

# THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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## BUDDHISM AND BRAHMANISM

In the *Esoteric Writings of T. Subba Row*<sup>1</sup> there is a rather remarkable article entitled "First Ray in Buddhism" (p. 527, ff.)<sup>2</sup>. Mr. Subba Row says, "The word Buddha is used in two senses. In one sense it means any one of the 7 kinds of Logoi—any Logos is said to be Buddha. In the other, it is the Logos of a particular Ray—viz., Gautama's Ray, the Second . . . In the first Ray there are two elements—(1) the permanent element of the First Ray, (2) the indwelling Divine Presence, which is Christos. These two are called in Buddhist phraseology, Amitābha and Avalokitesvara . . . Though each man belongs to a particular Ray of his own, it is only the first two Rays that have ever given rise to universal religions . . ."

Herein lies concealed the mystery of the conflict of the world religions, the reason why the Masters and H.P.B. who inaugurated the present Theosophical effort, called themselves "Buddhists"; as well as the significance of the so-called "Prayag" letter (*infra*); the meaning of the so-called "Hinayana" and "Mahayana" Buddhism; and what is "exoteric" and what "esoteric" Buddhism.

To open up some of the significance of Subba Row's remarks, we shall consider what at first might appear to be an entirely unrelated matter. As the eminent Orientalist Jean Przyluski wrote<sup>3</sup>, "It has frequently been asked why the same term which designates the gods in India (*deva*) means "demon" (*daeva*) in Iran and why, inversely, the Indian demons (*asura*) have a name which corresponds to that of the great god of the *Avesta*<sup>4</sup>." (The name of the

<sup>1</sup> Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India, 1931.

<sup>2</sup> We believe that the close study of this and other articles in this book will dispel the current and wide-spread misrepresentation of Subba Row as a tight-lipped Brahman who jealously concealed his knowledge from the Western infidels.

<sup>3</sup> "Deva et asura", *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, Tom VIII (1931-1932), p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Przyluski gives a brief bibliography, of which my present readers would most likely have access to Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 35-36, 230-233.

latter is Ahura Mazda—the Sanskrit word “Asura” having become *Ahura* in the *Avesta*).

To conserve space, we shall not here go into the explanation given by the esteemed scholar, as in this one particular case, it appears we may have more fundamental information. Our thesis rests upon the fact that the instructor of the Devas is, as well-known, *Brihaspati* (the planet Jupiter), the Lord of the sacrifice and the ritual—that is, the patron and protector of the Brahmans. The enemies of the Devas were called Asuras (which means only artificially, “not-gods”, since there was no Sanskrit word *sura* meaning “god” and the Brahmans had in later times to invent the latter term to “fill in” their arguments). The instructor of the Asuras is, as well known, Sukra (the planet Venus), hence Lucifer. It follows that the enemies of the Brahmanical system—that system of exoteric ritualism which was bringing the Hindu masses into successively lower levels of superstition—would be naturally led to consider the Devas as evil, and the opposing forces, the Asuras, as the bringers of light, of the good. Hence the inversion in the two religions.

Now consider a remark in the article, “Sākya Muni’s Place in History”<sup>5</sup>, “For the profane, the Exalted One was born in the 68th year of the Burmese *Eeatzana* era, established by *Eeatzana* (Anjana) King of Dewadaha; for the initiated—in the 48th year of that era, on a Friday of the waxing moon, of May.” But “Friday” is *Venus Day*.

As said in the Sutras, “On the eighth day of the 4th moon, when the star Venus appeared, the Buddha was born as the son of a king and when He

descended to the earth He took seven steps and lifting His right hand He said: ‘In heaven and on earth, I am the one to become the teacher of men.’ ”

Such is the symbolic way of stating in his last mortal life (in this series), Gautama Buddha was destined to destroy the power of exoteric ritualism and ceremony in India. Here are some of the fundamental teachings of that Second Ray: “. . . be a lamp and a refuge to yourselves. Seek no other refuge. Let the Truth be your refuge; seek no refuge elsewhere. And they, who now or when I am dead shall be a lamp and a refuge to themselves, seeking no other refuge but taking the Truth as their lamp and refuge, these shall be my foremost disciples.” And furthermore, “I have preached the truth without any distinction of esoteric or exoteric, for in respect of the truth, there is no clenched hand in the teaching of the Tathagata.”

Of course, the term “Venus” as here used does not signify the physical planet; nor does “Friday” necessarily mean a particular day of our week. As stated in the Secret Doctrine (I, 572, ff.)<sup>6</sup>: “The star under which a human Entity is born, says the Occult teaching, will remain for ever its star, throughout the whole cycle of its incarnations in one Manvantara. But *this is not his astrological star*. The latter is concerned and connected with the *personality*, the former with the INDIVIDUALITY. The “Angel” of that Star, or the Dhyani-Buddha will be either the guiding or simply the presiding “Angel,” so to say, in every new rebirth of the monad, *which is part of his own essence*, though his vehicle, man may remain for ever ignorant of this . . . The ‘triads’ born under the same Parent-

<sup>5</sup> H. P. Blavatsky *Collected Writings*, 1883, compiled by Boris de Zirkoff, Philosophical Research Society, Inc., Los Angeles, 1950, p, 249.

<sup>6</sup> Our pagination is based on the original edition of 1888, by the facsimile printed by *Theosophy Company*, Los Angeles, 1925.

(Continued on Page 73.)

planet, or rather the *radiations* of one and the same Planetary Spirit (Dhyani Buddha) are, in all their after lives and rebirths, sister, or 'twin-souls,' on this earth." And quoting from T. Subba Row, the SD (I, 574), says: "... every class of adepts has its own bond of spiritual communion which knits them together . . . The only possible and effectual way of entering into such brotherhood . . . is by bringing oneself within the influence of the Spiritual light which radiates *from one's own Logos*. I may further point out here . . . that such communion is only possible *between persons whose souls derive their life and sustenance from the same divine RAY . . .*"

It is surely a fallacy to think that, India, or any other country, or any nation or any race, is formed purely from one or another of the seven rays, as here considered. A whole nation may be dominated by a First Ray religion (as for example, in India, Brahmanism; and in Europe, Christianity), or a Second Ray religion (as for example, Buddhism). But individual souls coming under the domination of one or another may have quite different affinities as they progress along the path. Any occult school may provide initiations for more than one ray. As for example, in Mahayana Buddhism, there are *five* basic initiations corresponding to the five "Dhyani-Buddhas"—so-called.

However, just because a nation is dominated by a particular religion, that does not necessarily mean that there is any occult school in that nation which could give initiations corresponding to that ray, although such a school might once have existed. That is, a nation could be dominated by degenerated ritual and ceremony, as occurred in India and was the case for many centuries in Europe—and there be at the same time no First Ray initiation there. Similarly nations could be given up to

sterile scholasticism and down-right vicious doctrines—which is the degeneration of the Second Ray. It is, however, necessary in the activities of the White Lodge to hold open the avenues to individuals belonging to any one of the seven basic groups.

Another way of stating what we initially quoted from T. Subba Row is that there never was a world religion which was not based either on (1) *practice*—corresponding to the First Ray; or (2) *doctrine*—corresponding to the Second. But if we consider many of the Indian practices, we might well ask, "How thereby could anybody ever gain the wisdom of a Buddha?"; and if we read through some of the Buddhist treatises, we might well ask, "How thereby could anybody ever gain the occult force of a Buddha?" Neither of the religions of the 1st or 2nd Rays are sufficient to gain adeptship in that Ray. But the highest aspect of doctrine is *wisdom*; and the highest aspect of practice, *the means*. It is from the appropriate union of *the means* with *wisdom* (symbolized as "male" and "female") that the Buddhas and the Adepts are born.

This will now enable us to clarify what occurred in India. The Brahmans had a system of esoteric and exoteric teaching, the dissemination of which depended not upon the natural ability of persons, their efforts in that one, and in preceding, lives, but upon the caste of birth. One could be initiated into their mysteries, if he had the privilege of being an issue from designated physical unions, while those who were not so privileged by birth were condemned, in their system, to be fed with superstition and degraded practices. But this method obviously was not based at all upon the innate properties of individuals. As we have previously quoted from the SD, "The star under which a human Entity is born . . . is not his *astrological star*," which is the one concerned

with births in castes. The Brahmans in order to maintain their illicit power, deliberately foisted gross misteachings about spiritual progress upon the people. Then, as we read in "Sākya Muni's Place in History"<sup>7</sup> ". . . in after times in their impotent rage, they (the Brahmans—the initiates at any rate) destroyed every accessible vestige of the birth, life and death of Him, who in his boundless mercy to all creatures had revealed their carefully concealed mysteries and doctrines in order to check the ecclesiastical torrent of ever-growing superstitions . . ."

Now we can understand somewhat more clearly the "Prayag" Letter, which is to be found in the book, *Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* (p. 461 ff). H. P. Blavatsky claimed that this had been written under the dictation of the Master M, with reference to the Allahabad Theosophists. In particular, it says, "They join the Society, and though remaining as stubborn as ever in their old beliefs and superstitions, and having never given up caste or one single of their customs, they, in their selfish exclusiveness, expect to see and converse with us and have our help in all and everything . . . . It is useless for a member to argue 'I am one of a pure life, I am a teetotaler and an abstainer from meat and vice. All my aspirations are for good etc.' and he, at the same time, building by his acts and deeds an impassible barrier on the road between himself and us. What have we, the disciples of the true *Arhats*, of esoteric Buddhism and of Sang-gyas<sup>8</sup> to do with the *Shasters* and Orthodox Brahmanism? There are 100 of thousands of Fakirs, Sannyasis and Saddhus leading the most pure lives, and yet being as they are, on the

path of *error*, never having had an opportunity to meet, see or even hear of us. Their forefathers have driven away the followers of the only true philosophy upon earth away from India and now, it is not for the latter to come to them but to them to come to us if they want us. Which of them is ready to become a Buddhist, a *Nastika* as they call us? None. Those who have believed and followed us have had their reward."<sup>9</sup>

The letter is now palpably true and most meaningful. "Their forefathers have driven away the followers of the only true philosophy upon earth away from India . . .", because the only *true philosophy* is taught in the 2nd Ray (the ray of Gautama Buddha), while the only *correct practice* is taught in the First. Furthermore, "Which of them is ready to become a Buddhist . . .?"—that is, which of them are "sister-souls" of the Second Ray and wish communion with the adepts of that Ray, and also, which are "sister-souls" of another Ray and wish the wisdom to recognize that? But while holding to and worshipping exoteric shadows, they still think they are entitled to the highest truth. Yet if that truth were written out for them, they would not understand it; and if it were said, they would not hear it. If they met an Adept they would not recognize the fact, for by their acts they demonstrate they are not ready to have such communion. Only those who seek shall find, for it is by the act of seeking that a bridge is built between oneself and the desired goal.

<sup>9</sup> Students of the history of the Theosophical Movement will know that this letter caused considerable consternation and ire. Many claimed it was a forgery on the part of H.P.B. But we will recall that William Q. Judge defended H.P.B. and the letter's authenticity.

<sup>7</sup> op. cit., p. 256.

<sup>8</sup> The Tibetan name of the Buddha.

# "THE PASSAGE OF MATTER THROUGH MATTER"

*As Seen Among Various Moslem Sects*

*(Continued from Page 63.)*

More than one sect in this country is able to obtain incense. The votaries of Sidi Bou Ali in the South of Tunisia produce phenomenally all the incense they use at their meetings. They first chant while an orchestra of perhaps four or five musicians make strange music, then pots of fire are brought which they take in both hands and hold above their heads and run up and down chanting, then, take either a little chalk from the wall and throw it on as incense, or if a marabout be present they will run up to him and touch his hand, and take from his empty hand a piece of incense. If there be guests of distinction whom they wish to please they will touch either the back of their hand or clothing with the same result.

I have seen a man put his pot of fire on the ground and throw a handful of sand gathered from the ground and a fragrant cloud of incense filled the place. A moment later a boy, standing near looking on, thought he would do the same. He took a little sand from the same place and threw it on to the glowing embers which the man had left a moment, with the result that the fire was nearly extinguished to the merriment and derisive shouts of his companions. The Chaouch (the name given to one who has this particular power in that part) seeing what had happened, ran up, picked up his pot of glowing embers, shook them and threw on another handful of sand, the fire burned brightly and clouds of sweet smelling incense again arose.

This amusing little episode happened just in front of me. Occasionally the Chaouch, after dancing and playing on

the bandir, holds it against the wall and coins fall into it. The first time I attended a seance of this Sect I had arranged with the Sheik and provided a meal of cous-cous and bread. They did a few things such as producing incense and handling fire and even allowing the flames to play on their clothes which were not burned. There had been heavy rain that afternoon, but it cleared up later. The sheik was much upset because some of his people, who lived at a distance, had not come because of the rain. He apologised and said that if we would come again the following evening, we should have a better entertainment. "We have eaten your cous-cous", he said, "and should like to do something in return. We do not want you to provide another for tomorrow evening."

So the following evening we went again. It was bright moonlight and the effect was weird and very pretty. They did the same kind of things only with more phenomena. I mention this as tourists always seem to think they do nothing except for money, but the people of these desert regions are very poor and a good meal is an event.

At other times I have seen them hold out a handkerchief and receive into it a large lump of sugar which was then presented to the marabout in whose honour the fete was being given. He kindly passed it to me. But this production of incense also takes place in other parts of the country without any religious ceremony, rather as an entertainment at marriages and fetes.

When my cook married a few years ago he enlisted the services of a man who could produce incense for the en-

tainment of his guests as it is always a great attraction. This man produced incense at a fete held in the patio of the bridegroom's house and on the last evening (the festivities lasted five days) when the marriage procession was walking through the town he appeared in front of it and demanded fire. The procession halted and it was at once produced, for a pot of fire is carried for the musicians to tighten at intervals the membrane of their *debourkas* and other instruments. He placed the fire on the ground in front of him and asked for the loan of a walking stick. This was also forthcoming from one of the on-lookers, and with it he simply stirred the fire in the pot and great clouds of incense rose up. He joined the procession, stopping it at intervals to produce more incense and waved it in front of the bridegroom and guests.

During the fete at the bridegroom's house I talked to this producer of incense and asked him how he obtained the power, for evidently it was produced in a different way from that of the sect of Sidi Bou Ali. He told me that anyone could obtain the power as he had, by sleeping three nights in the tomb of a certain marabout, but that the ordeal was a trying one. On the first night he slept there, a number of creeping things came out, centipedes, beetles, scorpions, snakes and spiders, but at dawn they all went away. On the second night the same thing happened only worse, and a viper coiled itself up on his breast. He said he very nearly gave it up, but remembering that the power of his marabout was greater than that of the reptiles he put his thought on Him and lay still; at dawn, as before, the things went away. The third night, he said, was very terrible, but having passed through two safely he summoned all his courage to keep his thought concentrated on the saint and a little before dawn a bright light filled the *Zaouia*, or tomb. All the things fled and he saw the form

of his marabout who conversed with him and gave him certain words, which, when pronounced mentally gave him the power to produce incense at will.

All the 'apport' I have seen in this country have been produced, I think, by the help of *jincon*, nature spirits, or else by calling on the name of some marabout, but this does not in the least explain the laws which govern such materialisation of objects, and I am still utterly in the dark as to how the thing is worked, that is, the scientific *modus operandi*.

Personally, I have a great antipathy to spiders, scorpions and creeping things and do not feel at all tempted to try to spend a night in the tomb of that marabout, even to be able to produce incense. The price is too heavy!

1920.

E. Windush.

## ILLUSION

The One Unconditioned Beatific Thought, says the Vedantist, only exists. There is neither Creator nor created, neither virtue nor vice, heaven nor hell, I nor thou. Passages of such import are very apt to be misunderstood. It is supposed that the Creator as well as the present and future world are held to be unreal, even while I speak and write, and you read and hear. This unreality however is not meant in its ordinary sense as to our concerns in life . . . It is never to be forgotten that this unreality is predicated from the supreme stand-point of the Absolute, and has no practical bearing whatever. Thus unreality *cannot* and *ought not* to be acted up to, unless and until a person ceases to be a personality, until all possibility of action and thinking ceases—which brings us back to saying that this tenet has no practical bearing, except that a man may earnestly endeavour to get rid of quality by subjugation of the passions, abstract meditation, and above all, devotion to *Iswara*.—*Pramada Dasa Mittra*.

## NOTES BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

As you already know the Officers for the ensuing fiscal year were returned to office by the Lodges without an election—the vacancy left by the death of Mr. N. W. J. Haydon was filled by the nomination of Mr. Charles Hale, a member of the Toronto Lodge for the past thirty years. The first Executive Meeting takes place on the 8th of this month and on this occasion on behalf of myself and my confreres I take the opportunity of thanking you for the confidence you repose in us as your servants in carrying on the work of the Society in Canada. This is the first year of the last quarter of the century following the inauguration of the Movement and will no doubt be fraught with many changes, heart-searchings, plans and thoughts for the future. An occult cycle is about to close and the tempo of events is speeding up at an ever increasing pace. Theosophists are well aware of the portents and those worthy of the name are giving time and thought to the momentous happenings that are bound to come. Now, if ever, is the time to put our house in order, to take stock as it were, forget the schisms that have beset us in the past, renew our fealty to the First Object and stand shoulder to shoulder eager and ready to meet the new effulgence of Truth that will be given out when in the flesh or otherwise the coming Avatar will be sensed by the Faithful standing with the torch now in their keeping ready to go forward with renewed vigour and enthusiasm to illuminate an expectant world.

\* \* \* \*

The Society is ever growing! I have just received a letter from Tel Aviv, Israel, in which the new General Secretary, Dr. I. S. Cohen informs me of the fact. Needless to say we welcome the good news and wish him and his Section

every good wish in their efforts and endeavours to spread the Light. A copy of the letter is published below.

\* \* \* \*

I would remind members that Dues for 1951/2 are now payable and would request that these be paid direct to the Treasurer of their own lodge and not sent to me as it causes unnecessary correspondence and loss of time. A few members are still in arrears, I trust they will take this opportunity to place themselves in good-standing.

\* \* \* \*

I am happy to welcome the following new members into the Society: Mr. Bryan K. Gardner, Vancouver Lodge; Mr. Stanford L. Treloar, Toronto Lodge.

E. L. T.

## A MESSAGE FROM TEL AVIV

8th June, 1951.

Lt.-Col. E. L. Thomson, D.S.O.,  
General Secretary, Theosophical  
Society, Toronto, Canada.

Dear Brother:

It is with genuine pleasure that I inform you of the constitution of the Section of the Theosophical Society in Israel.

The Section is composed of members who immigrated here from Europe, North Africa and Asia. At our first meeting we unanimously decided to continue the Theosophical work that every one of us was conducting in his country of origin and to constitute this Section.

Our President, Mr. C. Jinarajadasa, has nominated me as Presidential Agent for Israel and I wish to give you hereby the assurance of my most cordial cooperation with your Section.

We shall be happy to receive a copy of your magazine "The Canadian Theosophist" for our members, with thanks,

Cordially and fraternally yours,  
(Signed) Dr. I. S. Cohen,  
Presidential Agent.

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## OFFICE NOTES

Isolated students and those unable to have access to Theosophical literature should avail themselves of the Travelling Library conducted by the Toronto Theosophical Society. There are no charges except for postage on the volumes loaned. For particulars write to the Travelling Librarian, 52 Isabella Street, Toronto, Ont.

The 65th Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society in America will be held at Olcott, Wheaton, Illinois, from July 15th to 19th; this will be followed by the Summer School, July 21st to 27th. Mr. N. Sri Ram will be the guest

of honour at the Convention and will be Director of Studies at the Summer School.

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The hard working editors of Manas are considering taking 'time out' during July and August—and well they deserve it. They have maintained an exceptionally high standard in the magazine and each issue bears the tokens of excellent workmanship in the writing for which the magazine is noted. It is a heavy task to produce a magazine of this character once a week. Theosophical students who are concerned with the application of ancient principles in modern thought and trends will find this magazine invaluable. But like all periodicals which are devoted to idealistic ends, Manas finds modern economics—or diseconomics—a bit of a problem and needs more subscribers to make ends meet. Sample copies may be obtained free of charge from Manas Publishing Company, Box 112, El Sereno Station, Los Angeles 32, California.

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One of the results of the Chinese invasion of Tibet is that that country will again have two chief Lamas, the Dalai Lama who is the political and executive head, and the Panchen Lama, the spiritual head, who in some respects outranks the Dalai Lama. The former Panchen Lama was expelled many years ago when the then Dalai Lama seized sole power. The new Panchen Lama is a youth of 14; the Dalai Lama is 16. Whether these two and their regents will be able to co-operate in their respective fields of dharma is in the lap of the gods at present.

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There is something ghoulish in the report that in preparation for the beatification of Pope Pius X, his body was exhumed and after being treated by embalmers, was dressed in ermine em-



broidered robes and placed in a crystal sarcophagus to await the final beatification ceremonies. Pope Pius died in 1914. The Church while claiming to be the representative of the spiritual power of the universe, clings closely to earth and things earthly.

## BUDDHISM AND BRAHMANISM

*(Continued from Page 68.)*

On the other hand, it is now possible to see a little better what was the basic difference between "Mahayana" and "Hinayana" Buddhism. The latter is a Second Ray Religion. It has great beauty and profound thought and teaches a noble code of ethics. The former has incorporated much from the First Ray, but then unfortunately was a prey to the degeneration of the First Ray in India. That is why Mahayana, while satisfying more one's mystical aspirations, also provides many more pitfalls than the Hinayana, and has much more trash.

The quotation we made concerning the lack of distinction between esoteric and exoteric in the preaching of the Buddha, has been used by the Hinayanists as an argument against the claim of the Mahayanists to an esoteric teaching. Of course, when keeping strictly to the 2nd Ray, the Hinayanists are perfectly correct. In such a case, we can explain esoteric and exoteric more fully as follows: They depend upon the natural ability of the listener and the follower. A Buddha when speaking can only speak the TRUTH; He cannot confuse the issue for the sake of occasion, for in doing so He would cease to be Buddha. But the listeners are of unequal qualities. Some are unworthy receptacles in which Truth becomes defiled; some have but slight penetration, which enables them only to attain a superficial understanding of the Doc-

trine. A minority, by self-discipline and effort of previous lives, comprehend the very nature of the Buddha's Words. However, this is just a distinction in the understanding of the Doctrine. Merely to have the ability to perceive the esoteric or true meaning is not sufficient to become an Adept; for to the Doctrine must be united Practice. However, the Mahayanists had in addition an idea of the esoteric springing from the 1st Ray; with them, it also referred to various practices. That is to say, various ways of doing things were to be revealed only to distinguished receptacles; in this sense they were secret by reason of carefulness on the part of the knowers and possessors due to vows taken. Here the trouble was that very often the receptacles were not of the distinguished type. Furthermore, some of the practices were not of the most noble kind.

In the reform made by Tsong-kha-pa in Tibet in the 14th century, a middle path is steered; for he incorporated both the Doctrine and the Occult Practice into his school; but he required first a thorough grounding in the Doctrine and a firm adherence to the disciplinary code before the candidate could be considered fit for any occult practices. This is echoed in the Mahatma Letters (p. 262), in the remark, "I tell you a profound truth in saying that if you . . . but choose wisdom all other things will be added unto it—in time."

That is to say, in order to avoid degenerate practices and gross superstition, one should first become a Buddhist (choose wisdom), and in time, the occult forces in the other Rays will be added thereto. But it might be thought, "Suppose I belong to a different one of the seven Rays—why should I become a Buddhist as the first step?" This can be answered as follows: that which thinks "I . . . this, and I . . . that" is the personality—not that individuality

or "triad" which belongs to one of the seven Rays. Now it is precisely the personality which is asked to gain wisdom—not the individuality. Without that wisdom, the personality will not prepare itself for union with the Higher Self—whichever one of the 7 Rays that Higher Self may belong to. Likewise, to become an Adept in the Second Ray, one must avail himself of *the means* from the First.

So H.P.B. called herself a Buddhist, and she said her Masters were Buddhists, and so it is written in the Mahatma Letters. Her *Secret Doctrine* is a Second Ray work; it comprises Wisdom. This must be mastered before any occult practices may be safely engaged in. Do any of my readers engage in occult practices while still not having

mastered the *Secret Doctrine*? If so, let them know that they have not complied with the rules; most likely they will greatly harm themselves and perhaps others too. And let them not say, "But only an Adept could understand the *Secret Doctrine*". Of course, only an advanced Adept could understand the *highest* Doctrine; but in the particular work, *The Secret Doctrine*, it is not suggested that all is revealed or concealed in its pages. It is still a very secret doctrine to most Theosophists, but it is probably a corresponding fact that most Theosophists are still as distant from the Brotherhood as when they began attending Theosophical lectures.

Alex Wayman.

Berkeley, California.

## THE OCCULT SYMBOLISM OF THE STONE OF SCONE

BY CECIL WILLIAMS

During the half-millennium the Stone of Destiny has rested in Westminster Abbey it has been taken out three times. Once for the installation as Protector of the non-conformist Cromwell; again, for safety from the Nazi rain of fire, when it was hidden in an Oxfordshire village, and, thirdly, last Christmas Day, when it was stolen by Scottish Nationalists, who succeeded where Irish Fenians of the last century failed.

For Celt and Anglo-Saxon this oblong block of coarse-grained, reddish-gray sandstone is a symbol: to the English, "a priceless sign of the continuity of the British people;" to the Scots, a symbol of liberty. But occultly it has a universal significance.

The legends that have clustered around this rock are echoes of a tradi-

tion extending from the remotest ages. It is believed to be the actual pillar erected by Jacob at the place where God spoke to him. Thence it was carried to Egypt by the Jews, to be later conveyed into Spain by the daughter of a Pharaoh. Somehow it reached Ireland where for eight hundred years it stood upon the Hill of Tara. In the sixth century of our era, after a sojourn in the Isle of Iona, encased in a chair of wood, it became the base of the coronation seat of the Pictish kings at Scone.

But the Stone of Destiny does not appear to have made the journeys ascribed to it. In Palestine the rocks are limestone, while around the Hill of Tara the sandstone is of a different colour and texture. And a sandstone stratum in Perth, near Scone, not only resembles the Stone in these particulars

but contains tiny pebbles similar to those in the coronation rock itself.

A hint in *The Secret Doctrine* suggests it was used in oracular magic. Its name, Lia Fail, means "the speaking stone," and tradition avers that it could raise its voice to name the king that should be chosen. From this it is to be assumed that it could be made to give off certain sounds which a wizard could interpret. Similar magical properties were ascribed to pebbles and flints and perhaps the flint found in Belgium, which a famous Canadian general carries about with him as a talisman, could be made to speak if we but knew the occult technique.

Be that as it may, each Celtic clan had its sacred stone, and by the ancient peoples of all five continents certain stones were held in reverence. To this day, a black stone in the Ka'ba, a pre-Islamic stone building in Mecca, is the chief object of veneration of Moslems. It is alleged to have been given Abraham by the angel Gabriel.

What was the mysterious object carried about by the Jews in the Ark of the Covenant is not definitely known, but it has been reasoned that it was a meteoric stone. One authority concludes that the Ark was a portable throne, a judgment supported by the description "mercy seat," and as the Stone of Destiny has iron rings in it, as if for convenience in moving, the resemblance between the throne of the Picts, now the throne of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and the Ark of the Covenant is very striking. *The Secret Doctrine* emphasizes, however, that the priestly enemies of the prophets of Israel had degraded the Ark into a phallic emblem.

Of all the legends associated with the Stone of Scone that which identifies it with the pillar erected by Jacob at Bethel is the most remarkable. For this association, preserving the most archaic

symbolism of sacred stones illustrates a point urged by Blavatsky: Tradition is symbolic history.

Moreover, the elucidation of the symbolic meaning attached to the Stone of Scone effectively refutes the monstrous, degrading yet widely accepted mythological theory that such sacred objects as the Cross have a phallic origin and meaning. Phallic they may and often did become, but they were not so at the beginning.

Religious symbols could not originally have been phallic because they preceded the separation of the sexes, described in the occult teachings as occurring in the third root race. Humanity was once bisexual, as indicated by the facts of physiology, enforced recently by the discovery of hormones. Dr. Kenneth Walker notes, as a scientific conclusion, that the female may be regarded as the basic type of the mammalian species from which the male, has been derived. Naturally so, the Secret Doctrine would say, because at one time all units of the race "bore" children.

It is partially upon this fact, as one of the grand analogies of Existence, that religious symbolism is based. The researches of Gerald Massey have amply corroborated, from anthropological sources, the assertion in *The Secret Doctrine*, restated in 1948 by Robert Graves, the poet and novelist, that originally all deities were feminine. Naturally, again, for at first masculine deities were unknown.

Religious symbolism is founded not upon copulation but upon birth. Not merely physical birth, but upon the genesis of the cosmos from the Eternal Mother, Mulaprakriti; upon the birth of all creatures out of Mother Earth, and finally, this being what the symbols stand for, the second birth of man into the realms of spirit.

Anthropology reveals what form the early symbolism of the Great Mother

took. It was that of the mountain, of Meru, Olympus or Sinai. For mountains have caves, and it is in the cave, a figure of the uterus, that the Saviour Child comes to birth. It is not by caprice that ancient temples in India, or monasteries in Tibet are attached to a mountain side, nor that in the mountainless land of Egypt the pyramid should have taken the shape it did. It was in the recesses of the temple, as in the inner chamber of the pyramid, that men sought initiation, the second or spiritual birth.

From the Sacred Mountain, as a symbol of the Great Mother, to a rock or stone as a talismanic similitude, is but a step. And it was only logical that the derived symbol should take the shape of a mountain, that is, it should be conical. Indeed, the cone is prominently illustrated in ancient religious carvings.

The pillar said to have been erected by Jacob was intended to represent not the phallus, but the Sacred Mountain, which is proved by the name he gave to the place, Bethel. For this means "the house of God." It was the place where God had spoken to him, that is, where he had been initiated.

Although Freudians and mythologists may see in the church steeple a phallic symbol they are grossly mistaken. It is in reality the representation of the Sacred Mountain, or even, because of the derivation of Christianity, the Great Pyramid.

Architecturally, it should stand over the chancel, for under it, under the Sacred Mount, church members are symbolically born anew at confirmation, and, symbolically, at communion hold converse with the Saviour God, partaking, again symbolically, of His very flesh and very blood. Thus too, with breaking of bread and drinking of wine did the devotees of the Cabiri at Samothrace and of the goddess Demeter at

Eleusis partake, in symbolism, of the divine essence.

It matters not that the God of Israel was a tribal god, as the *Bible* itself affirms, the pillar raised by Jacob was in the tradition of religious symbols that existed long ages before the Jewish race.

The emblem of the Mountain was derived through more abstruse symbolism from the eternal verities. The original pillar was not phallic in shape but conical. It was not masculine but feminine. In the light of these facts the mists of the phallic theory are dissolved.

Ideologically, the Stone of Scone is derived from the most ancient emblem of mankind. In itself it is the representation of the Great Mother as a foundation, as Isis was in Egypt. It is a seat, the similitude of the Eternal Mother Space, the foundation and supporter of the cosmos.

The Lia Fail was broken during its removal last Christmas. It was long known to have been cracked and there may be some ironic destiny in the cause of the break. This symbol of the Great Mother had been damaged by a bomb placed in the Abbey by militant suffragettes.

## THE THREE TRUTHS

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

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

Each man is his own absolute law-giver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

# THEOSOPHY ON THE HOOF

E. HOFFMAN PRICE

Upon joining the Theosophical Society, I put my membership in with that lodge, 2400 miles away, through which I first made contact. Circumstances meanwhile have kept me from taking the 30 mile drive to the San Francisco lodge. So, I have developed Theosophy on the Hoof.

A pair of teen agers heard me put the words *karma* and *reincarnation* into play. Betty was going to Mills College. Harvey, to San Jose State. They had minds I envied. And also, regretted for the time! Every lapse into lodge jargon, the kind that lodge goers use so casually, was followed by the demand that I define my terms. They were intensely interested—so much so that they wanted to make sure *they* knew what I was talking about. Well, now, I sweated my way through one of the most brutal three hours I can remember. My task was being sure that I knew what *I* was talking about! I had to cut loose from background jargon and build a clear picture of each concept. Try that some time.

Betty wrote a theme on "Karma" for Freshman English, and got an "A". Her great reward was that the instructor's comment on the margin displayed shocking ignorance of what was now to Betty a most elementary subject. The two youngsters have been married now for a couple of years, and we have gone a long way from basic definitions. Both, just for the record, are Roman Catholic. At our last session, my ordeal was to give the Theosophical-esoteric interpretation of half a dozen of the basic R.C. dogmas.

Then there was the Diesel mechanic I coached in trigonometry. Astrology fascinates virtually everyone, even the sceptics. So, after the sines and cosines

had been disciplined, I would chat with him and his wife, discussing his horoscope and the fine potentialities he had. *Karma* and *reincarnation*, again: the "why" of astrology makes these crop up. He had skimped his way through high school, and, belatedly, was rounding out his education. So, simple language was in order. Theosophy in truck drivers' and mechanics' language appealed to him and, to her.

A year later, my phone rang at 5:00 a.m. His wife was calling, to tell me she had been a widow for a few hours, since his death on a construction job, 200 miles from home. En route to make funeral arrangements, she asked me those questions which I believe every newly made widow has asked since the very first of all widows wondered why it had to happen to *her*. Theosophy on the Hoof paid dividends, that dreadful day. The event was easier to face. And without resentment. And without despair.

"*Think never there was a time when you, and I, and all these kings of men were not . . .*" The quote was mangled then as now, but Sri Krishna's words had meaning that day: because the preparation had been non-academic, non-dogmatic, untechnical, so that the two listened with eager interest.

My astrological clients—much or most of my practice is on a non-profit basis—are rebellious, self-sympathetic, frustrated, or else grimly groping in circles, futively self-reliant. I skip *fohat*, *prana*, rounds and root races, and give them Theosophy for Truck Drivers. The other night, I was the speaker at a Tri-Hi-Y Club, a group of high school girls. My "act" is to delineate two horoscopes of members whose identities are unknown to any but the committee, and

## WE IN CANADA

to describe them until their fellow members recognize them. After the business meeting, half a dozen crowded around for more. One persistent young lady wangled herself an impromptu horseshoe, calculated then and there. She also got a dissertation, in terms of her own problems, on the "vehicles": you are not your body, you are not your emotions, you are not your mind. The old, old simple stuff, in homely terms.

Inevitably, the lodge-going Theosophist is somewhat like those aristocrats of Boston, of whom it has been said, "The Lowells speak but to the Cabots, and the Cabots speak only to God." Not from snobbishness, I am sure, but simply because others could not understand.

True, I miss all the fine benefits of lodge association. I have become so illiterate, Theosophically, that when the president mails me a lesson sheet, I have a skull-cracking time with it. But I have had a lot of fun with Theosophy on the Hoof. There are hundreds of "untagged Theosophists" — Theosophists at heart, yet not academically minded, and, not joiners. Not that it makes any difference, but at times I fancy that when three or four of such gather, though in entire ignorance of the Masters, there is nonetheless a center of force set up. A very feeble little center—but nothing is ever wasted.

Lodge association is grand, because one meets people who "speak one's own language." Yet meeting people who do NOT speak one's language can be exceedingly rich. You, isolated ones, try it consciously, persistently, studiedly! You won't be jeered at as a crackpot. You will be welcomed as a pleasant variant from standard conversationalists.

from *Theosophia*.  
(Los Angeles).

It has been suggested that we contribute more money, books, work and other things of material and practical value to our world headquarters with the aim of building it up, widening its boundaries and making it a great, shining centre of Spiritual activity. "A strong headquarters" is an asset to any organization, it is asserted; a place where books are printed, where students, who want no outside influences, can go to study, and, perhaps contact the Masters because it is the Spiritual centre of the organization. A grand monument that will make an impressive mark on the world for Theosophy is what is wanted.

This seems to be a grave mistake. "A strong headquarters" may have certain advantages but in an organization like the Theosophical Society, a small working headquarters is sufficient. Donations are needed, and welcomed, for necessary administration but there is no need for extra glitter and pomp. A grand centre as described, has certain drawbacks. Unnecessary difficulties of politics and administration crop up. More money is needed for this and that consequently draining the small local lodges of their much needed funds. It also attracts much needed workers from their local fields thus weakening, still further, the local centres.

That is not the aim originally intended. One of the main duties of the headquarters is to encourage members to strengthen their own local lodges and various small fields of activity. The worst drawback of a grand headquarters is to give the unconscious concept that it is THE CENTRE of Spiritual activity, whereas, actually each member is his own centre. Wherever two or three gather in the name of Theosophy, there is a Spiritual centre.

As far as headquarters being the place where one may contact the Masters, we can say, that that is not the approach. Self-sacrifice, no matter in what place, and an unswerving loyalty and service to Humanity and to Truth, is the road to the Masters. THEY are not interested in personalities but in good deeds and Humanity as a whole. A "strong headquarters", glittering and sparkling in its fine material Form, gives the former impression, no matter how much it tries not to.

For the ideal headquarters I point to Toronto. For many years our Canadian administration has kept the Theosophical Society in Canada alive and active in each small centre, rather than glorifying the one. Quietly and unobtrusively Theosophy is permeating the masses. The Ancient Wisdom is spread by the clasping of hands, not the waving of arms, and those at our Canadian headquarters realize it, hence their hidden strength; the kind of strength that matters, not glitters.

Mrs. Ethel Trupp.

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## ANALOGY

Throughout the Secret Doctrine H. P. B. emphasizes the importance of analogy as a key to the understanding of occult teachings. Analogy relates to likenesses existing between things, or certain aspects or effects of things, which are otherwise entirely different. Analogy differs from similarity inasmuch as the latter word denotes a general likeness while the former indicates a general difference with a likeness or sameness in one or more relationships. There is an analogy between death and sleep; there

is a similarity between ordinary sleep and a coma.

"From Gods to men, from worlds to atoms, from a star to a rush-light, from the Sun to the vital heat of the meanest organic being—the world of Form and Existence is an immense chain, the links of which are all connected. The Law of Analogy is the first key to the world-problem."—S.D. I, 662.

The correspondences between the processes in the cosmos and in individual man are referred to by H.P.B. on page 196 of the above mentioned first Volume, and the section ends with these words, "Analogy is thus the surest guide to the comprehension of Occult teachings." Elsewhere in the Doctrine, valuable hints are given in the comparisons drawn between the Races in the Four Rounds, the evolution of our globe and the evolution of man, and other cosmic and individual processes.

The old Hermetic saying 'as above, so below' indicates that analogy formed part of the approach to the study of occultism in ancient Egypt and Greece. But despite the general uniformity of Nature's processes, her creative possibilities are infinite. That which is 'above' or rather 'inner' will bear a resemblance to that which is 'below' or 'outer'; but the two will not be the same. The student does not ask 'what is it the same as' because sameness does not exist even between two grains of sand. "The same as" attracts because of its suggestion of certainty, precision and security; but 'similarity with difference' stimulates imagination, intuition and creativity. Perhaps this is why the Secret Doctrine says that "Analogy is the guiding law in Nature, the only true Ariadne's thread that can lead us, through the inextricable paths of her domain, toward her primal and final mysteries."

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

The Theosophical Society was formed at New York in 1875. It has three objects:

1. *To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.*
2. *To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.*
3. *To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.*

The Society affords a meeting place for students who have three aims in common, *first*, the ideal of Universal Brotherhood; *second*, the search for Truth, and *third*, a desire to associate and work with other men and women having similar aims and ideals. The acceptance of the First Object is required of all those who desire to become members; whether or not a member engages actively in the work contemplated in the Second and Third Objects is left to his or her discretion.

The nature and purposes of the Society preclude it from having creeds or dogmas, and freedom of thought and expression among its members is encouraged. An official statement on this point; “. . . there is no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none of which a member is not free to accept or reject.” The statement calls upon the members. “to maintain, defend, and act upon this fundamental principle . . . and fearlessly to exercise his own right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.”

Theosophy or ‘Divine Wisdom’ is that body of ancient truths relating to the spiritual nature of man and the universe which has found expression down through the ages in religions, philosophies, sciences, the arts, mysticism, occultism and other systems of thought. Theosophy is not the exclusive possession of any one organization. In the modern Theosophical Movement, these ancient truths have been re-stated and an extensive literature on the subject has come into being. The teachings are not put forward for blind belief; they are to be accepted only if the truth that is in them finds an echo in the heart. Each student should by ‘self-induced and self-devised’ methods establish his own Theosophy, his own philosophy of life. The Movement encourages all students of Theosophy to become self-reliant, independent in thought, mature in mind and emotions and, about all other things, to work for the welfare of mankind to the end that humanity as a whole may become aware of its diviner powers and capabilities.