

between “them” and “us” are no longer meaningful or deemed valid? These are the questions any study of unlimited love must address.

(Stephen G. Post)

[Reproduced from the book “**Unlimited Love**”, by Stephen G. Post, Templeton Foundation Press, Philadelphia and London, 2003, 232 pp., see p. 155.]

The Fourfold Placenta

A Planetary Birth Is Being Prepared



A subtle karmic placenta and its amniotic sac are preventing the birth of a *globally fraternal* civilization from taking place as long as everything is not ready for it to occur.

One of the *signs of the labor* leading to birth is the *water breaking*, when the amniotic bag which contains life during pregnancy finally begins to break. Just as the nativity of an individual, the birth of a new civilization is a great blessing and a dangerous situation.

Since the 20th century, the trigger for the birth of an entirely new phase of human development is at least fourfold. The main aspects of its breaking point are these, not necessarily in the same order:

- 1) The dangers provoked by nuclear proliferation.
- 2) The environmental, climatic and geological crises.
- 3) The socio-economic and financial process threats to world order.

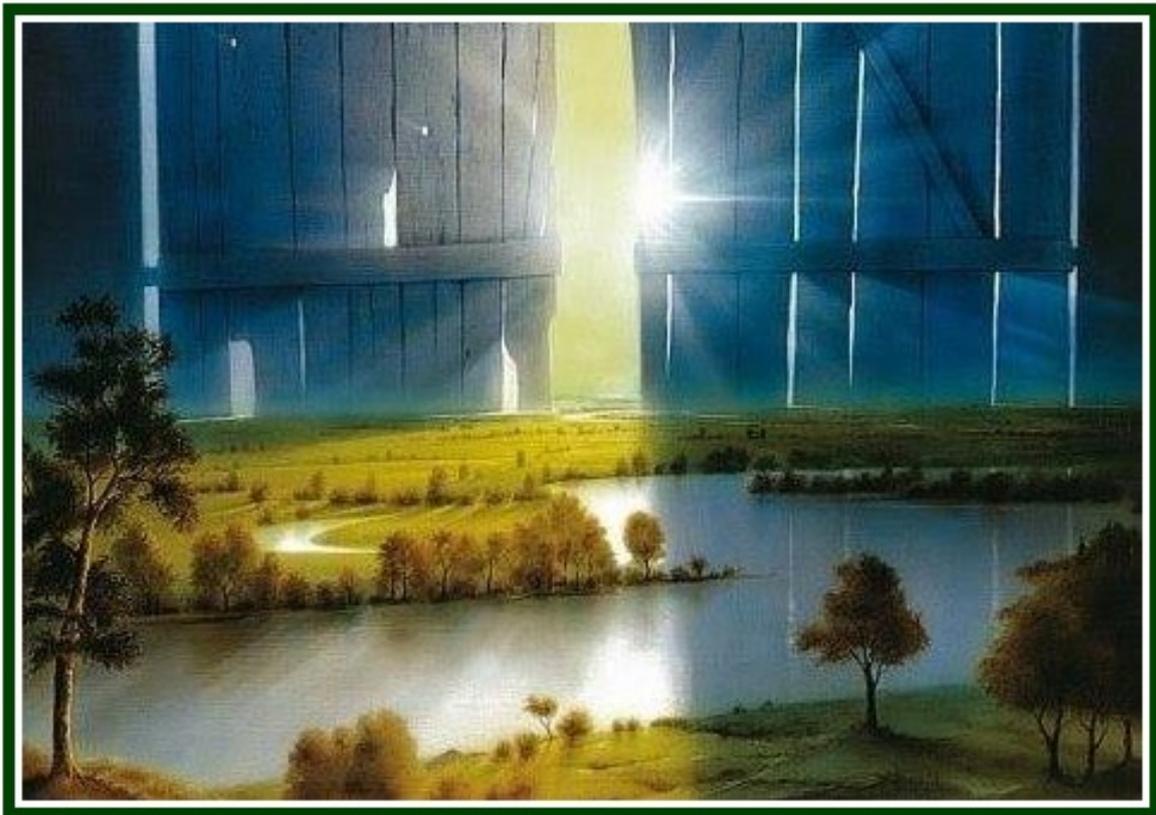
4) The spreading of spiritual awareness and the awakening of worldwide, cross-boundaries good will.

The breaking point is one and manifold: its four main aspects accelerate in connected ways. Their multidimensional acceleration is deeper than appearances and is not visible at the mere surface of events.

There must be a certain minimal number of sincere people who are conscious enough and committed to a healthy future, for the process to go beyond the *threshold of danger and destruction*, and for the birth to proceed along healthier lines. Such a delicate process of Karmic Balance is suggested in the chapters 18 and 19 of Genesis. H.P. Blavatsky wrote about it in the closing paragraph of “The Key to Theosophy”. It is not the quantity but the *quality* and the *resolve* of ethical people that makes the difference.

(C.C. Aveline)

Looking to the Future The Blessings Hidden Behind an Effort



As we study esoteric philosophy we come to understand that Ethics is at the essence of theosophy.

Knowledge, wisdom and service to mankind spring from an ethical life and are developed at the same time as we connect with the higher self and make a stronger effort to express it in the different dimensions of our life.

Being an ethical person demands sincerity in every aspect of life. Trying to act in a correct way is above all fighting personal desires and illusions. In order to win the inner battle we need courage, discernment and humility to see our mistakes and correct them. The correction of faults strengthens our connection to the higher self.

In order to express ethics we need to be the ethics ourselves, and this occurs when we put aside selfish views of life. Helena Blavatsky wrote:

“We need all our strength to meet the difficulties and dangers which surround us. We have external enemies to fight in the shape of materialism, prejudice, and obstinacy; the enemies in the shape of custom and religious forms (...). There are more insidious foes, who ‘take our name in vain’, and who make Theosophy a by-word in the mouths of men and the Theosophical Society a mark at which to throw mud. They slander Theosophists and Theosophy, and convert the moral Ethics into a cloak to conceal their own selfish objects. And as if this were not sufficient, there are the worst foes of all - those of a man’s own household, - Theosophists who are unfaithful both to the Society and to themselves.” [1]

“Society” here means “theosophical movement”.

Danger and opportunity go together. A Master of the Wisdom wrote to some theosophists:

“... *Look to the future* (...). If your eyes were opened, you might see such a vista of potential blessings to *yourselves* and mankind (...) as would fire with joy and zeal your souls!” [2]

The bright future is near. At each new effort to live ethics, it becomes in part the present, and sorrow gives space to bliss.

(Joana Maria Pinho)

NOTES:

[1] Reproduced from the pamphlet “Five Messages”, by Helena P. Blavatsky. The text is available in PDF in our websites. See the Second Message, pp. 13-14.

[2] Words quoted from the book “The Fire and Light of Theosophical Literature”, by Carlos Cardoso Aveline, The Aquarian Theosophist, Portugal, 2013, 255 pp., Chapter 24, p. 228.

Scientific Precision in Esoteric Philosophy

Time-Cycles are calculated with great precision in esoteric philosophy. Precision does not deny complexity: it is part of it. The precise date of the Kali Yuga is given, for instance, in theosophical literature. Examples are countless: numbers are sacred.

The Mathematics and Geometry of the Universe is serious business, and Raja Yoga is Science. Precision in details is a must in order to attain transcendence, just as the utmost precision in building a Boeing airplane is of the essence for it to work smoothly at 33,000 feet above ground. As we do our homework in daily life (precision), we can understand the teachings (transcendence).

Some Articles Are Surprisingly Challenging



Upon reading Carlos Aveline's article "**The Fraud in Adyar Esoteric School**" and before deciding to translate it into Italian [1], my first feeling referred to the psychological causes behind such a Fraud.

I think one reason for esoteric and "pious" falsehoods is related to the hypocrisy and fear one has with regard to the application of lofty ethical principles. These would completely burst and change one's lower self; and ill-informed people may think it is better and more meritorious to control others than controlling oneself. This, however, is not true.

In line with universal systems of ethics, H.P. Blavatsky quotes from Eastern Wisdom in the "Gems From the East": "If one man can conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men, and if another conquers himself, he is the greater of the two conquerors." [2] One has to build oneself according to the principles of authentic esoteric philosophy through self-devised and self-induced efforts, and taking into consideration that his present lifetime will not be enough to fully attain wisdom.

Another cause of pseudo-esoteric frauds is related, I think, to a lack of study of the original theosophy. The lower-self tends to live in and get satisfied for short-term periods. Where difficulties are present, the false theosophy of irresponsibility gets attractive.

A true study and assimilation of theosophy, on the other hand, take place in long-term time. This life is only one session of study and application among others. We are responsible for our self-discipline.

While reading the article another feeling occurred to me that relates to the lack of self-confidence and courage necessary to fulfil one's duty. Karma tests us in many ways. Kind diplomacy and political convenience are congenial to hypocrisy and falsehood. Sincerity and a philosophical attitude towards challenging circumstances are of the essence for the balance between the inner world of the soul and the outer daily life. We are here to share our existence, not to play the role of dried leaves in the human tree. At each and every moment

we can help renew the work of the theosophical movement and thus help it to transcend the pseudo-theosophical structures based on vested-interests.

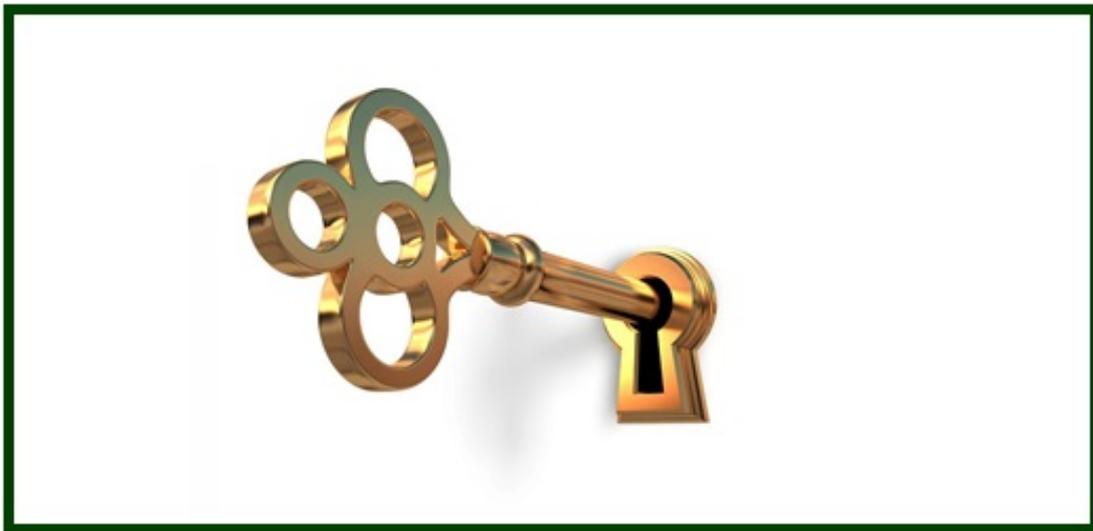
(Marco Bufarini, from Italy)

NOTES:

[1] The article is available in English and Italian at our websites. Visit for instance www.TheosophyOnline.com (for both languages) or www.ItaliaTeosofica.com , for Italian.

[2] See volume XII of the “Collected Writings” of H. P. Blavatsky, TPH-USA, p. 445.

The Occult Door to Serendipity



Serendipity has been defined as the faculty of making fortunate discoveries by apparent chance.

It implies an affinity with good karma. It results from having planted a karma of harmony through right action for the time necessary so that now good karma can be “tuned in” and revealed.

Serendipity means a state of unity with contentment and with the harmonious aspects of the law of equilibrium. This can only be obtained by transcending personal desire.

Studies in serendipity show its process is entirely different from the frustrating situations provoked by “the hedonistic paradox”, which says that the more one seeks for pleasure, the more pain one suffers; in other words, “the attempt to be happy at any cost ends in greater pain”. [1]

Serendipity has something in common with higher level mantras: it is the syntony with a sort of harmonious vibration which puts one in unity with things desirable, yet not desired; with things good and fortunate, which are not objects of any *personal* attempt to obtain them.

This might be called “the paradox of wisdom”: bliss cannot be pursued; you must deserve it, and then let it come down to you in its own way and its own timing.

NOTE:

[1] “The Travels and Adventures of Serendipity”, by Robert K. Merton and Elinor Barber, Princeton University Press, USA, 2004, see p. 6. On Serendipity, see also the front cover note in the July 2013 edition of “The Aquarian Theosophist”.

000

The Observatory of Luxor

A Study in the Western Lodge of Immortal Sages



A historical reconstitution of the ancient Library of Alexandria, in Egypt

Western civilization started, in a way, with ancient Greece. Helena P. Blavatsky wrote in “The Secret Doctrine”:

“This period, beginning with Buddha and Pythagoras at the one end and the Neo-Platonists and Gnostics at the other, is the only focus left in History wherein converge for the last time the bright rays of light streaming from the aeons of time gone by, unobscured by the hand of bigotry and fanaticism.” [1]

And a Master of the Wisdom says in one of his Letters:

“...See the remnants of the Atlanteans, - the old Greeks and Romans (the modern belong all to the fifth Race); see how great and how short, how evanescent were their days of fame and glory!” [2]

The ancient Greek and Roman world has been a constant source of inspiration for the Western Civilization and for humanity as a whole.

Classical Western philosophy provides answers for the problems faced by human beings. A student of esoteric philosophy can see the strength of divine wisdom as he reads, for instance, the Discourses of Epictetus, the texts by Seneca, Musonius Rufus, Marcus Aurelius and Plutarch, and writings as the Tablet of Cebes or the Golden Verses of Pythagoras. All of them are written in simple language and concentrate on the daily life of the truth-seeker.

Through reading, contemplation and daily practice, one can experience in part the very life-substance of these thinkers, and better understand the existence for millennia of an Esoteric School for the Western society as a whole. This is a mystery school of souls, a “conducting wire” of sacred teachings, a living process available today to people of good will.[3] It is not an external corporation or institution. It constitutes instead a line of thought and of action. It is a vibratory pattern. It “floats in the air” or rather in the astral light, inspiring hearts and minds in many different ways. People get connected to it by inner affinity and not formal affiliation.

Evidence of actions linked to this *subtle current* are as spread as the teachings emanating from it. They can be found in the areas of influence and written works of hundreds of thinkers and dozens of lines of philosophical thought. They include scientific progress and research done in many fields of knowledge, and can be identified in the philosophical aspects of religious traditions.

Modern theosophy revealed the way humanity is inspired from above. Since the end of 19th century, the written works and life-example of Helena P. Blavatsky constitute a focus of light, and help earnest seekers understand the way life evolves.

The most well-documented among the dozens of biographies of H.P. Blavatsky was written by Sylvia Cranston.[4] Part seven of that extraordinary book shows the impact the life and work of HPB have had over human history. It also examines the living current of subtle inspiration now available to mankind, and which is kept open by the wise beings which have transcended the present phase of human evolution.

On one hand, the energy of higher planetary consciousness has always been accessible to all aspirants to discipleship or soul-learning, although some of these may have little or no brain awareness of the actual inspiration process, and may ignore the existence of Adepts, Mahatmas or Masters of the Wisdom. On the other hand, such an inner help influences in a broad way every individual who sincerely seeks for wisdom. The process of discipleship or esoteric learning has been approached in a number of articles published in our associated websites. [5]

While a silent, mystical help has stimulated and supported for millennia those whose goal is the good of mankind, not all of them have a proper notion of the process involved. An

understanding of the matter, even if partial and limited, provokes a gradual opening of one's horizons.

From the point of view of esoteric philosophy, the practical research in the dynamics of such a process expands our task and makes it go beyond merely memorizing and repeating the writings of HPB or the Mahatma Letters.

The effort of every true student must contain a degree of creativity. He must open room for eternal wisdom in the world of today. The real esoteric movement is the subtle worldwide community of good-willing people dedicated to independent research and learning. Such an implicit, long-enduring communion remains free from outer labels and blind belief: it consists of the *magnetic field* formed by aspirants to the wisdom of the heart.

Three Centers of the Brotherhood

The Immortal sages who teach and guide our humanity revealed in the 19th century that there are three main centers of their Universal Brotherhood. A Mahatma writes in a letter:

“As the course of the river depends upon the nature of its basin, so the channel for communication of Knowledge must conform itself to surrounding circumstances. The Egyptian Hierophant, the Chaldean Mage, the Arhat [6], and the Rishi [7], were bound in days of yore on the same voyage of discovery and ultimately arrived at the same goal though by different tracks. There are even at the present moment three centres of the Occult Brotherhood in existence, widely separated geographically, and as widely *exoterically* - the true esoteric doctrine being identical in substance though differing in terms; all aiming at the same grand object, but no two agreeing *seemingly* in the details of procedure. It is an every day occurrence to find students belonging to different schools of occult thought sitting side by side at the feet of the same Guru. *Upasika* (Madam B.) and Subba Row, though pupils of the same Master, have not followed the same Philosophy - the one is Buddhist and the other an Adwaitee.” [8]

One of the great lodges of the fraternity of Initiates is situated in the Himalayas. The Mahatmas who took part in a most decisive way of the creation of the theosophical movement between 1875 and 1891 belong to it. Another section of the occult brotherhood includes Initiates of nations whose origins are in fourth root-race and who live in the South American Andes; in Central America; or in North America. The third center, the topic of the present article, is known as the Observatory of Luxor. It is traditionally located in Egypt and has an especially close relation with the Western esoteric tradition.

The word *Luxor* designates an Egyptian city, famous for its ruins of great historical value. Letter 3, second series, in “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom” [9] is signed by various Adepts of this center of the Brotherhood. Among those associated to it we have the names of S.B. (from Ellora Section), P.I. (Solomon Section) R.M. (Zoroaster Section), and T.B. The names of these sections suggest their intercultural dimension. At the end of the letter it is indicated that it was written in the “Observatory of Luxor”. [10]

This is no astronomical observatory. It observes human souls enlightened by good will, and, in this case, there is no difference between observing and inspiring.

The Adept who used the name of S.B. played a central role in the first years of the theosophical effort. If we consider the universe of known and published letters from Masters,

this teacher is in a marked third place among those who wrote more letters, and distant from other Adepts in that “ranking”.

We know that master S.B. belongs to the Ellora Section of the Observatory of Luxor; however, information on Ellora Section is remarkably rare. There is one footnote to Letter 3 by the editor C. Jinarajadasa reporting that in India Ellora is a system of caves and cave-temples situated some 225 miles Northwest of Mumbai (previously Bombay).

Ellora belongs to the World Heritage List of the UNESCO. It is considered by many the epitome of Indian rock-cut architecture. Its hundreds of monuments include at least 34 ancient monasteries and temples. Ellora certainly constitutes a major *magnetic centre*, and some of its caves might be unknown and *invisible* to the public due to occult protection.

In “The Secret Doctrine”, volume II, pp. 220-221, H.P. Blavatsky strongly suggests Ellora and other ancient places have even today vast nets of subterranean labyrinths and passages, perhaps with six or seven stories. As to old and forgotten times, in “Isis Unveiled”, volume I, pp. 561 and 567, HPB says that the buildings and ruins of Ellora are so similar to the ancient ruins in Guatemala, Mexico and other places that their builders evidently had close contact among them. On p. 590 of “Isis” she also mentions ancient Ellora subterranean rooms and their connections to other places.

Several elements of information expand the idea that the Western centre of Adepts is a major and permanent source of transcendent inspiration.

In the pioneer decades of 19th century, when the modern theosophical movement needed external forms of contact with Mahatmas, a Master of the Wisdom wrote to Alfred P. Sinnett:

“The sun of Theosophy must shine for all, not for a part. There is more of this movement than you have yet had an inkling of, and the work of the T.S. is linked in with similar work that is secretly going on in all parts of the world. Even in the T.S. there is a division, managed by a Greek Brother [11] about which not a person in the Society has a suspicion excepting the old woman [12] and Olcott; and even he only knows it is progressing, and occasionally executes an order I send him in connection with it. (...) Europe [13] will not be overlooked, never fear; but perhaps you even may not anticipate *how* the light will be shed there.” [14]

These lines deserve a few commentaries.

In those pioneering times [1875-1891], the theosophical movement had three sections. The first section was limited to Initiates. The second one gathered disciples. The third section was formed by the aspirants to discipleship and the members of theosophical associations, generally speaking.

What the Master says above, as he writes that there is a section in the movement of which almost no one knows, is tantamount to declare that there is a Fourth Section, under the responsibility of a Greek Master. And as he adds that Europe, or the West, “will not be overlooked”, he is suggesting that this Section of the movement is related to the work of the Western Initiates.

It is interesting to examine the data available on the work of one of the Greek “Brothers”.

Through letter 21 in the Second Series of “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom”, we come to know that Henry Olcott had a portrait of a Master called Serapis, and that Olcott apparently used the alternative name of Apollo to refer to this Master.

The name “Apollo” seems to contain a reference to the close relation between this Adept and classic Greece. The God Apollo, the spirit of the Sun, was mythologically a son of Zeus. Pythagoras, the first philosopher, was associated to Apollo.

The term “Serapis” also designates the official god of Egypt during the long occupation of the country by the Hellenistic Macedonia, between 305 B.C.E. and 30 B.C.E. The deity was adopted by the first Greek ruler of Egypt, Ptolemy I Soter, who wanted to establish links between Egypt and Greece.

The main statue of Serapis was situated in the city of Alexandria, in a temple especially built for it. The god Serapis included aspects of Osir-Apis, “the dead bull Osiris”. The myth of Osiris includes the idea of resurrection and is known since long time before the writing of the Christian New Testament. As a god, Osiris played the role of a judge of souls in the afterlife.[15]

Miraculous healings were ascribed to Serapis, and attracted many to Alexandria. Serapis was also the god of fertility and, in addition to that, the god of culture. In his book on the role of the great libraries in the history of mankind, Matthew Battles clarifies that there were two libraries in Alexandria, and not just one:

“The bigger one was built in the third century B.C.E., inside the *Mouseion*, or temple of the Muses. Its younger and smaller ‘sister’ was founded one century later, in the temple of Serapis, the Egyptian Hellenized god and protector of syncretic Alexandria, whose help the Ptolemies, always skillful in theological questions, evoked for themselves. Both collections were situated in the *Brucheion*, the part of the city where the royal palaces were located, and it is frequent to talk of the two libraries as if they were one.” [16]

Hellenized Egypt irradiated Greek culture to the world, just like Alexandria shone in the Egyptian context. Matthew writes:

“In the first centuries of our era, there was in the city an intense cultural competition among Pagans, Jews, Christians and Neoplatonists. That which we know today as Jewish-Christian tradition had its origins in the Alexandrian Eclecticism. Its libraries remained almost in every occasion above such disputes: their goal was to have in their bookshelves the whole of Greek literature, as well as the most significant works written in various other languages. The Library of Alexandria was, therefore, the first one to have universal aspirations; and, together with its community of students, it became the prototype of the modern era universities.”[17]

The cultural influence of Alexandria was in perfect harmony with the plan of the Immortal sages to accelerate human evolution and uproot the causes of unnecessary suffering. It is a natural fact, therefore, that the modern esoteric movement constitutes a continuation and a rebirth of that ancient line of work, as Helena Blavatsky states in her books.

The word “theosophy” was coined in Alexandria, and Helena Blavatsky writes:

“It comes to us from the Alexandrian philosophers, called lovers of truth, Philaletheians, from phil ‘loving’, and aletheia ‘truth’. The name Theosophy dates from the third century of our era, and began with Ammonius Saccas and his disciples, who started the Eclectic Theosophical system. (...) Hence the motto adopted by the Theosophical Society: ‘There is no religion higher than truth’. The chief aim of the Founders of the Eclectic Theosophical School was (...) to reconcile all religions, sects and nations under a common system of ethics, based on eternal verities.” [18]

Thus, when the Mahatmas proposed an esoteric philosophy and a theosophical movement which aimed at the comparative study of different philosophical and religious traditions and stimulated the practice of universal brotherhood, they were not just acting on the basis of Eastern philosophies and the wisdom of the raja-yogis who live in the Himalayas. Their proposition had at its foundation also the best tradition of true wisdom in the West, which is inspired by those Adepts whose nucleus is traditionally located in Egypt and relates to the Hellenic culture.

The Importance of Human Couple

Between 1875 and 1891, the Western lodge of the Brotherhood of Initiates took part in the daily life of the esoteric movement.

In March 1883, for instance, the “Indian Mirror”, in Calcutta, published an article on the healings made by Henry S. Olcott with imposition of hands. Olcott was healing people who conventional medicine had failed to heal, and the fact attracted public attention. In a short note addressed to his lay disciple Alfred P. Sinnett, an Eastern Mahatma explained the magnetic origin of Olcott’s healing powers:

“This is all done thro’ the power of a lock of hair sent by our beloved younger Chohan to H.S.O.” [19]

The “younger Chohan” was Master Serapis.

Another aspect of the teachings and work of this teacher refers to human affections. On letter 18 of the second series in “Letters From the Masters of the Wisdom”, Serapis writes about the spiritual dimension in human marriage:

“Purity of earthly love purifies and prepares for the realisation of the Divine Love. No mortal man’s imagination can conceive of its ideals of the divinity otherwise but in the shape [of] the familiar to him. One who prepares for solving the *Infinite* must solve the *finite* first.”

And he adds, on Letter 19 of the second series:

“...Where a truly spiritual love seeks to consolidate itself doubly by a pure, permanent union of the two, in its earthly sense, it commits no sin, no crime in the eyes of the great Ain-Soph [20], for it is but the divine repetition of the Male and Female Principles - the microcosmal reflection of the first condition of Creation. On such a union angels may well smile! But they are rare, Brother mine, and can only be created under the wise and loving supervision of the Lodge (...).” [21]

Here, as in other Letters, the master refers to the Luxor centre of Initiates as a “Lodge”.

It is also remarkable in his letters the emphatic way he defends Helena Blavatsky, who was by then already misunderstood and attacked, as generally happens to anyone who questions the dominant prejudices of his or her own time.

The 19th century world was full of prejudices, and HPB was an unmarried woman. She lived alone, travelled a lot and paid little or no attention to appearance. She led a pure life. HPB was totally dedicated to the spiritual ideal. However, she was irreverent and she demolished the main dogmas of authoritarian Christianity, while also questioning the superstitions and ignorance accumulated by various religions and sects in both East and West. This was more than enough to provoke furious opposition to her coming from several kinds of institutions and narrow-minded persons in general.

The attacks against HPB were intense and frequent, and defending those who are unjustly attacked is not always an easy thing to do. At some point master Serapis made a warning to Henry Olcott for having listened to someone's criticizing HPB and remained in silence, instead of actively defending her. The master's warning was subtle and effective. Using his occult powers, he made a paper materialize before Olcott, with a message containing no direct reference to the incident, and reproducing a fragment from the "Dhamma Padam". The first three sentences in the quotation say:

"He who hears his brother reviled, and keeping a smooth face leaves the abuse unnoticed, tacitly agrees with the enemy, as if he admitted the same to be proper and just. He who does it is either mouse-hearted, or selfishness is at the bottom of his heart. He is not fit as yet to become a 'companion'." [22]

A word to the wise is enough: the master added only two words to the transcription - "Translation correct" - and signed it.

Earnest researchers will see that the quotation is not easily found in the various public versions of the "Dhammapada". However, master Serapis wrote "Dhamma Padam", and these two words may have various meanings.

"Dhamma" or "Dharma" may signify Law, Duty, Virtue and Doctrine. "Padam" or "Pada" is "way" or "discipline". "Dhamma Pada" could be interpreted as a reference to the whole Canon on the discipline that leads to Wisdom, and not to the little masterpiece popularly known as "Dhammapada".

It is a significant fact that the same idea of these three sentences can be found in other words immediately before the Golden Stairs, in the first Memorandum of the Esoteric School created by Helena Blavatsky. Besides these few sentences, the whole quotation, made of three paragraphs, is similar in contents to the various paragraphs that precede the Golden Stairs.[23]

A Little-Known Master

Let us see now a more fragments of information about this little-known teacher who had a remarkable influence over the work of other Adepts.

An Eastern Mahatma wrote to Henry Olcott:

“...Once that you had determined to make of India your new home, it was in compliance with the direct orders of our beloved Lord and Chief - him whom you know under the name of S. - and Maha Sahib that you sailed *not sooner but later than you ought to.*” [24]

In a footnote, editor C. Jinarajadasa explains that “Maha Sahib”, an appellation given to Master Serapis, must be distinguished from “Maha Chohan”.

The word “Maha” means “great” in Sanskrit. “Sahib” is a respectful Indian term meaning “sir” or “master” and used to address Europeans. The expression “Maha Sahib” seems to suggest that Master Serapis, using a European physical body, also worked in India due to the intimate cooperation between different lodges of Adepts. (We will see later that Alfred Sinnett saw this Master while Sinnett lived in India.)

Jinarajadasa makes it clear that Maha Sahib is not the “Maha Chohan”. Both expressions mean “great or distinguished gentleman”, with the difference that the term “Chohan” belongs to the Tibetan language. The adept known by the words “Maha Chohan” was the master and immediate leader of the two Mahatmas who inspired in a more direct way the creation of the theosophical movement and who worked in intense and direct contact with H. P. Blavatsky. Both belong to the centre of Adepts which is situated in the Himalayas.

What could cause confusion and wrongly suggest that Maha Sahib and Maha Chohan are two names for the same Mahatma is the fact that the Master of Helena Blavatsky was himself a disciple and an aide of the Maha Chohan, while he also referred to Master Serapis or “Maha Sahib” as “our beloved Lord and Chief”, as we saw above.

The reason for this is that the creation of the modern esoteric movement was a combined operation of the three main groups of Adepts. The teacher of HPB consulted with and listened to sages who were greater than him in wisdom and belonged both to the Eastern and Western Lodges.

It is clear from various letters that Master Serapis provided guidance to HPB’s master (M.), and that her master was happy to follow such instructions. [25]

Another Initiate, H., followed orders from the Maha Sahib as we can see in Letters 43 and 44 of the Second Series in “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom”. There is strong evidence in other letters that Serapis Bey had a vast responsibility as an adept.

The close cooperation between the Himalayan lodge and the Egyptian lodge of Adepts is shown in a number of documents.

In 1882, for instance, a political-military crisis emerged in Egypt. An Eastern Mahatma wrote these ironical lines to his lay disciple Alfred Sinnett, then the editor of one of the main daily newspapers in India:

“The Egyptian operations of your blessed countrymen involve such local consequences to the body of Occultists still remaining there and to what they are guarding, that two of our adepts are already there, having joined some Druze brethren and three more on their way. I was offered the agreeable privilege of becoming an eye-witness to the human butchery, but - declined with thanks. For such great emergency is our Force stored up, and hence - we dare not waste it (...).” [26]

In that moment, British and French military forces were brutally crushing a nationalist movement in the port-town of Egypt, **Alexandria**. As I worked in the Portuguese language edition of the Mahatma Letters, I consulted the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1967 edition, and added this in a footnote to the Letter:

“Controlled by joint forces of the United Kingdom and France, Egypt had shown signs of a strong nationalistic movement since 1879. In 1882, popular leader Arabi Pasha led a revolt. In the beginning of the year Egyptian government made decisions that were independent from the colonial forces, and Arabi was made War Minister. British and French fleets were sent to Alexandria in May. In June, there was a massacre in that city, but the resistance went on. On 11 of July, the British bombed the city’s forts. British expeditionary forces crushed Arabi forces on 13 of September. The Letter was sent by the Mahatma precisely in July 1882.”

Henry More’s Library

As the researcher examines “The Mahatma Letters”, he comes to know that Master Serapis Bey was seen by Alfred P. Sinnett in a dream, during sleep. An Eastern Mahatma was also present. According to the careful notes taken by Sinnett, the fact occurred in the night of 19 October 1880.[27]

Two among the many indications of a close cooperation between the Greek-Egyptian and Himalayan lodges of Adepts must be still mentioned:

* HPB was mysteriously helped in writing down long parts of her masterpiece “**Isis Unveiled**” by Henry More, the neoplatonist who died in 1687. Two hundred years later, in the last quarter of the 19th century, More was firmly established and working in his vast library, in his kama-loka, the first phase of the afterlife.[28] Neoplatonism and neopythagoreanism are under the influence of the Observatory of Luxor or Egyptian-Greek Lodge. The cooperation between Henry More and HPB is described in the first volume of Henry Olcott’s Diary.[29]

* In Letter LXXXV of “**The Mahatma Letters**”, which was written by order of the Maha Chohan [30], there is an emphatic defence of Hermetic philosophy, a school of thought which comes from ancient Egypt and has much in common with neopythagoreanism and neoplatonism. In the letter, the Mahatma tries to preserve in the London lodge of the theosophical movement an equilibrium between two groups of students. On one side were those who preferred the Eastern teachings transmitted by the Mahatmas of the Himalayas. Their leader was Alfred Sinnett, who at the time was living once more in London. On the other side were the students who preferred the Western teachings and were, technically, under the influence of the Observatory of Luxor. Their main leader was Anna Kingsford. Although she had not a direct and authentic contact with the Egyptian Lodge (in fact, she had imaginary contacts), Ms. Kingsford placed herself in general and most sincerely in the atmosphere of the Western tradition. She also had much in common with the so-called “esoteric Christianity”, whose roots are neoplatonist.

Students can see in the Letter LXXXV an exaltation of the principle of unity in diversity and a statement of great value regarding what one could call “spiritual democracy”. By reading that letter we also come to appreciate and understand the profound harmony existing between Eastern and Western Adepts.

External Contact Lasted for a Few Years

The ostensive contact between Masters and the esoteric movement did not last long. During the 1880s, when the contacts were still frequent, an Eastern Mahatma said this to Helena Blavatsky, and she wrote the words down in a memorandum which is now included in “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom”:

“...The Society has liberated itself from our grasp and influence and we have let it go - we make no unwilling slaves. He [Olcott] says he has saved it? He saved its body, but he allowed through sheer fear, to its soul to escape, and it is now a soulless corpse, a machine run so far well enough, but which will fall to pieces when he is gone.” [31]

Indeed, since the deaths of H. P. Blavatsky (in 1891) and of Henry Olcott (in 1907) the Theosophical Society underwent various schisms, as the focus of the original proposal was left aside, so that the new leaders could more easily adopt fake, ritualistic and authoritarian views of the spiritual path.

In the 21st century, the theosophical movement has a diversity of associations and is still living its struggle between truth and illusion. The United Lodge of Theosophists is the only school of thought which is internationally organized around the clear goal of working according the original proposal of the movement. The ULT stayed away from bureaucratic structures.

The gathering together of all students of divine wisdom in the same institution would not be necessarily desirable any longer. Institutional diversity is healthy at this point, and if historical examples are useful one should remember that in its beginning Christianity also had no centralized institutions. James Robinson, the general editor of the “Nag Hammadi Library”, writes:

“Primitive Christianity was itself not a unified movement.” [32]

Since the end of 19th century, the contact with the Masters of the Wisdom still exists and constitutes the decisive factor for the present and future of the theosophical movement. However, it is neither verbal nor visual any longer. It takes place on a plane that is essential and subtler than the world of lower senses, as has been clarified in the well-known Letter of 1900.[33]

And indeed, even in the 1880s a Master wrote to a disciple:

“We rarely show any outward signs by which to be recognized or sensed.” [34]

A School of Souls, Working Across Millennia

By examining the material available on the Western Lodge of the Brotherhood students can see that the practical cooperation among the three main groups of Adepts is in the origin of the new wave of appreciation for Western classic philosophy which we can observe nowadays.

The silent cooperation between different inner schools is also connected to the present re-emergence of the Andean and other pre-colonial wisdom traditions in South America, Central America and North America.[35]

A vast number of inspiring works from the Western culture is available today online and in paper books. The idea that they are “difficult and complicated” is false. One must leave mental laziness apart and study. The ethics of ancient wisdom eliminates most problems and challenges of one’s personal life. While studying the works of classical Greek and Roman philosophy, we may see in fact that a Western Spiritual School is at our disposal.

This School lives and works on an inner plane, gathering minds and hearts together since at least the Pythagorean teachings of some 2500 years ago. Hundreds of thinkers have built along many centuries a line of Buddhist light that goes across both time and cultural borders.[36]

Among these numerous thinkers one finds Epicurus, the founder of the “Garden” whose ideas - as those of every pioneer - were distorted and attacked by narrow-minded people.

Epicurus is seen by HPB as a true philosopher of the occult wisdom, and the present text should be closed with one of his axioms. While examining the direct relationship between wisdom and happiness, the philosopher taught:

“It is impossible to live pleasantly without living prudently, well, and justly, nor is it possible to live prudently, well, and justly without living pleasantly. The man for whom this latter condition is impossible cannot live prudently, well, or justly; he for whom the former is impossible cannot live pleasantly.” [37]

It must be a pleasure, therefore, for the truth-seeker, to live a correct and virtuous life.

(CCA)

NOTES:

[1] Helena Blavatsky, in “The Secret Doctrine”, Theosophy Co., Los Angeles, vol. I, p. xlv.

[2] “The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett”, Transcribed and Compiled by A. Trevor Barker, TUP, California, Pasadena, 1992, 279 pp., Letter XXIII-B, p. 157.

[3] See the text “A 3,000 Years Esoteric School”, by Carlos Cardoso Aveline, at our websites.

[4] “HPB - The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement”, by Sylvia Cranston, G.P. Putnam’s Sons, New York, 1994, 648 pp.

[5] See the section “Mahatmas, Disciples and the Search for Discipleship”, in www.TheosophyOnline.com.

[6] Arhat: The Buddhist term for “Initiate”.

[7] Rishi: Ancient Hindu term corresponding to “Initiate” or “Immortal”.

[8] “The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett”, Transcribed and Compiled by A. Trevor Barker, TUP, California, Pasadena, 1992, 279 pp., Letter LXXXV, p. 399.

[9] “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom”, transcribed by C. Jinarajadasa, TPH, India, 1973.

[10] The complete names used by the adepts in the 19th century are mentioned in the two printed volumes of “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom”.

[11] Brother, *id est*, an Initiate or Mahatma. The fact that this Master is Greek shows the cultural proximity between Egypt and Greece. During many centuries, Egypt entirely belonged to the Greek cultural world, hence the neopythagoreanism and neoplatonism of Alexandria, with Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus and Porphyry, among others.

[12] Old Lady, *id est*, H.P. Blavatsky.

[13] In the 19th century, from the cultural point of view, “Europe” was practically a synonym to “West”.

[14] “The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett”, TUP edition, Letter XLVII, p. 271.

[15] In fact, the “king and judge” of the afterlife is the higher self or immortal soul of each individual. This “judge” makes decisions on the base of the Law, which is the Law of Karma. Each individual receives in the afterlife the harvest of what he planted in life. The idea of “resurrection” means the “reincarnation” of the same monad.

[16] “A Conturbada História das Bibliotecas”, Matthew Battles, Editora Planeta, SP, 2003, 239 pp., see p. 29.

[17] “A Conturbada História das Bibliotecas”, Matthew Battles, p. 36.

[18] “The Key to Theosophy”, various editions, Chapter 1. In the Theosophy Co. edition, pp. 1-3.

[19] “The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett”, TUP, Pasadena, Appendix III, p. 389. In the Chronological Edition of the Mahatma Letters, see p. 519.

[20] Ain-Soph: in the Kabalah tradition, the Absolute, unmanifested Spirit.

[21] “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom”, TPH, second series, pp. 40-42.

[22] “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom”, Second Series, transcribed by C. Jinarajadasa, Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras-Chennai, India, 1973, Letter 23, pp. 47-49.

[23] See “HPB Collected Writings”, TPH, volume XII, pp. 502-503 - especially the first lines on p. 503.

[24] “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom”, Second Series, Letter 27, p. 68.

[25] “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom”, second series, TPH, 1973, India. See Letter 31 (pp. 73-74), Letter 36 (pp. 77-78), and Letter 45 (p. 86).

[26] “The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett”, TUP edition, Letter XVI, p. 116.

[27] “The Mahatma Letters”, Chronological Edition, TPH-Philippines, 1993, 600 pp., Letter 3-A, p. 10. The chronological edition provides the context of each letter.

[28] Kama-loka normally lasts from a few months to a few years. This is therefore a remarkable exception to the rule. Certainly the kama-loka of such a philosopher contains elements of the Devachan, the blessed and lasting phase of afterlife, combined with a personal attachment to his library.

[29] “Old Diary Leaves”, H. S. Olcott, volume one, TPH, India, 1974, see pp. 237-243. On Henry More and his kama-loka cooperation with HPB, there are two articles in the magazine “The Theosophist”. In the September 1972 edition, an article by Alex Horne. In the October 1973 edition, an article signed with the initials “D.J.B.”.

[30] In the TUP edition, Letter LXXXV, pp. 398-402. For the context of the Letter, see Letter 120 in the Chronological Edition (pp. 409-413).

[31] “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom”, first series, TPH, 1973, India. See Letter 47, p. 101.

[32] “The Nag Hammadi Library”, Revised Edition, org. James M. Robinson, HarperSanFrancisco, EUA, p. 06.

[33] See the articles “On Contacts With Masters” and “The Process of Occult Osmosis”, both by Carlos Cardoso Aveline. They are available in our associated websites.

[34] “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom”, first series, TPH, 1973, India. See Letter number II to Laura C. Holloway, p. 149.

[35] See in our websites the article “The Ancient Theosophy in the Andes”.

[36] Read the text “A 3,000 Years Esoteric School” (mentioned in a note above and available in our websites).

[37] “The Essential Epicurus”, Letters, Principal Doctrines, Vatican Sayings, and Fragments. Translated by Eugene O’Connor, Prometheus Books, New York, 1993, 101 pp., see p. 70, Aphorism V in “Principal Doctrines”.

000

The above article is a translation from the Portuguese language text “O Observatório de Luxor”, by Carlos Cardoso Aveline. See the section “Western Philosophy and Modern Theosophy”, in www.TheosophyOnline.com.

0000

Truth Is Found by Layers

Life is not suddenly understood.

In some special occasions one may obtain great insights and undergo experiences that change one’s way of looking at the world and at oneself. However, the discovery of truth takes place step by step, slowly, and by layers.

At each phase, our vision changes and we ourselves change. Every layer of reality has its own sort of landscape. If we would get attached to the world vision we have today, we could not proceed the journey along the uphill road, because the very act of walking constantly widens our horizon and changes the landscape.

To each new layer of truth-perception, new forms of detachment, devotion and personal integrity are needed. Common sense is of the essence at higher altitudes. The more we climb, the more we need a sense of equilibrium and the ability to place our feet with firmness on the soil of reality.

Thoughts Along the Road

Observing the Sacredness of Daily Life



- * **S**elf-control is the natural result of self-knowledge.
- * It is correct to take some time each day and leave aside every waste of energy, concentrating one's mind and heart on the unchanging peace of pure Law.
- * Human potentialities are externally modest, innerly unlimited. A sense of courage allows one to try his best: humility and realism stimulate an unconditional harmony.
- * Discernment expands as the student has a clear and noble goal and learns to learn from his own mistakes.
- * No energy is lost as long as one's heart is present in what one does. However, it is always possible to improve the way we use time.
- * Individual austerity leads to happiness. If life seems to you to be "too uncomfortable", examine the possibility that you have been unduly indulgent with yourself.
- * "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find" (Matthew, 7:7). No doubt. However, one must learn to be careful in choosing what one will seek.
- * In order to understand the parts, one must see the whole. If we want to better use the time available today, we must have a notion of eternal time.
- * When the will is clean, learning takes place. Purity of intention gradually reduces spiritual ignorance.

- * Moderation is an element in attaining a victory that lasts. Exaggeration tends to destroy harmony. A knowledge of the appropriate limits increases efficiency.
- * Universal compassion is an unlimited balm. The healing power of selflessness is transcendent and derives its strength from the fact that generous help is the first-hand experience of unity in diversity.
- * The spiritual path demands that we understand the classical lesson from Epictetus and have less expectations regarding life, less expectations regarding other people, and concentrate instead in doing that which is right and which depends on us.
- * To live in depth is to live in calm. Agitation is shallow. Truth-seekers must be able to listen to the silence. The right amount of rest is necessary for one to make an effective and enduring effort in life.
- * Classic books offer us a safe sort of time travel. In addition to that, Lucius Seneca (4 BCE - 65 CE) wrote that through books one can become friends with the wisest men of all time.
- * Love means aiming at the happiness of the other, or others, rather than our own. The feeling produces intense bliss for a simple reason: it liberates one from the narrow-walled prison of selfishness.
- * As we understand the process of reincarnation according to the original teachings of theosophy, we realize we have the eternal time at our disposal. We live indeed in Infinite Duration. Boundless time is part of us. As we expand our horizons, our daily efforts become more effective.
- * By keeping in order the small things of daily existence, we can better dedicate ourselves to the issues that really matter. As one places his heart in that which is unlimited in space or time, one reaches voluntary simplicity regarding the material dimensions of life.
- * Since outward life is largely made of challenges and obstacles, detachment as to outer circumstances is needed for the student to develop his inner affinity with bliss and happiness. However, detachment does not suppress attention: it increases attention, instead, by liberating it from distortions and distractions.
- * Envy implies the desire to steal something from another person. It also means that the envious person has a severe lack of self-confidence. Admiration and good will, on the other hand, result from a correct relation between the individual and his higher levels of consciousness.
- * Sincerity results from self-respect. Those who lie - and they often do this using beautiful excuses - have no true self-esteem.
- * A feeling of frustration regarding others invites us to examine up to what extent we are happy with ourselves.
- * We need a sense of self-esteem in order to appreciate the positive qualities of those around us, and to try to help them in their difficulties.

