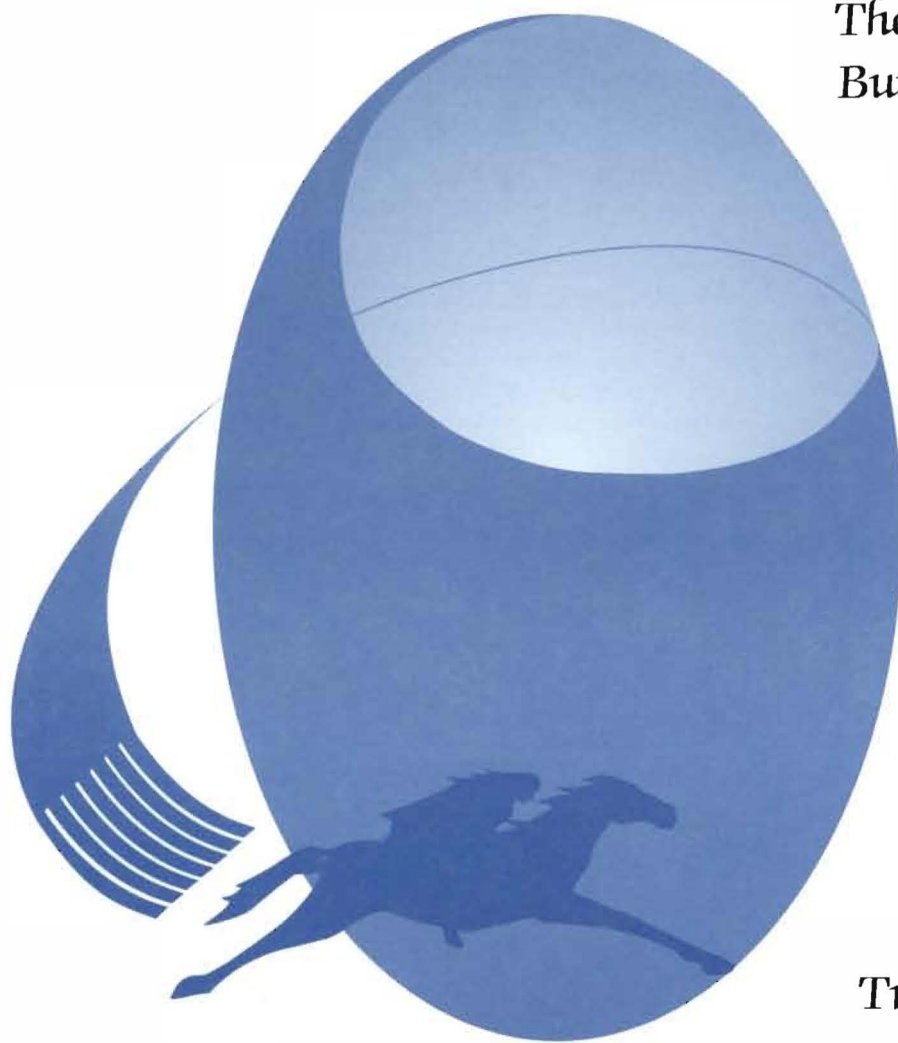


FOHAT

Volume VIII, Number I

Spring 2004



The Gunas: The
Building Blocks
of Nature

The Abuse
of the
Holy Ghost in
Modern Society

Practical Tips
on Using
Lunar Knowledge

Mabel Collins:
Getting Into
Trouble With HPB

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.

Recent Events from the News

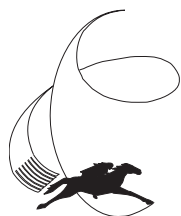
From the James McCanney Science Hour: In May there will be two significant comets in the inner solar system, C2002 T7 and C2001 Q4. Scientist James McCanney has different theories concerning comets and the solar system that may lead to some unique shows. McCanney is calling on amateur astronomers to train their telescopes onto the eastern sky on the morning of May 6th. Comet C2002 T7 will be visible around the world as it moves into a perfect alignment behind Mercury thereby setting up an alignment between the comet, Mercury and the Sun. Depending on the electrical volatility of the Sun at that time (and it has been uncharacteristically volatile during the past year when we should be in a time of Sunspot minima), we could see, according to McCanney, an electrical discharge occur between the comet and the planet Mercury. We could see a Sunward spike (an electron beam connecting bodies of different potentials) leaving the head of the comet and attaching to the planet Mercury. This could lead to a visible comet tail forming on the planet itself and possibly continuing to exist for some time after the comet has moved on. Also, occurring at the same time and situated in the sky above Mercury and C2002 T7 will be the Eta Aquarids meteor shower.

Soon after, in the western sky near the planet Venus, comet C2001 Q4 will be making a similar appearance. In both cases the comets will be giving a broadside appearance making the search for the Sunward spikes quite easy. Amateur astronomers are encouraged to train their telescopes in the dark sky just ahead of the comet between the comet and the Sun. Time lapse photographs or CCD images in this region should pick up any Sunward spikes and not risk having the images of the spikes washed out by the light from the head of the comet. The best night for observing this possible Sunward spike will be on Tuesday, May 11th. For further information go to www.jmccanneyscience.com.

More Bigfoot Evidence Found: *Phenomena Magazine* has a report of hunter Stuart Caesar finding evidence of Bigfoot in the wilds of Northern Pennsylvania. Caesar and his girlfriend found tracks 16 inches wide. Caesar stated that "Indians believed in Bigfoot. They considered him a spirit of the forest. They considered him to be a spiritual creature, and many Indian tribes still hold true to the story. They would leave him food and he would give them firewood in return, stacking it against trees." For more information go to www.phenomenamagazine.com.

A New Theory in Cryptozoology: Author Nick Redfern has come out with a new book *Three Men Seeking Monsters*. In the course of researching the book he came to realize that many cryptozoological sightings come in the regions of sacred areas. This led him to hypothesize that creatures such as Bigfoot and the Loch Ness monster may be Astral creatures as opposed to physical entities proper to our own reality. If this were true, Redfern points out that researchers might want to look to paranormal investigators and the type of equipment they use in order to conduct research into these entities. For more, see *Phenomena* magazine at www.phenomenamagazine.com.

There Be Dwarves: A story recently appeared on the *Inquirer News Service* relating how children at Rizal Elementary School in Iloilo Phillippines saw a group of dwarves one inch high during a clean up program at the school. Children ages 9 and 10 saw the dwarves with varying degrees of clarity. Approximately half the children present saw the dwarves. The children communicated with the dwarves and discovered their names were Wendy and Wendell. Apparently there was evidence for those unable to see the dwarves that they were in fact there. In one instance one leaf among many was being moved by one of the dwarves while the other leaves remained motionless. The dwarves had pointed hats and wore colourful clothes of red, green, and blue. For more see www.inq7.net/lif/2004/beb/17/text/lif_22-1-p.htm.



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We at Fohat would like to express our gratitude to those subscribers who have helped to make this magazine possible through their generous donations.

Thank you!

Comets, Moons, and the Dweller

In this issue we are looking at the moon, the gunas, and occult forces that revolve around human sexuality. We have a common denominator of forces and their effects on man and nature, forces that create, forces that preserve and forces that destroy so that out of the ashes there might be creation anew. Siva in India and Jehovah in the West are forces that destroy and are consequently extremely important deities when it comes to the evolution of Man. As individuals and as societies we grow and develop to where further growth along a particular line becomes untenable. We need to at some point walk away from the old and embrace the new incoming energy. This is the role of Siva and Jehovah, to tear down the old so that we are forced to embrace the new energies that are available to us. If we are wise as individuals and as societies we will let go of the past and the old ways and turn to what is new. By trying to hold on to the past, we only cause ourselves a lot of grief and trouble.

When we look at astrology, we are given a picture in large of what is going on in our own constitutions. Looking at hints given in *The Secret Doctrine* on the seven sacred planets, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Saturn and Jupiter, we understand that the Sun and the Moon are substitutes for secret planets, the Sun for an inter-Mercurial planet (a planet we might call Vulcan) and the Moon for another planet that we know little or nothing about. G. de Purucker feels the Moon is standing in for a dying planet that will one day be captured into the orbit of Earth as a captured satellite. There also seems to be a mystery with respect to Mars, as again, Mars seems to be left out of the esoteric list when referring to the Seven Sacred Planets.

NASA is currently studying the surface of the mystery planet, Mars. What NASA is telling us from their surveys is that water has existed on the surface of the planet sometime in the past. They have determined this in part from various salt deposits left on the surface of the planet. James McCanney, a scientist, picks up the story from there and states the obvious: if they are using these specific types of salt deposits to indicate the past presence of water, then the water in question must be salt water, hence there must have been oceans on the surface of the planet. Further, if there were oceans, there must have been a much heavier atmosphere present at that time in order to hold those oceans on the surface of the

planet. In addition, it is clear from the data coming back that NASA is avoiding the obvious implication of that data, that being, the atmosphere and the oceans were there as recently as several thousand years ago, not long in terms of geological time. As James McCanney has a theory that the oceans and atmosphere were sucked off the planet a few thousand years ago by a passing planet-sized comet, this information dovetails nicely with his theory. Now, if esoterically this energy represents the life-force of the planet, we can see one way in which a planet can descend into a temporary pralaya (Siva destroys the old in preparation for something new). There is nothing to say that, at the right time, a returning comet might not redeposit that life force back onto Mars. There are several very interesting things happening with this theory.

First, who is to say that planets, as they reach the end of their life, might not once again take to wandering like comets. Given that Mars is supposed to be a younger planet than Earth, might not the comet/moon (which is Mars' moon proper), be currently traveling about through the Solar System as a comet? Could it be that it is carrying the life force or soul of Mars at this time, and that this is part of the Martian mystery? In the future this comet might at last settle into an orbit about Mars just as our own Moon settled about the Earth. It might be also, that part of the Martian mystery is that the sacred planet for which Mars stands, is in fact the Mother of Mars, this future moon. As the Martian life force is dragged about the Solar System by this comet we can envision old energies being sloughed off and new forces acquired for the coming manvantara of that planet.

Our own Moon plays a similar role in regulating energies on a monthly basis. Energies are being sloughed off onto it as the planet's excess karma flows into the nearest suitable body, and then gets reflected back onto the planet when the karmic attraction pulls it back. The so-called dweller, that overshadows the lives of some, would be a similar entity. There exists a constant influx and efflux of energies informing and deforming bodies on an ongoing basis. Moons, comets, planets, dwellers, dugpas, adepts, etc. all play their role in the regulation of these energies, keeping bodies in sufficient balance so that the evolution might proceed along Nature's course.

The Role of the Gunas

Karin Smith

Most of us have heard of the three gunas: Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. They have been described as the “attributes of the universe of differentiated Spirit-Matter, self-formative, self-preserving and self-destroying, for purposes of regeneration and perfectibility” (Glossary, 340). This meaning is amplified by explaining why in the Hindu Pantheon they are embodied in their Trimurti:

Brahmā being made the personified embodiment of *Rajoguna*, the attribute or quality of activity, of desire for procreation, that desire owing to which the universe and everything in it is called into being. Vishnu is the embodied *Sattvaguna*, that property of preservation arising from quietude and restful enjoyment, which characterizes the intermediate period between the full growth and the beginning of decay; while Siva, being embodied *Tamoguna* — which is the attribute of stagnancy and final decay — becomes of course the destroyer. (Glossary, 340-1)

In another article H.P.B. describes the gunas as “the three fundamental and universally potent modes of consciousness of the armies of beings which make the universe” (CW XII, 540). These modes of consciousness come from the mind, in the macro- and microcosm, from Cosmic Ideation or Universal Mind to our own mind. They do not rise from Spirit, for Spirit per se has no qualities:

The spirit, *Ātman* or *Jivātman* (the seventh and sixth principles), whether of the macro- or microcosm, though bound by these Gunas during the objective manifestation of universe or man, is yet *Nirguna* — i.e., entirely free from them. Out of the three producers or evolvers, *Prakriti*, *Buddhi* and *Ahankāra*, it is but the latter that can be caught (when man is concerned) and destroyed when *personal*. The “divine monad” is *Aguna* (devoid of qualities), while *Prakriti*, once that from passive *Mūla-prakriti* it has become *Avyakta* (an active evolver) in *Gunavat* — endowed with qualities. With the latter, *Purusha* or *Ātman* can have nought to do (of course being unable to perceive it in its *Gunavatic* state); with the former — or *Mūlaprakriti* or undifferentiated cosmic essence — it has, since it is *one* with it and identical. (FYT, 125-6)

So these qualities are a part of *Prakriti*, or matter; they are embodied in it. During a *Pralaya*, *Mūlaprakriti* or the undifferentiated substance in the Absolute, the gunas are in a state of equilibrium, and they will go back to that state of equilibrium at the end of each *Manvantara* and *Maha-Manvantara*. But at the beginning of each new cycle, when the *Fohatic* force activates the universe and imbues it with consciousness, then the gunas become active agents in matter,

energetic vibrations. They are the colours reflected in the Auric Light and in our Aura, emanating from matter. As H.P.B. mentions the

“auric light,” . . . a light that surrounds every animate and inanimate object in nature, is, on the other hand, but the astral reflection emanating from objects; its particular color and colors, the combinations and varieties of the latter, denoting the state of the *gunas*, or qualities and characteristics of each special object and subject — the human being’s aura being the strongest of all. (CW XII, 396)

The gunas are, then, like an essence of matter, their primary constituent, but they must not be confused with the *Tattvas*, i.e., the fundamental elements of nature: air, water, fire, earth, ether and *Akasa*, which have to do with the density and properties of matter, not their qualities. These qualities are not like wetness is the quality of water, and heat that of fire, but rather vibrations — their ‘modes of consciousness’, a qualitative energy that emanates from matter.

In the *Uddhava Gita* the gunas are compared in the introduction to Dialogue 4 as the Yin and Yang of the Chinese philosophy, the former being *tamas* and the latter *rajas*, while *sattva* would be that point in equilibrium between the two. *Tamas* is the contracting, dark, inner force, while *rajas* is the “expanding, bright, outgoing force in nature.” They are considered as the “modes of nature” which attach us in bondage to *maya*.

The gunas are interblended through the macro and micro Cosmos, they are not individually singled qualities, but appear combined in matter. Thus during *Pralaya*, with its prevailing peace and quietude, the main “quality is highest *tamas*, yet *rajas* is present, albeit relatively latent. . . . Of course the highest principles of the universe are then in the *sattva* quality, while the *rajas* quality during *pralaya* is dormant” (CW XII, 540). The three qualities are always there either in a latent condition or highly active. Each activity will have its degrees, and its combination with more than one *guna*. For we find that from *sattva* flow the *tamasic* and *rajasic* mode of consciousness, and the union of these two “which do not neutralize each other but combine to form something superior to either, is what is meant by *sattva* — that which is ‘real’” (CW XII, 540). So we can expect all the combinations possible during the *Manvantaric* creation, a *sattvic-tamasic*, or a *tamasic-rajasic* or any other possible combination of these attributes.

The Sanskrit meaning of the word *guna* is rope, or thread. The gunas are like a three stranded rope

intertwined in matter as they pass through the six principles. The rope must be unraveled by the mind, which must turn the three into one, i.e., turn the three qualities into its sattvic attribute, and then use the sattvic to become Nirguna. This is how we will lift matter up to spirit, this is how we liberate ourselves. In the *Uddhava Gita*, when Krishna speaks about the dissolution of the worlds, he describes the stages in which each of the gunas dissolve into the Absolute:

These gods merge into the mind, and the mind into the sattvic Ahamkara, where it abides as goodness. Sound will merge into the tamasic Ahamkara, where it abides as ignorance. And the rajasic Ahamkara, the most powerful part of that idea-of "I", will merge into the Cosmic intelligence.

The Cosmic Intelligence merges into its own three gunas, which then merge into the unmanifest part of Prakriti, which merges into time. Time dissolves back into the original Jiva, the activating principle of creation, which dissolves into the Supreme Being, unborn, unmanifested, absolute — where all things come to rest. (195-6)

H.P.B. tells us in a footnote "*Ahamkara*, as universal Self-Consciousness, has a triple aspect, as also *Manas*. For this conception of 'I,' or one's *Ego*, is either *sattwa*, 'pure quietude,' or appears as *rajas*, 'active,' or remains *tamas*, 'stagnant,' in darkness. It belongs to Heaven and Earth, and assumes the properties of either" (SD I, 335fn). That conception of "I", which is also the egotistical aspect of our being, works through the mind weaving our life. It is this idea of I, which separates us from the Oneness of all life; it comes from ignorance, from thinking that I am my body or my mind, instead of the Self, the divine monad. The gunas work through the mind, they are the qualities of our thoughts, actions, reactions and through it they become attached to the body and to everything in the physical world. All our interactions with life are mediated through our mind and the senses. We build patterns in our lives colored by the gunas, individual awareness which attaches us to our world view, so everything we do, think, and hope for, our desires, our meditations, our joys and sadness, it all comes with the qualities of one or more of these gunas.

The function of the gunas has to do then with our attitude in our thinking and acting process. Each thought is a force, a vibration, and when our motives are pure and positive, the thought or vibration will emit a certain colour which typifies our inner motives. As our motives change, and our thoughts become less selfish, so will our qualities improve. By observing the mind we can see which guna tends to predominate in our thinking and acting or reacting. The more we observe the more we can correct ourselves, our tendencies, our fixed views, the more aware and awake we are to life, the better chance we have to correct ourselves.

The three gunas have many meanings, it is not just activity, inactivity and wisdom; these are the most generalized meanings. We have to add more meanings to this, and try to understand the further implications that these generalizations mean. If we take Tamas, for example, we have to understand that there are many degrees, if we can call it that, of such inactivity, which play their role in the six Principles, and many states of consciousness, the highest being during a Pralaya. The other meaning commonly given is "darkness", a condition that exists during Pralaya, but which has different connotations in the microcosm. It implies not just the lack of activity, but non-duality. Yet when we speak of "darkness" we think of a negative quality — not in the Pralayaic state, but yes when it is referred to as part of the human existence. The outcome of this inertia, and darkness is ignorance, delusion, sloth, laziness, doubts and dullness. The outcome of these are varied and many, since from delusion and ignorance man commits many mistakes, and from laziness one procrastinates the doing of one's duties. Thus every time we procrastinate doing something we know we should, at that moment our tamasic quality is active, and if we are conscious of that, then we should make an effort to mend it. Doubts arise from ignorance, and are of the essence of tamas, but they can be dispersed through knowledge, and knowledge will lift the mind to the sattvic quality.

The rajasic condition, a condition of great activity, represents form and change. From the beginning of a new Manvantaric cycle, form, the product of Prakriti and Universal Mind, creates the new universe, with a constant changing of its most complex forms. Life is generated from the karmic and gunasic causes of previous cycles, and reshapes the new cosmos. Spirit and matter come into such activity, ever changing, ever creating, with cycles within cycles. No more the calm, dispassionate, eternal Absolute, but the energetic mayavic creativity. The rajasic quality is a quality of passion, of egotism, of selfishness, of the rising of all desires. It is the outcome of lust, anger, arrogance, envy, for these rise from passion and egotism, from the desires of self. Of course not all rajasic conditions are negative; there is also the creativity in the human existence and it is essential for life. So when we are conscious of our desires, and the things we want just for ourselves, then we are vibrating with our rajasic essence, we are generating a disequilibrium in life for we are thinking of ourselves, not of the whole. When we realize that the real Self is not the doer of these actions, and we sacrifice, so to say, all our actions to the Supreme Self, not wanting recognition, when they have been totally unselfish, then we are moving them to the sattvic condition, and we are vibrating more in harmony with the universe.

Sattva is wisdom, it is the quality of goodness and purity, it is truthfulness, it is contentment, freedom from selfishness, it is respect, self-control, reverence for life, it is tranquillity of mind. A human being who chooses divine knowledge, true faith, freedom from attachments to the gunas, devotion to the Higher Self with clear understanding, destroying the idea of I, which is the root cause of this world of multiplicities, such a person would be free even when living in the world and would be living in the sattvic mode.

A child is born in a naturally sattvic state and the colour of his aura is almost pure white, but when its skandhas are attracted to him, are these skandhas already vibrating with the qualities of one or more gunas? Do we come with certain predetermined ways of being due to our karmic and gunasic past? One would think that the two are together, and so our lives unfold, affected by our karma and coloured by the qualities of the gunas. In astrology we know that the colour of the ruling planet “has always predominated in a man’s aura and the corresponding principle will rule in him”. For those who are born with predominant fixed signs, theirs is the stability of tamas, while those with cardinal signs will experience more rajasic activity, they tend to make things happen, and those beings with mutable signs will experience the rhythm of the sattvic, who enjoy change with less strong attachments or Ego. These are generalities, for no one is born under just a single mode, but with a complex mixture.

Just as all colours are derived from the three primary colours, i.e., blue, red and yellow, so “all properties through which we cognize the objective universe around us are derived from three fundamental properties or *gunas*” (Taimni, 204). Our auras reflect this. And just as there are numerous combinations of colors, so there are an “infinite number of differentiated vibrations [which] lie at the basis of sensuous perceptions” (Taimni, 204) caused by the gunas. It is known in science that a pendulum must continue to oscillate unless it is stopped by an opposite force or some resistance. This perpetual movement is due to inertia, or the quality of tamas. “This tendency which is inherent in Nature has been formulated in the form of a definite law of dynamics and is at the basis of all natural movements . . . of planets in a solar system” (Taimni, 30). Thus science is teaching us the nature of the gunas through some of its laws.

Imagine the difference in the reaction when someone sees another being suffer, and our sense of compassion awakens in us. Someone with strong tamasic qualities would see it with certain indifference, perhaps considering it as part of human existence but without doing anything about it, while someone with a stronger rajasic quality would act upon it with the idea of getting something from it, perhaps just recognition of his kindness.

A person of stronger sattvic qualities wouldn’t think about himself but would just help the being in distress, with no ulterior motives. We all want to belong to the sattvic category, but as we go through life, and if we are honest with ourselves, we might sadly realize we don’t. Yet each person will react differently to the same objective experience, and it will depend on the state of his gunas. How many of us have not procrastinated in the performance of our duties, where our tamasic nature takes hold of our mind and says: tomorrow. How many of us have not felt anger swell in us at the moment of criticism, where our rajasic nature is ready to fight for it felt wounded. So the smallest desire could become a burning passion for a rajasic being, and because of lack of self control he will invariably end up in sorrow.

In the *Uddhava Gita* Krishna speaks of the effect each guna has in a person:

The three gunas have no effect on the supreme Self, but they do affect the individual awareness. Through the mind they entice the awareness to become attached to the body and worldly objects, this constitutes individual bondage.

When sattva, which is bright and pure, and filled with auspiciousness predominates over rajas and tamas, the individual becomes possessed of joy, virtue and knowledge.

When rajas, which gives rise to attachment, passion and the illusion of multiplicities, overcomes both sattva and tamas, the individual is seized with a desire for fame and fortune, and attended by unhappiness and struggle.

When tamas, which clouds one’s judgment, veils one’s vision and gives rise to dullness, overcomes both rajas and sattva, the individual becomes lethargic and belligerent, and always expects unreasonable help from others. (200)

Different places are considered to have a predominance of one of the gunas: the forest is considered sattvic, the city rajasic, while a brothel is tamasic. Food that is old or not clean is tamasic, spicy food is rajasic, and food that nourishes you and is healthy is sattvic.

Objects, places, outcomes, time, knowledge, actions, doers, faith, state of awareness, form and goal, all come under the domain of the gunas. . . . O best among men, understand: without exception everything that emanates from Purusha and Prakriti, whether seen, heard, or only thought of, comes under the domain of these three gunas. The cycle of birth and death and birth again is nothing but the flow of the gunas, which are themselves the product of the mind, one who overcomes them through the path of devotion to me is absorbed into me.

. . . continued on page 23

Penitent Squirrels — Episodes from the Life of Mabel Collins

Kim Farnell

The following is extracted from the forthcoming book “One Mystic Vampire: A Biography of Mabel Collins” to be published later in 2004.

Minna Mabel Collins was born 9 September 1851, the daughter of the writer Mortimer Collins. She is primarily remembered as the author of “Light on the Path”, an acknowledged spiritual classic. Mabel wrote at least forty-six books and innumerable articles in her lifetime, she was widely known as a novelist in the US and UK. She married Keningale Robert Cook in 1871, although the couple later separated and Robert, (as he was known), died in 1886. Mabel developed mediumistic skills during her marriage to Robert. Mabel described how in a vision she was led by the hand in her astral body to a hall of learning where she saw jewels and writing. The writing that she returned to note down was eventually to form the text of “Light on the Path”. She was introduced to theosophy in 1881 by the artist Isabelle de Steiger and first met Blavatsky in November of 1884.

In May 1887 Archibald and Bertram Keightley brought Blavatsky from Ostend to spend some time at Mabel’s house, Maycot, a cottage in Norwood, south London. Blavatsky hated Maycot, and didn’t trust Mabel. Numerous visitors called at Maycot and three weeks after Blavatsky’s arrival the Blavatsky Lodge was founded. At its second meeting the Lodge decided to launch the magazine “Lucifer”, and Mabel was appointed as co-editor along with Blavatsky. With Maycot only being a temporary location for Blavatsky, the Keightleys located a house at 17 Lansdowne Road, in Notting Hill to become the new centre of theosophy. The household moved there except for Mabel. This is where we pick up the story.

With *Lucifer* beginning to take off, much of Mabel’s writing was directed towards this magazine. *The Blossom and the Fruit* appeared there in serial form throughout 1887 and 1888. However, she still had to find a way of making a living and however worthy,

Lucifer was not going to help her there. Even in 1889 it was struggling financially. “The magazine, *Lucifer*, I do not think is paying expenses yet. It is a very costly thing to get up, and its circulation has necessarily slow growth.”¹

From July 1887 Mabel was writing for *The World*, a paper owned by Edmund Yates, who had been a friend of her father’s. *The World* consistently carried glowing reviews of Mabel’s books. Her weekly column *Tea Table Talk* written under the name of *Flower o’ the May* considered clothes, cosmetics, recommended a spa for pet dogs, discussed how often a pair of gloves ought to be worn, (once only according to Mabel), and described the latest fashions at great length. She would recommend sun creams, advise on hemlines and spend many column inches waxing lyrical about hats.

At some points she sounded mildly obsessive about the terminology used by other fashion writers. So far as Mabel was concerned a milliner had a larger remit than hat making and she developed this point at great length. In fact, she was happy to develop any of her points at length. “I had not space to say half of what I wanted to say last week about hats, so I must return to the subject. I am glad that only one milliner among the leading few in London, so far as I know, has had the temerity to exhibit the dog-bonnet, a monstrosity which has been worn of late in Paris — by some people.”²

At times it can be a little difficult to join in her enthusiasm about some of the clothes she describes. “A quilted silk bonnet is one of the daintiest and simplest things I have seen this year . . . The squirrel brown silk is quilted just like the inside of a cloak and there are wide soft silk strings which appear to go right through the bonnet and across the back of it. . . . Two squirrels’ tails stand up in front, and are not sewn or pinned on, but actually tied into their place by the cream coloured ribbon which makes a small, smart bow just above the hair in front.”³ It was doubtless delightful, as Mabel said. But squirrel

¹ *The Very Latest News From the World of Occultism — Blavatsky and her Mahatmas*, An Interview with William Q. Judge, *The New York Times*, January 6, 1889, p.10.

² *The World*, “Tea Table Talk”, October 19, 1887, London, p.27.

³ *The World*, “Tea Table Talk”, October 19, 1887, London, p.27.

tails standing up on the forehead perhaps don't make the same sort of fashion statement today. In pursuit of such news Mabel would dash around London in hansom cabs.

For the next two years Mabel was to remain the co-editor of *Lucifer*. And theosophical life continued, albeit on a larger scale, much as it had at *Maycot*. Blavatsky stayed firmly planted at Lansdowne Road, writing throughout the day, much of her outpouring being edited by Mabel for *Lucifer*. As one of her more intimate friends, Mabel would often be there later into the evening, chatting with the theosophists who lived in the household, and occasional visitors such as Sinnett.



Mabel Collins

Mabel's place had been taken by Constance Wachtmeister who ran the household with frightening efficiency. The Keightleys were as equally firmly planted there. Blavatsky had to impose a few of her own rules — one being that the household went to bed at midnight. She was also to recommend celibacy for those who aspired to become one of her chelas.

The Thursday evening meetings increased in popularity. Non-members were admitted strictly by invitation — and the cards of entry were in constant demand. Unfortunately Blavatsky's social skills hadn't improved along with the change in location. Bert occasionally rebelled, although he always regretted it later. But he never failed to notice how Arch didn't suffer the sharp end of Blavatsky's tongue in the way that he did. When he asked why she never scolded Arch, Bert was told that it was because he had a blue liver, though she never explained what that meant.

There was no doubt that theosophy was becoming highly fashionable. Scores of people poured into the new headquarters to meet the famous Madame. "At Homes" were held on Saturdays when there would be a succession of guests, and during the week the dinner table was often set for twenty. *Pall Mall Gazette* editor WT Stead, William Butler Yeats and George W Russell, (AE), were amongst the visitors.

George RS Mead became a member of the household as Blavatsky's private secretary. The Wilde family drifted in and out of the theosophical world with Oscar Wilde's wife, Constance, joining the society.

It wasn't all fun and games however. For much of early 1888 Blavatsky was working on *The Secret Doctrine* with the help of the Keightleys and the Blavatsky Lodge continued to meet on Thursday evenings. "The meetings of the Blavatsky Lodge were out of the ordinary. . . All nations would be represented in those rooms on Thursday nights, and one could never tell who would be present."⁴ But not all of the visitors were as solid as some. "Another time I remember that the rooms gradually filled until there was no vacant seat. On the sofa sat a distinguished Hindu, in full panoply of turban and dress. The discussion proceeded and apparently our distinguished guest was much interested, for he seemed to follow intelligently the remarks of each speaker. The President of the Lodge arrived that night very late, and coming in looked around for a seat. He walked up to the sofa and sat down — right in the middle of the distinguished Hindu, who promptly, and with some surprise, *fizzled and vanished!*"⁵

Mabel was living at Clarendon Road at this time, and her garden backed onto that of Lansdowne Road. So although she was not part of the household the two women developed the habit of signalling one another across the gardens when they wanted to talk.

The formation of the Esoteric Section was announced by Olcott in the October and November 1888 issues of *Lucifer*. The Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society was a group solely under Blavatsky's direction, separate and distinct from the Society proper. Members of the section were not taught practical occultism or how to perform psychic phenomena. But as all its activities were carried out under a strict pledge of secrecy, it wasn't clear to many what was being taught there.

So, when on February 15th 1889, Mabel's name suddenly disappeared from *Lucifer* it was inevitable that everyone would want to know why. Mabel herself kept quiet about the matter. Nothing appeared in *Lucifer* or other theosophical publications to explain what had happened. Gradually, the scandal began to emerge.

One of the characters in the drama, Vittoria Cremers, was an American, the widow of Baron Louis Cremers, who was at one time attached to the diplomatic corps at the Russian Embassy in Washington. In 1886 she

⁴ "Reminiscences of H.P. Blavatsky", Archibald Keightley. *The Theosophical Quarterly* (New York), October 1910, pp.109-122.

⁵ ditto.

had come across a copy of *Light on the Path*, which prompted her to immediately join the Theosophical Society. In 1888 she went to Britain and met Blavatsky. As she had been previously involved with publishing Blavatsky asked her to take over the business side of *Lucifer* — it would only be a short time before she met Mabel.

Vittoria moved into the household at Lansdowne Road and after a short time was introduced to Mabel by the Keightleys. She became firm friends with Mabel and began to spend time at her home.

It was now alleged that *The Blossom and the Fruit* had contained an ending that endorsed black magic. According to Blavatsky, she had to intervene before it was published and rewrote the final chapters. Considering how much of Blavatsky's work was rewritten again and again by the Keightleys and Mabel, amongst others, we can't help feeling that this sounds a little unlikely.

In any event, Vittoria was called to see Blavatsky one day. She was told that Mabel was being asked to leave the society because of her conduct with the Keightleys. While Vittoria sat wide eyed Blavatsky related how Mabel had been engaged to Arch and the two had taken part in Tantric worship and black magic. The trouble they got themselves into apparently meant that Blavatsky had to intervene to rescue them.⁶

Vittoria refused to break her friendship with Mabel and had to leave the Society herself. Mabel was understandably furious when she heard what was being said about her.

The accusations of tantrism were particularly stinging. There was a strong association between black magic and tantrism. Tantra is often used as a general term that relates to the traditional practice of sexual practice as a spiritual evolutionary scheme. There are many different approaches as to how this may manifest. In some contexts tantric sex simply refers to fellatio. Since Richard Burton's translation of the *Kama Sutra* was made available in 1883 there had been an interest in sex and the spiritual. It would be more than likely that Mabel would at least be aware of the ideas being discussed. Whether or not she practised them, or what in fact she was specifically being accused of practising is another

matter entirely. Blavatsky began to claim that even *Light on the Path* contained dangerous teachings based on tantrism.

At this point it seems that a doctrinal difference had simply gone a little wild, and was more interesting than many in-house theosophical rows. But the stories weren't to stop there.

Mabel had also begun a friendship with Michael Angelo Lane. Lane was a newspaper reporter from St. Louis. A staunch theosophist from 1885, he had come to London after hearing about the esoteric

section and stayed there several weeks. As a member of the esoteric section he went from Lodge to Lodge revelling in spreading tales of what was happening in the inner sanctum.

Mabel herself had not initially been allowed to join the esoteric section. After pleading with Blavatsky she was allowed to join as a probationer but within four days was dismissed for her "treachery and disloyalty". Part of that treachery was to flirt with Lane. WB Yeats wrote in a letter to John of Leary in May 1889:

Mme B expelled Mrs Cook (Mabel Collins) a most prominent theosophist writer and daughter of Mortimer Collins, also the president of the lodge for flirtation; and expelled an American lady for gossiping about them. Mme B is in great spirits, she is purring and hiding her claws as though she never clawed anybody. She is always happy when she has found a Theosophist out and clawed him.

Yeats also wrote to Katherine Tynan telling her that Lane and Mabel had been expelled for flirtation and that Mabel's husband was still alive! He contradicts Vittoria's version of events by saying that Vittoria was expelled for gossiping about what was happening.

The situation had actually blown up in March and April of 1889. Vague accusations of tantric activities and flirtation with a fellow theosophist sound fairly harmless though surely?

When I first began to frequent her house, as I soon did very constantly, I noticed a handsome clever woman of the world there, who seemed certainly very much out of place, penitent though she thought herself. Presently there was much scandal and gossip for the penitent was plainly entan-



H.P. Blavatsky at Maycot, 1887

⁶ This story is related in the unpublished memoirs of Vittoria Cremer, owned by the writer Melvyn Harris.

gled with two young men who were expected to grow into ascetic sages.⁷

So according to Yeats, Mabel's relationship with the Keightleys went way beyond a little chummy late night editing. Mabel was, of course, an independent widow at this time. Although she had paid lip service to conventionality there is no reason at all to assume that after the breakdown of her marriage to Robert she took the celibate role that Blavatsky recommended to her acolytes. But did Blavatsky actually expect her to be celibate? It seems not — although one Keightley may have been acceptable, two was excessive.

The scandal was so great that Madame Blavatsky had to call the penitent before her and to speak after this fashion, "We think that it is necessary to crush the animal nature; you should live in chastity in act and thought. Initiation is granted only to those who are entirely chaste." But after some moments in that vehement style, the penitent standing crushed and shamed before her, she had wound up "I cannot permit you more than one."⁸

Vittoria's claims that she had a more intimate relationship with Mabel than Mabel really ought to have had time to schedule, considering what she was accused of wasn't likely to help. Although this wasn't to emerge publicly for some time, Aleister Crowley was later to delight in telling this part of the tale.

One of the closest followers of H. P. B., and in the sphere of literature unquestionably the most distinguished, with the possible exception of J. W. Brodie-Innes, was a woman named Mabel Collins. Her novel, *The Blossom and the Fruit*, is probably the best existing account of the theosophic theories presented in dramatic form. One of the great virtues acclaimed and defended by this lady was that of chastity. She did not go quite as far as the girl made famous by Mr Harry Price upon the Brocken a few years ago, whose terror of losing the jewel of her maidenhood was such that she thought it unsafe to go to bed without the protection of a man; but Mabel Collins had considerable experience of this form of chastity *a deux*; at the same time, reflecting that one of the points of HPB's mission was to proclaim the Age of the Woman, she occasionally chose a female for her bed-fellow.⁹

Vittoria certainly played a part in bringing the scandal to everyone's attention. Crowley reported that

she boasted of worming her way into Blavatsky's confidence with Mabel to betray her at her first opportunity. However, Vittoria's importance in the affair was never so great as she claimed, though her part in it was to remain for posterity in a fictionalised form: "Didn't I down ole Blavatzky? Sure I did. An ain't this like eatin' pie after that?"¹⁰

It is all too easy to judge Mabel according to present day views of Victorian sexuality. We often have in mind a prudish society, obsessed with covering table legs lest they cause offence, one where women's sexuality was, at the best, an aberration. But it was also one where the free love movement went hand in hand with spiritualism, one where Blavatsky could speak of tantric sex and know that the term with its implications of group sex, sodomy and bestiality would be understood. Mabel was never the most conventional of women. A number of her friends in later life were happy in lesbian relationships including Frances Power Cobbe who lived with sculptor Mary Lloyd for thirty six years. It was also a society where Mabel felt comfortable in writing in *Blossom and the Fruit* in 1887, "The blossoms hid from her the sky and all else until a soft pressure on her hand drew her eyes downwards; and then she saw beside her that one whom she had loved through the ages, and who, side by side with her, was experiencing the profound mystery, and learning the strange lesson of incarnation in the world where sex is the first great teacher."¹¹

Whatever the facts of Mabel's entanglements, it appears clear that Blavatsky had seized an opportunity to be rid of her. Why? Blavatsky must have known about any goings-on between Mabel and the Keightleys since they all stayed together at *Maycot*. Vittoria's stirring could easily have meant that it was impossible to ignore what was going on any longer, but one event that occurred at this time seems to have passed most commentators by. In late March Blavatsky met Annie Besant for the first time.

Annie was friendly with WT Stead and through him was asked to review the *Secret Doctrine* for the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Annie never did anything by halves and asked Stead for a letter of introduction to Blavatsky which she forwarded with a note asking for permission to call. On March 15th 1889 Blavatsky wrote back enthusiastically asking Annie to call at practically any time she wished — and to bring anyone she wanted with her.

⁷ *The Autobiography of William Butler Yeats*, William Butler Yeats, Macmillan, New York, 1938.

⁸ ditto

⁹ *Sothis*, 1:4, Aleister Crowley, London, 1974, pp.61-67.

¹⁰ *Moonchild*, Aleister Crowley, Mandrake, London, 1929.

¹¹ http://www.teosofiskakompaniet.net/MC_TheBlossomAndTheFruit_Introduction_2003_.htm.

Annie was already known over half the world as one of the most remarkable women of her day. She was an agitator in radical political circles, a champion of science, an atheist, feminist, social and educational reformer, author and the first prominent woman to wage war on behalf of birth control. She was acclaimed as the greatest woman speaker of the nineteenth century. Becoming disillusioned with life Annie had recently begun to take an interest in psychology, hypnotism and spiritualism. She was poised for change when offered the *Secret Doctrine* to read.

In late March Annie called on Blavatsky for the first time. At the final moment of her visit, as Annie and her friend Herbert Burrows turned to leave, Blavatsky cried “Oh, my dear Mrs Besant, if only you would come among us!” Although Annie was transfixed she didn’t call again until the end of April. On the 10th May 1888 Annie visited the office of the Theosophical Publishing House, asked Constance Wachtmeister for an application form, filled it in and hurried straight to Lansdowne Road. She knelt at Blavatsky’s knee saying, “. . . will you accept me as your pupil, and give me the honour of proclaiming you my teacher in the face of the world?”¹²

The rest, as they say, is history. Although the news of Annie’s conversion did not break until June, there was no doubt from the onset that she would play an integral role in the Society. In years to come she would be elected as president and lead theosophy into the twentieth century. She would become more renowned than Blavatsky herself and was to be seen as one of the most important women in the twentieth century. But that is Annie’s story — Mabel simply could not compete with the potential Annie offered to theosophy in the first moments of her meeting Blavatsky. Mabel’s downfall coincided precisely with the first appearance of Annie. And to play completely safe Blavatsky sent Bert over to America, where he remained until late 1890. She was a little coy about precisely why she had got rid of Mabel. “As regards Miss Collins, I also state that this lady received in London during March and April, a serious official rebuke for grave cause, in the Theosophical Society. Up to this time she had always declared her theosophical writings to be inspired by an adept known to her and to other members of English lodges, but not an Oriental adept.”¹³

The derivation of Mabel’s works and whether or not the Masters dictated them was to lead to a huge



17 Lansdowne Road as drawn by William Q. Judge

theosophical scandal immediately following Mabel’s expulsion. It is commonly assumed that this issue lay behind Mabel’s expulsion. But by the time the question was raised Mabel had already been ejected. Several writers have speculated about the likelihood of a lesbian affair between Blavatsky and Annie, and so by implication a previous similar involvement with Mabel. Blavatsky certainly held a deep affection for Annie from the onset, writing to her as “Dearest, My Dearest, ‘Dearly Beloved One’” and signing herself ‘Very adoring.’ However, her main reaction towards Mabel often appears to have been that of irritation. The theory of such a shift in Blavatsky’s affections seems unlikely in terms of a lesbian affair, although it is certainly true that she had a number of extremely close relationships with her women friends and colleagues, many of which ended in disaster.

Right from the first of Blavatsky’s accusations Mabel had talked about taking legal action against her. And this turned to be no idle threat. An action for libel was lodged in July 1889, although it didn’t reach court until July 1890. Blavatsky wrote to Judge, “Well, that’s all. Choose ye this day etc. Here Bert & I have received writs from Mrs. Cook, who proposes to sue us for defamation & damages for our two libels in Light!! She begins[?] & I had no right to reply & contradict her libel. What next. I am sick, sick, sick of all. If you don’t help, I give up all.”¹⁴

The case was very short lived. Blavatsky asked that a letter written by Mabel be produced. This letter

¹² *An Autobiography*, Annie Besant, T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1893, pp.342-3.

¹³ *Miscellaneous Letters Transcribed, Compiled, and with an Introduction* by A. T. Barker, <http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/hpb-aps/bl-hp.htm>.

¹⁴ Letter from Blavatsky to WQ Judge 7 July 1889, Blavatsky Archives Online, <http://www.blavatskyarchives.com/hpbwqjtab.html>.

was shown to counsel who went into court and asked the judge to take the case off the list. The action was halted immediately although the contents of that letter have never been disclosed. "We do not as a rule care to make mention of things disagreeable to others, but so many have written to us about the suit brought last year against Mme. Blavatsky by Mabel Collins — Mrs Cook — we are constrained to say that the suit was called in July and the plaintiff was ready to proceed and had through her counsel demanded the production of a certain letter written before the suit to people in London. The case was expected on for some days and people were there for the sake of the expected scandal, but the defendant's attorneys showed the letter beforehand to the plaintiff's counsel, who then came into court and asked the judge to take the case off the docket, thus confessing the weakness of the charge and bringing the matter to a final conclusion. He is said to have done this against the plaintiff's desires, but acting on his legal judgment and his responsibility as a lawyer to the bench and bar."¹⁵

Mabel's reaction to this outcome was apparently "sensational".¹⁶ She collapsed when confronted with the letter.

The stress of the scandal could not fail to get to Mabel. She developed eczema and started to suffer from incessant headaches. She could only bear to be in subdued lighting, stopped eating and sank into a deep depression. Finally, she had a complete nervous breakdown and spent four months being cared for by her sister, Ellen Hopkins, incapable of the simplest of tasks.

On Blavatsky's death in 1891 Mabel wrote about her in *The Sunday World*¹⁷ under the title *The Modern Witch is Dead*. She called her a charlatan and mystic pretender, running through the story of Blavatsky's life. "I had been smitten . . . with the fatal fascination of Esoteric Buddhism as exhibited, rather than explained in Mr Sinnett's book of that name. . . . It was said to me that . . . one should never speculate with ones illusions or ones banking account. I have done both to my bitter cost. . . . She was an impostor pure and simple; but of the first water. . . . When she wanted anything done . . . her master . . . showed his displeasure. In this way she got her furniture rearranged, when she wished it, got personally vituperative paragraphs inserted in the journals, her disciples launched upon the world, had her special

dishes prepared for her meals and got her favourite Russian tobacco to smoke. . . . I commenced by being interested in her professed knowledge of magic . . . I ended by arriving at a condition of wonder at her genius in Charlatanry. . . . Her system of tutelage was largely that of intimidation, assisted by the lowering consequences of a reduced diet, by her constantly mesmeric passes and the use of her truly terrible, yet beautiful glittering eyes."

Mabel's fury with Blavatsky continued unabated. In the same paper she gave a statement that was to be reproduced again and again over the years in attacks on Blavatsky, most notably by John Maskelyne in his attack on theosophy, *Modern Spiritualism*.

She taught me one great lesson. I learned from her how foolish, how gullible; how easily flattered human beings are en masse. Her contempt for her kind was on the same gigantic scale as everything else about her, except her marvellously delicate taper fingers. In all else she was a big woman. She had a greater power over the weak and credulous, a greater capacity for making black appear white, a larger waist, a more voracious appetite, a more confirmed passion for tobacco, a more ceaseless and insatiable hatred of those whom she thought to be her enemies, a greater disrespect for les convenances, a worse temper, a greater command of bad language, and a greater contempt for the intelligence of her fellow beings than I had ever supposed possible to be contained in one person. These, I suppose, must be reckoned as her vices, though whether a Creature so indifferent to all ordinary standards of right and wrong can be held to have virtues or vices I know not.

In 1889 Mabel was further at odds with the Theosophical Society when an argument broke out about whether Blavatsky had forced Mabel to say that "Light on the Path" was dictated by one of the Masters. Now having left the Theosophical Society, Mabel began an involvement with Robert Donston Stephenson, who she was later to believe to have been Jack the Ripper. Mabel continued to write her novels and in the late 1890's become prominent in the anti vivisection movement. She rejoined the Theosophical Society on 22 July 1907, resigning for the final time on 1 April 1909. During the war years Mabel spent much of her time at the home of Catherine Metcalfe. She died of angina on 31st March 1927 at the age of 76 and is buried in Cheltenham, England. 

¹⁵ *The Path*, August 1890, p.154.

¹⁶ "Suits Suddenly Ended", *Daily Gazette and Bulletin*, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, 25 July 1890, p.3.

¹⁷ *The Sunday World*, 10 May 1891, London, p.1.

Sexual Charisma and the Occult

Robert Bruce MacDonald

Kim Farnell's extract, "Penitent Squirrels — Episodes from the Life of Mabel Collins", demonstrates a difficult problem for most historians. The problem is how to make sense of various seemingly contradictory accounts on a given episode when those accounts surround an event in occult history. With an occultist there might be things going on at several different levels with several different ways of explaining the situation. Consequently, depending on who is telling what to whom, different stories might be told according to what level of perception each has. It is quite clear that the expulsion of Mabel Collins from the society is just such a situation.

It follows as Kim Farnell points out, that the expulsion was not over the derivation of Mabel's works. It is also clear that talk of a lesbian affair was simply

the commonplace musings of the common herd of humanity reflecting the minds of that herd as opposed to anything real. As we shall see, there is every reason to believe that as a practicing occultist, not only would Blavatsky not get involved in a sexual liaison (and most certainly not in a same sex relationship) — unless her goal was to create a den of Black Magicians with which to surround herself. Such a speculation would reflect infamously on anyone who would surmise that H.P. Blavatsky and those attracted to her were motivated by the selfish desires of Black Magicians. The evidence simply does not corroborate such a case.

The case is one that relates to tantric practices. A conventional historian simply will not know why tantric abuse is to be so avoided. Theosophists do

2ND.—MICROCOSM (THE INNER MAN) AND HIS 3, 7, OR 10 CENTERS OF POTENTIAL FORCES

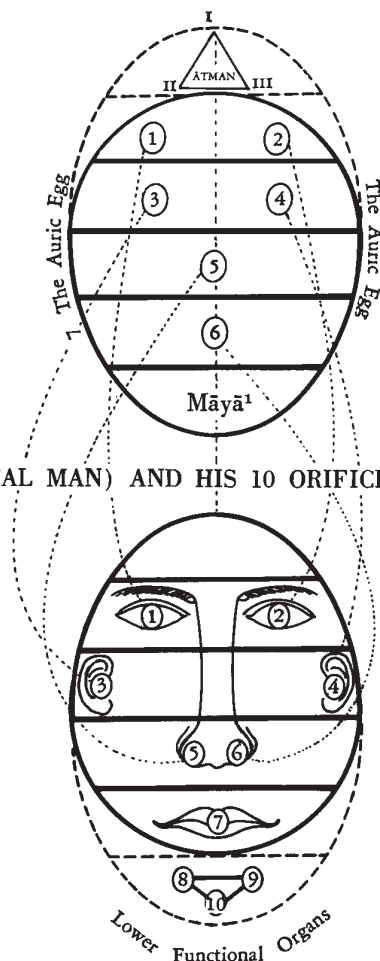
(ĀTMAN, although exoterically reckoned as the seventh principle, is no individual principle at all, and belongs to the Universal Soul; is the AURIC EGG, the Magnetic Sphere round every human and animal being.)

1. BUDDHI, the vehicle of ĀTMAN.
2. MANAS, the vehicle of BUDDHI.
3. LOWER MANAS (the Upper and Lower MANAS are two aspects of one and the same principle) and
4. KĀMA-RŪPA, its vehicle.
5. PRĀṆA, Life, and
6. LĪṄGA-ŚARĪRA, its vehicle.

3RD.—MICROCOSM (THE PHYSICAL MAN) AND HIS 10 ORIFICES, OR CENTERS OF ACTION

1. (BUDDHI) Right eye.
3. (LOWER MANAS) Right Ear.
5. (LIFE PRINCIPLE) Right Nostril.
7. The Organ of the CREATIVE Logos, the Mouth.

8, 9, 10. As this Lower Ternary has a direct connection with the Higher Atomic Triad and its three aspects (creative, preservative and destructive, or rather regenerative), the abuse of the corresponding functions is the most terrible of Karmic Sins—the Sin against the Holy Ghost with the Christians.



I, II, III, are the Three Hypostases of ĀTMAN, its contact with Nature and Man being the Fourth, making it a Quaternary, or Tetraktys, the Higher Self.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. These six principles, acting on four different planes, and having their AURIC ENVELOPE on the seventh (*vide infra*), are those used by the Adepts of the Right-Hand, or White Magicians.

1 The Physical Body is no principle; it is entirely ignored, being used only in Black Magic.

2. (MANAS) Left Eye.
4. (KĀMA-RŪPA) Left Ear.
6. (LIFE VEHICLE) Left Nostril.
7. The Paradigm of the 10th (creative) orifice in the Lower Triad.

These Physical Organs are used only by Dugpas in Black Magic.

From Blavatsky: *Collected Writings* XII, 524

not like to draw people's attention to this subject as natural curiosity will lead to abuse by some. However, the information is out there and is being used by some, this is quite obvious, so it might be useful to outline the issue in hopes that some will be deterred from falling into ruin.

In Blavatsky's E.S. Instructions, Diagram I gives us a layout of the Macrocosm, the Microcosm and the physical microcosm (the physical body of man) and how these three spheres relate to one another. It is the two lower spheres (see diagram) that we are interested in. Here we see the top of the second sphere being reflected in the bottom of the third. This is the portion of the egg that is dotted in each. Blavatsky writes that the "Lower Ternary has a direct connection with the Higher Atmic Triad and its three aspects (creative, preservative and destructive, or rather regenerative), the abuse of the corresponding functions is the most terrible of Karmic Sins — the Sin against the Holy Ghost with the Christians." The reason why will become very clear as we proceed. Also, in reference to the lower functional organs, Blavatsky writes, "These Physical Organs are used only by Dugpas in Black Magic." They are used in Black Magic and it is their direct connection with the Higher Atmic Triad that explains why this is so.

What then does Blavatsky write concerning the higher Triad? She writes that "ATMAN, although exoterically reckoned as the seventh principle, is no individual principle at all, and belongs to the Universal Soul; is the AURIC EGG, the Magnetic Sphere round every human and animal being." This magnetic sphere connects the Inner Man with Nature. It is a psycho-spiritual interface made up of energies that blend the principles of Man with the planes of Nature. Similarly the Lower Ternary is a psycho-physical interface between Physical Man and the Inner Man and by extension the planes by which these physical principles are governed. The energies of the higher Triad are uplifting and sublime whereas those of the lower Ternary are dull and stupid.

Now, if we take another look at the diagram, we can see another interesting anomaly. The seventh orifice in the 3rd Microcosm, the mouth, has no corresponding higher principle. There is a very good reason for this. Blavatsky writes that the mouth is the "Paradigm of the 10th (creative) orifice in the Lower Triad." By extension, within the Higher Triad is the paradigm for the mouth (which she calls "The Organ of the CREATIVE LOGOS"). Therefore the mouth can naturally serve its paradigm, the Creative Logos, or it can be made to serve (as in the case of the Black Magician) the Lower Triad. If it should serve the Lower Triad, the dotted lines of the 3rd Microcosm would solidify while the dotted lines of the 2nd Microcosm would vanish. This would result in what

Blavatsky calls a soulless being. This is the constitution of the Black Magician; he is cut off from the Macrocosm and consequently intensely selfish.

The mouth and the hands generate a lot of energies. The natural clairvoyant can see energy emitting from these areas at various times. It is this energy that the aspiring Black Magician uses to inflame and awaken the lower Triad. This is why couples indulging in perverse acts have to be careful as they are continually having the Lower Triad excited in unnatural manners, which if overindulged in could shut down the higher centers of his or her being. In conventional coitus, the energies generated by the sexual chakras as they interact with one another tend to be more balancing and less inflaming in nature. Consequently, the married heterosexual couple tends to lose interest in sex over time if they remain faithful to one another, and in later life their minds naturally turn to more spiritual matters.

H.P. Blavatsky gives us some further hints in *The Inner Group Teachings of H.P. Blavatsky*. She teaches that:

Sushumna, Ida, and Pingala are the three vital airs, and are symbolized in the Bramanical thread.

Now the three vital airs are ruled by the Will, and Will and Desire are the higher and lower aspects of one and the same thing. These airs, as said, play in the canals, and hence the importance of their absolute purity. For if they soil the vital airs energized by the Will, disease results at the best, Black Magic at the worst. Therefore all sexual intercourse is forbidden to the students of Practical Occultism. (*IGT*, 3fn)

The Black Magician cuts himself off from Nature by forcing over time these heavy stupid sexual energies into the vital canals and into the cavities of the head thereby destroying the ability of the vital body to interact with the spiritual soul. The Black Magician's body becomes magnetized by heavy gross energies and cut off to the spiritual planes.

As the Dugpa is going through this process, if he allows himself to be compassionate towards any other, he risks insanity. To achieve his goal he must be completely selfish; he uses others for his own ends. He cannot have both centers, the lower and the higher operating or the conflict will drive him insane or drive him into dementia. He must be cold and calculating towards all others. A person cannot serve two masters. Certain mentally degenerative diseases are Nature's way of dealing with those who have tried to serve two masters; Nature takes away their ability to serve either. The karmic effects can last over several incarnations.

As we recall from above, Blavatsky refers to three vital airs. Another way we might look at these airs

would be as the Martial, Venusian, and Mercurial Aires. The White Magician is of the middle path and consequently would want the Martial and Venusian Aires more or less balanced in order to follow that Mercurial path, hence the caduceus as a symbol. A person should not enter into the practice of White Magic until these two energies are in equilibrium, and once they are in equilibrium, celibacy is the best path to ensure that they stay that way. One can further see how the strength of the Martial Air relative to the Venusian Air, as well as their respective qualities, indicate the compatibility of a couple as well as the propensity to be born one sex or the other. G. de Purucker explains this latter very well in *Studies in Occult Philosophy*:

The secret lies in the individual himself or herself, for in each individual there are the two poles. Thus it comes about that a human individual for two or three or more incarnations is a man or a woman; and as karma makes for adjustment in these things and prevents extremes, slowly such an individual begins to lean or have a bias towards the other half of mankind . . . and when that reaches a certain point, then the man's incarnations become feminine, and the woman's incarnations . . . become masculine. Thus it is that our destiny swings us from incarnations as a man to incarnations as a woman, then back to a man, then back to a woman; and this will last until sex disappears slowly and inevitably.

The twin-soul idea is a very dangerous one, and in fact fundamentally all wrong. What we must strive to do is to rise above sex in both thought and feeling, directing our efforts towards the spiritual within us, in which there is neither sex nor any of its attributes. (SOP, 676-77)

The vital airs follow the psychology of the person and a person with male psychological biases would tend to develop more strongly his Martial vitality until he reaches a point where karma dictates that he begin to explore his feminine vitality. We can see how this movement back and forth between sexes can lead to a confused sexual identity in some incarnations. The vital airs may not be in synchronization with the psychological pole thereby leading to unnatural unions.

Whereas anyone may be born under a creative ray or a leadership ray in a particular incarnation, the manipulation of the vital airs can help to empower people who might not necessarily be as gifted otherwise. Stories are often told of secret societies within institutions of higher learning with homosexual initiations. The members of these secret societies, often from rich families and from the most intellectually gifted, go on to take prominent roles within their respective nations. Stories of sexual improprieties in political centres and in centres of creativity such as Hollywood are rampant. The people involved

in this type of sexual enhancement have a natural charisma or magnetism that makes them very popular on the one hand and yet cursed with totally inappropriate tendencies for the roles they are playing on the other hand. The sad thing is that this type of behavior is also prevalent in religious institutions. If one wonders why religious institutions turn a blind eye to sexual improprieties, it is because their most successful and charismatic advocates are those engaged in sexual perversity, whether it be with children or others. They lead society towards the master that they serve, which is the master of selfishness leading to moral degeneracy. All of these leaders in their various areas would naturally have a tendency to make the society they live in over into their own image. How can they do other than this? They have no access to anything other than themselves once they have given free reign to their Lower Triad.

The Black Magician is blessed in this day and age with the many ways of reaching the masses through the various instruments of the mass media. The clairvoyant will tell you of the energies emanating from pornographic material and inflaming the Lower Triad of individuals viewing such material. When the Lower Triad is aroused, there is a dulling of the individual's intellectual faculties making it easier to instill ideas into a person. The advertising industry knows this well. Our leaders are capable of bringing out the worst in a nation by capitalizing on disasters that shake the nation. When you look at how factionalized the world is, and with the number of wars that go on, it is easy to see that the various factions are ruled by the heresy of separatism so enthusiastically endorsed by the Black Magicians. It is the Black Magician who is able to draw forth and fan into life the worst tendencies lying in the constitution of the people. In *The Mahatma Letters*, K.H. explains the difference between his order and that of the Jesuits. Referring to the Jesuits, he writes:

[T]hey know that what they teach is a lie; and we know that what we impart is truth, the only truth and nothing but the truth. They work for the greater power and glory (!) of their order; we — for the power and final glory of individuals, of isolated units, of humanity in general, and we are content, nay forced — to leave our Order and its chiefs entirely in the shade. They work, and toil, and deceive, for the sake of worldly power in this life; we work and toil, and allow our chelas to be temporarily deceived, to afford them means never to be deceived hereafter, and to see the whole evil of falsity and untruth, not alone in this but in many of their after lives. They — the Jesuits sacrifice the inner principle, the Spiritual brain of the ego, to feed and develop the better the physical brain of the personal evanescent man, sacrificing the whole humanity to offer it as a holocaust to their Society — the insatiable monster feeding on the brain and marrow of humanity, and developing an incurable cancer on every spot of healthy

flesh it touches. We — the criticized and misunderstood Brothers — we seek to bring men to sacrifice their personality — a passing flash — for the welfare of the whole humanity, hence for their own *immortal* Egos, a part of the latter, as humanity is a fraction of the integral whole, that it will one day become. *They* are trained to deceive; we — to *undeceive*; they do the scavenger's work themselves — barring a few poor sincere tools of theirs — *con amore*, and for selfish ends; we — leave it to our menials — the *duggas* at our service, by giving them *carte blanche* for the time being, and with the sole object of drawing out the whole *inner* nature of the chela, most of the nooks and corners of which, would remain dark and concealed for ever, were not an opportunity afforded to test each of these corners in turn. Whether the chela wins or loses the prize — depends solely of himself. (ML, 231-32)

When the chela is ready, it is the *duggas* who draw forth the seeds hidden in the darkness of the *chela's* soul ensuring when it is all done that there is nothing left to draw him back into the evil doctrine of materialism. Staying true while in the hands of the *duggas* is the final victory. The same way that the Black Magician can draw forth the worst in the *chela*, he can also draw that out of the rich and the powerful. In the end the rich and powerful can be made a tool, willing or not, of the Black Magician. Most people have their price. Because our leaders can hide many of their deeds behind official secrets acts and the morality of society has been turned upside down, the populace and its leaders have become a much easier prey for the forces of separatism.

The spiritual man who follows the middle path, the Mercurial ray, attains enlightenment and at that point is able to use the powers of the Martian and Venusian rays, to serve Nature. The Mercurial ray becomes the channel through which the wisdom of Nature guides the lower Man to wisely use the powers available to him. The Black Magician excites the Martian and Venusian rays as he embraces the philosophy of dualism. He sacrifices the One in order to embrace the Maya of the two, so that he can use the two to wage war against humanity. This message is played over and over again in the various writings of the founders of the Theosophical Society. Right

up to the death of W.Q. Judge, the message was consistent. Up until that time nobody in the Society was able to succor any mundane benefit to themselves by being associated with the Society. More than everyone else, the founders gave their time, their money, their reputations, and finally their lives in a noble attempt to wake humanity up to the principle of Universal Brotherhood. Is celibacy necessary for one who follows Practical Occultism? Absolutely!

Historians for the most part reflect the mentality of today's society. In one sense they can hardly be blamed for some of the nonsense they print, especially if they are not particularly wise in the way of things spiritual. On the other hand, if they stuck to the facts and did not feel impelled to imply all manner of clearly ludicrous suppositions, the nobility of humanity would shine through much more clearly than it presently does, and that could only be a good thing. Kim Farnell in looking at Mabel Collins and her associates may view things a little too readily through the lens of popular culture.

In one sense, we can see how the act of flirting is using the energies of dualism. These are energies that become awakened through sexual activity. Sexual activity soils the vital canals of the body. I do not think anything more has to be said about the Mabel Collins case. All of the different explanations that various people received are consistent within the context of occultism. The dark depression that Mabel Collins fell into afterwards is understandable given the pledge she had taken and the energies that she insisted on playing with. The description that Kim Farnell gives us of a woman of somewhat superficial concerns who at the same time was able to write some of the most profound and sublime works of her time, gives the reader some marvelous hints into the working of the psycho-spiritual apparatus in man. For the theosophical reader able to read between the lines, there are some remarkable things to mull over. For others, unfortunately, it seems this is yet another salacious story concerning the nucleus of the Theosophical Society. 

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Subscriptions can be purchased according to the rates on the Contents page.

MOON VOID-OF-COURSE PHENOMENA

Chris McRae, PMAFA, CA.NCGR, CAP.ISAR*

As we look up into the night sky, there appears to be a circular dome surrounding our Earth. This dome stretches far into the vast reaches of space and is called the Celestial Sphere. It is considered to be concentric with planet Earth. On this Celestial Sphere, which can be drawn as a circle on a piece of paper, we can plot the position of stars and planets, as well as our own Sun and Moon from the perspective of planet Earth. This is also used as the outer circle of an astrological chart.

We know our planet moves around the Sun, but it appears that the Sun is moving around our planet. This yearly path is called the Ecliptic and it moves through a backdrop of specific constellations out in space that we call the zodiacal belt. This belt is a series of 12 constellations, or groups of stars, that lie within a few degrees above or below the ecliptic. The names of these constellations have been given to the 12 signs of the zodiac but they no longer coincide because, over the ages, they have shifted westward about 23 degrees due to the precession of the Equinoxes.

As the Sun moves along its apparent journey of 360 degrees per year, it projects onto the backdrop of these 30 degree divisions that bear the names of the 12 zodiacal signs, hence we can identify the position of our own sun sign or birthday sign. As the planets in our solar system rotate according to their own individual time frame, they also project onto this same backdrop and fit into the astrological chart wheel. The Moon completes its synodic cycle around the earth in 29 days 12 hours and 44 minutes and it too projects onto the backdrop of the 12 zodiacal signs. That means we theoretically say that the Moon passes through each zodiacal sign in approximately 2-1/2 days. Now we get to the crux of the Moon Void-of-Course phenomena.

As the Moon approaches the end of each sign or division, there is a short period when it does not form a major aspect to any of the planets in the sign that it is in, until it reaches the next sign. This is called the Moon Void-of-Course period. For those unfamiliar with astrological terminology, an aspect is the angular distance between two planets or luminaries as measured around the 360 degrees of the circle. Some angles are more powerful than others so they fall into the category of "major aspects".

Some of these Moon Void periods may last only a few minutes, they may occur in the middle of the night when you are asleep, or they could last half a day or even a full day. It all depends on the position of all the planets in the solar system in relation to the fast moving Moon because some planets are so far away from us, that their revolution, or circular distance, is much longer than others, which affects the length of the Moon Void periods. Some months, the phenomena is quite unusual and leads us to believe that unusual developments will take place in the lives of many people who are not taking heed to this valuable information.

Symbolically speaking, the Moon is the planet of nurturing and it brings matters to fruition or conversely, it can also indicate delays and frustrations. In terms of human affairs, the Moon is often called the developmental agent. When it is Void-of-Course, it has no developmental influence or power to bring matters begun at that time, to fulfilment. Sometimes it is called a silly period but that may be a misnomer because it is an important time frame that has its purpose. Metaphysically speaking, it is significant in giving us an opportunity to take care of routine matters, contemplate our next endeavor, take stock of our position, meditate, slow down. In short, it is not a time to take direct action.

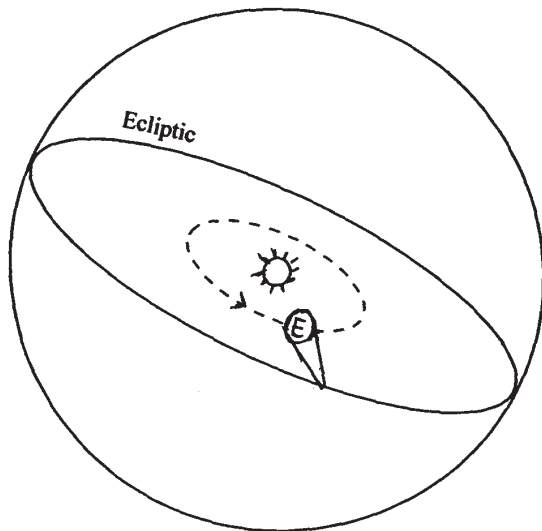
This is an ancient concept that is gaining popularity, even among non-astrologers, because it is so easy to apply and verify. I have personally used it over many years and have accumulated many interesting stories of what happened when I neglected to check before taking action.

Here are a few guidelines to help you decide when it is important to check your Moon Void positions.

1. It is not a good time to purchase an automobile, buy a new appliance, or buy anything that has moving parts. There may be a flaw in the product, you may decide you don't like your purchase, or it may not suit its intended purpose. My husband and I once purchased a large motor home. We gave the cheque to the sales person and drove the unit off the lot under a void period because we were caught in the excitement of the moment. That motor home developed countless unac-

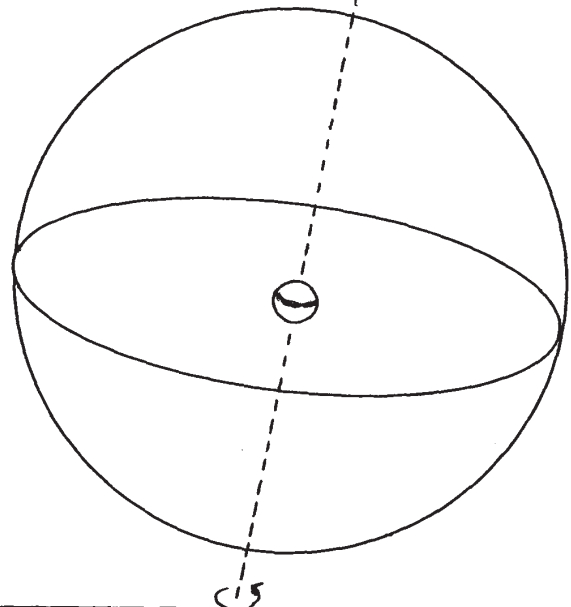
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ECLIPTIC: Apparent path of the Sun around the Celestial Sphere is created by the Earth's annual rotation. Thus the plane of the Ecliptic coincides with the plane of the earth's orbit.

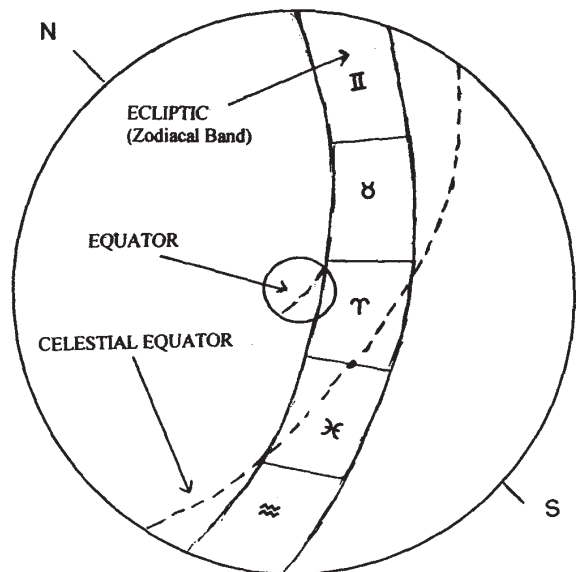
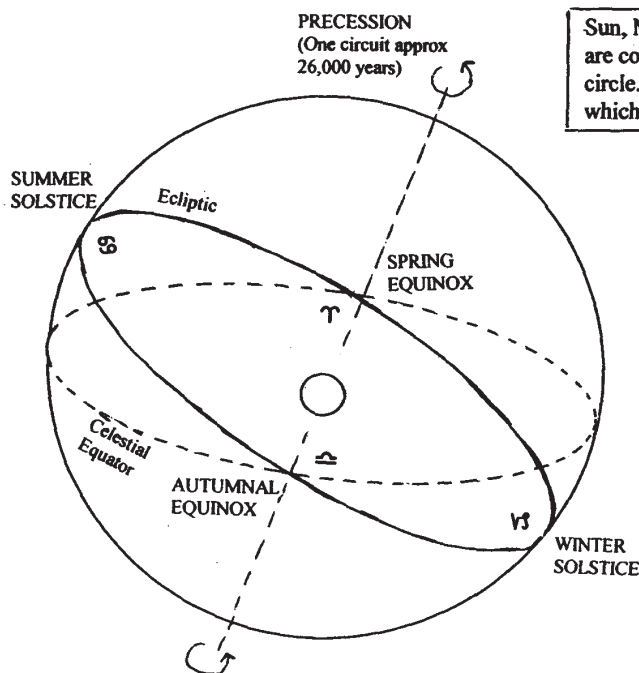


SUN, MOON AND PLANETS MOVE ACROSS THE SKY IN A RHYTHMIC PATTERN GIVING EARLY MAN THE IDEA OF MEASURING TIME. THE NEED FOR SUCH A SYSTEM WAS THE REASON MATHEMATICS WAS DEVELOPED.

CELESTIAL EQUATOR: Earth's Equator extended into space.



Sun, Moon and planets move against a background of fixed stars. Of these, 88 are constellations or groups. 12 of these in the equatorial zone form the zodiacal circle. These fall near the 12 thirty degree sections bearing the zodiacal names, which were originally identified with them but have now shifted from them.



ECLIPTIC & CELESTIAL EQUATOR SUPERIMPOSED

The Earth spins around on its polar axis daily but this is not at right angles to its annual orbit around the Sun. They are tilted by 23-1/2 degrees. This gives us our seasons.

At the Spring Equinox, the Sun is directly over the Equator. This point is 0° Aries from which celestial longitude is measured.

Presented by: Chris McRae, pmafa, ca.ncgr, cap.isar

countable problems over the years that we owned it. As an example, it contained two furnaces for use in winter skiing. At no time did both furnaces work at the same time. Numerous mechanics were unable to solve the problem. The outside skin of the unit began rotting from the inside to the outside by showing pit marks on the outer surface. It was due to the kind of glue that was used. Periodically the roof would leak, be repaired, only to leak again. The saga went on and on over the several years we owned the unit.

2. It is a poor time to sign a major document, make a major decision, say "I do" in a marriage ceremony, or make any kind of a significant commitment.

3. It is a poor time to either start a new job or hire a new employee. In either case, it will likely turn out to be a disappointment.

4. I would prefer not to start a journey, either by automobile or plane during a Moon Void period. It does not mean a disaster will occur but it could mean your luggage goes to Hong Kong while you go to Los Angeles. It may mean that the hotel accommodation you thought you had, miraculously disappeared from the computer. You will likely experience any number of annoying circumstances that could be avoided by starting your journey at a more propitious time. I have occasionally experienced this one when circumstances dictated my flight arrangements. In such an instance, I expect strange experiences, double check my arrangements and wonder what kinks or wrinkles will occur before I reach my destination.

Only recently I flew to London. We were just beginning to board the plane in Edmonton for the scheduled take-off time when an announcement came over the PA system of the airport that there was a security breach and all passengers had to exit and pass through security once more. That took two hours. We missed our connecting flight and new arrangements had to be made. That new flight was just beginning to roll away from the gate when the pilot announced that we were returning due to some unexpected mechanical problem that needed to be checked. That delayed us for another two hours. When we got to London, we were further delayed by being stacked in the air. This was highly inconvenient because I had friends who had flown into London from New York a few days earlier, and were waiting for me at King's Cross Terminal to catch a train up to York. They too were inconvenienced by my serious delay. Eventually we did arrive in York safely but it made a long journey from Western Canada much longer. The return flight was similar. The com-

plete journey, until I returned home, was under a Moon Void because that was the influence under which it began.

5. It would be a poor time to redecorate your home or buy new furniture. If you choose a new paint color, you would likely not like it when you see it on the wall. If you buy new drapes, you can be sure something will be wrong.

6. It would be a poor time to buy an outfit of clothing for an important event, particularly if it is expensive. You will either return it in a few days because you don't like it, you may never wear it, or it may not be right for the occasion. It is not a poor time for the purchase of casual garments.

7. It is a poor time to make an investment.

8. It is a poor time to have an important appointment. You may be sure that the appointment will be canceled, delayed, or the outcome unsatisfactory.

9. It would not be a propitious time to open a new business.

These are only a few suggestions. There is no reason to be fanatical in the application of the Moon Void because they do occur frequently, but check it for the most important events, purchases, or decisions in your life. It can save frustration and aggravation.

How to find when the Moon is Void-of-Course.

An astrological calendar or calendar of celestial influences can be purchased at any astrological or metaphysical book store but usually only in September and October preceding the year in question, unless they are willing to place a special mid-season order for you.

You may find a Moon Void listing on the Web. Try <http://www.accessnewage.com> and look under Moon Tables. If that does not work for you, simply put "Moon Void-of-Course" in your search engine and go through the list until you find a site that offers a Moon Void Ephemeris. Make sure you check the time zone of the listing. In North America you would want one that is listed for either Eastern or Pacific Time, and make the easy adjustment if you live in the Mountain Time Zone. Avoid one that is listed for Greenwich because of the large time adjustment required to align it to times in North America.

To help you get started, listed below are the Moon Void periods for the upcoming three months of April, May and June 2004, in Pacific Time, with Daylight Saving Time included.

Add one hour for Mountain Time
 Add two hours for Central Time
 Add three hours for Eastern Time.

April 2004

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Moon goes Void</u>	<u>Moon ends Void</u>	<u>Enters new Sign</u>
Thursday	Apr 1	3:56 pm	6:45 pm	Virgo
Saturday	Apr 3	10:23 am	11:52 pm	Libra
<i>Daylight Saving Time begins 2:00 am April 4</i>				
Monday	Apr 5	2:26 pm	Tuesday 3:24 am	Scorpio
Wednesday	Apr 7	4:06 am	Thursday 4:50 am	Sagittarius (This is a long one)
Friday	Apr 9	5:29 pm	Saturday 6:33 am	Capricorn
Sunday	Apr 11	8:46 pm	Monday 9:33 am	Aquarius
Wednesday	Apr 14	12:27 pm	2:24 pm	Pisces
Friday	Apr 16	6:42 am	9:24 pm	Aries
Monday	Apr 19	6:21 am	Tuesday 6:42 am	Taurus
Tuesday	Apr 20	12:36 pm	Wednesday 6:10 pm	Gemini
Friday	Apr 23	4:22 pm	Saturday 6:56 am	Cancer
Monday	Apr 26	2:56 am	7:14 pm	Leo
Wednesday	Apr 28	7:08 pm	Thursday 5:00 am	Virgo

May 2004

Saturday	May 1	4:31 am	11:03 am	Libra
Monday	May 3	9:49 am	1:39 pm	Scorpio
Tuesday	May 4	2:37 pm	Wednesday 2:08 pm	Sagittarius
Friday	May 7	4:50 am	2:16 pm	Capricorn
Sunday	May 9	6:03 am	3:46 pm	Aquarius
Tuesday	May 11	12:31 pm	7:52 pm	Pisces
Thursday	May 13	7:14 pm	Friday 3:20 am	Aries
Sunday	May 16	5:17 am	12:57 pm	Taurus
Tuesday	May 18	9:52 pm	Wednesday 0:47 am	Gemini
Friday	May 21	5:13 am	1:35 pm	Cancer
Saturday	May 22	11:58 am	Void all day Sunday 'til Monday 2:07 am	Leo
Wednesday	May 26	2:42 am	12:52 pm	Virgo
Friday	May 28	9:17 am	8:22 pm	Libra
Sunday	May 30	12:09 pm	Monday 0:08 am	Scorpio

June 2004

Tuesday	Jun 1	2:16 pm	Wednesday 0:52 am	Sagittarius
Thursday	Jun 3	10:12 am	Friday 0:12 am	Capricorn
Saturday	Jun 5	5:28 am	Sunday 0:10 am	Aquarius
Monday	Jun 7	11:08 am	Tuesday 2:38 am	Pisces
Wednesday	Jun 9	4:37 pm	Thursday 8:49 am	Aries
Saturday	Jun 12	4:31 am	6:37 pm	Taurus
Monday	Jun 14	7:34 pm	Tuesday 6:44 am	Gemini
Thursday	Jun 17	1:27 pm	7:37 pm	Cancer
Sunday	Jun 20	3:46 am	8:05 am	Leo
Tuesday	Jun 22	0:54 am	7:10 pm	Virgo
Thursday	Jun 24	10:19 am	Friday 3:50 am	Libra
Saturday	Jun 26	4:41 pm	Sunday 9:13 am	Scorpio
Monday	Jun 28	5:57 pm	Tuesday 11:15 am	Sagittarius
Wednesday	Jun 30	7:52 pm	Thursday 11:01 am	Capricorn 

Ruby Welbourne

June 20, 1897 - January 6, 2004



A small group of Theosophists joined together with family members, friends, and fellow volunteer workers, to honour the memory of Ruby Welbourne who passed away peacefully on January 6th in her 107th year. An impressive feature of the afternoon's gathering was the presence of a peaceful and quite beautiful atmosphere. There was no deep sadness, but rather a happy enthusiasm to celebrate the life of Ruby, a long life filled with kind thoughts and loving acts.

It is significant that she left her earthly body at the time of the true winter solstice, that is at the earth's perihelion, and a waxing moon; these being considered auspicious signs according to eastern teaching. It is equally of interest to note that she entered this incarnation at the summer solstice, perhaps indicating the opening of a great sunny heart. Also maybe this was what stimulated the source of shining health and vitality that enabled her to channel a never-ending supply of energy into a lifetime of service, even up to a very advanced age.

A native of London, England, Ruby was actually born in the 19th century, and lived into the 21st, a fact which highly amused her as she exclaimed to her nephew, "Who would have thought I would live to see three centuries!" What tremendous changes she lived through, and what tragedies! She was no stranger to the devastation of war, having served as a nurse in France during World War I, caring for the wounded in dastardly conditions. Later in her retirement years she was to return to work with the sick and suffering when she volunteered for many years at Mt. Sinai Hospital in Toronto.

Shortly after that war she moved to Canada where she made her home, and was responsible for supplying the means for the rest of her family to join her: both parents, five sisters and a brother. She enjoyed a long career with the Ontario Provincial Police as an executive secretary, and on her retirement delved whole-heartedly into the work she really loved, that of giving help to her fellow humans and animals. Her close friend and comrade, Merlin Andrews, spoke of her dedication as a volunteer at the Toronto Humane Society right into her late nineties, and amused us with the description of Ruby at the time of a strike, barging through picket lines to feed the animals.

Merlin also spoke of Ruby's great love of poetry, a love inspired by her innate recognition of theosophical truths, for she was aware of a divine source of consciousness that is often touched by the mystical intuiti-

tions of the poet. She was an ardent Theosophist ever ready to express her undying gratitude to H.P.B. for giving us again this Ancient Wisdom at such extreme personal cost.

Ruby embraced the theosophical concept of the sacredness of all life, an ideal that she exemplified as a living practice day to day with every breath she took. As she showed tolerance to all humanity, she also took responsibility for care of the animal world, the forests, the waters and the earth. She spoke so enthusiastically about the secret life of plants and believed in the etheric flow of sympathetic energy from a caring gardener which could help their growth. She made a trek to Findhorn at the peak of its fulfillment, and was able to discern a spiritual presence there that gave direction to the work of elementals.

While still a young woman she joined the Theosophical Society in Toronto, where she was always active behind the scenes. For many years she was a loyal friend and assistant to Dudley Barr, helping set up programs, preparing newsletters for distribution, introducing speakers, and working in whatever capacity was necessary to keep Theosophical ideas available for those who were seeking. Members and attendees of the Lodge meetings remember her as a kind and beautiful soul always ready to give a warm-hearted welcome to any newcomer and cheerful encouraging words to old friends. Possessing a good speaking voice she would often fill in an evening at a moment's notice by reading from a Theosophical book, thus averting an otherwise disaster.

When her hearing deteriorated in later years and participation in public meetings became impossible, she invited students to meet in her home for discussion of such subjects as Karma, reincarnation, ethical responsibility, etc. It was always a treat to visit with her, and a small group of us met regularly right up to shortly after her 100th birthday. Besides philosophical discussion, there was a warm social side highlighted with the exotic tea parties hosted by her sister, Doris. Along with her keen intelligence Ruby had a delightful sense of humour, and the tea was laced with laughter. These were lovely evenings that all of us will long treasure in our memories.

Ruby spent the latter few years of her life near relatives in Windsor, Ontario, where she continued to make new friends and cheer lonely souls until the time of leaving this incarnation. Here as elsewhere she leaves a lasting impression.

Joan Sutcliffe

BOOK REVIEW

O Rare Denis Saurat, An Appreciation by John Robert Colombo. Toronto: Colombo & Company; Shelburne, ON and Sauk City, WI: George A. Vanderburgh, Publisher, 2003. 442 pp. Soft cover. Price \$65.00

The Lamp magazine once ran a series of profiles under the general title “Unenrolled Theosophists”. They were intended to identify those who — such as Mark Twain in the editor’s opinion — might have been attracted to the Theosophical Movement had it lived up to its initial promise — “public men whose ‘facilities of observation’ have given ‘a greater breadth of view, a more pronounced and impartial, a more widely spread humane-ness’” [*The Lamp* IV: 8 (Aug 1900), p. 171.]. A first impression after reading John Robert Colombo’s new book is that Denis Saurat could well be described as an unenrolled Theosophist.

O Rare Denis Saurat is not a biography *per se*, but effectively presents the subject’s life through an examination of his life’s work. In it, John Robert Colombo offers a perceptive survey of almost the whole of Saurat’s literary output. All books, articles and other writings are described, with informed comment added. An extraordinary intellect is thus revealed.

Born in France in 1890, Denis Saurat enrolled in the Sorbonne in 1912, having already had two years’ teaching experience (as a Professor of English). Not surprisingly, he served in the French military intelligence throughout World War I. What is surprising, however, was that his first academic appointment immediately after the war was to the University of Glasgow. After receiving his war-delayed doctorate in 1920, he first taught English at the University of Bordeaux; then, from 1926, French at the University of London. There he stayed until 1950 when he retired as Professor Emeritus. He died in France in 1958.

Saurat published extensively in both the French and English languages and was a respected scholar of the two literatures. Among his important works are stud-

ies of John Milton, the poet; of William Blake the mystic; and of Victor Hugo the novelist. But literature was only part of his wide-ranging interests, which included serious psychic research. Outside academic circles, these interests can be partly judged by those with whom he associated. For instance, one of his best friends was A.R. Orage, who was once active in the Theosophical Society, but who like many fine members departed at the time of the 1907 Leadbeater scandal. Orage published and for many years edited *The New Age* which, in the first quarter of the 20th century, was one of the most influential magazines for discerning readers not put off by new ideas. Another acquaintance was psychologist Laurence J. Bendit, who later served as General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in England. In 1923 Saurat visited Gurdjieff at the Fontainebleau Institute, but not until several years later did he write of this experience: while he was favourably impressed with the man, his unorthodox methods evidently held little appeal.

Saurat’s books that should be of interest to students of Theosophy include *Atlantis and the Giants* and *Literature and Occult Tradition*. In the latter, several pages are devoted to H.P. Blavatsky and her writings. Colombo observes that “[I]n Saurat’s eyes Blavatsky is something of a philosophical poet.” A rather unusual assessment, but probably few readers of the thousands of pages of her writings will argue with it.

O Rare Denis Saurat is a most interesting study. It imparts much useful information of an unusual — no, extremely “rare” scholar and his work. Not for the first time John Colombo has succeeded in reviving interest in one who might qualify as an “unenrolled Theosophist”.

Ted G. Davy

... **Gunas** continued from page 7

Let the wise, having attained this longed-for human body, which is so disposed towards liberation, free themselves from attachment to these gunas and through devotion come to me. (203)

Both Gitas, the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Uddhava Gita*, give us clues of how to live in order to raise our

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Uddhava Gita, Translated by Swami Ambikananda Saraswati, Seastone, Berkeley, CA, 2002.

mind into a sattvic state, in order to liberate our Self from the bonds of the gunas for the Self is a prisoner of them. A full study of these qualities, a constant awareness of our mind, and a willingness to change will help man to be free. 🌸

Fohat is the Steed, Thought is the Rider

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



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