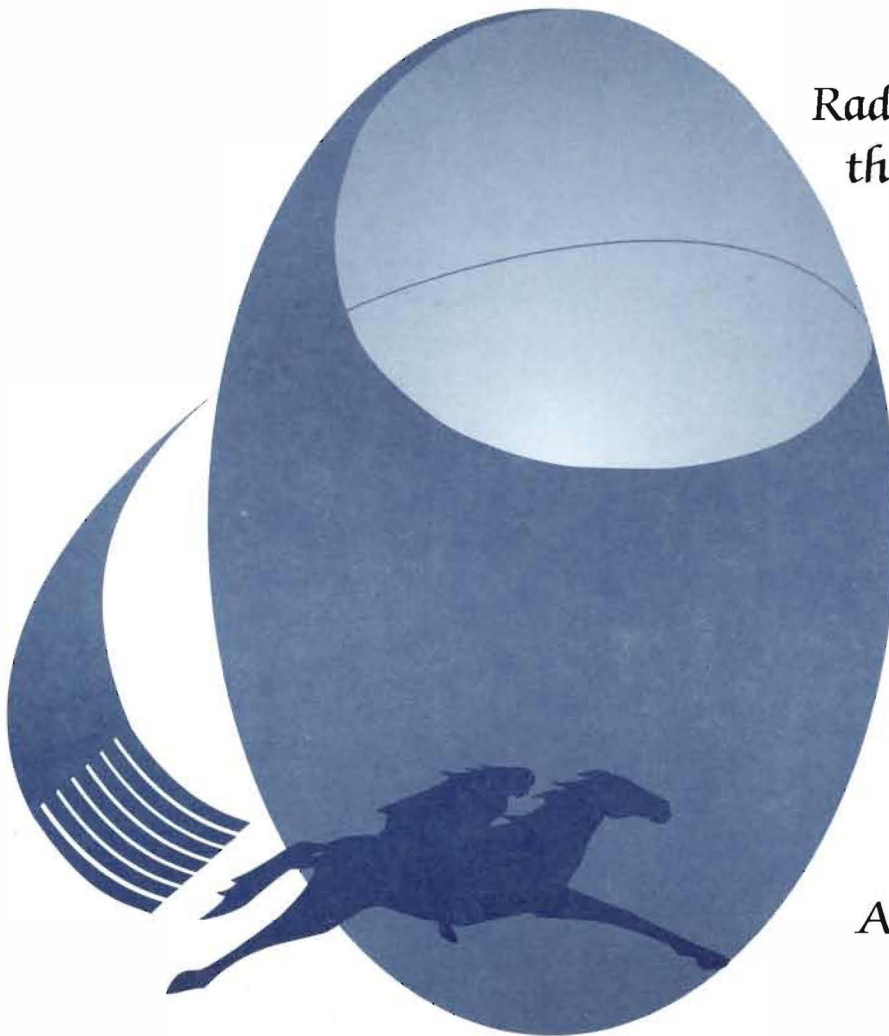


# FOHAT

Volume IV, Number 1

Spring 2000



*Radioactive Dating and  
the Age of the Earth*

*Theosophy,  
Buddhism, and  
the Masters*

*Theosophical  
Brotherhood:  
The Judge Case*

*The Many  
Aspects of Milk*

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 Occasional Paper**

Robert Hütwohl is the compiler of the latest offering from *Theosophical History*. Franz Hartmann's essay, *Some Fragments of the Secret History of the Theosophical Society*, tells of his nine month stay at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Adyar in 1884. Hartmann covers a period that includes the expulsion of the Coulobms from the headquarters and the Hodgson investigation that followed. For price and details contact:

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20733 Via Sonrisa  
Yorba Linda, CA 92886

or

Dr. Joscelyn Godwin  
c/o the Department of Music  
Colgate University  
Hamilton, NY 13346-1398

### **“Freedom” in Insight**

In the January/February issue of *Insight* Geoffrey Farthing explores the concept of freedom. What does it mean to a theosophist when he talks about freedom? Geoffrey Farthing tries to point us in the right direction.

### **The Bhagavad-Gita comes to The High Country Theosophist**

In one of several looks on *The Gita* Dr. C. A. Bartzokas brings together several passages from the writings of Blavatsky and Judge that look at the true aim and age of *The Bhagavad-Gita*. This is followed by an essay that describes Dr. Bartzokas' introduction to theosophy and the pitfalls that he has had to skirt. I am sure that Dr. Bartzokas' experiences are not too terribly different than many of ours.

### **More Bhagavad-Gita**

The Great Lakes Branch of the Theosophical Society brings to us “Studying the Bhagavad-Gita Part 3: The Gunas.” Alex Rau looks at the gunas in conjunction with several passages taken from *The Bhagavad-Gita*. The *Kali Yuga Rag* can be contacted at:

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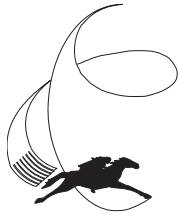
### **Protogonos available on CD**

Mark Jaqua reports that all the back issues of *Protogonos* are now available on CD. They have been reformatted and include a table of contents and rough index. This CD which includes some other archival material is only \$5.00 postpaid. For details contact :

Mark Jaqua  
PO Box 444  
Grand Rapids, OH 43522

### **Theosophical CD-Rom Index**

Watch for a new CD-Rom index of theosophical and related periodicals to be released by the end of the year by Gladney Oakley. Various sections of the Theosophical Society including Edmonton Theosophical Society have been supplying Gladney with material. Keep an eye out for further details!



# FOHAT

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## To be featured in coming issues:

*Who Are Blavatsky's Aryans?*

*The Way of the Hopi - Self-Determination  
and Prophecy*

AND MUCH MORE!

## Theosophy and The Theosophical Society: Where Lies the Spirit?

One thing is certain; with the exception of Colonel Olcott, everyone seemed to banish the Masters from their thoughts and Their spirit from Adyar. Every imaginable incongruity was connected with these holy names, and I alone was held responsible for every disagreeable event that took place, every mistake made. In a letter received from Dâmodar in 1886, he notified me that the Masters' influence was becoming with every day weaker at Adyar; that They were daily represented as less than "second-rate Yogis," totally denied by some, while even those who believed in, and had remained loyal to them, feared even to pronounce Their names. - *BCW XII*, p.163.

Geoffrey Farthing has recently circulated a letter that he titled "Master/H.P.B. Association of Theosophists." The letter is an invitation for those who believe that the original teachings, as embodied in the works of Blavatsky, the Mahatmas and Judge as well as later writers consonant with this body of work, have not been studied and adequately understood by students. There is also the belief that because this body of work has not been studied and understood, later writers have come along and presented ideas that may not be consonant with the original teachings, and these writers have been lumped under an ever-broadening umbrella of theosophical literature. This then presents a problem as new students become confused with different terminologies and irreconcilable doctrines. Dr. C. A. Bartzokas presents this problem admirably in a recent issue of *The High Country Theosophist*. Dr. Bartzokas had been a student of Theosophy for some years and quite frustrated at the seemingly different doctrines before he was pulled aside and told that the doctrines may not only **seem** different but in fact **be** different and that he should make a choice as to which set to follow. This then is a problem and it could very well be that those writings not included in the set of original teachings may in the end not even be consonant with the objects of the society. Consequently, the Theosophical Society may have, in misguided respect to the idea of freedom of thought, accepted teachings that are not harmonious with its objects, especially its first object. Geoffrey Farthing first and foremost seems to want to bring together an association of serious students capable of studying and understanding the literature so that the integrity of the Theosophical Society can be protected.

In addition to a focus on the original teachings, Geoffrey Farthing also wants this group to acknowledge "a loyalty to the Adyar Theosophical Society as the one, and only one, originally set up by the Masters through H.P.B., Olcott and Judge." He feels

that "[t]here were certain specific intentions for it which . . . have not yet been fulfilled." It would seem fair to say that the full potential of the Theosophical Society as imparted by the Mahatmas has not been fulfilled, however, that potential, its spirit, would seem more likely to be found in the hearts and minds of earnest theosophists than in the dead or dying body of an institution that has lost its way. If Geoffrey insists on such a loyalty, he may find that for no good reason he will end up denying entrance to this association of some of the most capable and resolute theosophical students in the world today.

A Society is a body and like any body it is born, grows, gets old, and dies. It may be that the Theosophical Society in Britain has been powerful enough to prosper under and despite the "so-called" parent society, but that has not been the experience of every Section. It may be that the British Section has experienced a democratic relationship with Adyar, but that is not the experience of every Section. The Canadian Section was unceremoniously excommunicated from Adyar for what seems to be the politically expedient resolve of a few members at the top of the Adyar hierarchy of power. This was done with proxies entrusted to a few and no apparent consultation with the members who entrusted the few with these proxies—so much for democratic bodies. If the Adyar Society is not dead, it is certainly the experience of some to be without theosophical spirit. It would seem that Geoffrey's seed would grow much better in the hearts of committed students who did not have to work with the albatross of Adyar hanging about their necks. A seed planted in the soil of pure Theosophy could lead to unexpected bounties.

Just about every Theosophical Society in existence today can trace itself back to Blavatsky, Judge, and Olcott as these different Societies were simply a branch of a split in the Society. It is very probably the case that students filled with the Spirit of Theosophy can be found in all of these different

branches. One of these branches or sub-branches may even have managed to hold on to that original spark that was generated by the Mahatmas. By limiting the membership of this Association, this spark may be refused admittance. It is admirable to have respect and love for one's mother, but the corpse that is decaying in the ground does not hold the soul of one's mother and in order to honour her it might be better to look for her spirit in the living, in those whom she affected and shaped when she was at the height of her power. There came a time when Colonel Olcott had to choose between protecting the Society or protecting the reputation of Blavatsky. He chose to protect the name of the Society and some say that he chose wrong. What is a Society dedicated to Brotherhood if it does not protect the name of its representatives when slandered before the public? Olcott would have done much more to strengthen the Society had he chosen to protect Blavatsky's honour and good name for then the Society would be seen to be living what it preaches. Instead he chose to endow the Society with the Spirit of political expediency and it may be that the Society has stayed true to that Spirit ever since. However, not all of its members have.

If Theosophists committed to the Spirit of Theosophy can be gathered together into a working force studying the original teachings, unexpected benefits could arise from this. One could envision in time a new Society forming, especially if this loose Association

manages to get the Brotherhood Object right this time. A Society capable of drawing members from all of the existing Societies would be an exciting and powerful force capable of fulfilling some of that potential imparted to the original Society founded in America. Certainly, the world is so dark at this time that a Society dedicated to Truth and Brotherhood would be like a blazing beacon in the wilderness. People would have to sit up and take notice. That they do not do so now is indicative of the states of the various organizations calling themselves Theosophical. Theosophy is the relationship between a body of people dedicated to Truth and to three objects, it is not a body of those holding membership in a certain club. This is exactly where we got it wrong the first time and if we are not careful, we may get it wrong a second time. There may not be a third time.

Geoffrey Farthing is right, those dedicated to the original program have to align themselves more formally with one another. An attempt must be made to rekindle the flame while the spirit still lives in the heart of some of us. The world is badly in need of an example of a nucleus of a Brotherhood of Humanity. This was true at the end of the nineteenth century and it is still true today at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Great movements always fall on the shoulders of a few; perhaps there are a few among us ready to take up the challenge.



## Letters to the Editor:

The profound truth written by H.P.B. and quoted by Claude Hughes in the Winter '99 edition of *Fohat* viz:-

Every Ego has the Karma of past Manvantaras behind him. . . . At the end of its cycle of reincarnation it is still the same Divine Consciousness, but it has now become individualized Self-Consciousness.

This truth can be personalised by using the step by step meditation that takes us from the physical through the spiritual to the infinite.

Physical I am (height, weight, race, sex, medical condition)  
 Emotional I am (occupation, marital, social, community relationships)  
 Mental I am (knowledge, experience, intellectual capacity)

Spiritual I am (an individual patiently working through my karmic environment seeking to understand the workings of the natural laws and being prepared to accept my next assignment in whatever circumstances I find myself when I reincarnate to serve the will of God as it will be revealed to me.)

I am Immortal.

Infinite I am a part of the eternal, infinite, love-wisdom consciousness that had no beginning and will have no ending.

AUM.

E. Labrum  
 Sidney, BC

# Lights and Shadows of Brotherhood

Brett Forray

History is a powerful, often under appreciated and sometimes misused tool that shapes our understanding of the human condition. Many minorities, for example, who read about the history and development of the country they now live in notice that either their group is left in the margins of the story, or the story told typically favors the bias of the people who are writing the history. The winners of the day typically write the textbooks most of our children read. More recently, due to the post-modern movement, the missing stories of groups other than the ones who hold the reins of power are being told and their perspectives are being woven into the fabric of the nation's story. History is very much alive and, like any growing entity, stories change as more information and insight come into the hands of researchers. Sometimes this is due to timing. History is tucked away in many an archive, attic, or basement that has been undiscovered or ignored. History is essential to know who we are and where we will be heading from that illusive point called the "present."

Knowing the history of the Theosophical movement is no different. Like any human endeavor, Theosophy has had its share of glories and mistakes. More often than not, the glories are exalted and the mistakes are down played or shoved in the closet, which we know can turn into that proverbial skeleton. And, if you do hear about those unpleasant moments in our history, you mainly get the point of view the establishment wants you to know. Some of Theosophy's problematical periods have never been told objectively, let alone comprehensively. And, this makes Theosophy's notable moments seem too hagiographic and suspicious by comparison. Occasionally we do get holes poked into the official version of a story. While there is much to laud about the teachings we have and the people who brought them to us, we too often forget how human they were and thereby have trouble acknowledging their mistakes or that they acted outside our assumptions of how we think pious people should conduct themselves. We fear this takes away from their "spirituality" and somehow devalues the teachings they brought to us.

One period in the Theosophical movement where I have noticed this tendency in our generation, also

happens to be one of its darkest episodes. After H.P. Blavatsky died, a struggle over who was maintaining a real relationship with the Mahatmas developed between William Q. Judge and Annie Besant, primarily, though the president, Col. Olcott also played a significant part. Judge and Besant each claimed to have had experiences with the Mahatmas before Blavatsky died. Up to Blavatsky's death in 1891 there seemed to be no qualms about the relationships either person had with these Mahatmas. Within a year after Blavatsky's demise hushed criticisms began to blow in Judge's direction that he was faking messages from the Mahatmas. This was important, because even though Col. Olcott continued as the administrative head of the Society, Besant and Judge were appointed the new spiritual leaders within the Society's Esoteric Section or E.S.T. Judge was also being strongly considered to succeed Olcott as the President. The first public criticism against Judge appeared in 1893 in *The Theosophist* magazine. This episode was soon given the title *The Case Against William Quan Judge*, or more briefly *The Judge Case*. Besant took on the role of prosecutor. After years of claims and counter claims Judge and a majority of the American Section of the Society decided they were fed up with the behavior of their co-Theosophists and declared their "autonomy" from the rest of the Theosophical Society during the annual convention of the American Section in April 1895. Several months later, Col. Olcott, who was in Spain at the time, issued a directive cancelling the charter of the "succeeding" American Section and he also cancelled the membership diplomas of all the errant members following Judge. The new group in America would now be known as The Theosophical Society in America<sup>i</sup> and Judge was elected President for life. Ironically, Judge had been fighting tuberculosis for years and his life would end in March the following year.

There are numerous historical writings that also deal with *The Judge Case*.<sup>ii</sup> Up to now most of them have been written by people who represented one side of the argument or the other. Most studies either believe from the outset that Judge was guilty of the accusations leveled against him, or the others believe Besant was at fault and had to go. Before Judge died nothing was *proved* that he forged Mahatmic corre-

spondence. And, Besant's claims of Mahatmic correspondence were taken prima facie and never questioned at all. Read objectively and carefully, you will soon notice in each history about this period that the writers tell their version of the story to confirm their own assumptions. No one has approached this period to tell this story fully in a nonpartisan spirit.

Not surprisingly, you don't hear a lot of discussion among the different Theosophical groups about this time period. Frankly, I don't think they would know how to talk about it constructively. As with any dysfunction, Theosophists find it a difficult topic to discuss – I don't mean between peers (it's easy when people already believe as you do), I'm referring to members from different organizations.<sup>iii</sup> There are strong and deep-seated emotions tied into this period, and despite our spiritual intentions, there are still some primal emotions connected to how we feel about *The Judge Case*. Some of these emotions stem from our reactions to the claims made by Judge and Besant concerning their spiritual lives. These claims ultimately compound our perception of their behavior throughout this period, because of the subjective nature of paranormal experiences and the faith that must be taken by members who do not have the same declared connection with the Mahatmas as these two leaders. Many of the emotions tied into this episode eclipse other important issues. It should be noted that both of these E.S.T. leaders after Blavatsky worked tirelessly for the Society. The request of Blavatsky to work selflessly for the Society became dominated by who was considered the authentic mouthpiece of the Mahatmas. As numerous divisions in the T.S. show, this is the most difficult area of the Theosophical experience to ascertain.

To be sure, discussing the elements of *The Judge Case* thoroughly and comprehensively is beyond the scope of this article. What can be more manageable is to discuss some of the consequences that came from this turbulent period. They have shaped what we are as Theosophists today, whether we know much about *The Judge Case* or not. The first and most obvious outcome was the divisions created within the Society. *The Judge Case* divided national sections, families, long-standing friendships, and even the first object on which the Society stood. Whether you believe in Judge's or Besant's cause throughout this period, you can't help feeling sad when you go back and review Blavatsky's letters to the American conventions, which she finished writing just before her death four years before the split. In these letters she reiterates time and again the need to work for Theosophy together even if approaches differed. She was aware of the need to let the Society be a meeting place for a diverse membership, and emphasized the need to let people do Theosophy in their own way, as long as their intention was to



William Quan Judge

further the great Cause of the Movement. Part of the meaning of this Cause is echoed in the motto of the Society, "There is no religion (dharma) higher than truth." Different sides in *The Judge Case* can have a field day debating whether each side was true to this Cause. However, in Blavatsky's last letter, she made the special point of commenting how important it was to work as a united band of workers to make it through the end of a critical cycle that closed between the years 1897-1898. If the split in the ranks that occurred in 1895 didn't completely destroy the Society as H.P.B. feared, it changed the tenor of the remaining and soon to emerge new Theosophical organizations.<sup>iv</sup> With more than one group calling itself Theosophical, which one was carrying on the original impetus on which the T.S. was founded?

Each remaining Theosophical group made its claim as the successor to the parent group. While the issue of successor-ship was a concern even to Blavatsky, after 1895 it became an even more critical issue with the new factions in Theosophy. Part of the issue of who succeeded whom around the turn of the century usually involved the blessings of the Mahatmas. And, with several Societies vying for the name of Theosophy, whose group were the Mahatmas going to rally behind, now? Whatever the truth, each faction claimed that they continued to be assisted by the same Masters. What criteria do we use to find out the truth in matters such as this? The simple and favorite pat answer, "Use your intuition," is slippery, since most people are unable to distinguish intuition from their feelings. And, people usually lack the clarity and critical insight into their emotional nature. The Theosophical system of thought



Annie Besant

is a pre-psychological model and does not address how people can explore their emotional complexes in a very sophisticated way.

While one contemporary Theosophical leader once pointed out that he likened the different groups today to different flavors of ice cream, the leaders in the 1890s or early 1900s would never have accepted this analogy and its underlying rationale. The principles of Theosophy were strongly defended by each organization in accordance to the way they saw themselves in relation to those principles. As each group saw itself as the real defender for the Cause of Theosophy with the support of the Mahatmas, this led to the development of a form of Theosophical autocracy within several of the remaining groups. Leaders in the Point Loma group and the Adyar group maintained highly autocratic powers over their organizations. And throughout the early 1900s there was still talk of Mahatmic influence on the leaders of the day.

Each of the new Theosophical organizations had no choice but to become a little more polarized in their views and beliefs about what Theosophy meant to them in order to be distinguished from the “other” groups. Each group’s continued focus on their particular view of Theosophy normalized their ideals and behaviors within that respective group. The different Theosophical organizations were now like birds of the same feather. There was little if any interaction between members of the different groups. The Theosophical Society under Judge in 1896 did try to extend a hand of cooperation to the Adyar Society, but it was ignored. The original Theosophical Society was divested of its interaction with a wider and more diverse membership after the split. The remaining organizations generated members who approached Theosophical ideas within the boundaries of their


newly politicized group. The brotherhood that was to accommodate diversity of opinion, methods of service and growth was handicapped. You only need to spend time reading the journals of the various Theosophical societies to see this for yourself. In spite of this, there were certainly some tremendous accomplishments by some of the remaining organizations. But they still lacked the counter balance of real diversity and freedom of opinion outside of their group’s assumptions about what is Theosophy. They were missing the broader spirit of interaction with different types of Theosophical thinkers that the earlier Society stood for. Now many of the accomplishments of the separate groups reflected the position of their distinctive Theosophical Zeitgeist.

This ultimately leads to the question, “What, then, is a brotherhood?” To be fair, this was also a question H.P.B. was constantly addressing throughout her Theosophical life. She bemoaned that the essential quality of brotherhood was being violated in any number of ways. Many of her articles address this issue either directly or indirectly, but some members missed her point beyond its sentimental value. The best way she and the other founders felt the Society could foster an environment for brotherhood was to manage the organization on a federal system that could nurture the needed solidarity among differing approaches toward studying, and exploring ideas about the esoteric philosophy. She felt that modeling the Society’s administration according to a federal system was the best way to allow each member to become a true associate in what she called a “Republic of Conscience.” After the Theosophical Society broke into its different factions, this ideal was segregated into Theosophical ghettos chanting, “You do your Theosophy your way, and we’ll do our Theosophy our way.” There are some who believe a true brotherhood needs the presence of a spiritual guide at its core. Possibly. Though, both Besant and Judge each claimed to be chelas in touch with the same Masters. Are there not more objective principles and criteria on which to base the formation of a brotherhood? Especially since a vast majority of Theosophists only know the Mahatmas as an ideal based on the logical faith of the Theosophical philosophy and a hope anchored in the existence of a series of letters.

The nucleus of a brotherhood that the Theosophical Society tried to represent began to crumble within the Esoteric Section. After a committee held in London in 1894 to resolve Judge’s situation failed to meet the hopes of the committee members, Judge and Besant came to the mutual agreement that they would no longer work as co-outer heads of the E.S.T. They issued circulars to the E.S.T. members saying they would become independent outer heads working only within their jurisdiction. The ongoing con-

flict between Judge and Besant reached a critical point when Judge issued an E.S.T. circular in November 1894 saying that black magicians were influencing Besant through certain Brahman members in India. Judge also declared his supremacy as the sole E.S.T. leader when he single-handedly canceled Besant's position as an outer head in the E.S.T., from a directive of the Mahatma. This coup d'état became the straw that broke the camel's back. This circular is the one document that must be considered the most controversial paper in all the documentation that exists on *The Judge Case*. Whether you believe in the contents of his circular or not, it sealed the fate of the coming split that was soon to materialize. Judge followed what he was certain was the Mahatma's orders. Of course, Besant defended her actions along the same lines. Throughout disagreements and disputes in our Theosophical legacy, it has not been uncommon to hear that the Mahatmas have been relied on as a source of conviction and justification for some course of action – pleasant or otherwise. Is there a more level playing field that we can use in making important decisions affecting the Society, since everyone is not going to have access to Mahatmas? There is no record, as far as I'm aware, that Blavatsky ever relied on the Mahatmas when she was asked to become the President of the European Theosophists. Is a brotherhood dependent on following a single person who claims they have some kind of relationship with Mahatmas? What about having spiritual principles at the core instead? How does the main body of the membership prove, for example, that there are black magicians infiltrating the Theosophical Society? Judge once stated that brotherhood was a fact of nature. However, incidents such as *The Judge Case* show that brotherhoods aren't always successful, because people don't always make it work. If Judge was referring to the core of

our spiritual natures being one and the same – as a fact of nature, then how can we better manage conflicting relationships in the outer world, especially when there are differing claims about contact with spiritual figures only a few out of the whole Society manage to have in common?

Questions like this could go on and on. But an important perspective that we must keep in mind in situations such as *The Judge Case* is that the Theosophical Mahatmas can become troublesome ideals, since the paranormal techniques to relate with them are more difficult than we suppose, and many claims of contact only turn out to be some form of psychic self-parody. If we want to form a nucleus of a universal brotherhood, maybe we need to base the criteria of this compact less on our super-sensate connections with spiritual beings that others may not (nor have to) share, and more on the character and labor of the men and women who will work together to eventually form Blavatsky's true republic of conscience. The Theosophical Society was not supposed to be "the" nucleus of a world wide universal brotherhood (let's admit it, Theosophy is not for everyone), but was supposed to set an example of what it would be like to have a thriving center for such a solidarity. And, when people are gifted with paranormal abilities they would not be ignored, but even as the Mahatmas stated in their letters to Mr. Sinnett, the claims of these people were tested and tried before they were accepted. Even the Mahatmas, developed some objective means to find out what was true in the perceptions of occultists. Developing a brotherhood deserves no less. Learning more about our history could help us understand the strengths and pitfalls of becoming better brothers and sisters with one another. Only we must not be afraid to open the closet – together. 

<sup>i</sup> Judge's new group is not the same group as the one today in Wheaton, IL, which also goes by the name The Theosophical Society in America.

<sup>ii</sup> See the following publications that talk about this episode of Theosophical history:

- Anonymous [John Garrigues], *The Theosophical Movement 1875-1925*
- Eek, Sven and de Zirkoff, Boris, *William Quan Judge. His Life and Work*
- Mills, Joy, *One Hundred Years of Theosophy*
- Nethercot, Arthur, *The Last Four Lives of Annie Besant*
- Olcott, Henry S., *Old Diary Leaves* Vol. 4 & 5.
- Ransom, Josephine, *A Short History of the Theosophical Society*
- Ryan, Charles, *H.P. Blavatsky and the Theosophical Movement*

<sup>iii</sup> I'm not suggesting there should be some officially sponsored meeting between any of the organizations. I would just hope that members from different groups would network on their own about this issue.

<sup>iv</sup> The Theosophical groups in existence after 1895 and before 1900 were the following: The Theosophical Society in America, which soon changed its name to The Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society (or Point Loma group) after Katherine Tingley became the new "Leader" (the position of President was dropped). Her ascension to leadership led to another division in 1898 when Ernest T. Hargrove and others broke away to form their own organization called The Theosophical Society. There was also The Theosophical Society (the Adyar group) whose international headquarters was still in India under the presidency of Col. Olcott.

<sup>v</sup> See H.P. Blavatsky's *Collected Writings*, Volume II, p.104, & Volume III, p.226.

# Milk In the Kali-“Moo”ga

Rogelle Pelletier

**M**ilk has had many connotations over the ages. These have ranged from the mystical and mythological, to physical sustenance in the form of a white beverage and cheese.

In Hindu mythology, Hansa (Goose or Swan) represents Divine Wisdom because, as described in *The Secret Doctrine*, “when given milk mixed with water . . . separated the two, drinking the milk and leaving the water; thus showing inherent wisdom – milk standing symbolically for spirit, and water for matter”. (*SDI*, p.79)

In Commentaries on Stanza III, HPB writes:

“The radiant essence curdled and spread throughout the depths” of Space. From an astronomical point of view . . . it is the “milky way,” the world-stuff, or primordial matter in its first form. . . . [F]rom the standpoint of Occult Science and Symbolism . . . are enshrined more than a dozen symbols. (*SDI*, p.67)

She goes on to mention that the following are extracted from the allegorical “churning of the ocean” by the Hindu gods:

Besides *Amrita*, the water of life or immortality, “*Surabhi*” the “cow of plenty,” called “the fountain of milk and curds,” was extracted from this “Sea of Milk.” Hence the universal adoration of the cow and bull, one the productive, the other the generative power in Nature; symbols connected with both the Solar and the Cosmic deities. (*SDI*, p.67)

Again in Commentaries on this same Stanza:

[T]he . . . Omnipresent Spiritual Ray . . . calls cosmic matter to begin its long series of differentiations. The curds are the first differentiation, and probably refer also to that cosmic matter which is supposed to be the origin of the “Milky Way” – the matter we know. . . . [T]his matter, radical and cool, becomes, at the first reawakening of cosmic motion, scattered through Space; appearing, when seen from the Earth, in clusters and lumps, like curds in thin milk. These are the seeds of the future worlds, the “Star-stuff.” (*SDI*, p.69)

In the various creation myths of peoples around the globe, the ‘first’ matter is commonly referred to as milk or milky substance. It is commonly held that milk streamed from the breasts of the feminine di-

vinity and thus was the Milky Way, among other celestial bodies, formed.

*The Woman’s Dictionary of Symbols & Sacred Objects* lists a number of civilizations that regarded the Milky Way, the ‘river of stars’, as a river of sparkling, life-giving Goddess milk. The Egyptians apparently saw it as the outflow from the udder of the heavenly cow, Isis in her bovine form. The word *galaxy* itself comes from the Greek word *gala*, which means “mother’s milk.” In Norse mythology the ‘moon cow’ existed before every other creature and gave nourishment to the world. In Scandinavia the Milky Way was known as the Moon Way. In Celtic lands it was referred to as the Track of the White Cow. Even in a popular nursery rhyme, the cow jumped over the moon leaving a trail of her star-milk across the sky (pp.343-344).

In the Hindu Ayurvedic tradition, fresh unpasteurized milk, because it contains calcium, protein and vitamins, is considered a food, a medicine, and a healer all at the same time. The milk products cheese, yogurt, butter, and buttermilk are considered sattvic, that is, balanced, readily digested foods. In *The Healing Cuisine, India’s Art of Ayurvedic Cooking*, the author states:

Milk is nectar for the human organism. . . . In Hindu mythology, Vishnu is often depicted peacefully reclining on a serpent coiled in the Ocean of Milk. . . . [M]ilk symbolizes the sustaining and preserving power of the Universe. Milk is the preserver of the body. . . . All mammals, whether herbivorous or carnivorous, have milk as their first food. (p.20)

The author stresses the importance of tending to the cow in order to ensure good quality milk:

In Vedic times, care of the cow was a sattvic activity. There was no need to pasteurize or homogenize milk. Now milk sold in supermarkets is ultrapasteurized. . . . The vibrational effect of an electric milking machine must be shattering for the cow – imagine the difference in quality of milk from a well-cared for and revered cow, hand-milked. (p.22)

Now there is not simply mechanical intervention in the production of milk. Science has ‘improved’ milk by tampering with genetics in an effort to increase production from individual cows. In his book *MILK The Deadly Poison*, Robert Cohen states:

When the Pilgrims milked their animals almost 380 years ago, they were fortunate to receive even one quart of milk per day from each cow. (p.11)

By the mid-1800s, the average cow yielded just under two quarts of milk each day. By 1960, that yield was over nine quarts per animal per day. Today, thanks to new techniques including increased use of antibiotics, genetically selective breeding, and . . . genetic engineering, cows can yield up to 50 quarts of milk/day. (pp.15-16)

Cows are also injected with genetically engineered versions of their own growth hormones. These new hormones allow the animal to produce greater amounts of milk. The new milk is different from the old milk. Each procedure has changed the taste and consistency of milk. . . . Natural growth hormones were taken from dairy cows and recombined with the genetic material of bacteria, then implanted inside the *E. coli* bacteria (p.12). . . . The bacteria were then “harvested” with sophisticated new techniques, and the hormone collected. The new drug called *re-combinant bovine somatotropin (rBST)* would then be injected into cows. (p.18)

This genetically engineered hormone called *recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH)* has been in use in the United States since 1994. To its credit the Canadian government said “No” to the use of rBGH in Canada due to the negative effects on cows. It increases the risk of mastitis (an infection of the udder) which is in turn treated with antibiotics, residues of which can be found in tested milk and which has been shown to increase the growth of drug-resistant bacteria. Representatives from Monsanto, the manufacturer of numerous agricultural products, stated they will continue to push for acceptance of rBGH in Canada.

Mr. Cohen quotes from a column written by Jane Heimlich in Dr. Julian Whitaker’s *Health and Healing Newsletter*:

The single most disturbing aspect of rBGH, from a human safety standpoint, concerns Insulin-like Growth Factor-I (IGF-I), which is linked to breast cancer. IGF-I occurs naturally in human beings as well as cows, but rBGH injections cause substantial and sustained increases of IGF-I levels in milk, says Samuel Epstein, MD., professor of occupational and environmental medicine at the Illinois School of Public Health.

Worse yet, “IGF-I is not destroyed by pasteurization, survives the digestion process, is absorbed into the blood and produces potent growth-promoting effects” . . . .

Epstein says it is highly likely that IGF-I helps transform normal breast tissue to cancerous cells, and enables malignant human breast cancer cells to invade and spread to distant organs. [pp.22-23]

Ms. Heimlich states more bluntly in the *Foreword* that “IGF-I is a key factor in the growth and proliferation of cancer”. (p.vii)

Robert Cohen claims that US milk is no longer safe to consume and that the approval process for rBGH was a fraudulent one. The details he includes in his book are very convincing to this effect. He further claims that, through political intrigue, laws were passed which do not allow producers who do not use these hormones on their herds to advertise that their milk is “hormone free”. Today the public does not know if the dairy products they are consuming have been “treated with a genetically recombined hormone” or not. (p.17)

Milk does indeed have numerous connotations. Philosophers have used milk to allegorically describe the unfolding of the universe. An aspiration regarding the uplifting of mankind inevitably alludes to the ‘milk of human kindness’ as a prerequisite toward a more Utopian civilization. Milk is a common bond among all mammals and humans can naturally relate to such comments. Milk also denotes purity, smoothness, colour (milky-white) and density (opaqueness or thin-ness). It is considered a basic food item and the products derived from milk are a staple in many a diet worldwide. Unfortunately, milk has now been degraded to the point where in some instances it is no longer considered a ‘healthy’ food.

Perhaps the degradation of milk is a reflection of the current state of mankind. The mental and psychological states of humanity can be witnessed daily in the actions and reactions of people to each other. The first and fundamental principle of Theosophy is the Brotherhood of Humanity. Unfortunately, at this stage of human evolution, the responsibility which comes with knowledge appears to be forsaken on the altar of materialism, with the well-being of humanity falling a distant second to profit margin. This disease of the mental/psychological human states is naturally reflected in the physical aspects of our lives. I believe it is a sad commentary when one of mankind’s most common symbols of purity has instead become simply another consumer product of which to be wary.

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# The Age of Earth

David Pratt

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According to theosophy, the earth is about two billion years old — a figure in agreement with ancient Hindu teachings. In the west, it was widely believed until the early 19th century that the earth was less than six thousand years old, a belief based on a literal interpretation of the Book of Genesis. In the 1640s, for example, biblical scholar Dr. John Lightfoot calculated that the world was created at the autumnal equinox in 3928 BC. A few years later, Archbishop James Ussher of Ireland announced that God created heaven and earth on Saturday evening, October 22, 4004 BC.<sup>1</sup>

In the 19th century, scientists tried to work out the earth's age by assuming that its features had been shaped by the same gradual processes operating today. For example, they calculated the time required for the earth's sedimentary rocks to be deposited, for the oceans to attain their current level of salinity, and for the planet to cool from an original molten state. Because these processes were not fully understood, the resulting estimates of the earth's age differed widely, ranging from 3 million years to 15,000 million years. The discovery of radioactivity in 1896 led to the development of radiometric dating, but it was not until the 1950s that the techniques were considered sufficiently refined to yield reliable dates. This method put an end to the significant level of disagreement among scientists on the age of the earth.

The basic principle of radiometric dating is very simple. A radioactive parent element spontaneously disintegrates, at an apparently constant rate, into a stable daughter element — e.g. uranium-238 decays to lead-206. By measuring the amounts of the parent and daughter elements in a rock, the time that has elapsed since it solidified can be calculated; the greater the proportion of the daughter element, the older it is. However, there are various complicating factors. Even if it were true that radioactive decay rates never changed, some of the daughter element may have been present in the rock when it crystallized, and some of the parent and daughter elements may have been lost or gained by the rock since it formed. If, after a rock has crystallized, it later undergoes reheating, the radioactive clock will be reset, sometimes to zero. Attempts to take these factors into account are not always successful, resulting in

discordant dates. For example, potassium-argon dating has given ages ranging from 160 million to 2.96 billion years for Hawaiian lava flows that occurred in 1800! These anomalous dates were blamed on the presence of 'excess argon'. This is an extreme case, and it would be wrong to dismiss radiometric dating as utterly worthless, since different radiometric techniques frequently give consistent dates for the same rock samples.<sup>2</sup>

The oldest known rocks on earth have been dated radiometrically at 3.96 billion years, and the oldest individual crystals at 4.3 billion years. Scientists believe that the earth is older than this, but that more ancient rocks did not survive the molten conditions that prevailed after the planet's birth. The oldest moon rocks have been dated at about 4.5 billion years, and the oldest meteorites at 4.5 to 4.6 billion years. On the basis of these results, along with calculations concerning lead isotopes\* in meteorites and in the earth, scientists have concluded that the entire solar system, including earth and all the other planets, formed about 4.55 billion years ago.<sup>3</sup> Radiometric ages of 6 billion years for earth rocks and 5.5 billion years for moon rocks have occasionally been reported, but such results are generally regarded as unreliable.<sup>4</sup> At the other extreme, there are still a number of fundamentalist Christians, or creationists, who believe that the earth — and in fact the whole universe — is only a few thousand years old.<sup>5</sup>

According to Hindu philosophy, the age of the earth (to the year 2000) is 1,972,949,101 years.<sup>6</sup> The earth will live for a total of 4.32 billion years — a 'day of Brahmā' — after which it will die and its lower elements will disintegrate. After a rest-period or 'night of Brahmā' of equal length, it will reembody. H.P. Blavatsky stated that these figures were more or less in accordance with the teachings of the Trans-Himalayan Brotherhood, for which she acted as messenger. Has radiometric dating rendered the theosophical age of the earth invalid, and exposed the Brotherhood of Adepts as a bunch of amateurs? Only if we accept the key assumptions on which the method is based — namely, that radioactive decay began as soon as the earth formed, and that decay rates have remained absolutely constant throughout the earth's history.

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\*Isotopes are atoms of a particular element that contain the same number of protons but different numbers of neutrons.

Each radioactive atom or isotope has a characteristic half-life, which is the time required for one-half of any given quantity of the atom to decay. Half-lives range from over a billion years to less than a billionth of a second. Experiments have shown that decay rates are not significantly affected by pressure and temperature, chemical reactions, and gravitational, magnetic, and electric fields. This is because radioactivity results mainly from very stable properties of atomic nuclei — properties which scientists claim to be totally unchanging. However, there is a small measure of uncertainty (of up to 2%) in measured half-lives. This means that extremely slow changes in decay rates could go unnoticed for a very long time. Considering the short period that scientists have been making such measurements, it is premature to conclude that decay rates are absolutely unvarying. It is interesting to note that carefully conducted experiments in psychokinesis have shown that radioactive decay can be influenced by the human mind — but such results are of course ignored by mainstream science.<sup>7</sup>

In theosophy, the earth's evolution is divided into an arc of descent and an arc of ascent.<sup>8</sup> During the descending arc, which comprises the first half of the earth's life, the earth condensed from its original ethereal condition into an increasingly dense and material state. At the midpoint of human evolution, some 4.5 million years ago<sup>9</sup>, the ascending arc began, during which the earth will gradually become more ethereal again. Radioactive decay is a sign of etherealization, and has only become the dominant trend since the start of the arc of ascent, prior to which there were only temporary episodes of radioactivity.<sup>10</sup> At present there are 118 known chemical elements. All the elements from uranium (atomic number 92) upwards, are very unstable; some do not exist in nature and are known only because they have been artificially created in the laboratory. It is quite likely that several million years ago, when the earth reached its deepest point of materiality, there were *more* stable elements than there are today. With the commencement of the upward arc, the heaviest elements are the first to become radioactive, but as times goes on, lighter elements will also become unstable, and decay rates will tend to increase.

Thus, theosophy does not just say that decay rates have been slower in the past, but that most of the earth's history to date has been characterized by the *concretion* of matter — the *opposite* of radioactivity. On the upward arc, heavier elements tend to disintegrate into lighter elements, whereas on the downward arc lighter elements tended to *integrate* into heavier elements. Radiometric dating currently makes no allowance for this. In the uranium-lead dating method, for instance, it is generally assumed

that all the uranium in a rock has been present from the time it formed, and that the lead has been produced mainly by the decay of the uranium; the possibility that the uranium was partly produced by the *materialization* of lead is not considered. Due to the flawed assumptions on which radiometric dating is based, it results in ages that are far too old; at best, it gives only *relative* dates, not absolute dates.

Scientists recognize that light elements can turn into heavier ones by means of nuclear fusion, but the prevailing belief is that this can take place only at temperatures of millions of degrees, such as are thought to exist in stars. However, biologist Louis Kervran and a number of other researchers have demonstrated that, in both living organisms and the mineral world, some common elements are transmuted into heavier elements without the need for extremely high temperatures and pressures, and some are transmuted into lighter elements.<sup>11</sup> Orthodox science does not bother to study these subtle, alchemical processes because it is already convinced that they cannot exist. 'Cold fusion' is another anomalous phenomenon that has largely been shunned and sidelined by the scientific establishment.<sup>12</sup> The term covers a variety of poorly understood nuclear reactions but, in contrast to 'hot' fusion, these take place at low temperatures and in relatively simple devices, instead of in reactors costing millions of dollars. Clearly, mainstream scientists are in no position to decree what is or is not possible in nature!

The earth's history is divided into a series of geological periods, whose boundaries are often marked by geological convulsions, biological extinctions, and the sudden development of new species. According to theosophy<sup>13</sup>, sedimentation in the present, fourth round of the earth's evolution began in the Laurentian period, towards the close of the Precambrian era, about 320 million years ago (corresponding 'scientific' date: about 640 million years). This was followed by the Paleozoic era (the age of trilobites and fishes), which began with a rapid and unprecedented proliferation of marine organisms (the 'Cambrian explosion'), and ended with the greatest extinction event in earth history. It was followed by the Mesozoic era (the age of reptiles), and then the Cenozoic era (the age of mammals). The main theosophical and scientific dates are given below:

Paleozoic: began about 240 million years ago (science: 540 million)

Divided into: Cambrian, Silurian, Ordovician, Devonian, Carboniferous, Permian

Mesozoic: began about 44 million years ago (science: 245 million)

Divided into: Triassic, Jurassic, Cretaceous

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# Theosophy and Buddhism

David Reigle

Theosophy is the modern name given by H. P. Blavatsky to what is described by her as the once universal but now hidden Wisdom-Religion, the parent source of all known religions. This original Wisdom-Religion had been preserved intact out of the reach of the many conflicting sects, who each thought that their piece of it was the only truth. Blavatsky was now entrusted by its custodians with the task of making publicly known its existence and bringing out some of its teachings. She presented it to the modern world as Theosophy. In her early writings she referred to this Wisdom-Religion as pre-Vedic Buddhism.

We can assert, with entire plausibility, that there is not one of all these sects—Kabalism, Judaism, and our present Christianity included—but sprang from the two main branches of that one mother-trunk, the once universal religion, which antedated the Vedic ages—we speak of that prehistoric Buddhism which merged later into Brahmanism.<sup>1</sup>

We repeat again, *Buddhism is but the primitive source of Brahmanism.*<sup>2</sup>

Pre-Vedic Brahmanism and Buddhism are the double source from which all religions sprang . . .<sup>3</sup>

When the Theosophical Society was founded by Blavatsky and others in 1875, she was asked about this Wisdom-Religion by William Q. Judge, one of the co-founders. He in his question referred to the custodians of the Wisdom-Religion as Masters, as did Blavatsky, since they were her teachers. Her reply indicates that while pre-Vedic Buddhism is a correct designation for the Wisdom-Religion, she considered that it might best be thought of as esoteric Buddhism. As reported by Judge:

. . . on my asking her [Blavatsky] in 1875 what could the Masters' belief be called, she told me they might be designated "pre-Vedic Buddhists," but that no one would now admit there was any Buddhism before the Vedas, so I had best think of them as Esoteric Buddhists.<sup>4</sup>

The title chosen for the first book to attempt an outline of the tenets of Theosophy or the Wisdom-Religion was *Esoteric Buddhism*. Its author, A. P. Sinnett, obviously also felt that this was an accurate

designation. This book was written on the basis of correspondence with two of the custodians of the Wisdom-Religion living in Tibet. These, Blavatsky's Masters or teachers, also came to be called by the name used in India (where Sinnett and Blavatsky were then living), Mahatmas. Their letters, later published and now preserved in the British Museum, became known as the Mahatma letters. However, as made clear in them, the term Mahatma is not used in Tibet. Instead, the Tibetan term *byang chub* is used, whose Sanskrit equivalent is Bodhisattva rather than Mahatma. Sinnett's book based on these Mahatma letters was responsible for establishing the idea among the Western public that Theosophy is esoteric Buddhism. But the public did not correctly apprehend what was meant by esoteric Buddhism, as the Mahatma K.H. commented several months after the book of that name was published:

. . . that public having never heard of the Tibetan, and entertaining very perverted notions of the Esoteric Buddhist System . . . the Tibetan School will ever be regarded by those who know little, if anything of it, as coloured more or less with sectarianism.<sup>5</sup>

Thus arose the misconception that Theosophy is derived from one religion among others, namely that known in the world as Buddhism, rather than from the Wisdom-Religion which was the source of all religions.

In order to counter this misconception, and to stress the universality of Theosophy, Blavatsky opened her greatest work, *The Secret Doctrine*, with a refutation of the idea that Theosophy is esoteric Buddhism. She said that Sinnett's book should have been titled, *Esoteric Buddhism*, spelled with one "d," to distinguish the Wisdom-Religion, or Buddhism, from the exoteric religion known as Buddhism. She repeated this in Section I of *The Key to Theosophy*. We can certainly understand the need to correct the misconception that had arisen in people's minds; but was the problem really with the book title, or was it with people being too ready to jump to unwarranted conclusions? We may recall that at the time the book was being written, the Mahatma K.H. thought *Esoteric Buddhism* was "an excellent title."<sup>6</sup> One must wonder if this distancing of Theosophy from esoteric Buddhism has not produced its own misconceptions; e.g., the idea that the Mahatmas lived in Tibet among Buddhists, but were not themselves Buddhists as such. The literary evidence from Blavatsky's Ma-

hatma teachers indicates that they were in fact Buddhists.

Starting with the first known Mahatma letter, written to Blavatsky's aunt in 1870 in the Mahatma K.H. handwriting, we find the following (translated from the original French):

She [Blavatsky] has been very ill, but is so no longer; for under the protection of the Lord Sang-gyas she has found devoted friends who guard her physically and spiritually.<sup>7</sup>

The word "Sang-gyas" (*sangs rgyas*) is the Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit word "Buddha."

Then in letters from the Mahatma K.H. to A. P. Sinnett and A. O. Hume, written in the early 1880s, we find a number of references to Sang-gyas or Buddha as "our Lord:"

They cannot place—however much they would—the birth of our Lord Sangyas Buddha A.D. as they have contrived to place that of Krishna.<sup>8</sup>

. . . the ecclesiastical system built upon the basic ideas of our Lord Gautama Buddha's philosophy, . . .<sup>9</sup>

. . . for the information gathered as to what takes place beyond we are indebted to the Planetary Spirits, to our blessed Lord Buddha.<sup>10</sup>

. . . and necessity of the practical application of these sublime words of our Lord and Master:—"O ye Bhikkhus and Arhats— . . ."<sup>11</sup>

Our Lord Buddha—a sixth r. man—<sup>12</sup>

Plato and Confucius were fifth round men and our Lord a sixth round man . . .<sup>13</sup>

. . . the old, very old fact distinctly taught by our Lord . . .<sup>14</sup>

"The right in thee is base, the wrong a curse," was said by our Lord Buddha for such as she; . . .<sup>15</sup>

The Devachan, or land of "Sukhavati," is *allegorically* described by our Lord Buddha himself.<sup>16</sup>

In letters from the Mahatma Morya to S. Ramaswamier and from the Mahatma K.H. to C. W. Leadbeater, we find similar references to "our Lord," using the term "Tathāgata," another title of the Buddha:

. . . decide after counting the whole cost, and may the light of our Lord Tathagata's memory aid you to decide for the best.<sup>17</sup>

So now choose and grasp your own destiny—and may our Lord's the Tathāgata's memory aid you to decide for the best.<sup>18</sup>

Let no one know that you are going, and may the blessing of our Lord and my poor blessing shield you from every evil in your new life.<sup>19</sup>

The letters from these Mahatmas also include other passages that specifically identify them as Buddhists:

. . . our lamas to honour the fraternity of the *Bhikkhus* [Buddhist monks] established by our blessed master himself . . .<sup>20</sup>

"Real Adepts like Gautama Buddha or Jesus Christ did not shroud themselves in mystery, but came and talked openly," quoth our oracle. If they did it's news to us—the humble followers of the former.<sup>21</sup>

. . . he who reads our Buddhist scriptures . . .<sup>22</sup>

Therefore, we deny God both as philosophers and as Buddhists.<sup>23</sup>

If it is objected that we too have temples, we too have priests and that our lamas also live on charity . . . let them know that the objects above named have in common with their Western equivalents, but the name. Thus in our temples there is neither a god nor gods worshipped, only the thrice sacred memory of the greatest as the holiest man that ever lived.<sup>24</sup>

They distinguish themselves from other creeds, including even Advaita Vedanta, which is said by Blavatsky to be, along with Buddhism, the closest to the Esoteric Philosophy:

We are not Adwaites . . .<sup>25</sup>

They retain this distinction, even though they accept the truths taught in Advaita Vedanta, and have Advaita Vedanta chelas or pupils:

It is an every day occurrence to find students belonging to different schools of occult thought sitting side by side at the feet of the same Guru. *Upasika* (Madam Blavatsky) and Subba Row, though pupils of the same Master, have not followed the same Philosophy—the one is Buddhist and the other an Adwaites.<sup>26</sup>

The Mahatma Morya wrote to Dr. Franz Hartmann that his becoming a Buddhist will make the path of knowledge easier of access. After H. P. Blavatsky and H. S. Olcott publicly took "Panchashila" at Galle, Ceylon, on May 25, 1880, to formally become Buddhists, the first Westerners known to do so, Hartmann followed suit and became a Buddhist on Dec.

26, 1883. The Mahatma Morya wrote in a letter to him on Feb. 5, 1884:

Let me give you an advice. Never offer yourself as a chela, but wait until chelaship descends by itself upon you. Above all, try to find yourself, and the path of knowledge will open itself before you, and this so much the easier as you have made a contact with the Light-ray of the Blessed one, whose name you have now taken as your spiritual lodestar. . . . Receive in advance my blessings and my thanks.<sup>27</sup>

It would seem that not only were Blavatsky's Mahatma teachers Buddhists, but so was the trans-Himalayan school of adepts to which they belonged.

When our great Buddha—the patron of all the adepts, the reformer and the codifier of the occult system, reached first *Nirvana* on earth . . .<sup>28</sup>

. . . and philanthropy as preached by our Great Patron—"the Saviour of the World—the Teacher of Nirvana and the Law" . . .<sup>29</sup>

In a letter to Mrs. Sinnett, Blavatsky refers to other Masters or Mahatmas of this school,

. . . who are pure blooded Mongolian Buddhists.<sup>30</sup>

Indeed, some of the clearest references identifying this school of Mahatmas with Buddhism are found in the words of the Chohan, the teacher of Blavatsky's teachers:

That *we* the devoted followers of that spirit incarnate of absolute self sacrifice, of philanthropy, divine kindness, as of all the highest virtues attainable on this earth of sorrow, the man of men, Gautama Buddha, should ever allow the Theosophical Society to represent the *embodiment of selfishness*, the refuge of the few with no thought in them for the many, is a strange idea, my brothers.

Among the few glimpses obtained by Europeans of Tibet and its mystical hierarchy of "perfect lamas," there is one which was correctly understood and described. "The incarnations of the Boddhisatwa Padma Pani or Avalo-Kiteswara and of Tsong Kapa, that of Amitabha, relinquish at their death the attainment of Buddhahood—*i.e.* the summum bonum of bliss, and of individual *personal* felicity—that they might be born again and again for the benefit of mankind." (Rhys Davids). In other words, that they might be again and again subjected to misery, imprisonment in flesh and all the sorrows of life, provided that by such a self sacrifice repeated

throughout long and dreary centuries they might become the means of securing salvation and bliss in the hereafter for a handful of men chosen among but one of the many races of mankind. And it is we, the humble disciples of these perfect lamas, who are expected to allow the T.S. to drop its noblest title, that of the Brotherhood of Humanity to become a simple school of psychology? No, no, good brothers, you have been labouring under the mistake too long already.<sup>31</sup>

As clear as these references are to the Mahatmas of this school being the devoted followers of Gautama Buddha, and "humble disciples of these perfect lamas," there yet exists an even more direct statement. This came through unfiltered in a response from the Mahatma Morya to a request from a certain Hindu Theosophist to open up new correspondence. He and other Hindu Theosophists, however, were not prepared to give up caste and their "old superstitions" such as faith in the Gods and God, as had the Hindu Theosophist Damodar Mavalankar. The Mahatma Morya says in his characteristic blunt manner:

What have we, the disciples of the true *Arhats*, of esoteric Buddhism and of Sanggyas [Buddha] to do with the *Shastras* and Orthodox Brahmanism? There are 100 of thousands of Fakirs, Sannyasis and Sadhus leading the most pure lives, and yet being as they are, on the path of *error*, never having had an opportunity to meet, see or even hear of us. Their forefathers have driven away the followers of the only true philosophy upon earth from India and now it is not for the latter to come to them but for them to come to us if they want us. Which of them is ready to become a Buddhist, a *Nastika* [one who does not believe in God or Gods] as they call us? None. Those who have believed and followed us have had their reward.<sup>32</sup>

These quotations given above leave little doubt that the Mahatmas behind the Theosophical movement, Blavatsky's teachers, considered themselves to be Buddhists as such, and not only esoteric Buddhists.

The obvious question which now arises is this: Why don't the teachings given out by the Theosophical Mahatmas agree with the known teachings of Buddhism? To merely say that the Mahatmas are esoteric Buddhists does not entirely answer the question. It does not explain the Buddhist part. What makes them esoteric Buddhists rather than esoteric Hindus or esoteric Christians or esoteric anything else? Why should there have ever been any talk of pre-Vedic Buddhism or esoteric Buddhism unless known Buddhism has some direct connection

with their teachings? Having investigated this question for many years, my own conclusion is simply and in brief as follows.

Buddhism is the most direct descendant of the Wisdom-Religion now in existence, and in the Buddhist scriptures are preserved more of the Wisdom-Religion's teachings than in any other texts now extant. Thus Blavatsky's Mahatma teachers are even exoterically Buddhists. But, as often repeated by Blavatsky, the commentaries which give the true meanings of the known texts have been withdrawn and are no longer accessible. Thus the teachings of the Mahatmas differ significantly from those of exoteric or known Buddhism. In other words, the texts of the Wisdom-Religion are best preserved in Buddhism, while the true teachings of these texts, long preserved in secret by the Mahatmas, began to be given out to the world as Theosophy.

We may recall that when the Theosophical Society was started, the scriptures of Northern Buddhism were almost all unavailable and untranslated, unlike those of Hinduism that Blavatsky cited frequently. The books on Buddhism that then existed were criticized by the Mahatma K.H. Yet he indicates that even the exoteric Buddhism portrayed in them "is full of the sparkle of our most important esotericism," likening it to diamond mines:

The more one reads such speculations as those of Messrs. Rhys Davids, Lillie, etc.—the less can one bring himself to believe that the unregenerate Western mind can ever get at the core of our abstruse doctrines. . . . Mr. Rhys Davids' *Buddhism* is full of the sparkle of our most important esotericism; but always, as it would seem, beyond not only his reach but apparently even his powers of intellectual perception. . . . He is like the Cape Settlers who lived over diamond mines without suspecting it.<sup>33</sup>

To show this, the Mahatma K.H. then provides Sinnett with the esoteric explanation of an exoteric Buddhist doctrine given in Rhys Davids' book.

*En passant*, to show to you that not only were not the "races" *invented* by us, but that they are a cardinal dogma with the Lama Buddhists and with all who study our esoteric doctrine, I send you an explanation on a page or two in Rhys Davids' *Buddhism*,—otherwise incomprehensible, meaningless and absurd. It is written with the special permission of the Chohan (*my* Master) and—for your benefit. No Orientalist has ever suspected the truths contained in it, and—you are the first Western man (outside Tibet) to whom it is now explained.<sup>34</sup>

So far as I know, this explanation has not come down to us, as it is not among the Mahatma papers now preserved in the British Museum. From a perusal of Rhys Davids' book, we may assume that this explanation was "on a page or two" of his chapter 8, "Northern Buddhism." Specifically, it likely refers to the listing he gives of the five Dhyāni Buddhas, their five Bodhisattvas, and the five corresponding Mānushi (human) Buddhas.<sup>35</sup> K.H. had also in a previous letter spoken of sending an explanation of this material; but if there included, it too has not come down to us. In this letter he appeared anxious that the theosophists give out the right explanation of this seemingly fantastic Buddhist teaching.

Only, to prove *to you*, if not to him, that we have not *invented* those races, I will give out for your benefit that which has never been given out before. I will explain to you a whole chapter out of Rhys Davids work on Buddhism, or rather on Lamaism, which, in his natural ignorance he regards as a *corruption* of Buddhism! Since those gentlemen—the Orientalists—presume to give to the world their *soi-disant* translations and commentaries on our sacred books, let the theosophists show the great ignorance of those "world" pundits, by giving the public the right doctrines and explanations of what they would regard as an absurd, fancy theory.<sup>36</sup>

Fortunately, Sinnett did give out in his Esoteric Buddhism what is apparently this right explanation. In chapter 9, entitled "Buddha," Sinnett explains that the five human Buddhas given by Rhys Davids relate to the five races taught by Theosophy. He introduces this topic thus:

The explanation of this branch of the subject, in plain terms, will not alone be important for its own sake, but will be interesting to all students of exoteric Buddhism, as elucidating some of the puzzling complications of the more abstruse "Northern doctrine."<sup>37</sup>

The listing of the human Buddhas in the Rhys Davids book gives three Buddhas of the remote past, then Gautama the historical Buddha as fourth, and Maitreya the coming Buddha as fifth. Sinnett explains why it is that the fourth Buddha belongs to our fifth race; namely, that at the beginning of the first race appears a teacher he refers to as a Dhyān Chohan, and who is therefore not in this list of five Buddhas. His explanation of this, however, was not altogether clear; and a correspondent questioned it in *The Theosophist* for August, 1884. The editor, H. P. Blavatsky, clarified that:

. . . *Gautama* was the *fourth Buddha*, *i.e.*, "enlightened," while he was the *fifth* spiritual

. . . *continued on page 22*

# The H.P.B. Library

John Robert Colombo



H.P.B. Library Seal

A remarkable if little known resource that is lodged in this country is The H.P.B. Library.

The initial letters H.P.B. are recognized by students of occult thought and especially by members of the Theosophical Society, for they identify its leading

founder, Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891), the Russian-born author of such books on occultism as *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*.

The H.P.B. Library was established in her honour as an independent centre distinct from the Theosophical Society by Madame's close friend Alice L. Cleather, a member of the Theosophical Society's Esoteric Section and later its Inner Group. A personal pupil of Madame Blavatsky, Mrs. Cleather began to distance herself from developments within the Society under the leadership of Mrs. Annie Besant, Madame Blavatsky's chosen successor. So in London in 1917, Cleather established a lending library of basic books that would be consistent with the original aims and ideals of the Society.

How, then, did the library come to Canada, specifically to be lodged in the study of a private home in the West End of Toronto? It came about through the agency of Mrs. Hildegard Henderson, the daughter of an American wool broker who grew up in New York City. She encountered Mrs. Cleather in London, England, in 1910, and became her pupil. Mrs. Cleather transferred the responsibility of maintaining the collection to Mrs. Henderson in 1923, the year Mrs. Henderson and her husband retired to Victoria, B.C. Mrs. Cleather died in 1938.

Mrs. Henderson cared for the collection and developed it to reflect the principles of the "Back to Blavatsky" movement until her death in Victoria in 1948. A tribute to her and an account of the library appeared in *The Canadian Theosophist*, Dec. 1948.

Upon her death, responsibility for the library was assumed by one of her pupils, Mrs. Edith Fielding, who had an eighteen-year association with Mrs. Henderson. In 1969, it went on to Mr. Michael Freeman, a retired fruit grower in the Okanagan, who as a very young man had been a student of Mrs. Henderson.

With the death of Mr. Freeman in 1991, responsibility for the collection was assumed by Mrs. Joan Sutcliffe, who knew Mr. Freeman very well through correspondence and through numerous visits to the library. Since then the books have been housed at her address at 284 Ellis Avenue, Toronto, Ont. M6S 2X2.

Mrs. Sutcliffe was born in Yorkshire, England, in 1940. She studied at Leeds University and later worked at the Bradford Public Library. As she wrote in a letter to me dated 2 Nov. 1999:

During this period I became involved in spiritualism and explored various psychological and spiritual groups. In 1964 I came to Canada with my husband, Alan, and a few years later our two sons were born. At this time I became interested in Eastern philosophy and studied Sanskrit for two years at the University of Toronto and practised meditation with a Buddhist group. In 1969, I joined the Toronto Theosophical Society and was its secretary for about ten years. In the winter of 1978, I met Michael Freeman who came to Toronto to republish Alice Cleather's book *H.P. Blavatsky: A Great Betrayal*. He invited me to visit the H.P.B. Library the following summer at his home in the Okanagan. This visit evolved into a sort of yearly pilgrimage for me. For many years I have also been involved with an Ashram in South India, which looks after and educates poor or destitute children. The guiding motif of the Ashram is spiritual, and while basically of the Hindu tradition, there is a theosophical outlook through the president. Three years ago my son and I spent some time there, and presently I am running a sponsorship program from Canada.

She concluded:

As to the future of the library, I really have no idea, especially in this changing age. Some day I shall have to pass it on to some younger person, but who that will be, I do not have any inkling at this time.

The H.P.B. Library consists of rare and original publications of Theosophical and occult interest. The printed catalogue to the collection lists books by the following categories (with numbers of titles in parentheses):

. . . continued on page 20

# BOOK REVIEWS

*The Mystery Schools*, by Grace F. Knoche. Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1999. x + 98 pp. Price \$12.95 US cloth; \$7.50 US softcover.

A better definition of a Mystery School could hardly be found than that of Grace Knoche's: "A university of the soul, a school for the study of the mysteries of the inner nature of man and of surrounding nature" (p.vii).

Most students of Theosophy accept that such Schools have always existed when required, i.e., when aspirants on the spiritual path are ready for higher instruction. However, because at least in their purest forms they are conducted in the strictest secrecy, few are known historically. The most famous of the Mystery Schools are those collectively labelled the Hellenistic Mysteries – Eleusinian, Orphic, Bacchic, Isiac, Mithraic and others. But as these were only written about (for the most part exoterically) when already in their decadence over two millennia ago, even in this instance our knowledge is limited.

Grace Knoche's all too brief study, *The Mystery Schools*, considers the subject from a Theosophical perspective, beginning with the earliest cycles of humanity. This approach properly emphasizes the

universality of the Mysteries, though "not in detail of cultural and ethnic interpretation" (p.27). These schools of wisdom, philosophy and science have several grades, none of which can be skipped. Their universal and ageless presence is therefore encouraging to those who realize that many lifetimes will have to be lived before final graduation.

In this regard, the necessity for the division between the Lesser and Greater Mysteries, to use the Hellenistic expression, is given due explanation. The Lesser Mysteries but serve to show candidates the possibility of eventual individual perfection. They are open to all, but admission to the Greater – the road to final perfection (*telete*) – is not automatic and must be earned. It is a hard road to travel, and only the few with "sufficient spiritual stamina" (p.51) are encouraged to start out on it.

This small book, *The Mystery Schools*, deals with an important subject. It was originally published fifty years ago. Now revised, it well merits this new edition.

Ted G. Davy

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## *Psychic Pioneer Publications*

A new publishing venture known as Psychic Pioneer Publications will be welcomed by all who are interested in Theosophical history and/or 19th century spiritualism. The founder, Leslie Price of England, was also the founding editor/publisher of the *Theosophical History* journal, now edited by Dr. James Santucci in California.

The initial list of intended PPP publications announces "source material by and about earlier workers in the psychic field, together with new scholarship." The first in the series is a book review by William Stainton Moses of A.P. Sinnett's *The Occult World*. Originally published in the July 1881 issue of *Psychological Review*, it is aptly titled "Occultism and Spiritualism." Moses was one of the better known mediums of his day, whose own writings were a serious attempt to study the phenomena with which he was closely involved. His review therefore is an important early assessment of the Theosophical teachings given directly in correspondence

to A.P. Sinnett by the Mahatma K.H. Some phenomena reported by Sinnett were similar to those familiar to Moses, so his approach was far from that of a sceptic. Indeed, his review probably interested a number of Victorian Spiritualists to read *The Occult World* and to join the young Theosophical Society.

Fittingly, second on the list is a paper by Leslie Price himself, "The Mystery of Stainton Moses." It marks the centenary of Moses' death and was originally presented at the 1992 International Conference of the Society for Psychical Research. Moses is of interest to students of Theosophy if only because his name and mediumistic phenomena are mentioned in *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*.

Projected titles include a paper on the 19th century Russian psychic researcher Alexander Aksakoff, with whom H.P. Blavatsky corresponded; another on Abraham Lincoln and Spiritualism. One study, "The Cathars and Arthur Guirdham" indicates the series will not be exclusive to the 19th century.

A free sample of *Fohat* will be sent to anyone you might suggest.  
Subscriptions can be purchased according to the rates noted on the Contents page.

. . . **Milk** continued from page 11

Let us keep looking up to the stars and elevating our minds to the wonder of, and spiritual symbology reflected in the 'Milky' Way. By concentrating on the

One-ness of all manifestation, perhaps we can be a constructive force in an, at times, destructive world.

**References:**

- Blavatsky, H.P. *The Secret Doctrine*. Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1970.  
Cohen, Robert. *MILK The Deadly Poison*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Argus Press, Inc., 1998.  
Johari, Harish. *The Healing Cuisine, India's Art of Ayurvedic Cooking*. Rochester, VT: Healing Arts Press, 1994.  
Walker, Barbara G. *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols & Sacred Objects*. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row Publishers, 1988.

. . . **HPB Library** continued from page 18

- H.P.B. & the Theosophical Movement (39)
- Occultism and Theosophy (174)
- Buddhism, Tibet & the Far East (95)
- Vedanta & Mystical Philosophy of India (81)
- Egypt, Islam & the Near East (33)
- Greek & Roman Philosophy (41)
- Western Occultism (132)
- Native American Indian Teaching (23)
- Science, History & Psychology (52)
- Pamphlets (166)
- Magazines Bound in Volumes (21)
- Reference Books (17)
- Oriental Art (16)

*to Elephanta, The Todas, The Realms of the Egyptian Dead, The Wisdom of the Ancients and the New Atlantis, Guide to Glastonbury's Temple of the Stars, The Swastika & Atlantis & the Pyramid of Xochicalco, Heredity in Light of Esoteric Philosophy, The Best Food for Man, The Prasnotara, Lucifer, Thirteen Tibetan Tankas.*

Books may be borrowed from the Library in person or by post. (The reference works may be consulted only on the premises.) There is no borrowing charge, though donations to defray postal charges are appreciated.

If my arithmetic is correct, 890 books are arranged in 14 categories. There are some fascinating titles here, especially the following (one from each category: *The Hall of Magic Mirrors, Exploring the Great Beyond, Man and Mystery in Asia, From Adam's Peak*

[*John Robert Colombo is nationally known as the Master Gatherer for his compilations of Canadiana, as John "Bartlett" Colombo for his books of quotations, and as Canada's Mr. Mystery for his books on the supernatural and the paranormal. Among the latter are Mysterious Canada, Haunted Toronto, Mysteries of Ontario, etc.*]

. . . **Earth** continued from page 13

- Cenozoic: began about 8 million years ago (science: 66.4 million)
  - Divided into: Tertiary (subdivisions: Paleocene, Eocene, Oligocene, Miocene, Pliocene);
  - Quaternary (subdivisions: Pleistocene, Holocene)

The Quaternary period began with the Pleistocene ice age, about 870,000 years ago (science: 1.6 million), which ended with the extinction of many species of large mammals around 10,000 years ago, during the transition to the Holocene or Recent epoch.

Most scientists have so much faith in the radiometric timescale that independent verification of it is no longer considered necessary. There are, however, indications that it might be wrong. For instance, by counting the fine rhythmic layers making up the 3800-metre-thick Tertiary deposits of Burma, L.D. Stamp concluded that the duration of the Oligocene and half of the Miocene was about 2.5 million


years.<sup>14</sup> This figure is consistent with estimates based on measurements of present-day sedimentation rates. It is also exactly equal to the theosophical figure. The corresponding figure based on radiometric dating, on the other hand, is 22 million years.

Although the main reason for the discrepancies between the scientific and theosophical timescales is the false assumptions underlying radiometric dating, another relevant factor is the length of the earth-year. In theosophical dates, a year simply means one revolution of the earth around the sun, however long it may take. Radioactive half-lives and the dates derived from them, on the other hand, are based on the length of the earth-year as it is at present. If a year was much longer in the past, this would account for part of the chronological differences. Scientists do in fact claim that there were more days in a year in the distant past, but they say that this is because the earth used to rotate more rapidly, not because it took longer to orbit the sun. Growth rings in fossil corals supposedly confirm

that there used to be about 425 days in a year in the early Paleozoic, but this interpretation of the rather contradictory data has been challenged by some scientists.<sup>15</sup> According to theosophy<sup>16</sup>, the number of days in a year averages 360 over the course of the earth's lifetime — i.e. the earth rotates on its axis an average of 360 times during each revolution around the sun; at times, such as at present, there are slightly more days in a year and at other times slightly less. The absolute length of the year is likewise said to both lengthen and decrease, and it therefore probably plays no more than a minor role in explaining the discordances between scientific and theosophical dates.

Scientists seek to reconstruct the earth's history by examining the distribution and sequence of rock strata, their physical characteristics, and the fossils preserved in them. The ages assigned to these strata are of secondary importance. When correlating scientific findings with the information on the earth's history provided by theosophy, it is therefore important to focus on geological periods rather than years. For instance, theosophy says that the first apes arose in the Miocene, beginning about 4 million years ago, as a result of cross-breeding between undeveloped humans and simians. According to science, the

primitive ape-like hominids known as the australopithecines also appeared around 4 million years ago. Given the difference between the theosophical and scientific timescales, the fact that these dates are the same clearly indicates that they *do not* refer to the same event! The 4-million-year date assigned by science to the earliest australopithecines places them in the late Pliocene — millions of years after the appearance of their distant ancestors, whose fossils are found in Miocene strata; it is to the latter event that the theosophical date refers.

The Quaternary is sometimes called the 'age of man'. From a theosophical viewpoint, while it is true that our own fifth root-race or humanity rose to dominance during this period, recognizably human beings, with self-conscious minds, emerged over 18 million years ago in the Mesozoic, and the beginning of human evolution in the fourth round dates as far back as the mid-Paleozoic, when humans had huge ethereal forms. Our journey through the human kingdom on this planet embraces vast, unimaginable periods of time. However, it is not so much the attaining of some far-off goal of relative spiritual perfection that is important, but how we handle the challenges and adventures we meet along the way. 

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2. William R. Corliss (comp.), *Anomalies in Geology: Physical, Chemical, Biological*, Sourcebook Project, 1989, pp. 249-60; Michael A. Cremo & Richard L. Thompson, *Forbidden Archeology: The Hidden History of the Human Race*, Bhaktivedanta Institute, 1993, pp. 693-5; 'Geochronology kata John Woodmorappe', <http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/woodmorappe-geochronology.html>.
3. G. Brent Dalrymple, *The Age of the Earth*, Stanford University Press, 1991.
4. *Anomalies in Geology*, p. 253; William R. Corliss (comp.), *The Moon and the Planets*, Sourcebook Project, 1985, p. 116.
5. See Chris Stassen, 'The Age of the Earth', Talk. Origins Archive, <http://earth.ics.uci.edu/faqs/faq-age-of-earth.html>.
6. Hans Malmstedt, 'Our Position in Time on Globe D', *The Theosophical Path*, October 1933, pp. 226-35.
7. Richard S. Broughton, *Parapsychology: The Controversial Science*, Ballantine Books, 1991, pp. 168-72; Dean Radin, *The Conscious Universe: The Scientific Truth of Psychic Phenomena*, HarperEdge, 1997, pp. 138-42.
8. H.P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, Theosophical University Press (TUP), 1977 (1888), 1:159, 2:68fn, 250, 308fn.
9. G. de Purucker, *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, TUP, 1945, pp. 20-1, 638-40; *The Secret Doctrine*, 1:439fn, 2:147fn.
10. G. de Purucker, *The Esoteric Tradition*, 2nd ed., TUP, 1940, pp. 324-7, 453-4, 760; *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, pp. 450-1.
11. Peter Tompkins & Christopher Bird, *The Secret Life of Plants*, Harper & Row, 1973, pp. 274-91; C. Louis Kervran, *Biological Transmutations*, Happiness Press, 1989.
12. Tadahiko Mizuno, *Nuclear Transmutation: The Reality of Cold Fusion*, Infinite Energy Press ([www.infinite-energy.com](http://www.infinite-energy.com)), 1998; Dr Eugene F. Mallove, 'Cold Fusion: The "miracle" is no mistake', *Analogue: Science Fiction and Fact*, July/August 1997, pp. 53-73.
13. *The Secret Doctrine*, 2:314fn, 395, 709-10; F.J. Dick & William Scott, 'The Age of the Earth', *The Theosophical Path*, April 1919, pp. 369-79; 'Geochronology: Theosophy and Science', <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/dp5>.
14. William R. Corliss (comp.), *Inner Earth: A Search for Anomalies*, Sourcebook Project, 1991, p. 99.
15. Stephen J. Gould, *The Panda's Thumb*, Penguin, 1990, pp. 262-8.
16. G. de Purucker, *Fountain-Source of Occultism*, TUP, 1974, pp. 161-2; *The Secret Doctrine*, 2:324-5; *Dialogues of G. de Purucker*, TUP, 1948, 1:368-70.

. . . **Buddhism** continued from page 17

teacher. The first “teacher” of this “Round” on this planet was a *Dhyan Chohan*. As a *Dhyan Chohan*, he belonged to another System, and was thus far higher than a *Buddha*. As, however, in ordinary language, all spiritual teachers are called “*Buddhas*,” Mr. Sinnett speaks of Gautama as the fifth *Buddha*. To be more accurate, it must be said that Gautama was the fifth spiritual teacher in this “Round” on this planet, while he was the fourth who became a *Buddha*.<sup>38</sup>

With this one example the Mahatma K.H. showed that the hitherto esoteric teachings now given out as Theosophy could explain the known teachings of Buddhism that were otherwise considered fantastic, and at the same time the known teachings of Buddhism could support the newly given out Theosophical teachings that were otherwise considered fantastic.

The many schools of Buddhism, each with its own varying interpretations, all claim to have preserved intact the original teachings, and to have transmitted their correct explanations in an unbroken line. Theosophy, too, makes this claim. As Blavatsky describes to a correspondent:

But what I do believe in is: (1), the unbroken oral teachings revealed by living *divine* men during the infancy of mankind to the elect among men; (2), that it has reached us *unaltered*; and (3), that the MASTERS are thoroughly versed in the science based on such uninterrupted teaching.<sup>39</sup>

#### Notes

1. *Isis Unveiled*, by H. P. Blavatsky, 1st ed., 1877; rev. ed. [by Borisde Zirkoff] (pagination unchanged), Wheaton, Illinois: Theosophical Publishing House, 1972, vol. 2, p. 123.
2. *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, p. 169.
3. *Isis Unveiled*, vol. 2, p. 639.
4. *The Path*, vol. 9, March 1895, p. 431; reprinted in *Echoes of the Orient: The Writings of William Quan Judge*, vol. I, compiled by Dara Eklund, San Diego: Point Loma Publications, 1975, p. 453. The spelling “Buddhists” is found in *The Path*; it was adapted to “Budhists” in *Echoes of the Orient*.
5. *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, compiled by A. T. Barker, 1st ed., 1923; 3rd rev. ed., Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1962, p. 392; arranged in chronological sequence by Vicente Hao Chin, Jr., Quezon City, Metro Manila: Theosophical Publishing House, 1993, p. 410.
6. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 198; chron. ed., p. 363.
7. *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, compiled by C. Jinarajadasa, First Series, letter no. 38, Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1st ed., 1919, p. 102; 5th ed., 1964, p. 85; Second Series, letter no. 1, Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1925, p. 4; Chicago: The Theosophical Press, 1926, p. 11. Both volumes include a transcription of the original French letter, and an English translation. The second volume also includes a facsimile of the original, allowing my corrected spelling “Sang-gyas,” rather than the printed “Sangyas.”
8. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 339; chron. ed., pp. 377-78.
9. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 393; chron. ed., p. 410.
10. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 134; chron. ed., p. 279.
11. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 381; chron. ed., p. 385.
12. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 94; chron. ed., p. 186.

Both Buddhism and Theosophy teach that each person should determine for his or her own self what is true through proper reasoning. If the example given by the Mahatma K.H. be taken as representative, we may reasonably conclude that Buddhism does in fact preserve original teachings of the Wisdom-Religion, and that the correct explanations have indeed been transmitted in an unbroken line to the esoteric school of the Mahatmas, and partially given out to the world as Theosophy.

The Mahatma K.H. had advised Sinnett that to properly study and correctly understand their teachings, a special group should be formed for the express purpose of seeking esoteric knowledge from the Northern Buddhist source:

It seems necessary for a proper study and correct understanding of our Philosophy and the benefit of those whose inclination leads them to seek esoteric knowledge from the Northern Buddhist Source . . . that an exclusive group composed of those members who desire to follow absolutely the teachings of the School to which we, of the Tibetan Brotherhood, belong, should be formed. . . .<sup>40</sup>

However, the attempt made at that time soon proved abortive; and this remains unaccomplished and still a desideratum. Now that so many of the Northern Buddhist scriptures have become available, the opportunities to study and interpret them in light of Theosophy as sourcebooks of the Wisdom-Religion are very great indeed. 🙏

13. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 83; chron. ed., p. 176.
14. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 108; chron. ed., p. 199.
15. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 354; chron. ed., p. 442.
16. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 97; chron. ed., p. 189.
17. *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, Second Series, letter no. 51, Morya to S. Ramaswamier, Adyar ed., 1925, p. 98; Chicago ed., 1926, p. 110.
18. *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, First Series, letter no. 7, K.H. to C. W. Leadbeater, 1st ed., 1919, p. 35; 5th ed., 1964, p. 30. A facsimile of this letter was published in *The "K.H." Letters to C. W. Leadbeater*, by C. Jinarajadasa, Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1941, where this passage occurs on p. 11 (incidentally showing the circumflex mark in the word Tathāgata).
19. *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, First Series, letter no. 8, K.H. to C. W. Leadbeater, 1st ed., 1919, p. 36; 5th ed., 1964, p. 30; facsimile in *The "K.H." Letters to C. W. Leadbeater*, pp. 50-51.
20. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 58; chron. ed., p. 275.
21. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 277; chron. ed., p. 71.
22. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 54; chron. ed., p. 271.
23. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 52; chron. ed., p. 270.
24. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 58; chron. ed., p. 275.
25. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 53; chron. ed., p. 271.
26. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 393; chron. ed., p. 410.
27. *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. 8, Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1960, p. 446.
28. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 43; chron. ed., p. 62.
29. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 33; chron. ed., p. 49.
30. *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, compiled by A. T. Barker, 1st ed., 1925; facsimile edition, Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1973, p. 85.
31. *Combined Chronology*, Margaret Conger, Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1973, pp. 46-47; *The Mahatma Letters*, chron. ed., appendix II, pp. 479-80; with minor variants, *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, First Series, letter no. 1. The reference attributed to Rhys Davids is actually from Clements R. Markham, ed., *Narratives of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet and of the Journey of Thomas Manning to Lhasa*, 1st ed., 1876; 2nd ed., London, 1879, p. xlvi. The reference to securing salvation for a handful of men from but one of the many races of mankind is further explained in an excerpt from a secret book, given by H. P. Blavatsky in "Reincarnations' of Buddha," *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. 14, Wheaton, Illinois: Theosophical Publishing House, 1985, p. 405:
 

The Seven Ways and the Four Truths were once more hidden out of sight. The Merciful One [Buddha] confined since then his attention and fatherly care to the heart of Bodyul [Tibet], the nursery grounds of the seeds of truth. The blessed "remains" since then have overshadowed and rested in many a holy body of human Bodhisattvas.
32. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 455; chron. ed., p. 95.
33. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 337; chron. ed., p. 376.
34. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 154; chron. ed., p. 315.
35. *Buddhism: Being a Sketch of the Life and Teachings of Gautama, the Buddha*, by T. W. Rhys Davids, 1st ed., 1877; rev. ed., London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1886, p. 205; taken from Eugène Burnouf, *Introduction à l'histoire du Bouddhisme indien*, Paris, 1844, p. 117.
36. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 182; chron. ed., p. 261.
37. *Esoteric Buddhism*, by A. P. Sinnett, 1st ed., 1883; 5th annotated ed. 1885, reprint, Minneapolis: Wizards Bookshelf, 1973, p. 171.
38. *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. 6, 1st ed., 1954; 2nd ed., Wheaton, Illinois: Theosophical Publishing House, 1975, p. 267. The Buddhist texts (e.g., the *Bhadra-kalpika Sūtra*) speak of many more than five Buddhas, but only four have so far appeared in our *kalpa*, or eon; with the fifth, Maitreya, next to come in our *kalpa*. Buddhist texts (e.g., the *Abhidharma-kośa*) describe several kinds of *kalpas*. One kind of *kalpa* is, in the Theosophical terminology coined by A. P. Sinnett, a "round." A round is the time period during which seven sequential races or humanities evolve on our planet. The equivalence of this *kalpa* and "round" is shown in a quotation from a commentary given in *The Secret Doctrine*, by H. P. Blavatsky, 1st ed., 1888; rev. ed. [by Boris de Zirkoff] (pagination unchanged), Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1978, vol. 1, p. 184:
 

The human foetus follows now in its transformations all the forms that the physical frame of man had assumed throughout the three Kalpas (Rounds) during the tentative efforts at plastic formation around the monad by senseless, because imperfect, matter, in her blind wanderings. In the present age . . .
39. *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. 11, Wheaton, Illinois: Theosophical Publishing House, 1973, pp. 466-67. Contrast this statement with the popular view repeated again and again by ill-informed writers that Blavatsky's source was psychic communications from "Ascended Masters."
40. *The Mahatma Letters*, 3rd ed., p. 394; chron. ed., p. 411.

# *Fohat is the Steed, Thought is the Rider*

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*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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