

ESOTERICA

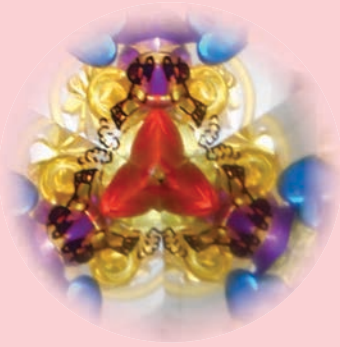
Autumn 2019

Insight into the Ageless Wisdom

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Special Celebration Issue





Editorial

Esoterica returns once more to publication after a long break of eighteen months, during which time the Foundation for Theosophical Studies and the Theosophical Society in England (TSE) have been through a tremendous period of transformation.

The TSE itself became a registered charity and during 2018 took over all of the charitable activities previously managed by the Foundation (the Foundation having been set up to be the charitable arm of the TSE). This has been a very momentous landmark and a great cause for celebration, as you will read on page five 'Landmark Charity Announcement'.

Esoterica has been 'reborn' into a different format and merges with the members' magazine *Insight* to become the new magazine for the Theosophical Society in England registered charity - the English Section of *The Theosophical Society* (Adyar).

Esoterica will be published twice yearly in the spring and autumn and will continue to cover many eclectic topics on theosophy and related subjects, also letting you know about events at our London headquarters, activities around the country and other items of interest to members and readers.

Susan Bayliss
Editor

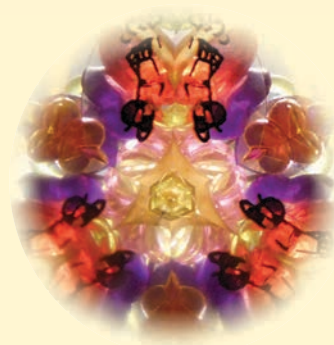
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Cover Image: 'Dawn of Wisdom', SWE, 2018.

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From the National President

In July I returned from the General Council (GC) and Planning and Strategy meeting held at the International Theosophical Centre (ITC) at Naarden in The Netherlands. The GC takes place biannually; the December meeting being held at the International Headquarters at Adyar, Chennai, India, and is made up of the International Officers, the heads of all the Society's Sections and some especially elected additional members.

Both the December and the June meetings are to deal with the governance of the Theosophical Society at international level, and the June meeting is extended to also discuss the future of the Society. There have been three Strategy and Planning meetings so far and several initiatives have been instigated. One such is the International Speakers list which has over 30 members world-wide who are willing to travel all over the globe to talk about theosophy. Subjects still under discussion include harmonising the core teachings of theosophy and the best ways to attract new members to the Society. There was time to share with each other our problems and successes and I appreciated the support and friendship I received from everyone.

The Mission Statement of the Theosophical Society complements the Society's three Objects: "To serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realization of the Ageless Wisdom, Spiritual self- transformation, and the unity of life."

It is a great privilege to attend these meetings as the English Section's representative and since 2015 I have met theosophists from all over the world and made some firm friends. I also represent the Theosophical Society in England on the Council of the European Federation of Theosophical Societies (EFTS). Every three years the EFTS organises a Congress and it is our honour to host the 2020 Congress at the University of York in the first week of August – see page 17. Further information about the Congress will be circulated in due course and I hope that you will support the TSE by attending. This will be a great opportunity for you to meet and make friends with members from all over the world, not only from Europe.

The English Section is moving into a new and exciting phase of its 131 years of existence now it is officially a registered charity. I am working closely with a dedicated team, The Board of Trustees, to ensure the safe future of the Section and its members. There is further happy news too, as the Theosophical Society in England and the Theosophical Society in Wales are in preparation to unite as the Theosophical Society for England and Wales during 2020.

Jenny Baker
National President
August 2019





Landmark Charity Announcement

We are pleased to announce that the Theosophical Society in England Registered Charity is now recognised as the English Section of the *Theosophical Society (Adyar)*. This marks a momentous occasion and great landmark for the Theosophical Society in England, which after more than seventy years succeeded in becoming a registered charity.

The Theosophical Society is a worldwide body – a theosophical community - whose primary object is Universal Brotherhood without distinction based on the realization that life, and all its diverse forms, human and non-human, is indivisibly One. Seen as revolutionary when it was founded in 1875, the Society draws together those of goodwill whatever their social status or ethnicity. It had though been unable to achieve recognition for its charitable activities because of a 1943 House of Lords judgement that restrained the Charity Commission from reaching any decision that could be viewed as overturning this judgement. The Theosophical Society in England was therefore unable to receive charitable status for itself. However, after considerable effort, in 1992 the Society was able to achieve a partial recognition through the establishment of its registered charity the ‘Foundation for Theosophical Studies’, and the Foundation worked in tandem with the TSE voluntary Association until it ceased activities in October 2018.

The promotion of the ideals implicit within the concept of universal brotherhood was not taken into account by the House of Lords in 1943, but by 2014, the Charity Commission recognised that a considerable period of time had passed since that decision and they welcomed a potential application from the Society. Nevertheless, a great deal of legal work was required to attain charitable status. The Society was Registered with the Charity Commission on 20 June 2016 and this was a very considerable achievement. The critical part of the House of Lords judgement in *MacAulay v O'Donnell* (1943) was Lord Tomlin's analysis of the Society's "Universal Brotherhood" objective which was that when read by itself it could not, in his opinion, be regarded as charitable. He further concluded that the explanation provided by Mr Leonard Syer-Bristowe, disclosed no charitable objects at all. The legal interpretation of this judgement was that: the study of comparative religion and the investigation of laws of nature might be charitable but the formation of a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity was not.

It has taken over two years to reorganise and transfer all of our activities into a new structure, but this is now fully operational as the English Section of the Theosophical Society (Adyar). The Charity is the incorporated successor to the unincorporated association also known as The Theosophical Society in England and members and friends are unlikely to notice any appreciable difference, as the Society's work will be as before *"for the holding of lectures, seminars, residential summer schools and study groups for the promotion of the Society's Classical Objects"*. The 'Classical Objects' are:

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 unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

The charitable objects of the English Society are for the public benefit to promote moral and spiritual welfare, and the advancement of education, through the promotion and study of Theosophy, and the dissemination of the results of such study to the public.

The society upholds freedom of thought and imposes no belief on its members, who are united by a common search for Truth and desire to learn the meaning and purpose of existence through study, reflection, self-responsibility and loving service.

We have reached a new chapter in the history of the Theosophical Society in England and the Society's work will continue to be the promotion and study of Theosophy.

Image: 'Obra Serie SoLuz' , Felipe Juan Artista. Courtesy Wikimedia Commons.



The True Meaning of Brotherhood

(Part One)

Jenny Baker

BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

The first Object of The Theosophical Society is: *To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.* If the Theosophical Society had been founded in the early part of the 21st Century instead of the last part of the 19th Century, I wonder how the first object would read. For example, the word 'sex' would be replaced by gender and the word 'caste' replaced by social status. What about the word 'Brotherhood'? Possibly Sisterhood would be included as the word Brotherhood seems sexist and out-dated in the modern age.

The word Brotherhood has at least two meanings. One, as a group of brothers, as in a Monastery; a Guild or a Trade Union. Other definitions refer to a community of like-minded people or a gathering or group working towards a goal. It is not stated that these groups should consist of men only, therefore I think that the latter definitions are the reason the Founders included Brotherhood in the first object of the Society. To them the word Brotherhood meant all humanity.

Let us consider some other words associated with Brotherhood, such as friendliness, fellowship, camaraderie and comradeship. All these words can be applied to our Society. I, like many of you have experienced the wonderful feeling of togetherness that is generated when members gather at Summer Schools, Congresses, Conventions and in study groups. These are up-lifting, joyful and treasured occasions from which we all benefit as does the Society.



How would we describe the behaviour of a member of a Brotherhood? The first and most obvious is to act in a brotherly manner. We can add kind and caring, patient and tolerant, nondogmatic and benevolent as well. This article will explore these and other aspects of brotherhood.

Let us return to the foundation of the Society in 1875 in New York. For many decades The Masters of the Wisdom had been searching for a suitable person who could act as their

mouth-piece and spread the knowledge of the Ageless Wisdom to a world in desperate need of spiritual fulfilment. They discovered Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, a Russian aristocrat with remarkable powers. After many years of training and travelling the world, it was when she was in New York, that 'HPB' met Colonel H Olcott and William Q Judge, and together they became the founders of The Theosophical Society.

Although the objects of the Society have changed slightly from the original, it would seem that the Masters were insistent that the first object should be that of Universal Brotherhood and the Unity of Humanity. This is what Master Koot Hoomi had to say in Mahatma Letter 33 to A P Sinnett:

"You have ever discussed, but to put down the idea of a Universal Brotherhood as the primary work of the Society, questioned its usefulness and advised to remodel the Theosophical Society on the principle of a college for the study of occultism. Rather perish the TS than that we should permit it to become

Image facing page: Courtesy of Bruce Hong, Unsplash.

Image above: Summer School, photograph by Damon Scothern.

no better than an academy of magic or a hall of occultism and it is we who are expected to permit this Society to drop its noblest title, that of the brotherhood of humanity, to become a simple school of psychology?"

Further advice was offered to Sinnett by 'KH': *"It is he alone, who has the love of humanity at heart, who is capable of grasping thoroughly the idea of a regenerating practical Brotherhood who is entitled to the possession of our secrets. A man who places not the good of mankind above his own good is not worthy of becoming our chela — ; he is not worthy of becoming higher in knowledge than his neighbour."*

You can see by these words the huge importance that the Great Ones gave to the Society's First Object. They wanted a universal fraternity established as an institution that will make itself known through-out the world. It did not take very long for the word to spread and for branches to open in several countries. In furtherance of the idea of establishing a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, The Masters suggested the formation of Lodges as a basis for promoting theosophical knowledge, for a group working together is far more effective than an individual however knowledgeable that person might be.

The key words of the last paragraph are "working together". A community of like-minded people can achieve much whereas people with different agendas only cause disharmony and opposition. The Brotherhood of Humanity includes everyone; the saint, the sinner, the rich, the poor the ignorant and the wise. Is it possible to act in a brotherly manner towards everyone? It is doubtful unless one is a highly evolved being. Very few could love all mankind especially when you look at the state of the world today and the harm man is causing to his fellow man and to the earth which must sustain our life.

The only requirement for a person when joining the TS is to agree to and abide by the three objects. There is no creed, no dogma that must be obeyed, so being a member of the TS would appear to be easy when compared to some strict religions or sects. This is a misleading statement because to follow the precepts set out in the first object is not as easy as it may seem. Universal Brotherhood is an ideal which is easy to state but hard to live up to. In his address to new members George S. Arundale had this to say: *"As we learn to live more brotherly lives so do we penetrate more deeply into the Kingdom of Truth. As truth unfolds in us in ever-increasing measure, so do we become able to express more effectively its active principle — Brotherhood. Truth is life and power. Brotherhood is truth in action."*

Annie Besant in her address to new members also stresses the importance of the meaning of Brotherhood: *"It is right that you should all thoroughly understand that the TS does not pretend to make the Universal Brotherhood — as it already exists. People are brothers whether they know it or not for all are brothers because all draw their life from the One life. We recognise the truth of Universal Brotherhood and that recognition is of great value because it helps others also to recognise it."* She adds, *"you all ought to be little centres of Brotherhood by virtue of the fact that you have recognised it as the Law of Life."*

Radha Burnier, wrote in her address to new members: *"The entire edifice of the Theosophical Society is built upon two strong pillars; one is freedom; the other is brotherhood. They are both fundamental to life itself."* C. Jinarajadasa concluded his address to new members with these words: *"A Theosophist is as a Theosophist acts. The only possible action is that which is irradiated with the spirit of brotherliness. If you try to be a brother to all that live — human and non-human — you will be able to know for yourself that you yourself are 'the Way, the Truth and the Life' as also the 'Joy'."*

When a man knows himself as spirit, rather than as a body, he realises that sharing and giving is the condition of growth and power, for the more that is given the more received. Brotherhood, therefore, has its roots in the spirit and from there it spreads into the realms of emotion and intellect. Brotherhood cannot be imposed from without; it comes solely from the spirit within.



THE BROTHERHOOD OF RELIGIONS

We know that Theosophy is not a religion, yet the Society has as its motto; 'There is no religion higher than truth' The original read 'there is no dharma higher than truth' - in Sanskrit: *Satyat nasti para dharma*. The word Dharma is difficult to translate into English from the Sanskrit as there is no one word that fully expresses the meaning; so, as well as religion it is variously translated as duty, righteousness, virtue and moral order. The TS elected to use the word religion possibly to make it easier for westerners to understand the concept. Let us explore the significance of that word by looking at the concept of a Brotherhood of Religions.

What do we mean by religion? Religion may be considered under two aspects: the first is that which relates to the divine spiritual nature of man which is inseparable from that of Nature herself or of the Cosmos: the second is how the teachings and practices of religion are made available to mankind generally. Theosophy corresponds to the first of these and The Theosophical Society to the second. The Masters reiterated repeatedly that they wanted a universal brotherhood of humanity to be the prime means of alleviating the suffering of millions of people on earth. They are equally clear that this suffering arises through man's institutional religions and the dominance of the priests.

Looking back, we see that the diversity of religions and the quest for power by their leaders has caused immense suffering not only between the people of different religions but within the same religion. Many of the conflicts occurring today are religion-based and seem to have no end or peaceful solution. Most people are brought up in a religion in which its principle beliefs are regarded as sacred and unchallengeable with the idea that their God or Deity is in some form or another amenable or susceptible to supplication and with various other attributes. With this outlook it is difficult for anyone to take an outside objective of their own religion.

The Master KH in one of the letters to A P Sinnett, made very clear that *"the idea of God is not an innate but an acquired notion."* and that *"human misery will never be diminished unto that day when the better portion of humanity destroys in the name of truth, morality and universal charity, the altars of their false gods."* Again he said *"our chief aim is to deliver humanity of this nightmare, to teach man virtue for its own sake and to walk in life relying on himself instead of leaning on a theological crutch."*

Image: "Visiting a Hermit", painting by Hashimoto Kansetsu 1930. Public domain.



The Masters recognised a common basis of all religions: *“Once unfettered and delivered from their dead weight, dogmatic interpretations, personal names, anthropomorphic conceptions and salaried priests, the fundamental doctrines of all religions will be proved to be identical in their esoteric meaning.”*

Looking deeper into the different religions we see that their founders are united in the truths they proclaim. The prophets, rishis, divine men and sons of god of various religions are united in Oneness, comprising one great spiritual Brotherhood of god-inspired men. The guardians and teachers of humanity whatever religion, all brought the same divine message to the world, taught the same fundamental spiritual truths, proclaimed the same changeless moral law and lived noble and inspiring lives. They all recognised human brotherhood as the highest ideal for mankind. This is the Ageless Wisdom which we know as Theosophy and which is often described as *“the essence of all religions.”*

The Brotherhood of religions comprises common symbols, common doctrines, common stories and common morals. Let us look at some of the similarities between the different religions.

The Buddha teaches: *“A man who foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the kindness of my ungrudging love: the more evil comes from him; the more good shall go from me.”* He also said: *“let a man overcome anger by love; let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth.”* and *“hatred ceaseth not by hatred at any time; hatred ceaseth by love.”*

Confucius answered a questioner thus: *“What you do not wish done to yourself, do not do to others: when you are labouring for others, let it be with the same zeal as if it were for yourself.”* Jesus said: *“Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them that do spitefully use you and persecute you.”*

Let us look at other quotations about Brotherhood from various religions. In the Hebrew scriptures we read: *“Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”* (Leviticus XIX). *“Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother?”* (Malachi II 10).

From the Christian Bible: *“Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knows God . . . Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him: That he who loveth God love his brother also.”* (1 John IV).

From the sayings of Muhamma: *“No man is a true believer unless he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself.”* (Iman “Al-Nawawi’s Forty Hadiths, No 13”).

And from the Hindu Scripture, the Isa Upanishad we read this; *“He who sees all beings in his own self, and his own Self in all beings, loses all fear. When a sage sees this great Unity and his Self has become all beings, what delusion and what sorrow can ever be near him?”*

And from the epic, The Mahabharata: *“Let not any man do unto another any act that he wishes not done to himself by others, knowing it to be painful to himself. And let him also purpose for another all that he wishes for himself.”*

From the Buddhist scriptures we can also read the following;: *“All beings desire happiness; therefore, to all extend your benevolence. Hurt not others with that which pains yourself. With pure thoughts and fullness of love I will do unto others what I do for myself.”* (The Udanavarga 5;18).

There is ONE RELIGION which is the knowledge of God and all religions are branches of that stem — the tree of Life. The roots are in heaven while the branches are outspread in the world of men. For all teach the same truths; all are channels of the one life; every scripture repeats the one message, because there is only one great Brotherhood of teachers and each who comes forth from it speaks with a single language.

So, religions should not be rivals or hate each other for they are from the same source. Annie Besant in her book, The Brotherhood of Religions, says *“There is a real Brotherhood of Religions and all who study the religions of the world must recognise the identity of their teachings. To a Theosophist all religions are true and are the outgrowth of the Wisdom. Each religion has an equal right to every truth.”*

Annie Besant had a vision that from the two Brotherhoods of Humanity and Religions there would emerge a World Religion which would be based on Mysticism. A mystic is a person who has found God within himself and knows that his spiritual consciousness is one with others’ spiritual consciousness and that there is but One Eternal Life for all. This is the TRUTH behind all life, all religions and faiths.

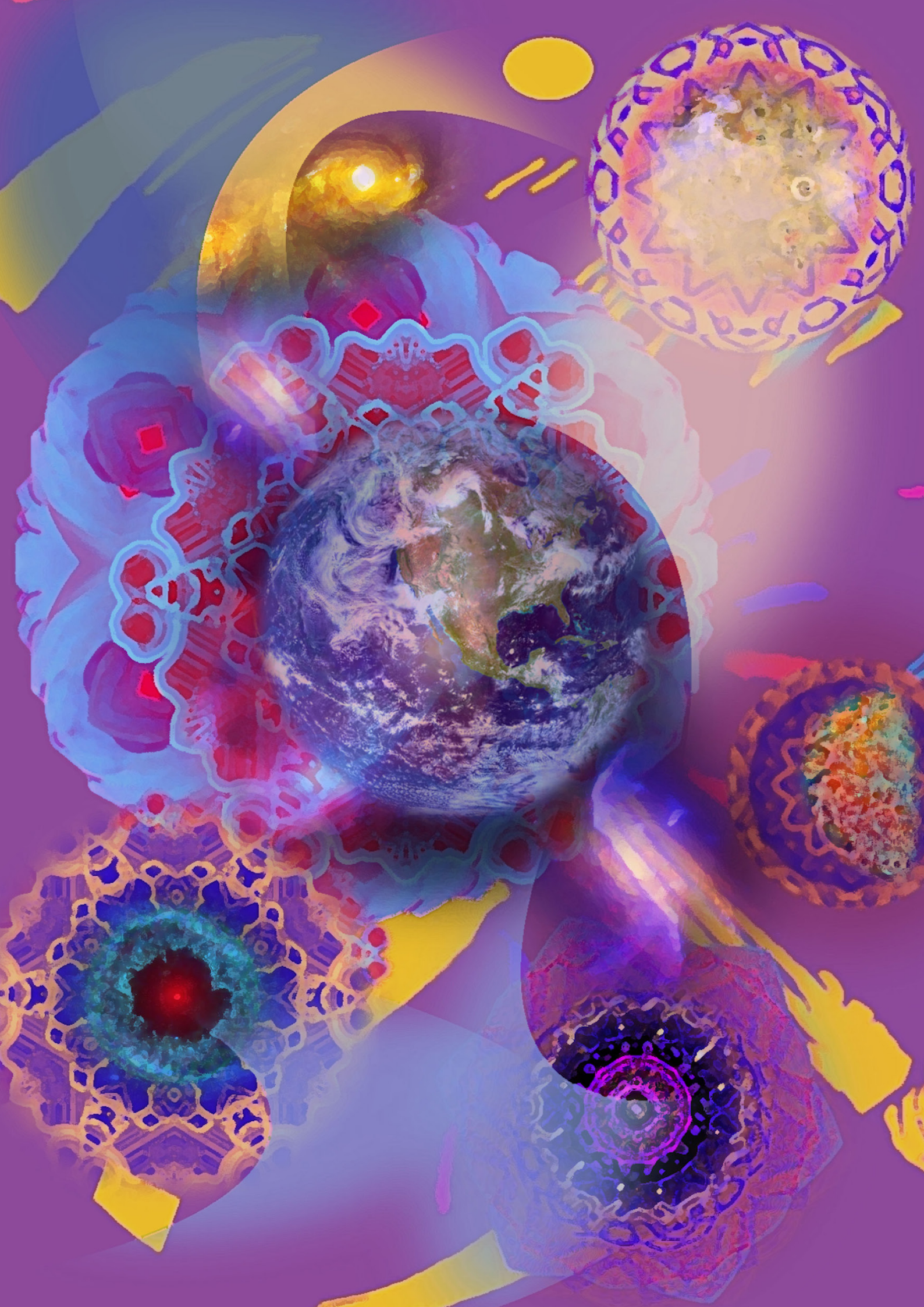
“The Theosophical Society was chosen as the cornerstone of the future religions of humanity.” This statement was made in the Maha Chohan’s letter to A P Sinnett in 1881.

The Masters state firmly: *“It, the Theosophical Society, has no one religion to propagate, no creed to endorse, it stands for truth alone and nothing can make us deviate from this which we consider the path of our duty and for which we have sacrificed everything. Our Motto stands for ever; There is no religion higher than truth.”* (Collected Writings V, p 121).

From The Blavatsky Lecture ‘The True Meaning of Brotherhood’ 2018. **Part Two** will follow in the next issue of Esoterica.

Jenny Baker has been National President of the Theosophical Society in England since April 2015. She attends General Councils of the TS world body twice a year and is in her second year on its Executive Committee. Additionally, she is on the Council of the Federation of European Theosophical Societies and is a board member of the International Theosophical Centre at Naarden, in the Netherlands. Jenny is a Trustee and Chair of the Board for The Theosophical Society in England.





Transcendental World

William Innes Wickham

The Transcendental World, its existence or non-existence and their implications

On the not unreasonable assumption that some Force, Energy and/or Power initiated the Big Bang, I am fascinated with exploring this concept in view of the fact that we have been given to understand that it was the Big Bang which brought Space and Time into existence, entities without which a Transcendental realm is virtually impossible for us to conceive of. Just try thinking of a world devoid of Space and it should be easy for the reader to appreciate what I am saying. But if we still believe, as I do, that on a balance of probability the Universe must have been brought into existence by some higher, incomprehensible Power then the Transcendental world is something we have to contemplate. That is the subject of this dissertation.

We are aware of our existence. We are aware that we live on a planet which common-sense would suggest was brought into being by some force or power within or without our Universe. If we begin by acceding to the 'principle of sufficient reason' which, according to the philosopher Schopenhauer, is that always and everywhere each thing exists merely by virtue of another thing or, as he puts it, "nothing is without a ground or reason why it is", then we must acknowledge the existence and/or operation of an external power greater than ourselves.

My book *'The Search'*, was a personal investigation into the source and meaning of existence, scrutinising the answers of some of the prominent philosophers of the past and embracing the latest findings of modern science. Some considerable time earlier I had concluded, when pondering on the origin of the Universe, that there seemed to me to be a choice between believing in an infinite creative Spirit (or energy) or in an original piece of inorganic material devoid of any intentional impetus, will or mind, and that on a balance of probability I had opted for the former. This was long before Professor Richard Dawkins referred to the infinite regress which

he alleged would be necessary for us to pose if we believed in the existence of a God with the intelligence to create the improbable complexity of our Universe - although it is obvious that this assumes that God is on our level, despite the fact that we know that insects can inhabit their own world without any awareness of our existence. I had therefore presupposed that an invisible force had been responsible for the Big Bang - as opposed to the "laws of physics" which recently seems to be suggested by Professor Brian Cox in his interesting TV series on the subject, although anyone of a philosophical turn of mind would probably wonder what that really means. If we opt for the inorganic material explanation cited above then we would seem to have no way of explaining the Big Bang other than through an inexplicable accident that completely contravenes scientific causality and logic - tantamount in fact to an irrational belief in magic!

However, assuming we accept that an invisible, infinitively creative Spirit lay behind the Big Bang, the intriguing issue is whether this was at work invisibly within our Universe. That is to say, within the confines of Space and Time, perhaps, for example, in the Dark Energy of which we are now told equates to some 90% of the Universe, or in a transcendental world outside of them. If the former, it raises the question of whether this Energy has a secret Will or Mind but as this is outside my present concern I will defer a discussion of this subject until later. As far as we are aware, this Dark Energy exists inside our Universe and therefore within Space and Time, it seems likely that the Universe itself was brought into being by an unknown and invisible force outside itself. I raise this issue because we all know that it is virtually impossible for us to conceive of a Universe devoid of space and time.

Indeed, this leads us to inquire how much of the metaphysical world, if any, did Emmanuel Kant reveal via his *'Critique of Pure Reason'*, a topic to which I now turn. Kant has argued that it is impossible for our knowledge to be extended to the super sensible realm of

Image: 'Metaphysical Worlds' *SMB*, 2018.

speculative metaphysics. The essential basis of this contention is that the mind plays an active role in constituting the limits of experience and confining the mind's access solely to the empirical realm of space and time.

However, in his *Critique of Pure Reason*¹ Kant himself states that "it is by means of the transcendental unity of a perception that all the manifold given in an intuition is united into a conception of the object". I know that this was not intended to contradict what he maintained re the metaphysical realm as stated earlier, but it is both interesting and illuminating to reflect on how his thinking differed from that of David Hume and how this allegedly limited the latter's knowledge regarding 'cause and effect' as he had expounded it. David Hume had perceived that to arrive at cognitions which lay far beyond the limits of all experience, it was necessary that the conceptions should have an *à priori* origin (that is to say be based on knowledge that comes from the power of reasoning based on self-evident truths, rather than empirical observation), but as he could not explain how it was possible that conceptions which are not connected with each other in that understanding could be considered as necessarily connected in the object, he was forced to derive these conceptions solely through experience via repeated association of experiences erroneously considered to be objective – i.e. from 'habit'. But Kant maintained that this view could not possibly be reconciled with the fact that we do possess scientific *à priori* cognitions, namely, those of pure mathematics and general physics.

The crucial question that this gives rise to is whether Kant is asserting that the fact that an 'effect' always follows a 'cause' can be intuited *à priori* without the necessity of the repeated conjunctions of experience which Hume attributed it to. Several quotations from his *Critique* seem to suggest this. For example, *'every transition from one state into another, is always effected in a time contained between two moments, of which the first determines the state which the thing leaves, and the second determines the state into which the thing passes.'*² *'Now every change*

*has a cause, which evidences its causality in the whole time during which the change takes place.'*³ *All change is therefore possible only through a continuous action of the causality, which, in so far as it is uniform, we call a momentum. The change does not consist of these momenta but is generated or produced by them as their effect.'*⁴ And again *'Necessity, therefore, regards only the relations of phenomena according to the dynamical law of causality, and the possibility grounded thereon, of reasoning from some given existence (of a cause) à priori to another existence (of an effect). Everything that happens is hypothetically necessary, is a principle which subjects the changes that take place in the world to a law, that is, to a rule of necessary existence, without which nature herself could not possibly exist. Hence the proposition, nothing happens by blind chance [it] is an à priori law of nature.'*⁵

Now if, as Kant asserts, nothing happens by blind chance and every change has a cause, it seems to follow that the 'Big Bang' – which is now the generally accepted origin of our Universe – must have had an external cause despite the fact that we find it virtually impossible to envisage or understand an existence outside of space and time. In other words, there must have been, or be, a mysterious force outside our known Universe which brought it into being. Alternatively, we have a state of affairs where something can be caused by nothing for no reason and without explanation. This seems a highly unlikely alternative. We can therefore safely assert that there must be a force or energy, call it God if so desired, which created the Universe even although it appears to have emerged out of nothing.

The difference between the Metaphysical and the Transcendental

Starting with the dictionary definitions of these terms the difference between them does not appear to be as great as I had originally expected. The 'metaphysical' apparently pertains to the abstract which is beyond nature or the physical supernatural, while the 'transcendental' is concerned with what is independent of

1 *Critique of Pure Reason*, Immanuel Kant, p 80, lines 1-3 final paragraph. First published 1771.

2 *Ibid*, p 137, lines 4-8 of paragraph one.

3 *Ibid*, p 137, lines 10-12 paragraph one.

4 *Ibid*, p 137, lines 16-20 paragraph one.

5 *Ibid*, p 150, lines 2-10, paragraph one.

experience an *à priori* in human knowledge. I should have thought that anything that is beyond nature would also be independent of experience and therefore of transcendental character, although I think of a transcendental realm as being an unimaginable one outside of space and time. My concern here lies with asserting that the latter must exist but in a totally different dimension from that with which we are familiar.

If - as I suggested earlier was more probable than improbable - the Big Bang had a cause, and if science is right in asserting that space and time were created by the Big Bang, then we have to imagine, if possible, a state devoid of any visible space and devoid of any measurable time, implying perhaps that it has to consist of invisible space and immeasurable or infinite time.

Before we venture into a consideration of this ephemeral issue, we should pause here to reflect on the observation that because an entity cannot be measured does not necessarily mean that it does not exist. Objects are required to exist before we can acknowledge the presence of space and time. By this I mean that it is only through the existence of bodies of substance and weight that we are aware of space, and time can only be measured by virtue of motion between such bodies in space, that is, by measuring how long it takes to transverse a distance as fixed by the position of these bodies in space. But the complete absence of any such bodies does not automatically mean that space and time *per se* do not exist. In theory at least we might then be dealing with infinite space and time (the philosophical equivalent of a Black Hole?). However, if, as I said earlier, science is right when it claims that space and time only came simultaneously into existence along with, and as a result of, the Big Bang, then we may be persuaded to embrace the atheistic belief that there is no explanation or external reason for the existence of the Universe. This perception surely seems to amount to some form of magic bereft of any scientific basis or logic – an extremely unlikely proposition (Professor Richard Dawkins take note!).

The real nub of the problem for us human beings - or for me at least - is whether or not there is an

after-life or some such way of coming to terms with our mortality. Perhaps in the scheme of things, consisting of a vast Universe, we are of no significance or importance although, naturally, we usually tend to view ourselves as being of central concern. This is one perspective we may possibly embrace.

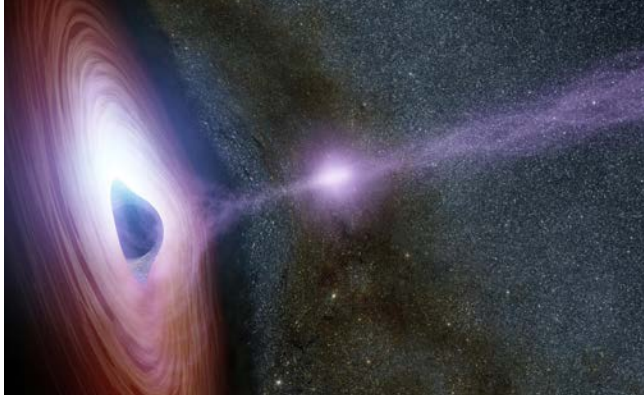


According to the philosopher Schopenhauer, as opined in his book *The World as Will and Representation*, preparation for one's death is what philosophy is all about. On the assumption that we should like there to be some sort of after-life, creating hope for the future, we must turn to the Transcendental world beyond the Universe, where God dwells, and trust that the Creator will honour and fulfil his invitation expressed in these words: '*Come ye blessed of your Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the Earth.*' As stated somewhere else in the Old Testament '*As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, saith the Lord*'. Interestingly, this fits in with what Sir David Attenborough said recently, when asked whether he believed in God, to the effect that he could not rule out the possibility because of the fact, for example, that the thousands of termites working away within their nest are totally unaware of our presence and existence so that, in a similar way, there might be higher dimensions of which we are unaware. Personally, in this connection, I rather like the Biblical verse which reads '*When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?*'⁶

⁶ Psalm 8 vs 3, 4.

Image: Horned Owl in Alaska. Public domain, courtesy of its author Pieter S. van der Meulen.

This undoubtedly poses a serious question, although many of the thoughts previously expressed can, of course, be dismissed as *make believe* and/or *wishful thinking*. But, if so, there is still the question of how something came out of nothing.



NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory depict a so-called X-flare issuing from a supermassive black hole in distant galaxy Markarian 335. Based on data gathered in 2014 from NASA's Nuclear Spectroscopic Telescope Array (NuSTAR).

Over sixty years ago a friend of mine, when asked why he believed in God, replied "*because I am here*" and it strikes me that this is still a good answer because despite the recent advances of modern science we are all confronted with the puzzling issue of why anything exists at all and how it apparently emerged from nothing. This is the crux of the matter. And I think Professor Richard Dawkins has underestimated the import of this observation. Moreover, while Buddhism may claim that our individual existences are an illusion, they clearly are not since we actually possess physical bodies which came from somewhere, even if temporarily. I have expressed this conundrum elsewhere with the following words:

From macro to micro inside a black hole,
To merge gravity with quantum mechanics,
The physicists puzzle
And the scientists struggle
To come up with a theory that's whole.

Let them look toward CERN if they're eager to
learn what gravity does down the hole,
For the Hadron Collider
Might show what's inside her,
And play an astonishing role.

But have they considered the large and the small
may not be designed to embrace,
So is it time to admit
That a Creator might fit
In the holes they've discovered in Space?

Even if they come up with a theory complete
Will they ever be able to know
Why a star is born out of nothing
And in time disappears in a glow?

When we contemplate the possibility of a Transcendental World we may be confronted with a situation in which we do not enjoy any physical after-life but are simply merged with the eternal, universal spirit, that is to say, with whatever it is that continues to exist. After all, God is just a word denoting whatever it is that brought our Universe into being - whatever it is that exists. On the other hand, we may find ourselves in a new, other worldly life which we did not anticipate but which is depicted by the Christian faith as seemingly expressed through Christ. Perhaps unlikely in our earthly terms but always possible in a Transcendental world. We will not know until, and if, we arrive there.

At a relative's funeral which he was conducting, an uncle of mine, who was a clergyman in the Church of Scotland, drew his memorial service to a close by referring to the time "*when we come into that eternal kingdom where all tears shall be washed from our eyes*". We live in hope which, in the words of the poet Alexander Pope, "*springs eternal in the human breast*".

William Innes Wickham is author of "The Search" first published in July 2018, and of this Philosophical Ramble, William says: This comprises personal philosophical reflections on the source and meaning of existence, scrutinising the answers supplied by some of the prominent philosophers of the past and embracing the latest findings of modern science.

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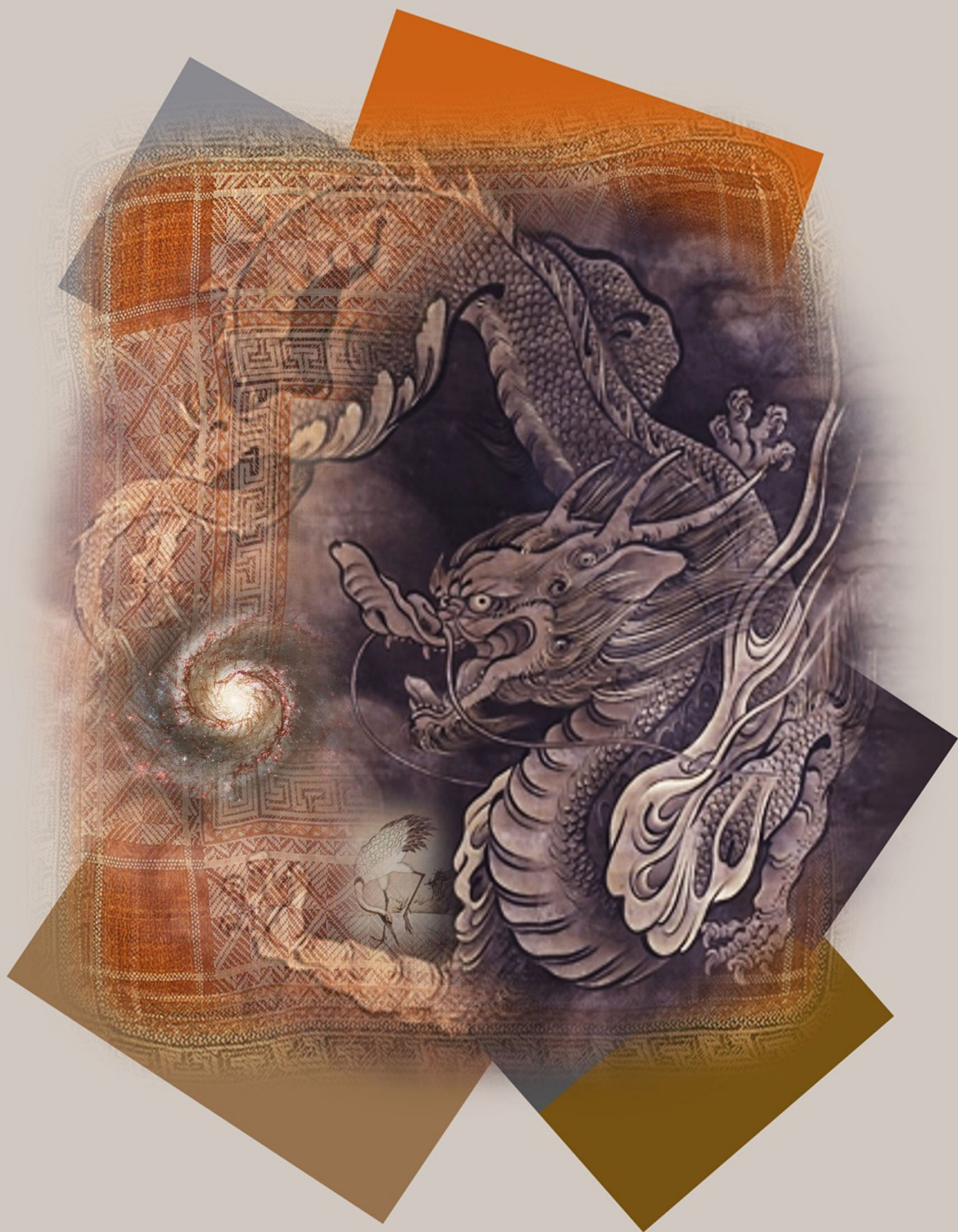
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University of York England





The Unity of Life

Luke Michael Ironside

The First Fundamental Proposition, as put forth in the Proem of H. P. Blavatsky's The Secret Doctrine, posits "The One Absolute Reality which antedates all manifested, conditioned being," which she says is: "An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception..."

This is the Absolute, the One Reality, often referred to in Western philosophy by the term "*First Cause*", and yet it is better understood from the theosophical conception by the term "*Causeless Cause*" – that which is infinite, unmanifested, and unmanifestable whilst yet the source of from which all else springs forth.

Whilst yet the Universe is pervaded by the duality of apparent forms, the opposite poles of subject and object, spirit and matter, are merely aspects of the fundamental unity which underlies them. The Absolute Itself is neither manifested nor manifestable; it is alone infinite and eternal; the Universe of form being but a passing appearance, or Maya.

This proposition asserts the unity and oneness of all life. It suggests an original, homogenous Source, from which the differentiations of substance come into existence. The One manifests as the Many – from here arises the multiplicity of forms in Nature and the diversity of cosmic life. The Secret Doctrine goes on to affirm "*The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root...*"

All existence is one, at the most fundamental level. Differences and separations are but apparent, having no true basis in reality. Whilst, in the midst of the constant changes and fluctuations of daily life, this fact is an easy one to forget, the truth of unity remains ever existent before the surface; a single thread running throughout the variety of forms. The task of the theosophist is to seek the One in the Many.

Our daily experiences tend to reinforce the sense of separateness which pervades our outlook on life. The forms of life which surround us differ greatly from our own, and our tendency of thought is to focus on the differences – on our sense of individuality – and as such we too often fail to recognise the unifying source that binds us together as one. Yet we each of us also experience fleeting moments of unity, where our focus of identification shifts from the personal self to that of the Universal. This is the mystic experience referred to in the writings of the mystics of all ages and religious persuasions – most often captured in poetry, song, and art for the fact of its experience transcending the limits of words. Looking beyond the tapestry of forms, the seeker may yet behold the unity beneath – the essence of the One.

And so, we have established that underlying the world of form, there must be a One Reality – the essence of Life and Being – which transcends both mind and matter. To speculate further upon this Ultimate Principle is impossible, as it surpasses the reaches of finite speculation. In the words of Spinoza, "to define God is to deny him". The only statement that can be made regarding the nature of the Absolute is that IT IS.

Everything in the Universe is alive – there is no dead matter, in truth. The entire cosmic play is an emanation of the Absolute as expressed in the Universal Life; by which is brought into form the countless varieties of life and activity in the phenomenal world. Even in the world of inorganic things is manifested that One underlying Life – in every atom and particle may be found its animating spark.

The active principle of this Universal Life is the Creative Will, which is forever at work in the creation and building up of new forms, shapes, and combinations, and the subsequent tearing down of such, for the purposes of recycling the material for use in new combinations of form. The Creative Will thus has a threefold function – that of creator, preserver, and destroyer – the changes taking place, however, being merely in the reorganisation of forms, the fundamental substance remaining ever the same; the change being but an outward appearance. The Universal

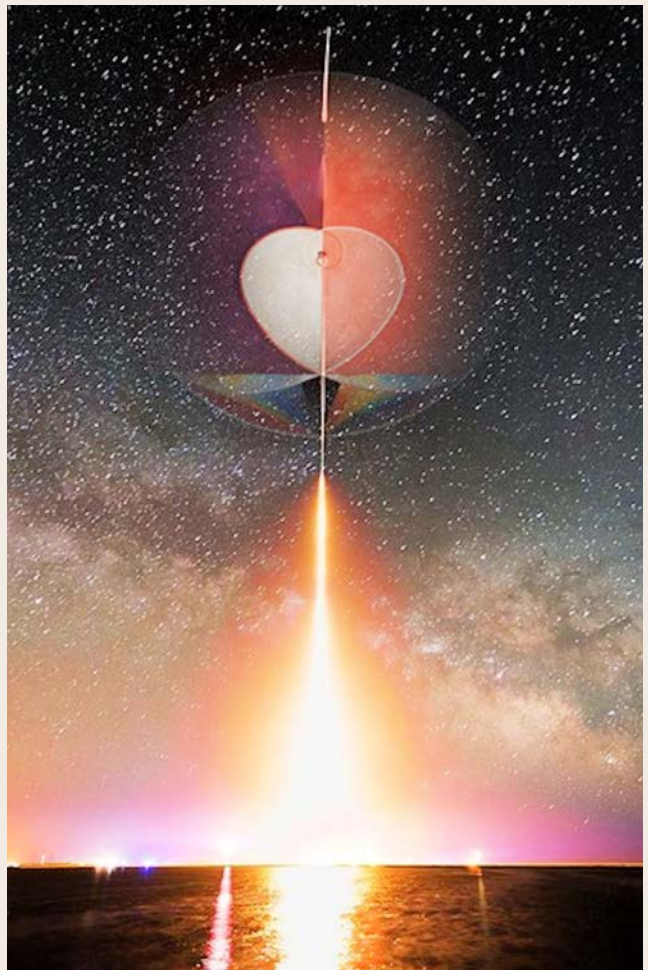
Life is a great ocean of being; the depths of which remain ever still and undisturbed, the real essence of which is unmoved by the chaos of the crashing waves and billows that break upon the shore; the constant play of the Creative Will upon the surface of Life.

The One Universal Life is thus the grand manifestation of the Absolute, in which the variety and multiplicity of forms are centres of Consciousness – each expressing some aspect of the One Life whilst remaining vitally connected with all other such centres of Energy or Consciousness by the bond of unity underlying each and all. This idea is fundamental to arriving at an understanding of Theosophy, and must be taken as the proposition upon which the edifice of theosophic thought is built. Without such unity, all would be Chaos – correlations between things would be but a fiction, and Law, Order, Science, and Cosmos would be as shadows in the dusk of the chaotic night. That all Life is One – that of forms of manifestation exist in harmonious unity with one another – that all diversity is but apparent and must fade before the light of Truth – this is the great teaching of Theosophy, from which the well of wisdom springs forth.

It is the tendency of the human intellect to report that Life, in its many forms, is characterised by variety and separation – that there can be no unity amidst such diversity and that such a concept would be opposed to the facts of Nature. Yet from the higher reaches of the mind is revealed the knowledge of an underlying oneness, that, in spite of the appearance of duality and diversity, affirms the deeper truth of our connection to the One. Thus do we become aware of the illusion of separateness – the “working fiction of the Universe” – which veils the fact of Unity at the heart of our existence.

Arriving at a consciousness of this unity is something that must be experienced before its truth can be properly realised. Intellectual speculation can only bring the seeker so far; the remainder of the path must be walked along the experiential road. This Cosmic Knowing is not always an immediate acquirement; for many, it is a gradual process whereby the seeker unfolds progressively into an awareness of the Oneness of All Life and the fact of his being a centre of

consciousness by which the Universal Life is made manifest. He thus recognises himself as a centre – a sun around which the whirling planets revolve – and it is only then that he may arrive at that fuller conception of the One Life.



This shifting conception of the place of Man in the grand scheme of cosmic existence is fuelled by a realisation in the hearts of those so illumined as to the changing of the tides of human interaction. We have thus far found ourselves tied, as a species, to the vicious cycles of incessant violence and conflict – and yet in turning his gaze towards the horizon of the future, Man perceives a bright beacon of hope upon the mountain peak of the coming age – a turning away from the primitivism of ages past in the light of a grader and nobler unfoldment of consciousness.

Unity is the war-cry of our current age. With each rising Man looks anew upon the circumstances of his life, and, failing to perceive the underlying order beneath the seeming chaos, finds himself standing at a crossroads – between a new dawn or a fateful and final slide into the gaping chasm of despond. It is into this scene that we must

emerge, as students of the Ageless Wisdom, to carry forth the Banner of Brotherhood unto the world. In facing the tides of darkness, the theosophist conquers by the light of love and service. He charges joyously into the fray, ever willing to stand up for the cause of Unity. Such is the theosophic life; the practical promulgation of unity by the means of faithful service.

The realisation of the Oneness of Life thus brings us, at the last, to a shift in our conscious outlook on life. No longer can we turn from the injustices and terrors of our world; the conflicts and struggles that so afflict our current age. We must each play our part in the creation of a better world built upon the foundation of Brotherhood, in whatever capacity that role may be. Theosophy offers us the means whereby we may fulfil such a role by shedding a light upon the often-darkened

path, to reveal, in part, the road ahead. All that falls to us is to continue along the way – through thickets and thorns, bracken and brier – to the sunlit clearing that lies beyond the tangled path. Here we may bask in the light of Unity – brothers and sisters all – united in common cause for the building of a world founded on the ideals of justice, cooperation, and peace.

Luke Michael Ironside is a lecturer and writer on theosophical and esoteric subjects, and the history of the Theosophical Movement. Originally from the UK, Luke has lectured at theosophical lodges and groups in England, India, and the Philippines. He was the facilitator of the Youth Forum at the International Convention of the Theosophical Society in 2017. Luke is a member of the Pandacan Lodge in the Philippines.

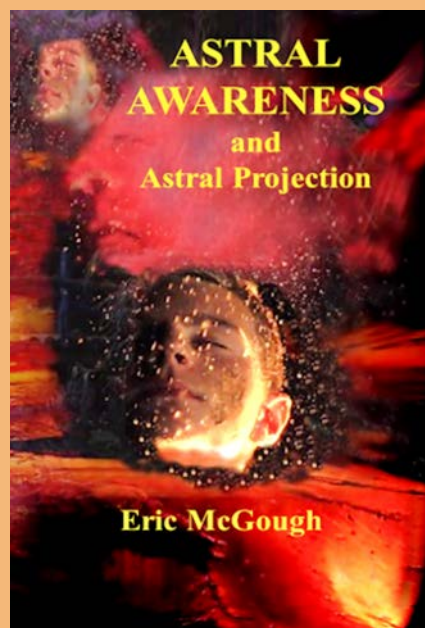
Image facing page: NASA sounding rocket experiment, adapted with addition of Dove No. 13, Hilma af Klint 1915.



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In Remembrance

HAROLD SWINBURN TARN

Harold was a much loved and respected member of the Society and a former long-serving member of the Executive Committee of the TSE and director of the European School of Theosophy. Harold was a very knowledgeable speaker able to convey Theosophy with a very catching enthusiasm and clarity. He gave many talks in this country, including the prestigious Blavatsky Lecture, and also in Europe and America. Harold had a very good sense of humour and enjoyed long philosophical conversations. Born at sunrise on 29 June 1922, he died peacefully at sunset on 5 May 2019.

Harold was born in Jarrow and as his father died when he was only twelve years old, he had to leave school early and earn a living to supplement his family's income. He got a job as an apprentice at a large electrical manufacturer, but told his friends that he was so incompetent in a practical way at the job, that one day his supervisors took him into their office and said 'we have a way of improving production in the factory and we would like you to have this suggestion and make it your own. In that way, hopefully, you will be given promotion'. He gratefully took this on and was indeed promoted to the drawing office, which catapulted Harold into his future career. He studied mathematics and eventually was given the opportunity to teach when a colleague who taught at night asked him to take a lesson for him. Harold had to ask his grandfather's permission to read at the table so he could swat up on the lesson he had to give. This was his first break into teaching.

Harold met and married his wife Elizabeth and they moved to Guisborough where he taught in various schools in the area, eventually teaching at Sir William Turners Grammar School in Redcar which later became a sixth form college. Being a careers officer at the school gave Harold many interesting experiences, one of which was to be locked in The Bank of England whilst a million-pound note was passed around the group he was with.

Harold was a keen piano player and when asked to play a song he didn't know, would often find himself playing the song perfectly – a great example of 'what we need is out there and comes to us when we need it'. He had a great passion for classical music and was a founder member of the local 'gramophone society', virtually becoming the permanent chairman, and also held musical afternoons at his home five or six times a year. Harold also developed a keen interest in mountaineering and climbed many mountains in the UK and Europe, which in turn caused him to be invited to join the Scout movement where he gained high office, meeting and mixing with members of the royal family on a number of occasions.

Above all Harold was a thinker and lover of the good things in life, both of which he indulged in good measure. Mostly, for those who knew him later in life, his primary interests were classical music and Theosophy. Harold lived a long and happy life and our sadness is softened by a gratitude for all that he was able to achieve and a thankfulness that our lives were intermingled with his. Harold faced his last days with dignity and quiet acceptance. Elizabeth, his wife, sadly is suffering from dementia and is living in a care home. Our thoughts nevertheless are with her as well as his family and friends.

By Harold's long-time friends.

ADAM WARCUP

Adam was a former National President for the TSE in England, an author and well-known speaker at theosophical summer schools and other events. He had an elegant quirky mind, which played so lightly from a deep, comprehensive and compassionate understanding of humanity and humanity's purpose in the evolving plan of the gods. For certainly, Adam who gave much deep penetrating thought to these things, was a man of no little distinction in the world. You could describe him as venerable in his later years, and he would have been amusedly delighted if you did. For Adam was a true gentleman, a perfect knight. He was born on 25 May 1945 and died on 26 April 2019.

Everyone who knew him enjoyed his kindliness and powerful spiritual insights, which were always given without judgment, as well as his ability to brighten the confused or tired soul with the radiance of his understanding. Adam was often ready to share in the wonderful absurdities of life and us, its children. Always kindly, deliciously witty with sublimely accurate observations. To Adam, who spent his life penetrating the mysteries of the divine, God was, perhaps for him, the loving, merciful and all-powerful humourist.

Adam's health was delicate, his movements becoming more and more restricted and in spite of his wife Rosemary's supernal abilities and care the disease eventually took its toll; but I never once in thirty years of our friendship heard him complain, or saw in him anything other than the patient and yet passionate commitment to life and truth that defined him. Adam will always be an example of true grace, expressed with compassionate humour and lightness of being. His memory will serve to remind us always to look at life with interest and delight and try to behave with courtesy and consideration to everyone, as he always did.

Our thoughts are with Adam's wife Rosemary and his family and friends.

By Katie Butler.

ALAN PHILIP HUGHES

Alan passed away in July 2019 and his funeral took place on 1st August at Worthing, well-attended by family and friends and members of the Theosophical Society. His life and theosophical work will be remembered in the next issue of Esoterica.

NOTICE

FOUNDATION FOR THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES

In 1992, the Foundation was set up as the charitable arm of the Theosophical Society in England. Now that the TSE itself has charitable status, the Foundation has handed over its activities to the Society and is no longer operational – see p 4. All funds generously donated to the Foundation have transferred to the Society and will continue to be used for charitable purposes in support of promoting theosophy, theosophical activities and theosophical values. Esoterica is now published by the Society, and past issues of the magazine, other information and reference material previously on the Foundation's website have transferred to the TSE's website: www.theosoc.org.uk

THEOSOPHY

“Theosophy is the shoreless ocean of universal truth, love and wisdom, reflecting its radiance on the earth, while the Theosophical Society is only a visible bubble on that reflection. Theosophy is divine nature, visible and invisible, and its Society human nature trying to ascend to its divine parent. Theosophy, finally, is the fixed eternal sun, and it’s Society the evanescent comet trying to settle in an orbit to become a planet, ever revolving within the attraction of the sun of truth. It was formed to assist in showing to men that such a thing as Theosophy exists, and to help them to ascend toward it by studying and assimilating its eternal verities.”

The Key to Theosophy, H. P. Blavatsky 1889.

THE THREE FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITIONS

The first proposition is that there is one underlying, unconditioned, indivisible Truth, variously called “the Absolute”, “the Unknown Root”, “the One Reality”, etc. It is causeless and timeless, and therefore unknowable and non-describable: “It is ‘Be-ness’ rather than Being”. However, transient states of matter and consciousness are manifested in IT, in an unfolding gradation from the subtlest to the densest, the final of which is physical plane. According to this view, manifest existence is a “change of condition” and therefore neither the result of creation nor a random event. Everything in the universe is informed by the potentialities present in the “Unknown Root,” and manifest with different degrees of Life (or energy), Consciousness, and Matter.

The second proposition is “the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow”. Accordingly, manifest existence is an eternally re-occurring event on a “boundless plane”: “the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing,” each one “standing in the relation of an effect as regards its predecessor, and being a cause as regards its successor”, doing so over vast but finite periods of time.

The third proposition related to the above is “The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul... and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul—a spark of the former—through the Cycle of Incarnation (or ‘Necessity’) in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term.” The individual souls are seen as units of consciousness (Monads) that are intrinsic parts of a universal oversoul, just as different sparks are parts of a fire. These Monads undergo a process of evolution where consciousness unfolds and matter develops. This evolution is not random, but informed by intelligence and with a purpose. Evolution follows distinct paths in accord with certain immutable laws, aspects of which are perceivable on the physical level. One such law is the law of periodicity and cyclicity; another is the law of karma or cause and effect.

SUMMARY

1. There is One absolute, eternal principle.
2. Creation is cyclic at all levels.
3. One Life, and all expressions of it must pass through all cycles according to Law.

The Secret Doctrine - The Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy. H. P. Blavatsky 1888.

The Fall of Ideals – A Theosophical View

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky



In a world of illusion in which the law of evolution operates, nothing could be more natural than that the ideals of MAN - as a unit of the total, or mankind - should be forever shifting. A part of the Nature around him, that Protean, ever changing Nature, every article of which is incessantly transformed, while the harmonious body remains as a whole ever the same. Like these particles, man is continually changing, physically, intellectually, morally, spiritually.

At one time he is at the topmost point of the circle of development; at another at the lowest. And, as he thus alternately rises and sinks, and his moral nature responsively expands or contracts; so will his moral code at one time embody the noblest altruistic and aspirational ideals, while at the other, the ruling conscience will be but the reflection of selfishness, brutality and faithlessness. But this, however, is so only on the external, illusionary plane. In their internal, or rather, *essential* constitution, both Nature and man are at one, as their essence is identical. All grows and develops and strives toward perfection on the former planes of externality or, as well said by a philosopher, is - "ever becoming"; but on the ultimate plane of the spiritual essence all *IS* and remains therefore Immutable. It is toward this eternal *Esse (essential nature or essence)* that everything, as every being, is gravitating,

gradually, almost imperceptibly; but as surely as the Universe of stars and worlds moves towards a mysterious point known to, yet still unnamed by, astronomy and called by the Occultists the *central Spiritual Sun*.

Hitherto, it was remarked in almost every historical age that a wide interval, almost a chasm, lay between practical and ideal perfection. Yet, as from time to time certain great characters appeared on earth who taught mankind to look beyond the veil of illusion, man learnt that the gulf was not an impassable one; that it is the province of mankind through its higher and more spiritual races to fill the great gap more and more with every coming cycle; for every man, as a unit, has it in his power to add his mite toward filling it. Yes; there are still men, who, notwithstanding the present chaotic condition of the moral world, and the sorry débris of the best human ideals, still persist in believing and teaching that the now ideal human perfection is no dream, but a law of divine nature; and that, had Mankind to wait even millions of years, still it must someday reach it and re-become a race of gods.

Meanwhile, the periodical rise and fall of human character on the external planes takes place now, as it did before, and the ordinary average perception of man is too weak to see that both processes occur each time on a higher plane than the preceding. But as such changes are not always the work of centuries, for often extreme changes are wrought by swift acting forces - e.g., by wars, speculations, epidemics; the devastation of famines or religious fanaticism - therefore do the blind masses imagine that man ever was, is and will be the same.

To the eyes of us, moles, mankind is like our globe - seemingly stationary. And yet, both move in space and time with an equal velocity, around themselves and - onward. Moreover, at whatever end of this evolution, from the birth of his consciousness, in fact, man was, and still is, the vehicle of a dual spirit in him - good and evil. Like the twin sisters of Victor Hugo's grand, posthumous poem "Satan" - the progeny issued respectively from Light and Darkness - the angel "Liberty" and the angel "Isis-Lilith" have chosen man as their dwelling on earth, and these are at eternal strife in him.



Yet we go, perhaps, further still than the Biblical dead letter. For we say that while as extra-cosmic Entities there is neither god nor devil, both exist nevertheless. And we add that both dwell on earth in man, being in truth the very man himself, who is as a physical being, the devil, the true vehicle of evil, and as a spiritual entity - god, or good. Hence to say to mankind: "Thou hast the devil," is to utter as metaphysical a truth as when saying to all its men: "Know ye not that God dwelleth in you?" Both statements are true. But we are at the turning point of the great social cycle, and it is the former fact which has the upper hand at present.

Yet as - to paraphrase a Pauline text - "there be devils many yet there is but one Satan," so while we have a great variety of devils constituting collectively mankind, of such grandiose Satanic characters as are painted by Milton, Byron and by Victor Hugo, there are few, if any. Hence, owing to such mediocrity, are the human ideals falling, to remain un-replaced; a prose-life as spiritually dead as the London November fog, and as alive with brutal materialism and vices, the seven capital sins forming but a portion of these, as that fog is with deadly microbes. Now we rarely find aspirations toward the eternal ideal in the human heart, but instead of it every thought tending toward the one central idea of our century, the great "I," self being for each the one mighty centre around which the whole universe is made to revolve and turn.

When the Emperor Julian - called the Apostate because, believing in the grand ideals of his forefathers, the Initiates, he would not accept the human anthropomorphic form thereof - saw for the

last time his beloved gods appear to him, he wept. Alas! They were no longer the bright spiritual beings he had worshipped, but only the decrepit, pale and worn out shades of the gods he had so loved. Perchance they were the prophetic vision of the departing ideals of his age, as also of our own cycle. These "gods" are now regarded by the Church as demons and called so; while he who has preserved a poetical, lingering love for them, is forthwith branded as an antichrist and a modern Satan.

Well, Satan is an elastic term, and no one has yet ever given even an approximately logical definition of the symbolical meaning of the name. The first to anthropomorphize it was John Milton; he is his true putative intellectual father, as it is widely conceded that the theological Satan of the Fall is the "Mind-born Son" of the blind poet. Bereft of his theological and dogmatic attributes Satan is simply an adversary; not necessarily an "arch-fiend" or a "persecutor of men", but possibly also a foe of evil. He may thus become a Saviour of the oppressed, a champion of the weak and poor, crushed by the minor devils (men), the demons of avarice, selfishness and hypocrisy. Michelet calls him the "Great Disinherited" and takes him to his heart.

The giant Satan of poetical concept is, in reality, but the compound of all the dissatisfied and noble intellectuality of the age. But Victor Hugo was the first to intuitively grasp the occult truth. Satan, in his poem of that name, is a truly grandiose Entity, with enough of the human in him to bring him within the grasp of average intellects. To realize the Satans of Milton and of Byron is like trying to grasp a handful of the morning mist; there is nothing human in them. Milton's Satan wars with angels, who are a sort of flying puppet, without spontaneity, pulled into the stage of being and of action by the invisible string of theological predestination; Hugo's Lucifer fights a fearful battle with his own terrible passions and again becomes an Archangel of Light, after the most awful agonies ever conceived by mortal mind and recorded by human pen.

All other Satanic ideals pale before his splendor. The Mephisto of Goethe is a true devil of theology; the Ahriman of Byron's "Manfred" - a too supernatural character, and even Manfred has little akin to the human element, great as was the genius of their Creator. All these images pale before Hugo's SATAN, who loves as strongly as he hates. Manfred and

Cain are the incarnate Protests of downtrodden, wronged and persecuted individuality against the "World" and "Society" - those giant fiends and savage monsters of collective injustice. Manfred is the type of an indomitable will, proud, yielding to no influence, earthly or divine, valuing his full absolute freedom of action above any personal feeling or social consideration, higher than nature and all in it. But, with Manfred as with Cain, the Self, the "I," is ever foremost; and there is not a spark of the all-redeeming love in them, no more than of fear. Manfred will not submit even to the universal Spirit of Evil; alone, face to face with the dark opponent of Ahura Mazda - Universal Light - Ahriman and his countless hosts of darkness, he still holds his own.

These types arouse in one intense wonder, awe-struck amazement by their all-defiant daring, but arouse no human feeling: they are too supernatural ideals. Byron never thought of vivifying his Arch-angel with that undying spark of love which forms - nay, must form - the essence of the "First-Born" out of the homogeneous essence of eternal Harmony and Light, and is the element of forgiving reconciliation, even in its (according to our philosophy) last terrestrial offspring - Humanity. Discord is the concomitant of differentiation, and Satan, being an evolution, must in that sense be an adversary, a contrast, being a type of chaotic matter.

The loving essence cannot be extinguished but only perverted. Without this saving redemptive power, embodied in Satan, he simply appears the nonsensical failure of omnipotent and omniscient imbecility which the opponents of theological Christianity sneeringly and very justly make him: with it he becomes a thinkable Entity, the Asuras of the Puranic myths, the first breaths of Brahma, who, after fighting the gods and defeating them, are finally themselves defeated and then hurled on to the earth, where they incarnate in Humanity. Thus Satanic Humanity becomes comprehensible. After moving around his cycle of obstacles he may, with accumulated experiences, after all the throes of Humanity, emerge again into the light as eastern philosophy teaches.

What is the chief torment of this great Cosmic Anarchist? It is the moral agony caused by such a duality of nature - the tearing asunder of the Spirit of Evil and Opposition from the undying

element of primeval love in the Archangel. That spark of divine love for Light and Harmony, that no HATE can wholly smother, causes him a torture far more unbearable than his Fall and exile for protest and rebellion. This bright, heavenly spark, shining from Satan in the black darkness of his kingdom of moral night, makes him visible to the intuitive reader.

It made Victor Hugo see him sobbing in superhuman despair, each mighty sob shaking the earth from pole to pole; sobs first of baffled rage that he cannot extirpate love for divine Goodness (God) from his nature; then changing into a wail of despair at being cut off from the divine love he so much yearns for. All this is intensely human. This abyss of despair is Satan's salvation.

In his Fall, a feather drops from his white and once immaculate wing, is lighted up by a ray of divine radiance and forthwith transformed into a bright Being, the Angel of LIBERTY. Thus, she is Satan's daughter, the child jointly of God and the fallen Archangel, the progeny of Good and evil, of Light and darkness, and God acknowledges, this common and "sublime paternity" that unites them. It is Satan's daughter who saves him. At the acme of despair at feeling himself hated by LIGHT, Satan hears the divine words: "No; I hate thee not. Saith the Voice: "An angel is between us, and her deeds go to thy credit. Man, bound by thee, by her is now delivered."

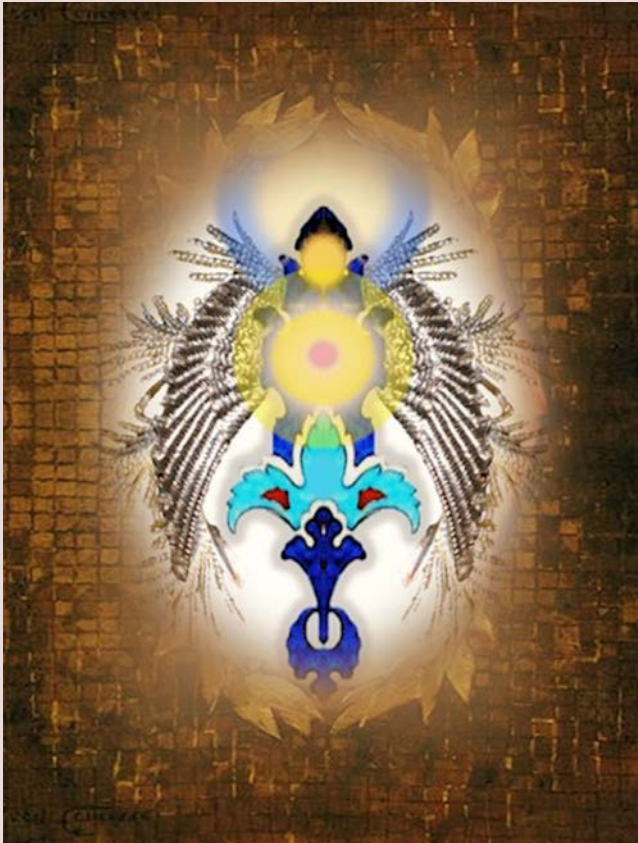
O Satan, tu peux dire à present: je vivrai! Viens;
l'Ange Liberté, c'est ta fille et la mienne;

Cette paternité sublime nous unit!...

O Satan, you can say now: I will live! Come;
Angel Liberty is your daughter and mine;

This sublime paternity unites us!....

The whole conception is an efflorescence of metaphysical ideality. This white lotus of thought springs now, as in former ages, from the rottenness of the world of matter, generating Protest and LIBERTY. It is springing in our very midst and under our very eyes, from the mire of modern civilization, the fecund bed of contrasting virtues. In this foul soil sprouted the germs which ultimately developed into all-denying protestators, Atheists, Nihilists, and Anarchists, men of the Terror. Bad, violent, criminal some of



them may be, yet no one of them could stand as the copy of Satan; but taking this heart-broken, hopeless, embittered portion of humanity in their collectivity, they are just Satan himself; for he is the ideal synthesis of all discordant forces and each separate human vice or passion is but an atom of his totality.

In the very depths of the heart of this HUMAN Satanic totality burns the divine spark, all negations notwithstanding. It is called LOVE for HUMANITY, an ardent aspiration for a universal reign of Justice - hence a latent desire for light, harmony and goodness. Where do we find such a divine spark among the proud and the wealthy? In respectable society and the correct, orthodox,

so-called religious portion of the public, one finds but a predominating feeling of selfishness and a desire for wealth at the expense of the weak and the destitute, hence, as a parallel, indifference to injustice and evil. Before Satan, the incarnate PROTEST, repents and reunites with his fellow men in the common Brotherhood, all cause for protest must have disappeared from earth. And that can come to pass only when Greed, Bias and Prejudice shall have disappeared before the elements of Altruism and Justice to all.

Freedom, or Liberty, is but a vain word now all over the civilized globe; Freedom is but a cunning synonym for oppression of the people in the name of the people, and it exists for castes, never for units. To bring about the reign of Freedom as contemplated by Hugo's Satan, the "Angel of Liberty" has to be born simultaneously and by common love and consent of the "higher" wealthy caste, and the "lower" classes - the poor; in other words, to become the progeny of "God" and "Satan," thereby reconciling the two. But this is a Utopia - for the present. It cannot take place before the castes of the modern Levites and their theology - the Dead-Sea fruit of Spirituality - shall have disappeared; and the priests of the Future have declared before the whole world in the words of their "God":

Et j'efface la nuit sinistre, et rien n'en reste,
Satan est mort, renaiss O LUCIFER CELESTE!

And I erase the sinister night, and nothing
remains, Satan is dead, reborn Celestial Lucifer!

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, was founder of the Theosophical Society in 1875, with Henry Steel Olcott. Published in *Lucifer*, Volume 5, December 1889.

Image p 26. 'Every Christmas eve an angel comes and tells him he has dreamt aright'. Fairy tales from Hans Christian Andersen, 1899. Author: Thomas Heath Robinson. Courtesy WIKIMEDIA Commons.

Image above: 'Angel of Liberty' *SMB*. 2016

Image p 29. 'A Classical Beauty', Léon-François Comerre (1850 – 1916). Public Domain image.

"Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play on the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously, by licensing and prohibiting, to misdoubt her strength.

Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter?"

John Milton - Paradise Lost.



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Events at London Headquarters

50 Gloucester Place W1U 8EA

Further Details: www.theosophicalsociety.org.uk

Tuesday 24 September, 8 October, 22 October, 12 November, 26 November.

6:30 pm

THE SECRET DOCTRINE COMMENTARIES

Study group led by Petra Meyer

After Madame Blavatsky had published the SD, serious students of Theosophy gathered regularly on Thursday evenings in her dining room at Landsdowne Road in Notting Hill, London, where she gave answers to all their questions. At the end of 1888 they hired a stenographer who took down what was discussed at these gatherings. An edited version of the meetings from January 10th to June 20th 1889 was published under the title "Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge", and a new and extended version was edited again in 2010 under the title "The Secret Doctrine Commentaries" by Michael Gomes, which will be the subject of these Tuesday study meetings.

Wednesday 25 September, 9 October, 23 October, 13 November, 27 November.

7.00 pm

THE GREAT BEYOND

Study group led by Pam El-Hosaini

According to the ancient teachings, death of the physical body is just the beginning of a long and complicated process. We are complex beings and the withdrawal of life from our principles with the subsequent journey leading to the next incarnation is a fascinating study. What can we do to influence our future lives for the better? Come and see what the perennial philosophy teaches us about the after-death states.

Thursday, 17 October, 21 November

2:30 pm

STUDIES ON THE SERMONS OF MASTER ECKHART

Study group led by Neville Crofts

Meister Eckhart was a thirteenth century Dominican theologian, philosopher and mystic. He was regarded as the most learned scholar of his time and people flocked to hear him preach. His influence on contemporary theology was considerable. This study group will explore the sermons and consider their relevance in our lives. "He lived on a high level, on the same highlands of the spirit that were disclosed in the Upanishads and Sufi classics. To go where Eckhart went is to come close to Lao Tzu and Buddha and certainly to Jesus Christ." ('Introduction to Meister Eckhart' by Raymond B Blakney).

Thursday 3 October, 17 October, 7 November, 21 November, 5 December.

7.00 pm

THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY

Study arranged by Blavatsky Lodge

Published in 1889, this book is a Clear Exposition, in the Form of Question and Answer, of the Ethics, Science and Philosophy for the Study of which The Theosophical Society has been founded.

Sunday 20 October.

11.00 am

THE JOY OF MEDITATION

Presented by The Dhyana Centre

Part 1: Introductory Course

'Joy of Meditation' courses consist of two parts, both separate workshops 11am – 4pm on Sundays. Part 1 covers the basic theory and mechanics of meditation as a spiritual discipline, broadly following the Raja Yoga system laid down by the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. Techniques taught include the systematic use of breathing, chakras, devotional visualisation and mantra. Suitable for absolute beginners, this session is open to all and free of charge but **booking is required through the Dhyana Centre website at www.dhyanacentre.org or email info@dhyanacentre.org**

Saturday 12 October.

11.00 am

KARMA STUDY DAY

Blavatsky Lodge, led by Elizabeth Crofts

According to the Theosophical teaching given in *The Key to Theosophy* by H P Blavatsky, Karma is declared to be the Ultimate Law of the Universe and the source of all other laws which exist throughout Nature. It is the unerring law which adjusts effect to cause and restores disturbed equilibrium and broken harmony, and yet it has no moral character. It exists from and in eternity and is eternity itself. The Law of Karma gives back to man the actual consequences of his own actions, and the one and only cause of the disturbance of harmony is selfishness. Our destiny, therefore, is in no other hands than our own. In this study day we will look closely at these momentous statements from as well as a great deal of other highly important information given to us in *The Key to Theosophy*, which are there to help us to live a higher and better mode of life.

Saturday 26 October.

2.30 pm

THEOSOPHY AND HUMAN EVOLUTION

Blavatsky Lodge, lecture by Peter Brierley

How does Theosophy compare with scientific and religious views on human evolution? There is a great chasm between fundamentalist religious beliefs that we are created by God and modern science that we evolved from apes. Theosophy affirms that the universe is a single whole and that one life animates every part of it, that there is no life without consciousness passing through the kingdoms of nature.

Saturday 23 November.

2:00 pm

THE THREE GUNAS

Lecture by Teresa King

‘The Seen consists of the elements and sense organs, and is of the nature of cognition, activity and stability, and has for its purpose experience and liberation.’ In this quote from the ‘Yoga Sutras of Patanjali’ he describes the three great universal forces of nature known in Sanskrit as Sattva (cognition), which reflects the light of consciousness, Rajas (activity), which conducts it, and Tamas (stability), which absorbs it. In this talk we will examine their nature as they manifest throughout creation and our own lives with a view to taking a step towards liberation.

ONLINE BOOKSHOP

The Theosophical Society has an extensive collection of books on theosophy and the wisdom tradition, self-discovery, meditation, religion, philosophy, mysticism and more: www.theosophicalsociety.org.uk or visit the bookshop in person at headquarters. Enquiries: 020 7563 9817.



Events Around the Country

BOLTON

Unity Church, The Gatehouse, 118 Chorley New Road, Bolton, BL1 4DH.

Enquiries: Lchrislowe@yahoo.co.uk or gawayne63@yahoo.co.uk Contact: Christine Lowe 01257 401152 or 07717383139. www.nwfederation.org.uk

Sunday 13 October, 2.30 pm

WHITE MAGIC: A CLOSER LOOK AT SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT – Talk by Ted Capstick

Sunday 27 October, 2.30 pm

THE PRICELESS PEARL OF MYSTICISM – Talk by Michael Van Buren

Sunday 10 November, 2.30 pm

HARMONISING BODY AND MIND – Talk by Gilly Czerwonka

Sunday 24 November, 2.30 pm

THE DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL AND SPIRITUAL AWAKENING – Workshop discussion.

CHESTER

The Quaker Meeting House, Frodsham Street, Chester CH1 3LF.

Enquiries: Mike Penney 01244 377170 or Alison Evans 0151 336 2681. www.chestertheosophy.org

Wednesday 9 October, 7 pm

HEALING WITH AN EMPHASIS ON SELF-HEALING – Talk by Helena Hawley.

Saturday 13 November, 7 pm

WHOLENESS, HOLONS AND HEALING – Talk by Peter Scarisbrick

Saturday 11 December, 7 pm

THE TAROT, A WORLD OF ANCIENT WISDOM – Talk by Brian Gill.

DURHAM

Shakespeare Hall, North Road, Durham DH1 4SQ.

Enquiries: durhamcentr4ts@btinternet.com Contact: Jim Blakey 0191 384 2748.

Saturday 23 November, 11 am and 2 pm

INITIATION AND RADICAL AWAKENING IN HUMAN EVOLUTION – Talk by Ted Capstick, 11 am.

SPIRIT-SOUL MATTER: THE FULL PICTURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS – Talk by Ted Capstick, 2 pm.

MANCHESTER

The Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount Street, Manchester M2 5NS.

Enquiries: cinba@hotmail.co.uk.

Saturday 19 October, 2 pm

CYCLES OF ETERNITY – Discussion Group.

Saturday 16 November, 2 pm

MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION IN THE MODERN WORLD – Talk by Mike Rutter.

Saturday 14 December, 2 pm

CYCLES OF ETERNITY – Discussion Group.

LEICESTER

The Quaker Meeting House, 16 Queens Road, Clarendon Park, Leicester LE2 1WP.

Enquiries: jrholden9@hotmail.com Contact: John Holden 0116 270 7293.

Saturday 5 October, 2 pm

SECRET GOLDEN NUGGETS FROM HPB'S SECRET DOCTRINE – Talk by Ted Capstick.

Saturday 2 November, 2 pm

THE PRIORY KNIGHTS OF ST FRANCIS – Talk by Shaun Johnson.

NOTTINGHAM

Theosophical Hall, 73 Maid Marion Way, Nottingham NG1 6AJ.

Enquiries: info@theancientwisdom.co.uk Contact: Finian Heavey: 0116 289 5882 in the evening.

Saturday 26 October, 2 pm

MUSIC AND VIBRATIONS - Workshop with David Manley.

Saturday 23 November, 2 pm

THE TRUE MEANING OF BROTHERHOOD – Talk by Jenny Baker National President.

NORTHAMPTON

Quaker Meeting House, Wellington Street, Northampton NN1 3AS.

REGULAR GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Programme: www.meetup.com/Northampton-Theosophy-Group

SIDMOUTH

THEOSOPHICAL Study and Discussion, 2.30 pm, monthly.

Sidmouth Theosophical Society. Enquiries: 07774 268235 or 07739 469662.

For details see: <http://sidmouthtslodge.jimdo.com/programme/>

SOUTHPORT

THEOSOPHY AND QABALAH Study and Discussion Groups.

Meetings are held on Tuesdays, with alternate weeks for Theosophy and the Qabalah.

Southport Theosophical Society. Enquiries: 07854-110800 or noeline@live.co.uk.

SWANSEA

Swansea Theosophical Society. 122 Clydach Road, Morriston, Swansea SA6 6QB, South Wales.

Study and Discussion Wednesday afternoons 2 – 4 pm, fortnightly

Enquiries: 01792 774225 pam@peacemala.org.uk www.theosophywales.com

TORBAY

Torbay Theosophical Society. 26 Parkhill Road, Torquay TQ1 2AL

Study group Thursday afternoons fortnightly and Study & Discussion Sunday afternoon monthly

Please call or email for details: 01803 203195 secretary@torbay.theosophicalsociety.org.uk

**Further information about theosophical branches can be found
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Editor: Susan Bayliss

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sbayliss@theosoc.org.uk

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Next Issue: CLOSING DATE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS 1st December 2019

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Contributors should make sure their articles have been proof-read by a competent person prior to submission and that every attempt has been made to ensure reasoned argument, correct grammar and spelling and clarity of style etc. Consideration should be given to the use of definitive statements in order to avoid stating as fact that which is actually speculation. Note: we receive occasional requests for articles to be reprinted in other theosophical magazines around the world, so if you do not consent to your article being reprinted please notify the Editor when you submit your article.

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