

- * Happiness is only the health of the soul. (Barthélemy)
- * True contentment is necessarily the sharing of true virtue. (Cabanis)
- * All happiness is made of courage and work. (Balzac)
- * Happiness is feeling that your soul is good. (J. Joubert)
- * Happiness is less dependent on circumstances than on character. (E. de Girardin)
- * Rather than a gift of destiny, happiness is an effect of wisdom. (L. Veillot)
- * Happiness does not consist in acquiring and enjoying, but in not desiring, because it consists in being free. (Epictetus)
- * Having happiness is seeing without envy the happiness of others, and with satisfaction the common happiness. (Bossuet)
- * There is no safer route to happiness than that of virtue. (J.-J. Rousseau)
- * Pleasure may be based on illusion, but happiness rests on truth. (Chamfort)
- * I seek my happiness in the happiness of others. (Crow)
- * Ask virtue for the secret of happiness. (V. Hugo)

[The above thoughts were selected by Hector Durville and published in his book “Magnétisme Personnel”, Hector & Henri Durville Imprimeurs - Éditeurs, Paris, 1918, 526 pp., see pp. 382-384.]

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Nicolas Berdyaev:

Philosophy is the Art of Knowing

* **I**n philosophy, the self-liberation of the creative act of the human spirit in its reaction to the world takes place in the knowing resistance to necessity and to the given world, not in adaptation to it. Philosophy is art rather than science.

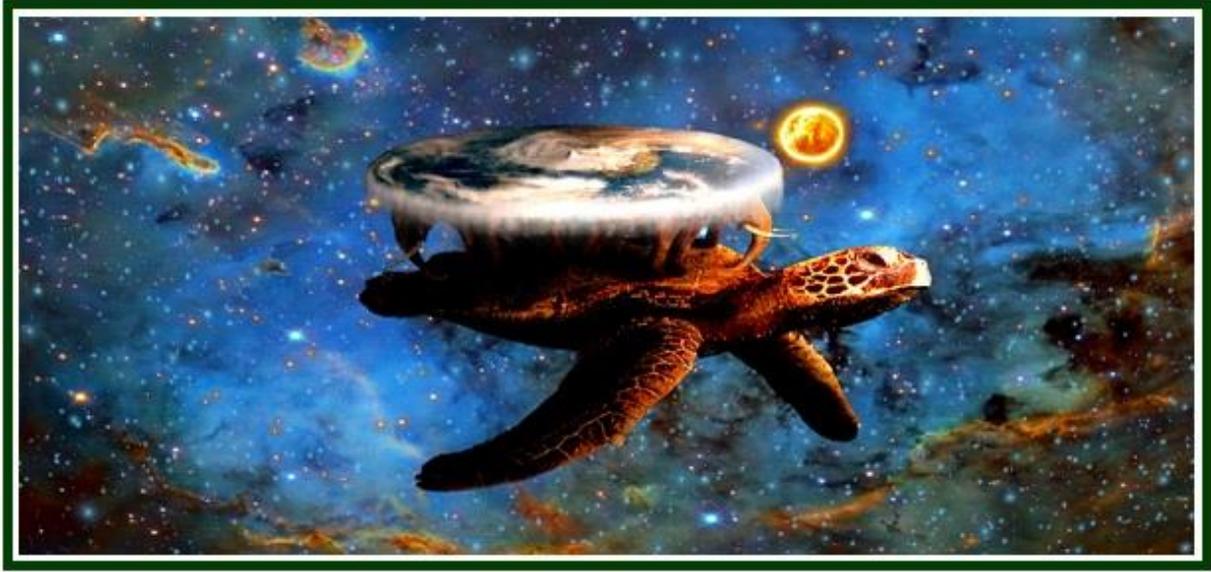
* Philosophy is a special art, differing in principle from poetry, music, or painting - it is the art of knowing. Philosophy is an art because it is creation. Philosophy is an art because it predicates a calling and a special gift from above, because the personality of its creator is impressed upon it, no less than on music or poetry. But philosophy creates existential ideas rather than images.

* Philosophy is the art of knowing in freedom by creating ideas which resist the given world and necessity and penetrate into the ultimate essence of the world. We cannot make art dependent upon science, creativeness upon adaptation, freedom upon necessity.

[From the book “**The Meaning of the Creative Act**”, by Nicolas Berdyaev, Harper & Brothers, New York, USA, copyright 1955, 344 pp., see p. 29.]

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The Spiritual Path and the Turtle



Just like the average turtle, each human being takes his home with him wherever he goes. However, the human house has four main floors.

The ground floor is the physical body. It must be healthy and stable, as much as possible; and its vital energy deserves to be preserved and kept at an optimal point of harmony. As time passes, one's efficiency must be expanded in that.

Above ground floor we have the emotional level.

Like the physical instrument of flesh and blood, emotions also require order, cleanliness, organization, purity - and a degree of enlightenment.

The third floor is the mental plane, from which one has a broad view of life, as long as the physical and emotional foundations are sane. For that it is also necessary to seek for the highest from an altruistic point of view.

The fourth floor is that of the higher self, the spiritual soul. Here another level of search for truth is experienced. Now inner happiness flows, regardless of circumstances and independently from short term events.

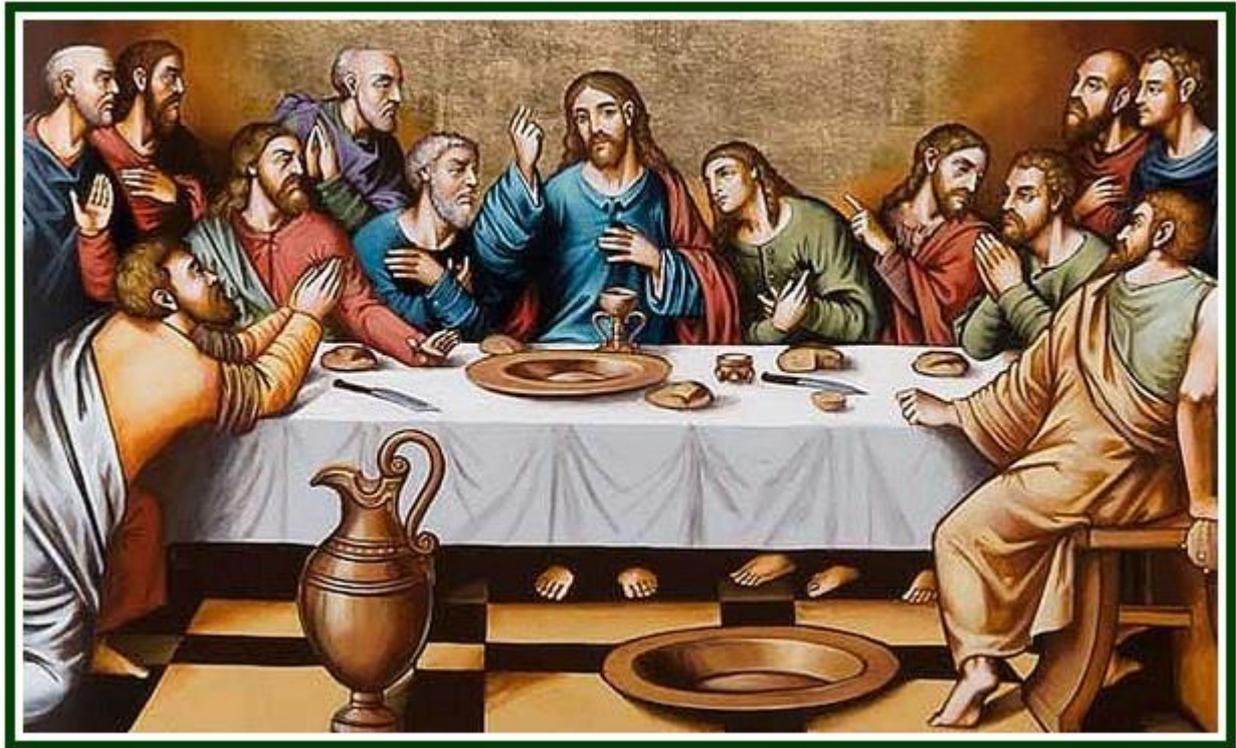
The four floors are vertically unified by a spiral staircase and an internal elevator which connect heaven and earth in one's daily life.

Its Sanskrit name is Antahkarana. Around such a Ladder the true Path of Wisdom goes upward.

On the different floors, discernment and self-discipline are essential for us to have an enduring firmness on Earth, and the right kind of transcendence in the realm of spirit.

Jesus Talks About Things to Come

Past, Present and Future Are Only External Aspects of the One Eternal Time



The Last Supper, a painting by an unknown artist from Romania

In John 16: 12-13, Jesus says:

“I still have much to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. When the Spirit of Truth comes, he will lead you to all truth, for he will not speak of himself, but will say all that he has heard - and will show you things to come.”

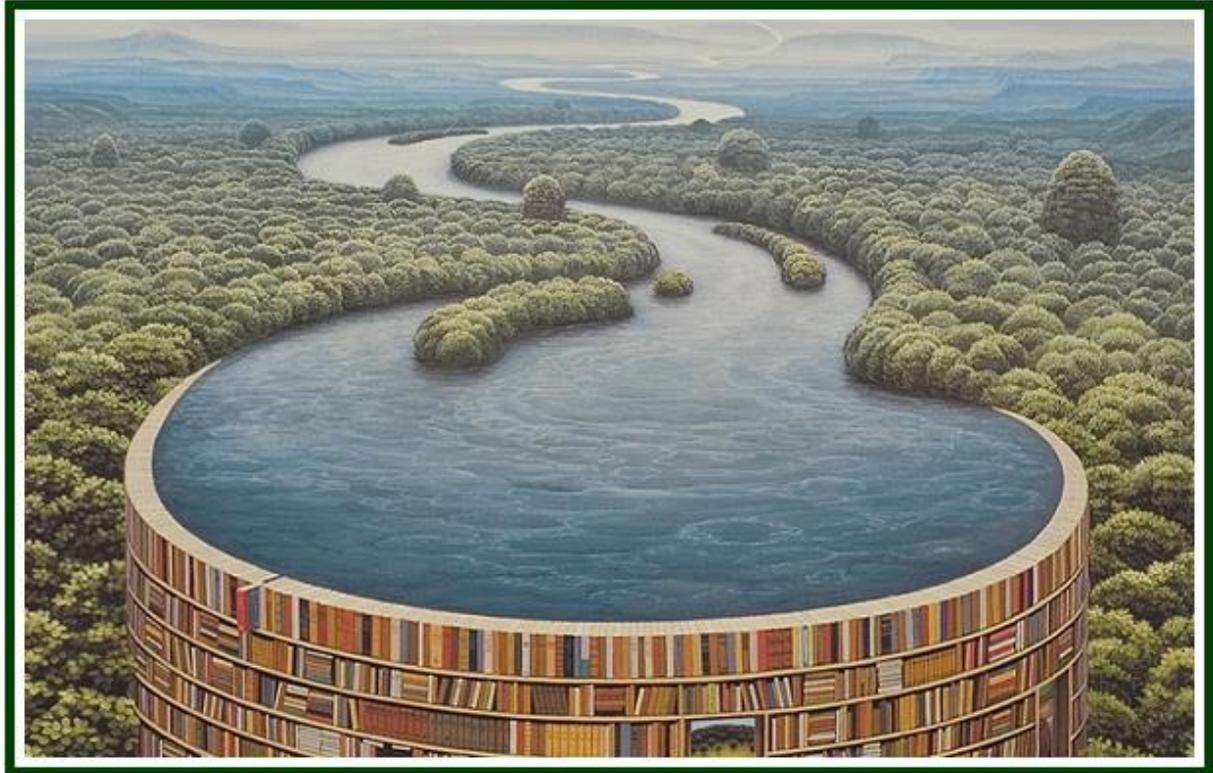
As long as we are too attached to personalities, we suffer from an emotional disease called *wishful thinking* and are not capable of a rigorous understanding of life.

The Spirit of Truth is not someone situated apart from human beings. The Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, is present in every individual. Before he is able to arrive to the visible levels of our consciousness, however, each one of us must grow as a person by renouncing illusions and being a friend of truth. Then the Spirit of the Law will be able to reach us, individually and collectively.

As we get nearer the truth, the one Law will also get closer to us. We will see the cyclical character of time. We will realize that the past contains the seeds of a healthy future, and that these seeds must be made to germinate in the present. Past and future will show themselves as intimately intertwined, for they are two external aspects of the one eternal time.

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The Soul of the Pilgrim Works Like a Hydroelectric Power Plant



The automatic succession of human thoughts and feelings flows like a river, but it can be hindered so that a higher and subtler energy is produced.

Many call this fact “meditation”.

True contemplation involves an active use of the will, whereby the door to ignorance is closed and the path to transcendence becomes available.

The process is not always pleasant.

Just as a hydroelectric dam gathers the latent electromagnetic force present in the hydrodynamics of a river, so also the self-discipline of human thought can gather the latent magnetic force present in the blind or instinctive activities of consciousness.

What is the result of interrupting the automatic flow of the current - be it a current of water or a river of thoughts?

The inferior dispersed energy of the physical river (or the blind mental flow) is forced to transcend the denser plane. It has to transfer itself to the immediately higher layer of reality.

Thus both the force of the waters and the power of ideas are stored in a subtler state, and remain available to the one who interrupted the lower automatic action.

But then Karma is also accelerated regarding the use of energy.

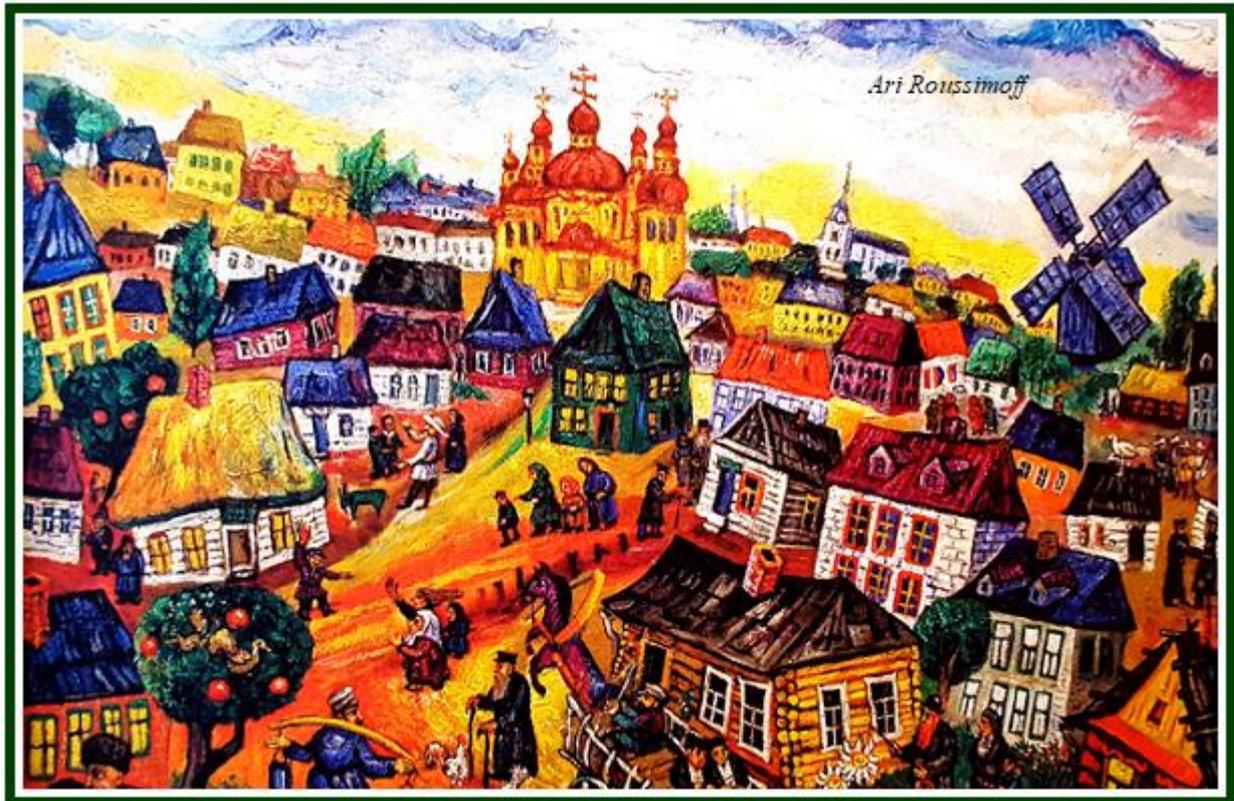
As the force available to one's "thinking self" expands, so the ethical duty that is inseparable from knowledge inevitably increases.

The karmic price to pay for one's mistakes becomes more expensive in the same proportion, and discernment and wisdom get to be ever more decisive elements.

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Thoughts Along the Road

Gaining Time, and Saving a Remarkable Amount of Life Force



Partial view of a painting by Russian artist Ari Roussimoff

* “**W**hen you are 20 years old, if you are not a revolutionary, you have no heart”, says a popular saying. And the axiom concludes with an irony: “But at 50, if you are not a conservative, it’s because you have no brain.”

* In other words, experience shows that good intentions are not enough. Yet it is an essential fact that altruism must shine forth in youth. A selfish youth would close the door of the future before society.

* Original theosophy eliminates the conflict between heart and brain. Authentic esoteric philosophy teaches us that life is a series of tests and was never meant to be a comfortable road. It shows the contrasts of human soul indicating how to transcend them with realism.

* Compassion for the suffering of the world must be expressed through constructive, not destructive, acts. The discernment of a mature age is not enough: it needs to be guided by goodwill.

* Life invites us to think for ourselves, with a sense of equilibrium and discernment. There is no essential difference between believing everything and doubting everything, since in both cases the brain has stopped working.

* Esoteric philosophy advises its students to avoid extremes in the various aspects of life. “Never eat if you are not hungry”, says Hector Durville. “Leave the table as soon as you have eaten enough, because it is not the quantity of food that you need, but quality.” [1] Gluttony leads no one to heaven. Self-control and calm attention, however, are among the best friends of every student of philosophy. A degree of austerity is often helpful.

* Life is made up of undulatory movements. Everything has its right moment. Balance is the Law: after a great effort, a deep rest. Foolish people pretend to themselves that they know everything. Sage is he who knows how to learn. [2]

* Perhaps most of the obstacles and unpleasant circumstances that surround us are but ways through which Life is trying to teach us something. Are we paying attention?

* On a collective level, the most uncomfortable challenges faced by any country are nothing but lessons that the entire community needs to learn - or, at least, the more lucid sectors of it.

* In order to avoid wasting energy, the pilgrim must know himself and make sure his efforts are coherent, so that they do not cancel each other, but have mutually complementary effects.

* When our different actions - physical, mental, and emotional - all point to the same direction, we gain time and save a remarkable amount of life force. The same is true of collective life, as in the marriage, the family, at work or in a theosophical lodge. Countries are not exceptions: everywhere, any time, unity and mutual help make people strong.

* Repentance can be defined as “the process of identification, detachment from and correction of our own mistakes”. From a spiritual point of view, repentance requires a wide horizon and an expanded notion of “self”, or “being”, so that the pilgrim transcends the narrow interests of his own lower self. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik says: “Repentance is not a function of a single, decisive act, but grows and gains in size slowly and gradually, until the penitent undergoes a complete metamorphosis, and then, after becoming a new person, and only then, does repentance take place.” (“On Repentance”, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, Maggid Books, Jerusalem, Israel, 2017, 245 pp., see p. 21.)

NOTES:

[1] “Magnétisme Personnel”, Hector Durville, Hector & Henri Durville, Éditeurs, Paris, 1918, 526 pp., see p. 195.

[2] However, wise people make foolish mistakes, sometimes, and every fool has in himself the seeds of his future wisdom.

praises of them. They surely mean more than that *his will or laws are conformable to themselves*. This we might ascribe to an artful impure Demon. Conformity to his nature is not conformity to immensity, eternity, omnipotence. It is conformity to his goodness, holiness, justice. These moral perfections then must be previously known, or else the definition by *conformity to them* is useless.

Neither is the notion of moral goodness under which we approve it well explained by conformity of affections and actions to *truth, reason, true propositions, reason of things*; as in the common acceptation these characters agree to every object of the mind, about which it judges truly, animate or inanimate, virtuous or vicious. *Conformity to moral truth*, or true propositions about morals, equally belongs to virtue and vice; as the mind discerns truth about both; and, as every true proposition is conformed to its object, so is the object to the proposition. If it is said that these moral truths intended are only such as show what actions are *good*, what we are *obliged to do*, what *ought to be done*, these words mean no more than the word moral goodness; and then the definition is no better than this, “the moral goodness of an action is its conformity to such true propositions as show the action to be good”, or “good actions are such about which it is true that *they are good*”.

In general, all descriptions of moral goodness by conformity to reason if we examine them well, must lead us to some immediate original sense or determination of our nature. All reasons exciting to an action will lead us to some original affection or instinct of will; and all justifying reasons, or such as show an action to be good, will at last lead us to some original sense or power of perception.

In like manner all descriptions of it by *fitness, congruity, agreement*, must lead us to these original determinations. The fitness of means or subordinate ends, does not prove them to be good, unless the ultimate end be good. Now fitness of an end truly ultimate must be an absurd expression; as it is referred to nothing, or is fit for nothing further. All ultimate ends are settled by some of the original determinations of our nature. [1]

It is in vain here to allege instruction, education, custom, or association of ideas as the original of moral approbation. As these can give no new senses, let us examine what the opinion or what the notion is upon which we approve, and to what sense it belongs, whatever way the notion may have been conjoined, or whatever have been the causes of our getting this opinion that such a quality is inherent in or connected with the action? And this will lead us to an original principle.

IV

There is therefore, as each one by close attention and reflection may convince himself, a natural and immediate determination to approve certain affections, and actions consequent upon them; or a natural sense of immediate excellence in them, not referred to any other quality perceivable by our other senses or by reasoning. When we call this determination a *sense* or *instinct*, we are not supposing it of that low kind dependent on bodily organs, such as even the brutes have. It may be a constant settled determination in the soul itself, as much as our powers of judging and reasoning. And it is pretty plain that *reason* is only a subservient power to our ultimate determinations either of perception or will. The ultimate end is settled by some sense, and some determination of will: by some sense we enjoy happiness, and self-

love determines to it without reasoning. Reason can only direct to the means; or compare two ends previously constituted by some other immediate powers.

In other animal-kinds each one has instincts toward its proper action, and has the highest enjoyment in following them, even with toil and some pain. Can we suppose mankind void of such principles? As brutes seem not to reflect on their own temper and actions, or that of others, they may feel no more than present delight in following their impulses. But in men, who can make their own tempers and conduct the objects of reflection, the analogy of nature would make one expect a sense, a relish about them, as well as about other objects. To each of our powers we seem to have a corresponding taste or sense, recommending the proper use of it to the agent, and making him relish or value the like exercise of it by another. This we see as to the powers of voice, of imitation, designing, or machinery, motion, reasoning; there is a sense discerning and recommending the proper exercise of them. It would be anomalous in our structure if we had no relish or taste for powers and actions of yet greater importance; if a species of which each one is naturally capable of very contrary affections toward its fellows, and of consequent actions, each one also requiring a constant intercourse of actions with them, and dependent on them for his subsistence, had not an immediate relish for such affections and actions as the interest of the system requires. Shall an immediate sense recommend the proper use of the inferior powers, and yet shall we allow no natural relish for that of the superior?

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As some others of our immediate perceptive powers are capable of culture and improvement, so is this moral sense, without presupposing any reference to a superior power of reason to which their perceptions are to be referred. We once had pleasure in the simple artless tunes of the vulgar. We indulge ourselves in music; we meet with finer and more complex compositions. In these we find a pleasure much higher, and begin to despise what formerly pleased us.

A judge, from the motions of pity, gets many criminals acquitted: we approve this sweet tenderness of heart. But we find that violence and outrages abound; the sober, just and industrious are plagued, and have no security. A more extensive view of a public interest shows some sorts of pity to occasion more extensive misery than arises from a strict execution of justice. Pity of itself never appears deformed; but a more extensive affection, a love to society, a zeal to promote general happiness, is a more lovely principle, and the want of this renders a character deformed.

This only shows, what we shall presently confirm, that among the several affections approved there are many degrees: some much more lovely than others. It is thus alone we correct any apparent disorders in this *moral faculty*, even as we correct reason itself. As we improve and correct a low taste for harmony by inuring the ear to finer compositions; a low taste for beauty, by presenting the finer works, which yield a higher pleasure; so we improve our *moral taste* by presenting larger systems to our mind, and more extensive affections toward them; and thus finer objects are exhibited to the moral faculty, which it will approve, even when these affections oppose the effect of some narrower affections, which considered by themselves would be truly lovely. No need here of reference to a higher power of perception, or to reason.

Is not our reason itself also often wrong, when we rashly conclude from imperfect or partial evidence? Must there be a higher power too to correct our reason? No; presenting more fully all the evidence on both sides, by serious attention, or the best exercise of the reasoning power, corrects the hasty judgment. Just so in the moral perceptions.

(To be continued.)

NOTE:

[1] A complete examination of these characters would call us off too much from the present design; we must therefore refer to *the illustrations on the moral sense*. (F. Hutcheson)

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From the book “**A System of Moral Philosophy**”, by Francis Hutcheson, Cambridge University Press, 2014, a facsimile copy of the 1755 edition, vol. I, Chapter IV, pp. 56-61. The spelling of words has been updated.

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Divine Wisdom is Older Than the Earth



Both modern theosophy and the ancient proverbs of Solomon say Wisdom is older than the planet Earth that we know now.

The Lord of Judaism is seen in esoteric philosophy as a poetical personification of the universal Law. Solomon’s Wisdom is a goddess in other ancient traditions. In Proverbs, a personified Wisdom confesses:

“The LORD created me at the beginning of His course
 As the first of His works of old.
 In the distant past I was fashioned,
 At the beginning, at the origin of earth.
 There was still no deep when I was brought forth,
 No springs rich in water;

Before [the foundation of] the mountains were sunk,
 Before the hills I was born.
 He had not yet made earth and fields,
 Or the world's first clumps of clay.
 I was there when He set the heavens into place;
 When he fixed the horizon upon to deep;
 When he made the heavens above firm,
 And the fountains of the deep gushed forth;
 When He assigned the sea its limits,
 So that its waters never transgress His command;
 When He fixed the foundations of the earth,
 I was with Him as a confidant,
 Rejoicing before Him at all times,
 Rejoicing his inhabited world,
 Finding delight with mankind." (Proverbs, 8: 22-31)

Readers of "The Secret Doctrine" are familiar with this teaching.

The Lord is a collective intelligence in theosophy. He had the practical task of creating the universe again. He had to bring it into a new awakening period - the manvantara or the "Day of Brahma" - out of the pralaya, the period of rest and sleep, the "Night of Brahma". In this, Wisdom was the "confidant" of the Lord Creator. Wisdom was his Knowledge, and the Lord was the Architect and Geometer of the Cosmos.

Wisdom is inseparable from Bliss, and she says:

"Now, sons, listen to me;
 Happy are they who keep my ways.
 Heed discipline and become wise;
 Do not spurn it.
 Happy is the man who listens to me,
 Coming early to my gates each day,
 Waiting outside my doors.
 For he who finds me finds life
 And obtains favor from the LORD.
 But he who misses me destroys himself;
 All who hate me love death." (Proverbs, 8: 32-36)

Esoteric philosophy, Judaism and every form of authentic religion celebrate that transcendent life which is present everywhere. H.P. Blavatsky wrote in "The Secret Doctrine":

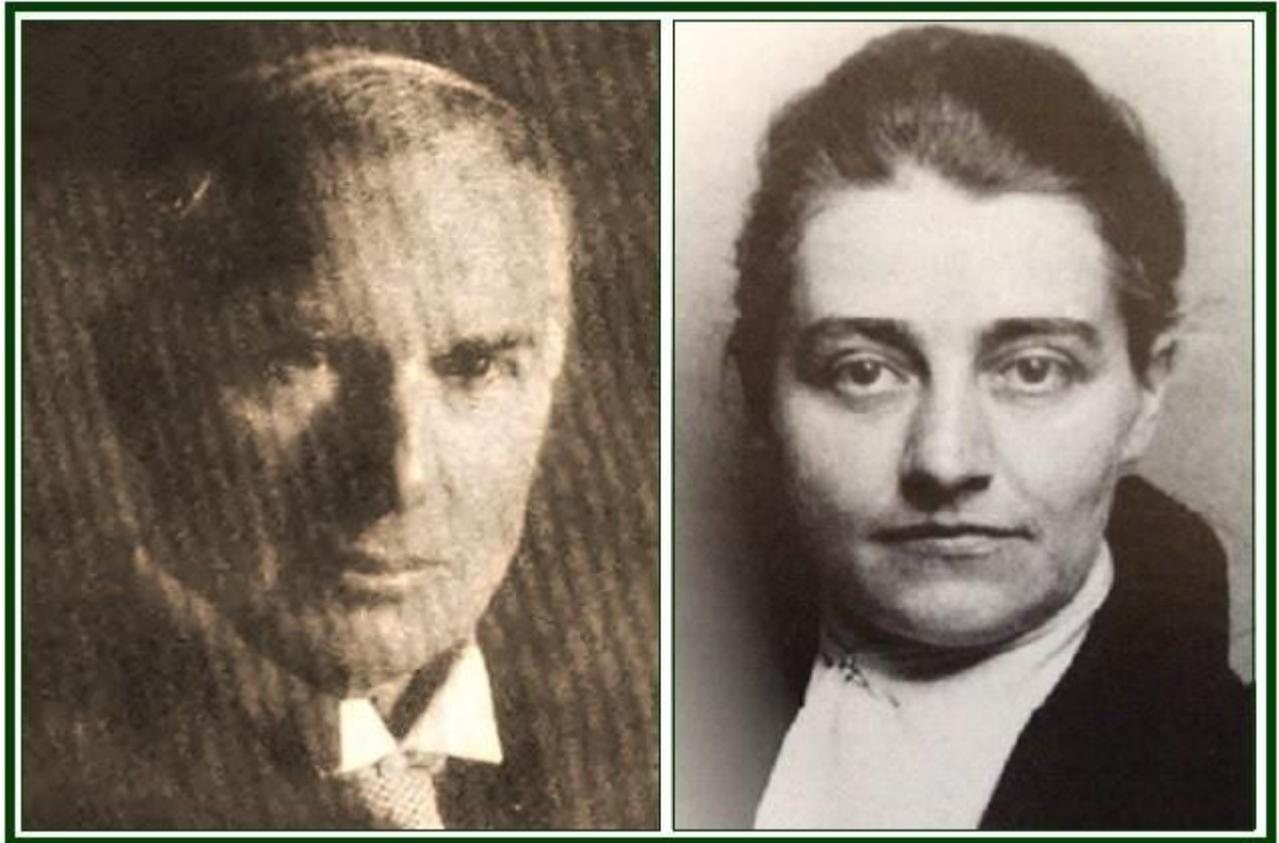
"The silent worship of abstract or *noumenal* Nature, the only divine manifestation, is the one ennobling religion of humanity". [1]

NOTE:

[1] ["The Secret Doctrine", volume I, page 381, footnote.](#)

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William B. Pease:
The Theosophist Who
Believed in Helena Blavatsky



William Benton Pease and Alice Leighton Cleather

Like Ms. Alice Cleather and a few other theosophists, Mr. William Benton Pease (1861-1953) had some strange-sounding ideas which even today are considered absurd by many.

To begin with, William Pease believed that the teaching given by Helena Blavatsky and her Masters is not limited to its theoretical aspects. Esoteric philosophy was never meant to be known on a verbal level only. It must apply to the daily life and to the very organizational structure of the theosophical movement. HPB and the Masters put on paper a large number of instructions on how the theosophical movement must work.

Secondly, according to Pease, the correct principle of liberty of thought is no excuse for anyone to promote fraud, or to adopt well-known and documented illusions, seeking to take short-term advantage from the fact that “spiritual” illusions are often politically profitable. It is not correct, for instance, to create false ritualisms as instruments to keep a tight institutional control of the movement, while using the fashionable idea of *searching for truth* as a *whited façade* to attract sincere and good-willing people into the trap.

Furthermore, Pease dared to think that fabricating imaginary contacts with Masters it not the right thing to do.

Pease did not adhere to the cults of personality created by influential followers of Annie Besant and William Judge. He felt that, instead of using fictitious contacts with imaginary masters as a means to obtain political prestige, or building a sect, one should honestly study the teachings of the *real* Mahatmas. [1]

Born on 27 December 1861, at Henbury Hill, near Bristol, England, William Pease belonged to an old Quaker family. He died at the age of 92, in April 1953, after a loyal, enduring work for the cause of humanity. An article published in the “Canadian Theosophist” says:

“Mr. Pease was a whole-heartedly devoted worker whose life was indissolubly linked with the Theosophical cause. (...) He was one of the first in Canada to recognize that the direction of Leadbeaterianism was away from the Theosophy of ‘*The Secret Doctrine*’ and the teachings of the Masters; that it was not merely, as has been claimed, a new approach to Theosophy, but was in fact a complete reversal of some of the basic ideas. Mr. Pease, a deep student of Theosophical sources and of Theosophical history, was always outspoken in his endeavors to restore the original basis of the Society.” [2]

Indeed.

When Alice Cleather wrote that theosophists should abstain from the practice of false clairvoyance and look at the theosophical movement from the point of view of the authentic teachings of HP Blavatsky and the Mahatma Letters, she was attacked both by the followers of Annie Besant and of William Judge. Then William Pease, William Kingsland and a few others defended the truth about Ms. Cleather, [3] and Pease’s lodge declared its independence from the followers of Mrs. Besant and Mr. Judge, to better study the teachings of HPB.

Since the 1890s, from time to time an effort is made and a theosophical project emerges that is based not on the philosophy of this or that second rank theosophist with political and institutional priorities, but on the study of the *direct philosophy and teachings* of Blavatsky herself and her Masters. These apparently isolated attempts are part of an “almost invisible lineage”.

The partial invisibility of the “third lineage” has been a karmic necessity. Theosophy points to that which is essential, and the essence of things tends to be occult for quite some time. However, such hard-to-see efforts are not made by “the last Mohicans”, but by the “first Mohicans” instead. Less than 200 years old, the theosophical movement has just begun. A practical understanding of Blavatsky’s teachings goes beyond the level of esoteric parrots and has yet to gain momentum. Since time is eternal, there is no need to hurry. Everything takes place in the right moment. William Pease was certainly a pioneer of better times to come.

NOTES:

[1] See “[The Prehistory of an Independent Lodge](#)” and “[Leaving the Masters Aside](#)”.

[2] “The Canadian Theosophist”, Toronto, June 1953, pp. 57-58.

[3] See the pamphlet “[Unpublished Letters Defending Alice Cleather](#)”.

Read more:

- * [H.P. Blavatsky: A Great Betrayal](#), by Alice Leighton Cleather.
- * [W. O. Judge, A. Besant and Imaginary Contacts With Masters](#), by the same author.
- * [Other articles and books](#) by [Alice Leighton Cleather](#).
- * [Michael Freeman and the H.P.B. Library](#).
- * [Unpublished Letters Defending Alice Cleather](#).

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Storks, the Phoenix, and Rebirth **Theosophical Teachings in an Ancient Legend**



Self-delusion is often pessimistic, and misinformed people may believe that “life is too painful” and “the law of impermanence provokes suffering”.

Esoteric victimization is useless at best.

Blaming the present cycle of Kali Yuga for human mistakes is particularly unintelligent, for this is a very long cycle. Theosophy says that every aspect of the universe evolves and learns under the blissful law of renewal and rebirth. Instead of complaining about difficulties, we should remember the philosophy of Epictetus and not lose energy with facts outside our field of action, but do our duty with regard to that which actually depends on us.

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[**‘Storks, the Phoenix, and Rebirth’**](#)

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Poem: The Harvest

A Work, a Love, and a Dream

C. Jinarajadasa



What have I gained from this heart-breaking struggle?
Sympathy with all who fail.

What have I gained from days and nights of weeping?
Insight into all men's pain.

What have I gained when Love denied me ever?
More love to offer to Love.

What have I gained from this long crucifixion?
A Work, a Love, and a Dream.

(Santo Domingo, 1938.)

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From the book "**Collected Poems**", by C. Jinarajadasa, TPH, Adyar, India, 1953, 122 pages, see page 121. Original title: "Harvest".

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