sages, and divinities. "By nature they were great sages and great thinkers" (82), thus mind was there, Universal Mind in the form of their gods.

"Then while they meditated, it became clear to them that when dawn would break, man must appear" (82). And the gods planned the creation of the Universe. "Thus it was arranged in the darkness and in the night by the Heart of Heaven who is called Huracán" (82).

From this beginning we can see several similarities between this Genesis, and that in the Stanzas of Dzayan. From darkness came light, and the first to appear were the Ah-hi, that collective host of spiritual beings "who are the vehicle for the manifestation of the divine or universal thought and will" (SD I, 38) thus the thinkers. From the thinkers, comes the word.

For the Mayas it became very obvious that the gods had to talk among themselves, and "meditate" the creation. The Three who appear first are called: Caculhá Huracán, Chipi-Caculhá and Raxa-Caculhá, and the three are the Heart of Heaven. This is the Maya Trinity whose names mean 'lightning, small flash, and green flash.' Could they have the same idea as Fohat, the electric flash which begins life?

"Like a mist, like a cloud, and like a cloud of dust was the creation, when the mountains appeared from the water" (83). Here mountains are not only the mountains in our earth, but in the waters of Akasa, i.e. the worlds in the universe. This mist is like the fire mist which forms the nebulas and then become more solidified until the physical universe is formed.

The Maya gods have to go through several creations to make a perfect man. In the first creation man is not mentioned, only that he must appear; but the animals are discussed, their place of abode, the guardians in the forests, the elementals which inhabit nature. They were the spirits of the mountains, and the animals were the guardians of the thickets. But before this, the gods had already realized "that when dawn would break, man must appear" for all creation aimed at the formation of man.

The gods were not happy with their creation and they tried a second time.

"Let us try again! Already dawn draws near. . . . We have already tried with our first creations, our first creatures; but we could not make them praise and venerate us. So, then, let us try to make obedient, respectful beings who will nourish and sustain us." (86)

And on their second creation they made man's flesh of mud:

. . . it was limp, it could not move its head, its face fell to one side, its sight was blurred, it could not look behind. At first it spoke, but had no mind. . . . [It could neither] walk nor multiply. (86)

Thus was the second creation also unsatisfactory. In this creation there is no mention of this race having been destroyed, no real "death", only with the third

¹ *Popol Vuh*, English version by Delia Goetz and Sylvanus G. Moreley, Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1950.

creation. H.P.B. mentions how the First Race became the Second Root-race:

Therefore the First Root-race of men, sexless and mindless, had to be overthrown and “hidden until after a time”; i.e., the first race, instead of dying, disappeared in the second race, as certain lower lives and plants do in their progeny. It was a wholesale transformation. The First became the Second Root-race without either begetting it, procreating it, or dying. (SD II, 84)

But again the gods were not happy with their creation and they started a new one. In the third creation man was made of wood from the tzité tree, they would be able to speak and populate the world. “They had daughters, they had sons . . . but they did not have souls, nor minds, they did not remember their Creator” (89) and thus must be destroyed. In *The Secret Doctrine* she says:

He has now a perfectly concrete or compacted body, at first the form of a giant-ape, and now more intelligent, or rather cunning, than spiritual. For, on the downward arc, he has now reached a point where his primordial spirituality is eclipsed and overshadowed by nascent mentality. (SD I, 188)

They were destroyed; at first the author mentions a flood fell on the heads of the wooden men, but later he specifies that it was not water, but a resin that fell from the sky. “The one called Xecotcovach came and gouged out their eyes; . . . and a black rain began to fall, by day and by night” (90). Does this mean that the third creation was destroyed by fire, the “resin”, plus the black rain which is mixed with the ashes from volcanic eruptions? They speak of the jaguars who mangled their bones, and of the different entities who destroyed them. The jaguar among the Mayas is a symbol for the white adepts.

“And it is said that their descendants are the monkeys which now live in the forests And therefore the monkey looks like man, and is an example of a generation of men which were created and made but were only wooden figures” (92). For the Mayas wooden figures meant that they had no mind, and no soul. Here is again another corroboration of what H.P.B. says in *The Secret Doctrine* II, p.729 footnote where she hints at the development of the monkeys “from the Third Race Man.”

Between the third creation and the fourth, the *Popol Vuh* has a section about the War in Heaven and on Earth, between good and evil. This war is portrayed on earth through an initiation, the trials that two incarnated gods have with evil beings. H.P.B. explains that “The Third Race was pre-eminently the

bright shadow, at first, of the gods, whom tradition exiles on Earth after the allegorical war in Heaven; which became still more allegorical on Earth, for it was the war between spirit and matter” (SD II, 268).

The war in heaven

The first war is against Vukub Cakis and his two sons, Cabracán and Zipacná, who represent the Titans, for they are giants, full of pride, who became “discouraged when the new humanity was formed”.² Two youths (gods), Hunahpú and Xbalanqué saw the harm that their arrogance had done in the presence of the Heart of Heaven, and decided to shoot them with their blowguns [emblem of the solar ray and their powers]. The Giants fight the gods, in heaven and the people on earth. Vucub Cakis and his two sons are destroyed by Hunahpú and Xbalanqué who trick and conquer them. The giant Vukub Cakis fell on his back upon the earth. This position prevented him from dying, thus he must incarnate on earth.

During the fight between the giant and Hunahpú, the giant tears one of Hunahpú’s arms. It is common in the Mexican and Maya mythology that their gods are often depicted as lacking an arm or a leg. In the case of the gods, it is as if the gods offered something to mankind, and thus they are missing a hand or a foot. Girard mentions that the

basic principle of monotheist theogony whereby the gods are only hypostases of one single deity, an idea that is expressed by the tearing off of a member of the divine body to signify that one god is a part divided off from another god. . . . The foot which Tezcatlipoca lacks appears in the earth, converted into the Maize god. (Girard, 68-69)

These then, are the giants, the Atlas or Hercules of Maya legend, here represented by the Black Giant Zipacaná “who ‘with one kick of his foot makes the earth tremble’. . . . Hunahpú confronts the giants of the Quiché mythology, which he has to vanquish before the reign of the true gods and civilization can be established” (Girard, 67). Speaking of the giants, Blavatsky says:

That third and holy Race consisted of men who, at their zenith, were described as, “towering giants of godly strength and beauty, and the depositories of all the mysteries of Heaven and Earth.” Have they likewise fallen, if, then, incarnation was the Fall? (SD II, 171-2)

The ball game and the trials

The ball game appears to have had a very important role in their civilization since it seems to be connected with their gods. The ball court consists of a rectangle

² Girard, R., *Esotericism of the Popol Vuh*, Translated from the Spanish by Blair A. Moffet, Theosophical Univ. Press, Pasadena, California, 1979, p.66.

with two walls, and on each wall is a ring through which the ball is supposed to go, but the players are not allowed to use either their hands, feet, nor their head to throw the ball, only their body. Whoever sends the ball through the ring, wins. The ball court represents the universe, and the two opponents are the forces of good and evil:

It in fact establishes a parallel between the ball players and the solar gods, which from the angles of the universe . . . meet in the center, in this case in the ball court, where they can convert themselves into two and even four persons with no loss of their theogonic individuality, at once a unity and a multiplicity. (Girard, 88)

The ball itself is the unifying force, a symbol of the “head” of each of the players. During this game they have to wear a ceremonial gear, to exhibit who they really are. The common people were not allowed to play at the ball court, it was meant only for the “lords” or the would-be initiates, as part of their trials.

Hun Hunahpú³ and Vucub Hunahpú are two brothers, “semi-gods”, who incarnated and married. Hun Hunahpú gave birth to two very wise and skillful sons (Hunbatz and Hunchouen). But Hun Hunahpú and Vucub-Hunahpú liked to play ball and dice⁴ and they were called by the Lords of Xibalba to play ball for them. Xibalba is hell, and the Lords desired to put them through trials. To get to Xibalba they descended a large staircase, crossed four rivers, one of which was a river of blood. Afterwards they came to four roads: the red, the black, the white and the yellow. The colour of these roads is significant, since each of them represents a Lord, a direction and an element. The black road told them: “I am the one you must take because I am the way of the Lord” (115). They failed in this trial, because they followed the wrong road, the black one. By the time they got to Xibalba the Lords knew they had failed.

The first request put to them was to identify the Lords by name, and Hun Hunahpú and Vucub Hunahpú thought that some wooden men, that is men without minds, were the real Lords. They were punished for their arrogance and asked to sit on a chair that burned them. They also failed in their next trial inside the House of Gloom. They were given a cigar and wood to burn, but neither must be consumed. The brothers burned them and consumed them, thus they failed. The Lords didn’t give them any more trials and had them killed. The head of Hun-Hunahpú was hung on a tree, and instantly the tree was covered with fruit. The Lords of Xibalba said “Let no one come to pick this fruit. Let no one come and sit under this tree” (118). We see here a repetition of the legend of the “tree and its fruit” the tree of knowledge.

The brothers failed because they didn’t know which path to choose, nor were they able to recognize the true Lords. The head hung on the tree, gave fruit, therefore knowledge was gained through sacrifice and experience.

The virgin birth

A maiden heard the story of the tree, and filled with curiosity she went to see it, even if it was forbidden by the Lords of Xibalba to see this tree. While she was watching the tree, she wanted to take some of its fruit. She reached towards the skull of Hun-Hunaphú, and a few drops of spittle fell directly on her palm. And the skull talked to her:

“In my saliva and spittle I have given you my descendants. . . . So, too, is the nature of the sons, which are like saliva and spittle, they may be sons of a lord, of a wise man, or of an orator. They do not lose their substance when they go, but they bequeath it; the image of the lord, of the wise man, or of the orator does not disappear, nor is it lost, but he leaves it to the daughters and to the sons which he begets. I have done the same with you. Go up, then, to the surface of the earth, that you may not die. Believe in my words that it will be so.” (119-20)

Thus spoke the head of Hun-Hunahpú. And in this way the girl became pregnant. It is the story of the virgin birth of all the great sages. In *The Secret Doctrine* Blavatsky says:

The “Son” of the immaculate Celestial Virgin (or the undifferentiated cosmic protyle, Matter in its infinitude) is born again on Earth as the Son of the terrestrial Eve — our mother Earth, and becomes Humanity as a total — past, present and future (SD I, 60)

The father of the girl wants to punish her for her pregnancy, and asks the Lords of Xibalba to sacrifice her. They have to burn her heart, but the messengers who are to sacrifice her, take pity on her, and instead of sacrificing her heart, they burn the clotted sap of a tree which is red as blood. When the tree clots, it forms a gourd, which they shaped into a heart. When they burned that, the Lords of Xibalba thought the girl had been sacrificed. She goes to live with her mother-in-law but she must prove who she is by performing miracles. She gives birth to Hunaphú and Xbalanqué, two divine incarnations.

The trials

Who are the two youths? Hunaphú and Xbalanqué, twins and sons of a virgin mother, one represents the sun, the other the moon. Their two brothers (Hunchouen and Hunbatz) are envious of them, and the

³ Hunahpú is also written as Hun Ahpu or Ajpu and it means the “sun” besides being a day in the Maya calendar.

⁴ The game of dice was done with throwing the seeds of some fruit, and they were used to predict the future.

twins show their skills by winning, through artifices, the arguments and troubles their brothers give them.

The twins love to play ball, and again the Lords of Xibalba, who are upset with the noise they make above, call them to come and play ball for them, and to bring their equipment. Before they go to Xibalba the twins plant a tree in the house of their grandmother, and tell her, that if the tree dies, it means they have perished, but as long as the tree is alive, so are they. "The symbol of the 'Tree' standing for various Initiates was almost universal. Jesus is called 'the tree of Life,' as also all the adepts of the good Law, while those of the *left* Path are referred to as the 'withering trees' " (SD II, 496). Thus the tree symbolized the life of the twins who had to meet the trials in Xibalba.

To go to Xibalba, like their parents, they crossed the four rivers: one which flows among thorny calabash trees, then the river in the narrow canyon where they have to use their blowguns to make a bridge to cross it, also the river of blood without being able to drink its waters. They went on to where four crossroads joined: the red, the black, the white and the yellow (North, South, East and West). And it was again the black road that said to them: "I am the one you must take because I am the way of the Lord." But they didn't take the black road. When they arrived at Xibalba the Lords of the underworld laughed at the youths, because they thought they had already been defeated.

In Xibalba they had to pass seven trials: First they needed to mention the names of the Lords, for once they knew their name, they could control them; the twins refused to give their own names to the Lords, nor their place of origin, no matter how often the Lords asked them.

"To pronounce a word is to evoke a thought, and make it present: the magnetic potency of the human speech is the commencement of every manifestation in the Occult World. To utter a Name is not only to define a Being (an Entity), but to place it under and condemn it through the emission of the Word (Verbum), to the influence of one or more Occult potencies." (SD I, 93)

The twins, though, did find out the names of the Lords as each was bitten by a mosquito sent by the twins, and their names were mentioned. Their names exemplify a form of death: Hun-Camé and Vucub-Camé (the main lords), Xiquiripat and Cuchumaquic (shedding of blood); Ahalpuh and Ahalganá (pus); Chamiabac and Chamiaholom (waste away); Ahalmez and Ahaltocob (bring disaster); Xic and Patán (sudden death) (see p.110).

Each of the trials the twins undergo represents one of the elements, a passion, or fear which must be

overcome. As a second trial they were sent to the House of Gloom, where again they were given a cigar to smoke and a torch of pine, but which must be returned without having been consumed. They passed the trial by getting fire-flies to make it look like they lit the cigar, and put a red cover over the pine, to make it look as if it was also lit.

The third trial was in the House of Spears, where they were asked to get four pots of flowers without communicating with the outside world. The twins asked ants to get the flowers for them, and so they complied with this test. The fourth was the House of Ice, to see if they would endure the cold. But they didn't die because the boys made a fire of old logs, and the cold disappeared. The fifth was the House of Tigers. Again the boys asked the tigers not to kill them, instead they gave bones for the tigers to eat. The sixth was the House of Fire which didn't burn them, only the coals and the wood burned, and by dawn they were well. The Seventh was the House of Bats; that was the house of Camazotz, the death Bat. His weapon to kill was a dry point (like a knife) and one would perish instantly if it touched him. So the last trial was to face the God of Death.

On this occasion the boys slept inside their blowguns, and they were not bitten by the bats. Hunahpú got out of his blowgun to find out if it was dawn already and his head was cut off by the bats. The head of Hunahpú was hung in the ball-court so that all the people of Xibalba would see that one of the youths had been conquered. But the head was made from a turtle's shell and the lords of Xibalba were fooled again by the twins. Eventually the twins showed the Lords their magic, and through this magic the Lords of Xibalba are conquered. Both youths reveal to the people of Xibalba their names, and who they really are, two incarnated gods. In punishment to the people of Xibalba, the twins lower their rank, "Not for you shall be the ball game" (161) and they will have to spend their time making earthen pots and tubs and stones to grind corn. Because of their evil ways only sinners and evil people will talk to them. So they lost their grandeur and the decadence of their empire began. This is part of the wars in heaven and on earth.

Why these trials before the next creation? H.P.B. in a way, in answer to this, points to:

Adam, born an image of clay, into which the "Lord-God" breathes the *breath of life* but not of intellect and discrimination, which are developed only after he had tasted of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge; in other words when he has acquired the first development of Mind, and had implanted in him *Manas*, whose terrestrial aspect is of the Earth earthy, though its highest faculties connect it with Spirit and the *divine Soul*. (SD II, 175)

... continued on page 69

Spiritual Ambush: Confronting Cyclic Impressions and Their Return

[Based on a talk given on April 5th, 2002 at Theosophical Society, Pasadena]

Dara Eklund

Just as grand and stately ideas have their cyclic dawns, so also, our worldly thoughts and lower mental habits have their own inevitable little orbits. These thoughts and impressions have a way of cycling back upon their originator unexpectedly, and at such surprising interludes, that the dweller within seeks some strategy with which to rise above and conquer them. That strategy might be styled "Spiritual Ambush." That is, ambush **by** the spiritual, not ambush **of** the spiritual. We'd like to suggest a few tactics to meet our next encounter with that inveterate gang of past impressions, when they come galloping around the bend to meet us on our Spiritual trails.

First we might examine how these predators behave. Do they regroup as we place our attention on the all-absorbing tasks of daily living, or are they moving along like our shadows, unaffected by our conscious lines of thought until we confront them? Why do they seem so unpredictable? In *The Tao of Physics*. . . . Fritjof Capra formulated the unpredictable habits of a single particle as follows:

In quantum theory, we have come to recognize probability as a fundamental feature of the atomic reality. . . . Subatomic particles do not exist with certainty at definite places, but rather show "tendencies to exist", and atomic events do not occur with certainty at definite times and in definite ways, but rather show "tendencies to occur."¹

Now exploring other dimensions, physicists are seeking a unifying theory behind these atomic events. A Theosophist can attribute this margin of uncertainty in human events to being governed by the ego, the actor within, who is always setting up new causes while experiencing the onslaught of all his former thoughts and deeds. That ego does not need to be governed by those lower past tendencies, but can become an overriding causal element.

The idea of causality was held by the Greeks to link Necessity with Justice, Nemesis or retribution. The Orphics mated Time [Chronos] with Necessity, which surrounds the universe in the form of a serpent. Indeed the word "necessity" stems from the Latin *necto* (I bind) or *nexus* (bound), and the word "destiny" derives from the Latin *destino*, which also means "I bind". So we ourselves weave our own web,

as does the spider from the center outwards.² We are Karma, issuing our own decrees.

In "Cyclic Impression and Return and Our Evolution"³ William Q. Judge describes a cycle as being more like a screw thread, a spiral rather than a ring. In the Theosophical sense this periodicity allows us to progress to a higher point than achieved when the cycle was set in motion. Of course there are cycles of degradation as well. Karmically "What goes around, comes around," as history repeats itself. Yet, meeting that past need not mean repeating the same errors. It provides opportunities to set new cycles in motion. Using our will power over cyclic tendencies in all parts of our evolving nature, we can prevail. In Judge's article on "Occultism" he writes of attuning our higher principles to three higher planes in the Kosmos:

. . . The attempt has to be made so as to come into harmony in ourselves with those planes, so that the potentialities may be made active and development of new faculties made possible.⁴

Focus on these planes of consciousness will help break cyclic return of bad habits and tendencies.

In astronomy we witness in the cosmic calendar, cycles within cycles. While our sun seems to progress backwards through the signs of the Zodiac, it actually spirals to a higher point in our expanding universe. This cycle, known as the precession of the equinoxes, covers 25,000 years or so. Our earth in turn moves with the sun in his own enormous orbit, spiralling us ever into new spaces and cosmic influences. It may seem to us that the concept of cycles is widely accepted today. Not knowing their intricacy we often take cycles for granted. Nevertheless in H.P.B.'s time a Master wrote A.P. Sinnett, . . . "I had to study for 15 years before I came to the doctrines of cycles and had to learn simpler things at first."⁵

The law of returning impressions concerns cycles, whether instigated by an entire nation or a single man. All our thoughts, words and acts, create in our nature an impression subject to this law of return. With respect to this law Judge wrote:

It includes everything, every atom in this solar system. And we come up from lower forms, and are learning how to so mould and fashion, use and abuse, or impress the matter that comes into our

charge, into our bodies, our brains and our psychological nature, so that matter shall be an improvement to be used by the younger brothers who are still below us, perhaps in the stone beneath our feet. . . .⁶

An illustration follows of the impression made by an electric light on the retina. Periodically the image is repeated, but becomes weaker, until it finally fades away. This is due to other impressions which have rubbed it out. In this same manner we form habits — good or bad, and likewise can replace them by inserting new impressions of thought and practice. Thus we establish one of the first tools of Spiritual ambush. A childhood memory verse comes to mind:

Sow a thought, reap an act.
Sow an act, reap a habit.
Sow a habit, reap a character.
Sow a character, reap a destiny.

Judge explains that we cannot blame heredity for our characters, good or bad. We enter our forefathers' line of bodily encasement because we must have been at some point in that family line or cycle in our past, and thereby attract, like a magnet, those tendencies when reincarnating. Actually these tendencies can work for or against us: Judge cautioned:

An opportunity will arise for you to do something; you do not do it; you may not have it again for one hundred years.⁷

Of course we might argue that we observe it returning much sooner, at intervals even in this lifetime. With our scouts out, on the alert, we might find it reappearing in an anxious memory of the event, or in remorse. The golden opportunity might round the bend in another disguise, the same set of characteristics but with a new group of passengers to deal with, in this stagecoach of life. Say, for instance, pride was not conquered when we had a chance to share the credit for some deed or accomplishment. In another setting, perhaps where we are little known or even shunned by our fellows, we spot a chance to rejoice in another's glory and success. That same pride is overcome by a generous spirit, a heart which sees the good of one as the good of all! A new turn of the spiral upwards, an experience of Spiritual ambush has arrived.

We apply the word ambush here, in that sometimes these opportunities are hidden from the personal ego, although known to the Inner Self. The spiritual man must discover some secret lookout to watch for them. By rising to the plane above personality, he has such a lookout. In his article "Occultism", Judge explains:

If we examine ourselves critically we see that there is, lying back of ceaseless mental change, of all the continual going to and fro of Thought, a power to observe, sum up, analyze, and direct the whole process. We find ourselves possessed of another

mode of consciousness, above or behind the fluctuations of thought, which calmly observes the whole panorama moving before us.⁸

By entering that mode as often and as vividly as possible, we evolve a rudiment of the Universal Mind, in one of its phases or states. Judge emphasizes that this is not a state of trance, but one in which the student is no longer intoxicated by the fumes of his passions. This is an analytic weapon, you might say. Concerning the student achieving this state, Judge continues:

When analysis comes into play he no longer says, "I crave," "I win", "I desire", "I sin". . . He says, as one aspect of Desire comes before him, "In this the Kamic principle is active"; another he ascribes to undue stimulus of the *lingaśarīra*; here he sees the lower *Manas* prevailing, and here the flash of intuitive perception. He ascribes each act to its principle; each becomes to him a result of one of these principles; they are no longer himself, but he is the judge of them all, and analysis destroys the heady fumes of Desire. *For Desire ceases to attract us when we no longer identify it with ourselves.*⁹

Judge proceeds to illustrate that all these principles are vehicles "for the purpose of enabling the ONE — the Self — to fully comprehend Nature and 'bring about the aid of the soul'."¹⁰

What other weapons might there be, to overcome the feisty dragons of our lower nature and take charge? The virtues Patañjali and other Eastern sages inculcate provide us shields for confronting them. They are: Mindfulness—harmlessness—purity—selflessness and contentment, to name a few. Accurate discernment is also a keen weapon. Although painful at times, it allows us to see ourselves as we really are.

Audubon magazine has a recent article on "Seeing Clearly", wherein a naturalist speaks of places which strip us of our illusions, "offering the peace of cleanly seen truths. If they are beautiful", Sallie Tisdale writes, "it is a desperate beauty." "We go to the spare places for clarity, to see things as they are, not as we want them to be." For Sallie it was a lava flow relentlessly consuming lush Hawaiian fields. Yet even the lava is only barren for awhile. Mosses, ferns and lichens are already springing up along the cracks of the 18-year-old active lava stream, which destroyed highways, lawns, and homes in its pathway.¹¹ In the same article is a photograph of the LeConte Glacier in Alaska, which spawns more icebergs than any other glacier. Its caption states: "The tide goes out, and all the icebergs land on the bottom of the inlet. Then the tide comes back in, and these things are spinning and tipping and sailing. They almost become creatures."¹²

The Buddhists teach that our real enemy is “ego-clinging”. In a commentary on Dharmarakṣita’s *The Wheel-Weapon Mind Training*, Geshe Lhundub Sopa analyzes verse 49, which reads:

. . . I seize the enemy! I seize the thief who ambushed and deceived me, the hypocrite who deceived me, disguised as myself. Aha! It is ego-clinging, without a doubt.

He states that our inner enemies, our vices, are the root causes of everything undesirable in cyclic existence:

In the past you did not recognize them; you obeyed those terrible thieves who hid out and robbed you of your wealth of wholesome qualities that bring peace and happiness. They are much worse than ordinary thieves who just take property or money; they have cleverly deceived us by masquerading as ourselves so that we don’t even recognize them as enemies. . . . Now, through study, reflection, and meditation we have finally unmasked the enemies. . . .¹³

We see here a form of ambush both **of** and **by** the self, the self being its own enemy and its own friend, as Kṛishṇa often reminds us in the *Gīta*.

For instance, say we are disappointed in someone who “let us down”, who broke our trust or a promise. We could confront this recurring feeling of betrayal by reason or circumspection. How could we be “let down” had we not put ourselves “up”? On the other hand, did we place that other person on a pedestal perhaps? Or we could confront the repetitive feeling of being wronged, with compassion, with a recollection that we too have broken a trust in our past lives, or in this lifetime. This very experience deepens our sense of humility, by requiring us to balance our apparent hurt with what we once dealt another. This takes much restraint, for it may not be enough to say “My own has come back to me.” We must radiate loving thanks even to the instrument (our seeming adversary) for restoring that balance. We can swallow our pride, suffer in silence, remain standing and endure, or even step out and offer loving words that absorb our apparent enemy in the great emptiness of *Śūnyatā*.

Although “Spiritual Ambush” may seem to infer a siege, or surprise attack, it is not always sudden or even harsh. A fisherman along a brook or stream, will avoid casting his shadow on the water. The saying goes, you attract more flies with honey than vinegar. On the Animal Planet Channel one evening, the narrator showed how to train your child’s new hamster not to fear human touch. Instead of grabbing the fluffy little creature, you nudge it into an empty coffee mug. Feeding it little bits of fruit with your fingers, the hamster becomes familiar and trusts its new owner. The Taoist approach to conquer by gentle

speech or action is often more lucrative than confrontation.

Related to the return of cyclic impressions is the factor of true memory. Memory is a form of absorbed experience as we find in the following idea:

The One Consciousness pierces up and down through all the states and planes of Being, and serves to uphold the memory—whether complete or incomplete—of each state’s experiences. The One Consciousness of each person is the Witness or Spectator of the actions and experiences of *every* state we are in or pass through.¹⁴

We all recall Judge’s admonition that we must learn to **think** with the heart. In this way we open our hearts to all beings and all experience. “I am in the hearts of all men, and from me come memory, knowledge, and also the loss of both” spoke Kṛishṇa [*Gīta*, Ch. XVI]. For what is experience? If we think of experience as only our reactions to pleasure and pain, then we are limiting the range of memory to a purely survival level.

Some think of experiences upon the wheel of change as predestined. Shakespeare’s Hamlet spoke of the “slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.” [Act III, i, 56] Another poet, Tennyson, proposed that, “Men may rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things.”¹⁵ These stepping stones of past Karma, demand our attention by confronting us with triumph or misfortune. Both success and failure are opportunities to change. Reflecting upon the chain of causation alters our reception of both these welcome and unwelcome guests. By being alert to fresh challenges in unfamiliar circumstances and contacts, we open a better chain of causation. Perhaps it’s akin to pressing the refresh button on our computer screens, or refreshing our memories from time to time.

However, to cultivate true memory, to really know what is ours to face there is a method suggested in Judge’s article on Cycles. Judge had a friend suffering from depression. When he suggested a cyclic recurrence to this despondency, his friend noticed in his diary the intervals were about the same distance apart. Judge advised him to compel himself to feel joyous despite the onslaught of this low cycle. If that proved difficult he might try to empathize with the joy of others around him. Then he implants a new impression of joy or elation to counteract the next arousal of the darker cycle. Starting up a cheerful cycle fades or rubs out the old impressions, so that when the new association rises again it attracts the more positive currents associated with it. Master K.H. wrote to Hume:

. . . every thought of man upon being evolved passes into the inner world and becomes an active entity by associating itself—coalescing, we might

term it—with an elemental; that is to say with one of the semi-intelligent forces of the kingdoms. It survives as an active intelligence, a creature of the mind's begetting, for a longer or shorter period proportionate with the original intensity of the cerebral action which generated it. Thus, a good thought is perpetuated as an active beneficent power; an evil one as a maleficent demon. And so man is continually peopling his current in space with a world of his own, crowded with the offspring of his fancies, desires, impulses, and passions, a current which reacts upon any sensitive or nervous organisation which comes in contact with it in proportion to its dynamic intensity.¹⁶

Positive currents such as “right thought, right speech, right action”, are imperative for opening new cycles. As one progresses on the Path of inner development he finds there are powerful negative forces hidden in Nature. These lure men into attaining powers. These forces rush into a nature not prepared by practical Occultism. The student will feel an abyss akin to one who is depressed. That is because he has failed to calculate the power of **motive**. We find this thought repeated frequently in Judge's *Letters that Have Helped Me*, but explained most forcefully in the same manuscript on “Occultism” referred to earlier:

Every plane has its active and its passive aspects: its principles; its sub-divisions and theirs. It is only the higher plane forces that open the upper doors. What determines this difference in power?

Thought determines it. Motive determines it, for the motive determines the *quality* of Thought.

Through motive, Thought becomes contractive or expansive. . . . The introduction of the higher more spiritualized vibrations into the *secret* brain centers not only opens them to the influence of the higher spheres, but also it influences the selective action of the whole sphere. . . . The energetic pictures thus formed by the mental action of men are sensed by the Inner Man of each. Sometimes, even, the vibration thus sensed gets impressed upon the brain centers and enters the lower consciousness by avenues of which we have now but a feeble idea. The pictures inhere in the mental sphere of each of us, and the sphere is dense, turbid, contractive, or shows all the brightness of the higher vibration, according to the nature of these thought forms, which not only act outwardly, but also react upon their creators.

The importance of regulating our thoughts, in view of the plastic potency of the soul and its imaginative power, hence becomes apparent. As thought is dynamic, these pictures — often themselves an agglomeration of lives, for the atomic substance of the ether is, every atom of it, a life — these pictures are felt far and wide.¹⁷

Vibration is the key to it all. Even as galaxies pass through each other, yet unaware, we daily rub shoulders with saints and beneficent beings. We become aware of their helpful influence, as we rise in thought to their level. There is a harmony, a vibratory rate, a Universal metronome which keeps the globes evolving towards their higher destinies and spurs us on as well. 

ENDNOTES

1. *Tao of Physics* . . ., Shambhala, Boulder, Colorado, 1975, p.133.
2. See *Time: Rhythm and Repose*, by Marie-Louise von Franz. N.Y., Thames & Hudson, inc., p.24 in the 1992 reprint of her 1980 ed.
3. *Echoes of the Orient*, Vol. I, p.492. Point Loma Publications, 1975. Also *Theosophy*, Vol. XI, 1897 (in three parts).
4. *Echoes*, Vol.III, p.266.
5. *Mahatma Letters*, #XXII, p.144 (2nd ed.); p.141 (3rd ed.).
6. *Echoes*, I, p.498.
7. *Ibid.* p.499.
8. *Echoes*, Vol.III, p.264.
9. *Ibid.* p.265.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Audubon*, January-February 2002, p.43.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Peacock in the Poisoned Grove*, Boston, Wisdom Pubs. 2001, p.154-55.
14. *Echoes*, III, p.263.
15. Alfred Lord Tennyson, *In Memoriam*; many editions.
16. *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett* . . . in *Chronological Sequence*, edited by Vincente Hao Chin, Jr. Quezon City, Philippines, Theosophical Publishing House, 1993. p.472. See also “A Master's Letter”, U.L.T. Pamphlet No.29, Theosophy Co., Bombay, India, 1934, p.5.
17. *Echoes*, III, pp.266-68.

The Limitations of the Professional Historian:

A Revealing Look at *The Masters Revealed*

Robert Bruce MacDonald

[I was asked some time back to revisit K. Paul Johnson's *The Masters Revealed*. It was thought that I had perhaps been overly critical of that work in an editorial I had written. Perhaps I could have been more conciliatory and could have presented my problems with the book rather than chastising the author in what might be perceived as a personal attack. The article was not meant to be personal but rather to express my frustration with an author who supposedly had some theosophical background and yet seemed to ignore the principles of that philosophy. What follows is perhaps a more critical expression of that frustration.]

The belief in the idea of a "personal god" is a poison to the mind of the individual, to religious communities, and to mankind in general. This idea fosters and promotes in the mind tendencies towards black magic (see *Mahatma Letters*, pp.57-58). Even atheists who claim that there is no deity still hang their hats on some central belief whether it be money, honour, justice, their version of 'truth', etc. Whether it be a selfish end or a seemingly noble idea, this becomes their personal god, their end. This also describes their ignorance and points to their Achilles heel. No matter how noble their god may seem, it is through it that they can consciously or unconsciously be prodded into practicing black magic. Ignorance leads to fear, fear to anger, anger to hatred and hatred to violence.

The god of the conscious black magician is self. He uses the subtle energies of the ethereal planes for his own selfish advantage. The majority of mankind does not engage in these types of practices but rather follows more the path of the shadow out of ignorance. G. de Purucker in his *Occult Glossary* has the following to say on 'Brothers of the Shadow':

A term given in Occultism and especially in modern esotericism to individuals, whether men or women, who follow the "Path of the Shadows," the "Left-hand Path." The term "shadow" . . . applies to those who follow the path of Matter, which . . . from time immemorial in the esoteric schools in both Orient and Occident has frequently been called "shadow" or "shadows". . . .

The "Brothers of the Shadow" are therefore those who, being essentially of the nature of matter, instinctively choose and follow the path along which they are most strongly drawn, that is, the "Path of Matter" or of the "Shadows." When it is recollected that matter is but a generalizing term, and that what this term comprises actually includes an almost infinite number of degrees of increasing ethereality from the grossest physical substance, or absolute matter, up to the most ethereal or spiritualized substance, we immediately see the subtle logic of this technical term—"Shadows," or, more fully, the "Path of the Shadows," hence the "Brothers of the Shadow."

They are the so-called "Black Magicians" of the Occident, and stand in sharp and notable contrast with the "White Magicians" or the "Sons of Light" who follow the pathway of self-renunciation, self-sacrifice, self-conquest, perfect self-control, and an expansion of the heart and mind and consciousness in love and service for all that lives.

The existence and aims of the Brothers of the Shadow are essentially selfish. . . . *Multitudes of human beings are unconsciously treading the Path of the Shadows*, [italics mine] and in comparison with these multitudes it is relatively only a few who self-consciously lead and guide with subtle and nefast intelligence *this army of unsuspecting victims* [italics mine] of *Maya*. The Brothers of the Shadow are often highly intellectual men and women, frequently individuals with apparent great personal charm, and to the ordinary observer, judging from their conversation and daily works, are fully as well able to "quote scripture" as are the Angels of Light!

It thus becomes very difficult to discover what side of the fence another individual belongs to and in the end does not matter for the most part. We are responsible for ourselves and our own actions, not the actions of others. That is not to say that we do not interfere when innocent people are being unfairly attacked and we have the power to do something about it; only that we do not point fingers at people who we suspect are capable of evil or who we think might have done evil. Too much harm can come from this type of behavior. It is the behavior of those who live in the shadow. It is the behavior of someone who fears. For our own part we must ask ourselves if we "follow the pathway of self-renunciation, self-sacrifice, self-conquest, perfect self-control, and an expansion of the heart and mind and consciousness in love and service for all that lives." These are the actions of one who lives to serve the One Life, one who understands he can best serve his own needs by serving the needs of the Whole. If you are not following the ways of the Spirit, the Brothers of the Light, then you are following the Brothers of the Shadow, whether consciously or not.

G. de Purucker points out that you either follow the Brothers of the Shadow or the Brothers of the Light. If you are following the right hand path, that of light, then you are motivated in everything you do to alleviate ignorance and all that follows it (fear, anger, hatred, and violence). You are following the Path and helping others to realize their own obstacles so that they too may follow the Path. On the other hand, the Brother of the Shadow manipulates us through our strongest beliefs, our personal gods, so that we feel threatened (fear) and lash out in anger or violence. He divides us into warring camps and sets one against the other. The *modus operandi* of the Shadow is to divide and conquer and you can only divide and conquer those who are ensnared in the bonds of matter. Those who follow the Path understand the essential unity that underlies the material and spiritual universe. They understand that shadows can only lead you away from the essential nature of Self.

What is it that historians purport to do? Joscelyn Godwin in the foreword to *The Masters Revealed* divides the writing of Theosophical history into two groups, those who look upon Madame Blavatsky as a charlatan, and those who see her as a saintly “emissary of the Great White Lodge.” Dr. Godwin then instructs us on how history should and should not be written by the professional historian:

The writing of Theosophical history has been monopolized until recently by adherents and opponents of these groups. Every biographer of HPB has had the agenda either of exposing her as an imposter, however fascinating her achievements, or of exalting her, however visible her human frailties. How could it be otherwise? The writers were either Theosophists or they were not. But such a labeling missed that middle ground, where the truth is to be sought without fear of what it might turn out to be. If HPB took drugs, worked black magic, or bore an illegitimate child (and there is evidence of all these), the Theosophists are horrified; they immediately cover it up or deny it. If on the other hand she had unequalled mediumistic powers, and if she knew more about occult philosophy than anyone alive, then the skeptics must laugh these achievements off, because according to their faith, such things do not exist (or if they exist, do not matter).

Mr. Johnson’s work occupies the middle ground. He obviously has a great respect and admiration for HPB, but he has no illusions as to the mischievous and even dark sides of her personality. He observes the convention without which scholarship would be impossible, namely that of not imposing one’s own religious beliefs on the matter to be studied.

Here is how the philosopher looks at these two paragraphs wherein we find the personal gods of the historian. On the one hand the historian is to set his religious beliefs aside. Now if Theosophy is to be

unfairly lumped with religions then so be it. It seems that the historian is encouraged to not make the distinction between following a spiritual path (such as Theosophy) and following a religion. It appears that K. Paul Johnson, who is or was sympathetic towards Theosophy, is being praised for not mixing this into his thesis but rather for remaining “objective”. Religion (or spirituality) is what ties the manifested universe with the unmanifested universe. If we set this aside before we begin we are left with some form of materialism (the personal god of materialism) which it seems the historian must saddle himself with. In this way the middle ground, wherein lies the truth, can apparently then be found. But what kind of truth? The answer must obviously be the truth of materialism. No wonder the historian can be fearless; he does not have to fear presenting before his peers anything that hints of the god in man.

In the above example Madame Blavatsky’s powers are not referred to as occult, because that would be going too far; instead her powers are presented as of the lower, mediumistic order, hence materialistic. Religion (or a spiritual philosophy) is also the source for many of some kind of moral code. Is the historian setting this aside as well? It seems we are left with a legalistic code where it becomes ethical to accuse anyone of anything as long as care is taken to protect from civil suits (paying homage also to the personal god of money?). With history it always seems that those who are rich, powerful, and/or victorious are great people, while people like HPB end up being marginalized as fanatics. At least when history is written by a theosophist, one knows where the author stands. His is the Truth of the One Life and consequently he is careful when treating of one of Its aspects. The theosophist, as he matures, will be ever more careful about presenting unsupported innuendo, of needlessly blackening the name of another — after all what good does it serve?

Facts are a great source of mischief for the shadow world as people seldom question the inferences drawn from a particular fact. A fact is simply some experiential datum that gains its meaning from the context of its existence. Taken out of context or placed into an entirely different context can give an entirely different meaning to a particular fact. A group of facts can be taken out of someone’s life, placed into some theoretical narrative and then turned around, making the narrative believable because of the facts. Yet looked at in the context of that person’s life, the narrative is just plain silly. As no one knows another’s story, all the facts about that individual or the motives that gave rise to those facts, it is difficult or impossible to judge another person. Perhaps one can point to certain actions as being wrong due to the harmful consequences, but short of that, people who follow the Path are more interested

in encouraging others to follow the Path than they are in looking for evil doers. People make mistakes, it is how they learn.

In *The Masters Revealed*, K. Paul Johnson presents a letter brought to light by Maria Carlson in her book *No Religion Higher Than Truth*. The letter is purported to be written by Madame Blavatsky and addressed to the Director of the Third Section (an intelligence gathering department of the Russian government) on the 26th of December, 1872. The translated part that he reproduces is as follows:

During these twenty years I have become well acquainted with all of Western Europe. I zealously followed current politics not with any goal in mind, but because of an innate passion; in order better to follow events and to divine them in advance, I always had the habit of entering into the smallest details of any affair, for which reason I strove to acquaint myself with all the leading personalities, politicians of various nations, both of the government factions and of the far Left. . . .

As a Spiritualist, I have a reputation in many places as a powerful medium. Hundreds of people undoubtedly believed and will believe in spirits. But I, writing this letter with the aim of offering my services to Your Excellency and to my native land, am obligated to tell you the entire truth without concealment. And thus I must confess that three-quarters of the time the spirits spoke and answered in my words and out of my considerations, for the success of my own plans. Rarely, very rarely, did I fail, by means of this little trap, to discover people's hopes, plans and secrets. . . . I have played every role, I am able to represent myself as any person you wish. (MR, 213)

If we are to believe this letter, then modern Theosophy seems to have been founded by a common medium practiced in the art of deception with a passion for politics. In addition, her love and patriotism for her native Russia would appear to be a central motivating factor in her life. I am sure there are countless documented incidents of Madame Blavatsky practicing mediumship in Europe prior to 1872. Her innate love of politics has undoubtedly resulted in a great profusion of articles on this subject that some would like to detail. In addition there must be all sorts of documented incidents attesting to Blavatsky's deceitfulness. Finally, I am sure that we could be regaled with stories of Blavatsky's patriotism and service to Mother Russia. Yet strangely, despite pointing to this letter that could provide some evidence for his thesis of Madame Blavatsky as a politically motivated adventuress, Mr. Johnson provides nothing to indicate verification of its authenticity. When presented with damaging information concerning another human being it would seem that the decent thing to do would be to do some work to verify the information. The accused *individual* should not be put on trial, the *information* should be put on trial. This seems so

basic. But, it is hard to blame Mr. Johnson for following this line for, as Dr. Godwin points out, this is apparently what professional historians do, and must be trained to do. In the end it would appear that professionalism is put before Theosophy and any sympathies towards the principles that it tries to impart.

Let us look at what has here been presented. There is a translation of a letter purported to be written by H.P. Blavatsky, located in the Central State Archives of the October Revolution in Moscow. The letter was apparently addressed to a spy agency. The letter was found long after Blavatsky's death. These are the facts. What is *not* presented here? As of yet, there is no proof that Blavatsky offered herself as a spy and just about as little evidence. Yet Mr. Johnson writes, "[w]ere the Theosophical world to take note of this discovery in the Central State Archives of the October Revolution in Moscow, it would be seen as a bomb-shell exploding the hagiographic interpretation of the founder's early life" (MR, 213). This is where he is wrong. As a theosophist I ask not why he presents this letter but rather what motivates him to present this translation as somehow defining of Madame Blavatsky? How does it make the world a better place? How do these introductions of political motivations and deceitfulness into the character of Madame Blavatsky make for a better world? If we go back and try to read *The Secret Doctrine* as a politically motivated treatise then Theosophy is doomed. Is this the Truth that is being sought? When the implications of this letter and the fruit of Madame Blavatsky's life are both examined it is extremely improbable that her writings and this letter can both be true.

Obviously, Mr. Johnson feels safe in drawing inferences from this letter so he must believe the letter to have been written by H.P. Blavatsky and he must believe it to be an accurate portrayal of Blavatsky's behavior prior to 1872 and of her true state of mind at the time of writing this letter. Yet, why would any historian jump to such an unsubstantiated conclusion? Again, is this what historians do? Where is the critical analysis of the fact? The letter had to be initially taken from the files of a spy agency. Whether or not Blavatsky is deceitful, we do know that spies practice daily the art of deceit. To be a spy you leave your moral life at the door. How can people who are asked to sacrifice their moral life for the greater good of the state be trusted in anything? Could an enemy of Blavatsky have written the letter and then sent it to The Third Section? Has the translation been verified? In what context is the letter purported to have been written? Was it a joke sent to a friend in the Third Section that went astray and was not destroyed as it should have been? Does the characterization of Blavatsky in the letter represent the well-documented Blavatsky of later years? Is there

any proof that Blavatsky in her earlier years was somehow discontinuous with the later Blavatsky? Finally, we are looking at the reputation of a person, one who is unable to answer the charges now being leveled against her. If we ask for proof in these matters rather than evidence, it is only because Blavatsky cannot answer for herself. Sadly, Mr. Johnson does not offer either. This, however, appears simply to be how historians are trained. Yet one new piece of information should not nullify all the good done by a person. It should not be allowed to undermine a person's good name but, rather, the good name of the person demands that this information first be made legitimate and second should be made to fit in its proper context.

On the other hand, Mr. Johnson offers a letter in the very next chapter that would appear to be very good evidence for looking on the above letter with great suspicion. A plot hatched by the French to bring about rebellion in a certain region of India was brought to H.P. Blavatsky's attention while she was living in Belgium. From a letter written by H.P. Blavatsky to A.P. Sinnett, Mr. Johnson offers the following extract:

I believe I will go for politics now that I am near my sun-set; and just take a little occult revenge on your people who have, and are crucifying me daily. I WILL; I do not joke. . . . I would know very soon all the ins and outs of this horrid conspiracy through some theosophists—because they have no secrets from me, and then I would upset all these French plans. I want the Society to go on with its work, to progress and not be disturbed with any political complications. I am ready to become an infamous *informer* of your English Govt. WHICH I HATE, for their sake, for the sake of *my Society* and of my beloved Hindus. . . . Ah! If Master would only show me the way! If he would only show me what I have to do to save India from a new blood-shed, from hundreds and perhaps thousand innocent victims being hung for the crime of the few. For I feel, that however great the harm that will be done, it will end in the English having the best; Master says that the hour for the retirement of you English has not struck nor will it—*till next century* . . . it means only a temporary disturbance, loss of property, people hung—who are innocent, and other people glorified, who are the promoters. I know it. And to think that here I am, with the doors of India closed before my nose! That your Govt. here and in India, is so stupidly short sighted as not to see that not only I am not, nor ever was a Russian spy—but that the very prosperity, progress and welfare of the T.S. depends on everything in India being quiet for years to come.

Now what's the use writing to you this letter if you will not believe? I write it because I asked for permission to do so, and was given it, with a significant shrug of the shoulders, which I interpreted as meaning—"It will do neither good, nor harm—he won't believe you." But two months ago

Masters told me it was serious. Now Russia knows nothing of it, thanks to heaven. So my correspondents inform me at least. But if she did—I swear, I would stick for the Hindus against Russia even. I love my countrymen and country dearly—but I love India and Masters still more, and my *contempt* for the *stupidity* of Russian Govt. and diplomacy knows no bounds. So here's the situation true, and as clear as crystal Now there are two paths before you. One is—burn this letter and think no more of it; the other—to make use of it only in such case if you are sure it will not get into the papers and that my name will be unknown to all except to *one* having authority and who can warn Lord Dufferin [the Viceroy] to take care, one in short, who may take measures against the thing contemplated. But I beg of you, I trust in you as *a gentleman*, a man of honour and a friend, not to compromise me uselessly. Not because I am afraid of being assassinated by some Frenchman—as I am warned by one of our theosophists—for by so doing the murderer could only oblige me—but because I would indeed be regarded as an infamous *mouchard*, an informing *spy*, and the shame is worse than death. (MR, 226-27)

Does Mr. Johnson want us to believe that the patriotism and morality of the 41 year old Blavatsky of 1872 had undergone a substantial evolution to the time that this letter was written in 1887 some fifteen years later? If this is so perhaps he can give us some reason for believing such an incredible thing. Madame Blavatsky was not a young, naive impressionable woman in 1872; she had been born to the ruling class and had traveled the world by this time. In fact the woman of 1872 was a few short years away from the woman who was to write *Isis Unveiled*. *Isis Unveiled* expresses the same moral philosophy as is expressed in Madame Blavatsky's later writings. Philosophically they are not discontinuous. Consequently, we are not looking at a fifteen year evolution, we are looking at less than five years. Is it possible that a woman of her age could have changed so much in such a short time? We can claim that anything is possible, but this would be highly improbable. That being the case, one would expect that Mr. Johnson would naturally feel obliged to give some proof that she had indeed changed and why she had changed—or so one would hope.

The letter of 1887 comes across as a bit of a rant (Madame Blavatsky was known to vent at times) which probably expresses her feelings pretty accurately. Madame Blavatsky was in a moral bind where she could keep quiet on what she knew and have the death of innocents on her hands or she could inform the hated British government on what she knew and risk being labeled an "infamous informer", a fate that she looked upon as being worse than death. The irony of course is that the very government which spied on her every movement when she first came to

. . . continued on page 71

Love, Sweet Love

Kandalavala

Fohat, in his capacity of DIVINE LOVE (*Eros*), the electric Power of affinity and sympathy, is shown allegorically as trying to bring the pure Spirit, the Ray inseparable from the ONE absolute, into union with the Soul, the two constituting in Man the MONAD, and in Nature the first link between the ever unconditioned and the manifested.¹ (*The Secret Doctrine* I, p.119)

H.P.B. seems to never tire of Fohat and turns the facets of this diamond in many ways:

Fohat, then, is the personified electric vital power, the transcendental binding Unity of all Cosmic Energies, on the unseen as on the manifested planes, the action of which resembles — on an immense scale — that of a living Force created by WILL, in those phenomena where the seemingly subjective acts on the seemingly objective and propels it to action. (*SD* I, p.111)

The concept of “will” plays a leading role in almost all discussions of Fohat. On page 134 of *Transactions* we find it said:

All growth depends upon the indwelling force, because on this plane of ours it is this force alone which acts consciously. The universal force cannot be regarded as a conscious force as we understand the word consciousness, because it would immediately become a personal god. It is only that which is enclosed in form, a limitation of matter, which is conscious of itself on this plane. This Free Force or Will, which is limitless and absolute, cannot be said to act understandingly, but it is the one and sole immutable Law of Life and Being.

Fohat, therefore, is spoken of as the synthetic motor power of all the imprisoned life-forces and the medium between the absolute and conditioned Force. It is a link, just as Manas is the connecting link between the gross matter of the physical body and the divine Monad which animates it, but is powerless to act upon the former directly. (p.134)

Fohat is a generic term and used in many senses. He is the *light* (Daiviprakriti) of all the three *logoi* — the personified symbols of the three *spiritual stages* of Evolution. Fohat is the aggregate of all the spiritual creative ideations *above*, and of all the electro-dynamic and creative forces *below*, in Heaven and on Earth. There seems to be great confusion and misunderstanding concerning the First and Second Logos. The first is the already present yet still unmanifested potentiality in the bosom of Father-Mother; the Second is the abstract collectivity of creators called by the Greeks “Demiurgi” or the Builders of the Universe. The *third logos* is the ultimate differentiation of the Second and the individualization of Cosmic Forces, of which Fohat is the chief; for Fohat is the synthesis of the Seven Creative Rays or Dhyan Chohans which proceed from the third Logos. (p.38)

Question: Can you say what is the real meaning of the word Fohat?

The word is a Turanian compound and its meanings are various. In China *Pho*, or *Fo*, is the word for “animal soul,” the vital *Nephesh* or the breath of life. Some say that it is derived from the Sanskrit “Bhu,” meaning existence, or rather the essence of existence. Now Swayambhu means Brahmā and Man at the same time. It means self-existence and self-existing, that which is everlasting, the eternal breath. If Sat is the potentiality of Being, Pho is the potency of Being. The meaning, however, entirely depends upon the position of the accent. Again, Fohat is related to Mahat. It is the reflection of the Universal Mind, the synthesis of the “Seven” and the intelligences of the seven creative Builders, or, as we call them, Cosmocra-tors. Hence, as you will understand, life and electricity are one in our philosophy. They say life is electricity, and if so, then the One Life is the essence and root of all the electric and magnetic phenomena on this manifested plane. (p.87) 

¹ Leibnitz called his principle of attraction “an incorporeal and inexplicable power,” (*SD* I, 491) “Love, Sweet Love” makes us terrestrial bundles cling to one another in fond embrace, and we can never explain it or make away with it. Saints may exalt it, sinners may personalize and degrade, but none have seen its face, for it is a mask for the *Absolute*:

“Each world has its Fohat, who is omnipresent in his own sphere of action. But there are as many Fohats as there are worlds, each varying in power and degree of manifestations. The individual Fohats make one Universal, Collective Fohat — the aspect-Entity of the one absolute Non-Entity, which is absolute Be-Ness, ‘SAT’.” (*Ibid*, 143fn)

The nobler sort of man emphasizes the good qualities in others, and does not accentuate the bad. The inferior does the reverse.

- Confucius

STRANGE PLAQUE

John Robert Colombo

Theosophy turns up in the strangest places. Sometimes I think there is no way to escape its influence.

Consider this experience. My wife Ruth and I enjoy taking long walks through different areas of the city in which we live, Toronto. Early in the afternoon of January 9, 2002, when the streets were entirely bare of snow, we were strolling through Forest Hill, a well-to-do residential area. We walked past affluent home after affluent home, until my attention was caught by a plaque on the side of one of the residences. As a matter of principle, whenever I see plaque, sign, banner, poster, notice, proclamation, or billboard, I stop to read it. It might be curiosity; it might be inquisitiveness; it might be considered a custom related to my avocation. (After all, I collect Canadian quotations and publish them in "quote books.")

From the sidewalk the plaque was visible but not obvious. It was simply odd that it should be there. I stopped and pointed it out to Ruth. We stepped from the sidewalk and across the lawn to examine it.

It was a metal plaque with four words on it. Here are the words:

**THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
GLASGOW LODGE.**

You might imagine our surprise when we read these words, so unexpected to us in this context. It was decades ago I was the youngest member of the Toronto Theosophical Society. With the passage of years, I had allowed my membership to lapse, but I had retained a healthy interest in things theosophical, including the vicissitudes of the Toronto Lodge.

Why, in Forest Hill of all places, would there be a plaque that draws attention to the Theosophical Society, and in particular to the Glasgow Lodge? There are Theosophists in Toronto, of course; there are Scots in Toronto, obviously; but are there Theosophists from Scotland? If so, there must be very few of them!

The plaque was professionally finished, a work of quality, with letters embossed on a bevelled surface that was firmly fastened with screws to the stucco wall of the house.

I could not help but admire the plaque's typography. The words were capitalized, but these were

not ordinary capitals, but upper-and-lower capitals, recalling a design style that was more European than North American and that died out with the Second World War. The words were "word spaced," as typographers express it; further, the letters themselves were "letter spaced," considerations characteristic of the hand-craftsmanship of the Arts and Crafts Movement. I took especial note of the period (the full stop) at the end of the inscription. That, too, harkened back to a more leisured period in our past, possibly the 1910s.



Ruth Colombo, Ted Davy, and Doris Davy embrace before the T.S. plaque on the side of the house in Forest Hill, Toronto.

I asked myself the following question: "Why is this plaque attached to the side of this lovely, brick-and-stucco house located at the northwest corner of 38 Strathearn Boulevard, in plain view of pedestrians and motorists on Vesta Drive?"

I had no immediate answer to my question.

The house that bears the plaque is a two-story residence, handsome, well-maintained, and expensive. But it is not otherwise distinguished, though it is interesting to note that the house is located about four blocks south of Ava Crescent, where, at Number 2, will be found, picturesquely perched on a mound hill on a curve, the luxurious, art-deco residence that was designed and built for the painter Lawren Harris, a noted Theosophist. It is a "stretch," as journalists say, to connect the Glasgow plaque with the leading member of the Group of Seven.

Had the plaque been affixed to the front of the house, it might have served some conceivable purpose. Perhaps Society meetings had been held there. But it was affixed to the side of the house, where there was

no separate entrance, so it served no apparent purpose.



Ruth and John Robert Colombo point to the plaque.

The plaque measures close to one foot in width, about eight inches in height, and nearly an inch in thickness. I guessed that the house was built in the 1920s and that the plaque had been added at some later time. But it gave the appearance of having been in place for decades. I felt at the time it would benefit from some buffing and polishing. (It has subsequently been polished, as the photograph shows.)

Naturally I wondered about its history. Are there members of the Toronto Lodge who know about this plaque? Are members of the Glasgow Lodge (now the Glasgow Centre) aware that they are missing their lodge's plaque? Questions, questions!

I decided to investigate. To this end I undertook a number of initiatives. I wrote a letter to Ted Davy, fine friend and unofficial historian of the Theosophical Society of Canada, to ask him if he knew anything about this odd marker. After all, it might well be that the existence of the plaque was common knowledge among long-time T.S. members.

I described my discovery in detail. Ted wrote back right away to express complete surprise. He suggested that the discovery, far from being a coincidence, seemed to him to be an instance of serendipity, what Carl Jung called "simultaneity" and what was described by the French surrealists as "objective hazard." Other than expressing his surprise, Ted could add no particulars. We agreed that when Ted and Doris were next in Toronto, I would show them the plaque. (This occurred on May 27, 2002.)

I phoned a long-time associate, Paul Bura, President of the Toronto Lodge. Paul knew nothing about the plaque, adding, "There are hardly any older members, or former members, like us, still around." (That was the first time anyone had ever referred to me as an older former member.) I then spoke by phone with Peter Lakin, a retired highschool teacher and a long-

time student of Theosophy, as were his parents before him. (Peter must be another "oldster.") He was as surprised as Ted to learn about the marker as I had been.

None the wiser, I asked Alice Neal, my long-time researcher, to check the city directory and identify the house's owner, or at least its present occupant. Alice learned that the owner and occupant was an accountant named Harvey Hochberg, so I wrote a letter to Mr. Hochberg. I identified myself as a researcher motivated by curiosity and asked him to share with me the plaque's provenance. Was it in place when they bought the house? And when was that? If so, who were the previous owners of the house?

The problem with research is that it never ends. The quest for knowledge resembles the flight of Zeno's arrow, which fails to reach its intended target. It seems it is destined to cut in half the distance between itself and its destination, ever failing to attain its objective. A few days later I had my response, but it left me still up in the air.

On 20 February 2002, I had a phone call from a woman with a lively voice. She identified herself as Arla Hochberg, the wife of Harvey Hochberg. Right away she said, "Call me Arla," so I did.



Close up of the plaque which remains a curiosity that inspires thoughts about the possible connection between the Scottish and the Canadian lodges.

Arla was amused—and I believe pleased—that a stranger was interested enough in the plaque on the side of her house to take the time to write a letter to inquire about it. I was not the first such inquirer, though the first to write a letter. Once a passerby simply knocked on the door to ask about its meaning. When neighbours move into the area, she noted, they soon notice it and query her about it.

Arla is a public health nurse who took early retirement. She is a woman with considerable *joie de vivre*. She and her husband bought the house thirty-four

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Anne Whalen

February 9, 1912 — June 22, 2002



Anne le Nobel was born in Vancouver, British Columbia, one of six children of Christian and Elizabeth. She was the last surviving member of her family of origin. Members of her family were very involved with the Theosophical Society.

Anne married A.P. Whalen in 1937. He was in the Air Force at the time and the family spent the next twenty-two years travelling the world. Their daughter, Penny, recounts that these were good times for them all. They retired in Vancouver in 1959 and it was then that she was able to pursue her interest in Theosophy through her affiliation with Vancouver T.S. Over the years she held a number of offices.

Anne passed away “after a long life and a short illness.” She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Penny and Claude Hazle, granddaughter Christine (Gerry), grandson Tom (Tracy) and their daughter Katrina, as well as sisters-in-law, nieces and nephews.

Doreen and Ralph Chatwin were close to Anne for many years. Doreen contributed the following Tribute in memory of her dear friend.

Anne Whalen left us in her 90th year the evening of June 22nd after a long and healthy life. Her spirit is alive and well in a higher dimension. Born Anne le Nobel in Vancouver and raised in nearby Richmond, Anne had one sister, Aleida, and four brothers. Their grandfather and father passed on the teachings of Theosophy — her grandfather le Nobel having been prominent in the formation of Vancouver Lodge.

Anne was married young to Wing Commander A.P. Whalen, whose career in the Air Force moved the family around the globe for many years. At one time he was posted in Montreal and then in France and Anne became quite fluent in French. They had one daughter, Penny, and a little son who died shortly after birth. During W.W.II Anne, who was mathematically inclined, used her talents in accounting.

Her sister, Aleida, had been a member of Vancouver Lodge for several years before Anne was able to join in 1959, to enjoy with her usual enthusiasm, the guidance of Hannah Buchanan who was President and Teacher for many long and wonderful years. She joined in the Lodge activities and served as Librarian, for many years as Treasurer, and as President. Anne started a Theosophical Discussion Group in West Vancouver in 1987, and in 1996 she was invited by the University of British Columbia to give a lecture on Theosophy. She was an avid reader and eager student — an elegant and friendly woman with an easy sense of humour, and a great lover of Nature. She had a beautiful garden and loved to have her hands in the soil. In her later years she found great delight in visiting the beautiful Van Dusen Botanical Gardens in Vancouver with their wonderful variety of trees, and particularly in the Spring when their spectacular display of Rhododendrons was in bloom. She also took charge of the gardens (and the gardeners) surrounding the apartment building where she lived after her husband's death.

Anne Whalen had a wide circle of friends who loved her dearly and two special luncheons have been held at Van Dusen Gardens Restaurant to celebrate the part she played in the lives of each of us — followed by a period of “Happy Memories” in the Meditation area of the Gardens.

We shall miss her, but are sure there will be lovely gardens wherever she goes!

Doreen Chatwin

There is just one thing that a being in this our Home, which we call the Universe, cannot do: it matters not what its grade in evolutionary status on the Ladder of Cosmic Life, and it matters not in what Cosmic Hierarchy it may find itself. *It cannot annihilate itself*, nor can it ever find annihilation; and this is because it is in its essence of being a Droplet, a Spark, of that cosmic ocean of ‘mind-stuff’ which is the fundamental thing, the veritable essence, in and of the Universe. Were a droplet of this cosmic essence able to annihilate itself, or be reduced to nothing, it would be equivalent to saying that the Essence of the Universe itself could be annihilated, and that is absurd. It is merely our bodies which change, and change incessantly without interruption.

- G. de Purucker
What Death Really Is

BOOK REVIEW



Wading Into The Ocean, A Companion To "The Ocean of Theosophy" by Ann Forsyth Danno. Point Loma Publications, San Diego, CA., 2002; 220 pp., \$12.95 US softcover, ISBN: 1-889598-07-0.

This helpful little book, as described by the author, is "the result of a class on *The Ocean of Theosophy*" and consists of a compilation "of references quoted from numerous Theosophical and other important sources, . . . to clarify and enlarge upon the concise ideas presented by Judge."

Italicized phrases are provided from *The Ocean of Theosophy*, with page numbers supplied for both the Theosophy Company and Theosophical University Press editions. These are followed by references as described above. The presentation is in a convenient chapter-by-chapter format. What was found most practical in using this book for individual study was to scan *Wading* . . . for keywords which could then be referred back to upon coming across the phrases within the text of *The Ocean*. Many informative quotations have been gathered to help clarify the topic at

hand. A Glossary of Sanskrit Terms, a Bibliography, and Index complete this useful little volume.

The author summarizes the book well when she states, "*Wading Into The Ocean* will take the place of an extensive Theosophical library, and will moreover introduce the beginner to important Theosophical writings, either in a group situation or as an individual student."

Ann Forsyth Danno passed away unexpectedly and Nancy and David Reigle completed preparation of the manuscript for the press. They describe *Wading Into The Ocean* as a fitting tribute to her memory, and one would have to agree.

Wading Into The Ocean is available from Point Loma Publications, Box 6507, San Diego, CA 92166 (www.wisdomtraditions.com).

Rogelle Pelletier

. . . **Popol Vuh** continued from page 56

The people of Xibalba, hell (and earth), needed to learn to discriminate between good and evil, needed to get Manas.

New creation

The gods will attempt a new creation, but this time they will make the bodies out of corn, the white and the yellow corn. When they were made, they were able to know everything and see far and near. Nothing was hidden from them. "They were not born of woman, nor were they begotten by the Creator nor by the Maker, nor by the Forefathers. Only by a miracle, by means of incantation were they created" (167-8). [Could it mean here Kriyashakti?] "They were endowed with intelligence; they saw and instantly they could see far, they succeeded in seeing, they succeeded in knowing all that there is in the world" (168). In *Collected Writings V*, p. 223, H.P.B. says the following:

But—the *fourth* race of men, "men" whose sight was unlimited and who knew all things at once, the hidden as the unrevealed, is mentioned in the *Popol-Vuh*, the sacred books of the Guatemalans; and the Babylonian Xisuthros, the far later Jewish Noah, the Hindu Vaivaswata, and the Greek Deukalion, are all identical with the Great Father of the Thlinkithians, of *Popol-Vuh*, who, like the rest of these allegorical (not mythical) Patriarchs, escaped in his turn and in his days, in a large boat,

at the time of the great Deluge—the submersion of Atlantis.

But in time, the gods became worried about their creation being too much like them.

"Let us check a little their desires, because it is not well what we see. Must they perchance be the equals to ourselves, their Makers, who can see afar, who know all and see all?" . . . Then the Heart of Heaven blew mist into their eyes, which clouded their sight . . . In this way the wisdom and all the knowledge of the four men, the origin and beginning . . . were destroyed. (169)

This is when mankind went further down into matter and lost the sight of the third eye. They were made blind and couldn't know nor see everything but what was in front of them.

After the deluge, the tribes that came out of the Seven Caves⁵ went to look for fire, the sacred element. There were four Balams who guided them, each came from a different place. Balam means jaguar and also an Adept, and the four incarnations were: Balam Quitze (represents the East, fire energy, his colour is red, and he manifests light⁶), Balam Acab (represents the West, his energy is of the earth, his colour is black, and he manifests the occult, the night), Majacutaj (represents the North, his energy is air, his colour is white and his manifestation is the breath of life), and the last Iqi Balam (represents South, water,

⁵ Seven is a number used very frequently in the Popol Vuh, from Caves, cities, or connected to the names of their gods.

⁶ Notes on the meanings of the Balams came from: Ludovica Squirru and Carlos Barrios, Kam Wuj, El Libro del Destino, Editorial Sudamerica, Buenos Aires.

yellow colour and manifests nature, the water of life). These four Balams guided the people and taught them right from wrong, they represent the different races of mankind in this cycle. We can compare them with the four Kumaras in *The Secret Doctrine*:

The *Kumāra*—the Rudra gods, so called . . . are described as incarnations of Siva, the *destroyer* (of *outward forms*), named also Vamadeva. The latter, as a *Kumāra*, the “Eternal Celibate,” the chaste Virgin youth, springs from Brahmā in each great Manvantara, and “again becomes four”; a reference to the *four great divisions* of the human races, as regards complexion and type—and three chief variations of these. . . . [I]n the 29th Kalpa, Siva . . . the *root Kumāra*, becomes, from moon-coloured, *white*; in his next transformation—he is *red* (and in this the exoteric version differs from the Esoteric teaching); in the third—*yellow*; in the fourth—*black*. (SD II, 249)

Here we not only have the same colours, but also four celibate youths, like the Balams.

They all gathered in the city of Tulam, where the gods would be able to give them the sacred fire. One of the tribes wanted to steal this sacred fire because they didn’t want to sacrifice to the God, and only thus could they obtain this fire. This is the fire of Prometheus, who wants to steal it from the gods, to bring mind and light to mankind. For then man would be truly a complete being and able to create his own destiny, and not forget his origin. Thus, fire was essential. As H.P.B. says in SD II, 244:

Hence the allegory of Prometheus, who steals the divine fire so as to allow men to proceed consciously on the path of spiritual evolution, thus transforming the most perfect of *animals* on earth into a potential god, and making him free to “take the kingdom of heaven by violence” . . . burning in the fierce flames of his terrestrial passions; the conflagration fired by his *Thought*, discerning as it now does good from evil, and yet a slave to the passions of its earthly Adam; feeling the vulture of doubt and full consciousness gnawing at its heart—a *Prometheus indeed, because a conscious, hence a responsible entity*.

The god Tohil said to those who came to ask for fire: “Do not worry! Yours shall be the lost fire which is talked of” (176). A messenger spoke to them:

“This is, in truth, your God (i.e. fire); this is your support; this is, furthermore, the representation, the memory of your Creator and Maker. Do not give your fire to the tribes until they present offerings to Tohil. . . . Ask Tohil what they should give when they come to receive fire.” (177-8)

And Tohil said to them: “Are they willing to give their waist and their armpits? Do they want me to embrace them? For if they do not want to do that, neither shall I give them fire” (179). Man must be willing to sacrifice something of himself to be able to

obtain fire, the fire that will give him eventually enlightenment, and so must sacrifice part of himself, here represented as his armpits and his waist.

Origin of the Mayas

Where did the Mayas come from? We are told in the *Popol Vuh* that the Mayas came from the East, they never speak of them coming from the North.

It is not quite clear, however, how they crossed the sea; they crossed to this side, as if there were no sea; they crossed on stones, placed in a row over the sand. For this reason they were called Stones in a Row, Sand Under the Sea, names given to them when they [the tribes] crossed the sea, the waters having parted when they passed. (183)

We find in *Isis Unveiled* (I, 552) the following quotation:

This document [the *Manuscript* of Don Juan Torres] . . . states that the Toltecas themselves descended from the house of Israel, who were released by Moses, and who, after crossing the Red Sea, fell into idolatry. After that, having separated themselves from their companions, and under the guidance of a chief named Tanub, they set out wandering, and from one continent to another they came to a place named the Seven Caverns, in the Kingdom of Mexico, where they founded the famous town of Tula, etc.

Here she mentions not only the Seven Caves, but also the city of Tula which are mentioned in the *Popol Vuh*. And even if this paragraph refers to the Toltecs, the Mayas would have the same beginning. And in another quote from *Isis*, she refers to the word Balam, as being from Chaldean origin “and reminding one immediately of Balaam and his human-voiced ass” (*Isis* I, 553). And further on, H.P.B. mentions:

The perfect identity of the rites, ceremonies, traditions, and even the names of the deities, among the Mexicans and ancient Babylonians and Egyptians are sufficient proof of South America being peopled by a colony which mysteriously found its way across the Atlantic. . . . [T]hose who consider that there is no tradition, sanctified by ages, without a certain sediment of truth at the bottom of it, believe in the *Atlantis*-legend. (*Isis* I, 557)

And so we can surmise that the Mayas came from the East, across the Atlantic Ocean via the Islands which belonged to Atlantis.

There are more aspects in the *Popol Vuh* which resemble some of the teachings in *The Secret Doctrine*, but these should give an idea to the reader that all cosmologies have a common origin. It is most unfortunate that the present *Popol Vuh* is not the original work, for the present copy is but a version written after the Spaniards had invaded Mexico. Nevertheless we can appreciate their teachings, their origin and moral integrity while reading this book. 

. . . **Revealed** continued from page 64

India was the government that she now felt obliged to warn of a planned rebellion. She expressed that even if Mother Russia were involved she would still feel obliged to pass on what she knew to the British. Also, her cynical attitude towards the Russian governing institution is expressed. This is a woman who turned her back on the plotting and intrigues of the old European ruling classes and became an American citizen for a reason, a process that began in 1873 (less than one year after purportedly offering herself up as a spy for Russia) and ended five years plus one day later when she signed the papers making her a citizen of the United States. This is a woman who did the right thing (morally right, not politically right or politically expedient), passed on certain information to the British government in order to protect innocent lives and yet would have been labeled a British spy by her enemies had this information come to light. Her reputation would have been unfairly trashed once again. We can be sure of this because over one hundred years later, she is still being attacked.

The balance of Mr. Johnson's work consists of well researched facts speculatively strung together. Mr. Johnson posits various people as Masters or people who influenced her eventual writings. He tends to look for people in physical proximity to Madame Blavatsky as opposed to there being any astral encounters. Yet, if one looks at John Patrick Deveney's contribution in *Theosophical History Occasional Papers*, Volume VI, one can read many references to astral encounters with Masters. Of course it may be

difficult for academic historians to treat such encounters seriously, but if truth is their goal, they must at least be considered. Perhaps an unbiased look at Madame Blavatsky is too much to ask of academic historians at this time. Perhaps it would be safer to just gather the facts and present them rather than try to give them a particular spin since Madame Blavatsky must come out looking deceitful if you deny an occult reality, and deny that Madame Blavatsky had certain occult abilities.

Mr. Johnson and Dr. Godwin have pointed out one thing that theosophists and certain theosophical organizations might take note of. There are some controversies that have continued on in the theosophical world for far too long because documents have been hidden away in theosophical archives. It is time these documents were released and their merits closely examined by all. No one is being protected by the uncertainty that surrounds them. Instead, this uncertainty breeds suspicion which does more damage than would a few damaging paragraphs. Also, just because the holders of so-called "damaging evidence" perceive it as damaging, that does not mean others will. There may be perfectly plausible explanations for some things that can only be offered when the offending documents are brought to light. Theosophy is a philosophy of the light; let us get all the information out into the light. Truth always wins out in the end. Blavatsky has left behind a philosophy that will one day be vindicated, and its vindication will be her vindication. 

. . . **Plaque** continued from page 67

years ago, that would be in 1968. When they bought it, there was no plaque on the wall.

"I saw the plaque at a junk store, or antique shop, in Buttonville," she said. "That was the year we bought the house. I thought it would look interesting on the side of the house."

"That was before there were garage sales. You could still pick up interesting things in junk stores for a song," she continued. "I recall I paid about five dollars for the plaque, nothing really. I don't know how it got to Buttonville, which is a small community north of Toronto. But the antique dealer I bought it from—I forget her name—had recently moved her shop, near Ridpath's on Yonge Street, to Buttonville. So the plaque was probably in her store in Toronto. But I saw it there and bought it in Buttonville."

That is all that Arla knows about the provenance of the plaque. I have been able to determine nothing more about its history.

I do know that there was an active Theosophical lodge in Glasgow in the early years of the 20th century. Indeed, the lodge is still an active one, though it is now located in the city's Glasgow Centre. I assume that there is some connection between that Glasgow Lodge and the Toronto Lodge, which was founded as the Toronto Theosophical Society in 1891. What that connection is, I have no idea. I presume some member of the Glasgow Lodge brought it with him (or her) to Toronto and perhaps joined the local lodge. But who? Who knows?

Who would ever have guessed that the plaque could have triumphed over the vicissitudes of both time and transport? Some day there may come to light the connection between the Glasgow T.S. and the Toronto T.S. Until that time, there is a subtle association between the two centres, and that linkage, perhaps calculated, ultimately accidentally, is likely to remain a serendipitous one, an instance of simultaneity or what has been called "objective hazard." 

Fohat is the Steed, Thought is the Rider

It is the "bridge" by which the "Ideas" existing in the "Divine Thought" are impressed on Cosmic substance as the "laws of Nature." Fohat is thus the dynamic energy of Cosmic Ideation; or, regarded from the other side, it is the intelligent medium, the guiding power of all manifestation. . . . Thus from Spirit, or Cosmic Ideation, comes our consciousness; from Cosmic Substance the several vehicles in which that consciousness is individualized and attains to self – or reflective – consciousness; while Fohat, in its various manifestations, is the mysterious link between Mind and Matter, the animating principle electrifying every atom into life. – Secret Doctrine I, 16



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