



Violence is not a Solution

Claude Anshin Thomas

Claude Anshin Thomas, a Zen monk and teacher, has made many pilgrimages to war-ravaged parts of the globe to promote nonviolence. But his mission hasn't always been peaceful. At eighteen, Thomas was a U.S. soldier in Vietnam.

Thomas served his full tour of duty and received a Purple Heart and numerous combat decorations, but he later suffered from memories of the fighting and guilt over the people he had killed. He became addicted to alcohol and drugs, and for a time lived on the street. When he began recovering from his addictions, Thomas found that the pain and guilt he'd been numbing with substances were still there. It wasn't until he encountered Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hanh that he found a way to confront and accept his own suffering.

In his book, *At Hell's Gate*, Thomas tells his entire story, from his violent childhood, to his wartime experiences, to his ordination as a Zen monk and current life of nonviolent activism.

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I BELIEVE THAT violence is never a solution.

I have been led to this view by my own experience, by our collective history, and by the truth of cause and effect. Every action brings an equal and opposite reaction, says Newton's third law of physics. This holds true for our actions in life, as well. Though we cannot predict with certainty when the reaction will take place or how it

will manifest, we can know that violence leads to more violence. A look at history confirms this: we see an endless succession of wars, all justified with the rationale that war is necessary to bring an end to conflict. But it never has.

At speaking and teaching engagements, when I make the pronouncement that violence is never a solution, I am often asked what I refer to as the "Hitler questions." These include: If by killing one person you could save one hundred lives, wouldn't you kill that person? If someone broke into your home and was intent on killing everyone in your family, wouldn't you use force to stop him? If we hadn't taken aggressive action against Hitler, what would have been the consequences?

These questions are legitimate. And they are also inherently rhetorical. I don't know what I would do if I were confronted with the sort of situations that they pose. The Second World War appears to have been

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successful, but is the world a safer place for it? Have those who aspire to gain power through the use of violence and aggression been deterred? Without a doubt, the answer is no. While it is true that Germany's defeat stopped the Holocaust, for me there still exists the nagging question: Did this bring an end to genocide? Many people believe that, in certain circumstances, we should kill to prevent further killing. My hope is to help people discover what a terribly dangerous argument this is. This argument has been used to justify preemptive strikes, to maintain a nuclear arsenal that could destroy the planet a hundred times over, and to uphold the death penalty. It is being used as a rationale for the current occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan — and it was used by the Fascists and the Nazis to justify their agenda in Europe. As we can clearly see, this argument can be used to justify almost anything.

I know, unwaveringly, that violence is never the solution to humanity's problems, and that the real solution resides in the ethic and value of nonviolence. Nonviolence is not to be confused, however, with being passive or complacent. Passivity like its opposite, aggression — is a behavior of those controlled and dominated by fear. I also know that a commitment to nonviolence requires an almost complete overhaul of our conditioned nature. It requires us to live differently.

Ultimately, all responsibility and all action begin with the individual, and so it is here that we must start. In its simplest form, nonviolence is rooted in knowing that we have the capacity to act violently and

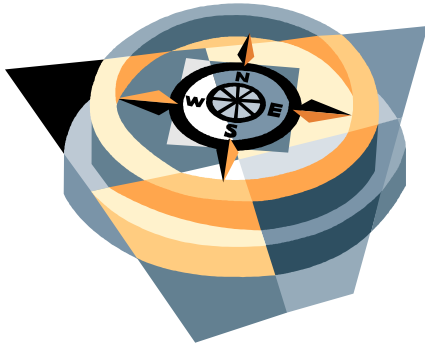
consciously choosing not to do so. Nonviolence is not succumbing to the sense of helplessness that has us decide, again and again, either actively or passively, to support the use of violence as an effective form of conflict resolution. Nonviolence means standing up for truth and compassion in the midst of confrontation — and doing so without aggression.

As a soldier trained and seasoned in the savagery of war, I make a concerted effort, when talking and writing about war and violence, to be direct and succinct. Contrary to pessimistic or fatalistic opinion, war is not inevitable. Conflict is inevitable, but the degeneration of conflict into slaughter, mayhem, and the abject abandonment of truth is not.

We do not need war to stave off our boredom or give us meaning and definition as a people. It is not our human nature but rather our unhealed, unaddressed suffering that propels us to industrialized killing. Killing at this level is the consequence of a fear-based philosophy that drives us to seek safety by attempting the impossible: to control everything and everyone around us.



Nothing in nature springs into existence suddenly, all being subjected to the same law of gradual evolution. Realize but once the process of the *maha* cycle, of one sphere and you have realized them all. One man is born like another man, one race evolves, develops, and declines like another and all other races. Nature follows the same groove from the "creation" of a universe down to that of a mosquito. In studying esoteric cosmogony, keep a spiritual eye upon the physiological process of human birth; proceed from cause to effect establishing as you go along, analogies between the birth of a man and that of a world. In our doctrine you will find necessary the synthetic method; you will have to embrace the whole — that is to say to blend the *macrocosm* and *microcosm* together — before you are enabled to study the parts separately or analyze them with profit to your understanding. Cosmology is the physiology of the universe spiritualized, for there is but one law. (ML#13)



POINT OUT THE WAY

LVII

Chapter XI

II. — **Equilibrium and Liberation**

ANSWER: — [This was ending paragraph of a long answer which was inadvertently omitted in last issue. The “closing section” it refers to is here inserted as a footnote.¹] The closing

¹ Nor would the ways of Karma be inscrutable were men to work in union and harmony, instead of disunion and strife. For our ignorance of those ways — which one portion of mankind calls the ways of Providence, dark and intricate; while another sees in them the action of blind Fatalism; and a third, simple chance, with neither gods nor devils to guide them — would surely disappear, if we would but attribute all these to their correct cause. With right knowledge, or at any rate with a confident conviction that our neighbours will no more work to hurt us than we would think of harming them, the two-thirds of the World’s evil would vanish into thin air. Were no man to hurt his brother, Karma-Nemesis would have neither cause to work for, nor weapons to act through. . . . We cut these numerous windings in our destinies daily with our own hands, while we imagine that we are pursuing a track on the royal high road of respectability and duty, and then complain of those ways being so intricate and so dark. We stand bewildered before the mystery of our own making, and the riddles of life that *we will not solve*, and then accuse the great Sphinx of devouring us. But verily there is not an accident in our lives, not a misshapen day, or a misfortune, that could not be traced back to our own doings in this or in another life. . . . Knowledge of Karma gives the conviction that if—

“. . . virtue in distress, and vice in triumph
Make atheists of mankind,”

it is only because that mankind has ever shut its eyes to the great truth that man is himself his own saviour as his own destroyer. That he

section of Chapter XI gives a recapitulation from a more elevated plane. Have we noticed that? Remember that Mr. Judge says he writes the book so as to be understood by the ordinary man, but it is most interesting to observe the true occultism of Mr. Judge. He begins his chapters speaking from our human, personal, every — day standpoint of things, and then in the concluding portion of the chapter he gives a re-capitulation and summary from a higher point of view. Throughout the writing, he proceeds in a general way, but, at the end of a given chapter, he uses the methods of occultism and so approaches the subject from the standpoint of the reincarnating Ego, the higher man.

The whole story of Karma is really contained in Mr. Judge’s Aphorism No. 30 on Karma: “Karma operates to produce cataclysms of nature by concatenation through the mental and psychic planes of being.” When we come to think about it — since we look from within outward — Karma insensibly and inevitably presents to us the appearance always of something happening to us from sources and causes

need not accuse Heaven and the gods, Fates and Providence, of the apparent injustice that reigns in the midst of humanity. But let him rather remember and repeat this bit of Grecian wisdom, which warns man to forbear accusing *That* which —

“.
“Just, though mysterious, leads us on unerring
Through ways unmark’d from guilt to punishment”

—which are now the ways and the high road on which move onward the great European nations. The Western Aryans had, every nation and tribe, like their Eastern brethren of the Fifth Race, their Golden and their Iron ages, their period of comparative irresponsibility, or the Satya age of purity, while now, several of them have reached their Iron Age, the *Kali-Yuga*, an age *black with horrors*. [SDI, 643-45] This state will last . . . until we begin acting from *within*, instead of ever following impulses from *without* . . . Until then the only palliative to the evils of life is union and harmony — a Brotherhood in *actu*, and *altruism* not simply in name. [Ibid., 644]

outside ourselves, while the whole theme of the chapter is that Karma inheres in ourselves, that there is no cause for any being unless he makes it, nor any effect for any being save as he feels it. Aphorism 30 speaks of Karma at large, every kind, and we may ask: How *can* the dynamic power of human thought cause a flood or an earthquake or a cyclone? Where is this terrific power stored until it reaches the exploding point?

In the section on Karma in the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. makes a curious statement that bears directly on this subject. She says:—

It is a law of occult dynamics that “a given amount of energy expended on the spiritual or astral plane is productive of far greater results than the same amount expended on the physical objective plane of existence.” (I. 614)

Let’s see if we can’t get an illustration. Our body is our earth, isn’t it? What are diseases? In disease, the body is used as a dumb, blind instrument. What are diseases but another kind of cyclones, floods, storms? How are they produced? Are they not produced in the first instance by a flash of feeling in us which explodes the vital energy inside and results in a physical earthquake? That is, our body becomes immediately an instrument.

Suppose the atmosphere gets surcharged with a mixture of air and water, vapour and gasoline. Nothing happens unless someone strikes a match, but, one flash of fire, and there is a truly frightful explosion. Earth and air and water are all *lives* which our thoughts and feelings affect; the elements of nature are the carriers, the storehouse of these human energies we expend. Then a flash of Manasic feeling explodes the situation. That’s the answer to the question here.

Every being, down to the minutest in his time and cycle, becomes the cause or fulcrum upon which the whole of life revolves; if that fulcrum breaks, there is a catastrophe.

QUESTION: — If calamities, such as cyclones and earthquakes, are caused by man’s thinking, why doesn’t the result of those calamities always affect man? There are a great many calamities which occur where nobody is, nobody exists.

ANSWER: — That is Nature’s prevision. Why is it that in an assassination somebody else is killed than the assassin, and when people die from poisoning, those who die are not the poisoners? Man, because of his dynamic powers, is forever visiting on those weaker than himself the results of his own actions. We affect the matter of our bodies we affect the astral matter which is powerless to resist our impact — and it is a good deal better for us to have our diseases physically than to have them mentally and morally.

There is, however, another side to the question. If the questioner will look at the quotation from Buckle’s *History of Civilization* given in the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* (p. 298, he will find that the subject of Karmic prevision¹ is

¹ How profoundly true are the words of H. T. Buckle, in his admirable “*History of Civilization*” (Vol. I., p. 256), when he says:—

“Owing to circumstances still unknown (**Karmic prevision**, H.P.B.) there appear from time to time great thinkers, who, devoting their lives to a single purpose, are able to anticipate the progress of mankind, and to produce a religion or a philosophy by which important effects are eventually brought about. But if we look into history we shall clearly see that, although the origin of a new opinion may be thus due to a single man, the result which the new opinion produces will depend on the condition of the people among whom it is propagated. If either a religion or a philosophy is too much in advance of a nation it can do no present service but must bide its time until the minds of men are ripe for its reception. . . . Every science, every creed has had its martyrs. *According to the ordinary course of affairs, a few generations pass*

treated; and also there are various hints by H.P.B. as to the work actually performed by those beings called Nirmanakayas. We shall then understand that in so far as the Karma of the race permits, these violent forces are discharged where they do the least harm, and, if man does not learn, then sooner or later he will be involved in those catastrophes. We have to remember that the time will come when whole continents will be destroyed by a natural catastrophe — fire, earthquake and subsidence in the sea. These things are cumulative.

QUESTION: — What is the explanation of the statement by Mr. Judge in *Letters That Have Helped Me* that when there is an earthquake some new Great Soul has come into the world?

ANSWER: — Mr. Judge didn't say what he meant; he only made the statement. One of the Masters once wrote that the method of occultism is to arouse or provoke curiosity — which means mental interest and inquiry — provoke it, but not gratify it. The *Ocean* itself is an illustration of that all the way through. All kinds of shocking or provocative statements are made; the answers aren't there, because in us is the power to solve the question raised. So whatever Mr. Judge may have meant by the statement — "Earthquakes here yesterday: these signify some souls of use have come into the world somewhere" — it is in the same category as the statement in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, that "rain comes from sacrifice." There is the statement; Krishna didn't explain the how, when, why or wherefore of it; but it is something for people to think about — and no doubt they have been thinking about it for 5,000 years!

away, and then there comes a period when these very truths are looked upon as commonplace facts, and a little later there comes another period in which they are declared to be necessary, and even the dullest intellect wonders how they could ever have been denied." (S.D.I, 298)

Chapter XII

I.—Death and the Death Vision

QUESTION: — It is said that after the physician has pronounced the body dead, the real man is busy in the brain. Is it the physical brain that is here referred to, and if so, what about those Egos, taken in war or by accidental death, whose physical bodies are blown to pieces?

ANSWER: — There is more than one view of the brain. To us the brain is a mass of pulpy matter, but to the dead man it is not a mass of pulpy matter but a film of impressions. Since those impressions are stored in the molecular structure of the physical brain, it follows that the real brain *cannot* be blown to pieces. It would not make a bit of difference if the physical head were shattered into ten million fragments — every molecule is there, undisturbed, after the explosion. We can see how that is. A great battle goes on, and yet Nature registers the vibrations just exactly as if they were so many rays of the sun; the exploding shells and the terrors of war don't interrupt Nature's processes for a moment.

Remembering that death is the separation of the principles, not only from each other but in themselves, can't we see that in such an instantaneous death only the *body* has been torn loose from the other principles? So the inner astral man is still alive "on the other side." A man may suffer a severe brain concussion and lie unconscious for many days, but his body is not separated from the other principles. The man himself is on another plane of consciousness than the physical, until he wakes up in his body again. In the case of death by violence; there is no body to return to, and death must be completed in a state of semi—lethargy, which is perhaps neither in Kama Loka nor on earth, until the period of the natural term of life is ended.

Just as the drowning man has part of his death vision before he is resuscitated, and must complete it when his natural "hour" has come, can we not imagine that the shock of death by violence must bring with it some part of the death vision? H.P.B. says in *The Key to Theosophy* that this vision is for every man, *without any exception* even when death is sudden. So, it stands to reason that when the natural life term has ended, the Ego must complete its review on the threshold of Devachan. Memory has remained intact in the astral brain. If this review were not completed, where would be the material from his last life on earth to afford him his Devachanic bliss?

The accounts given by those saved from drowning seem never to include the seeing of *causes* in the events of their lives. The same holds true with those who are within a split second of dying in an air crash. The seeing of causes is part of the spiritual death vision, since then the Ego knows the justice of all that has befallen him, and sees himself as he is in the whole chain of cause and effect. This is the kind of vision that means the *real* completion of one's last life on earth.

When death has occurred by violence, there must be many occult adjustments that take place for the averagely good man during the period of his semi-lethargy before Devachan; but the Teachers have not dealt with these matters in any detail. How could they, since every man has his own particular after death states, not to be "lumped" with those of others?

QUESTION: — Would one kind of violent death affect the subtle brain, so to speak, more than another?

ANSWER: — I don't recall any statement on that subject to that effect. Isis Unveiled says that even after actual death has supervened, it is possible to call the

Ego back to the body — which is in effect a new incarnation in the same body — and, in those cases of drowning where the actual death vision takes place, it stands to reason that the man is dead and then is brought back.

QUESTION: — How about the man in the airplane who had a death vision?

ANSWER: — He was dead, because, to the Ego, death means a separation from the body.

QUESTION: — Would you say it was the finishing of one life and the beginning of another?

ANSWER: — Yes. All we know is that there are innumerable records, principally in cases of asphyxiation such as drowning produces, where the man had seemed to be dead but was brought back and then said that, at the moment of drowning, all the past events of his life had passed before his eyes.

QUESTION: — It has been said that many Theosophists would have no Kama Loka or Devachan. Where would these elect be after death?

ANSWER: — Such a remark must have been made in connection with other statements and circumstances; that is to say, with qualifications. Those who have no Devachan are busy, whether in a body or out of a body. We have but to look at the various statements in respect to those beings who are called Nirmanakayas. But, for the average Theosophist, we can very easily answer the question as to whether he will have a Kama Loka and a Devachan. Do we dream at night good dreams and bad dreams? Do we get so happy while we are awake that we forget the woes of other people? Do we get so wretched, downcast and miserable that we forget even our own happiness? If so, we certainly will go into Devachan and Kama Loka. There is no doubt, however, that

those who desire to work, who have the good of their fellows at heart and whose will is set in that direction, are helped out of Devachan. That is the statement in the teachings.

QUESTION: — Some think that during the last Great War there was a great deal of communication with the astral bodies of deceased soldiers. Is there any truth in this idea?

ANSWER: — The statement of the philosophy is that only those beings are conscious and able to communicate on the astral plane who are one of two things: Adepts or sorcerers.

QUESTION: — The drowning man is said to review his past life during the short space of time consumed in the process of his complete suffocation, while with the man who is slowly freezing to death, after the first painful stages are passed, his condition becomes purely subjective and he seems to have passed directly into a condition of Devachanic bliss. Will you please comment on these strange phenomena?

ANSWER: — The only comments that can be made merely remind us of what everybody can see for himself. First, a frozen man is seldom restored to life; many drowned men are. So we do not know so much about what happens to a man who loses his life by freezing.

The next thing to consider is that death by drowning is an extremely violent death, brought about by the fact that air is instantly cut off from the man. Now, air has a direct relation to what we may call the connecting sheath of the seven principles of the living man; it corresponds to Buddhi. What do we breathe for? We don't breathe for the sake of our body; we breathe for the sake of some other principle than the body. We drink water for the sake of some other

principle than the body; we go out in the sun for the sake of some other principle than the body.

Further, a frozen body will last a good deal longer than a living one, whereas death by drowning takes place in a few minutes, and violently ruptures the connection between the three pairs of principles. With anybody who dies a natural death, the body gradually turns cold, so that death by freezing is an acceleration of the natural process — except that the body turns cold artificially while the man is still living. Therefore, we can imagine that death by freezing, once the initial pains are past, approximates simply an accelerated natural death.

QUESTION: — To revert once more to that period of unconsciousness between the dream state and the deep-sleep state — is there such a period between all the states?

ANSWER: — Of necessity we are all the time moving from state to state, and these states exist in alternating order. Thus, no matter what state we are in, when we pass to another state, we are in the position of a man traveling in one particular direction — before he can travel in the opposite direction, he has to come to a dead stop. There are intervening states of unconsciousness, but they are “unconscious” only in our sense, and because we associate consciousness with the idea of something to be conscious of.

Patanjali says that there are conditions in which the soul exists, but exists in the state of a spectator without a spectacle. Now, there is a moment of non-vision in passing from one state into another. We can visualize this: Come out of darkness into bright light; for a moment you can't see. Go out of bright light into darkness, and for a moment you can't see. Yet in a little while, coming

from bright light into darkness, or from dense blackness into light, you can see.

QUESTION: — Since the Ego is always conscious on some plane of being, what is meant by the term “unconsciousness”?

ANSWER: — Where is the Ego during a condition of coma? If he is not here, he is in some other state; he may be in any one of a hundred extra-physical states, higher than our consciousness or lower, as the case may be.

QUESTION: — Would a prolonged period of coma just preceding death tend to make the separation of the lower principles easier after death actually supervenes?

ANSWER: — If we take a simple statement in the philosophy, we can answer that question, each one for himself. The moment death supervenes, the being is on the plane of effects; he can set up no new causes until after he emerges from Devachan prior to the next incarnation. If that is the case, no matter what he does after death, it is reflex, it is involuntary. Coma, in any case, simply means unconsciousness here. Where he is conscious, how he is conscious, depends upon his interest on the other plane and in the other states to which he has gone.

QUESTION: — If the Perceiver, as said by Patanjali, looks directly on ideas, how could we see anything save as we see it in idea? In external sight, wouldn't we have to have an idea in regard to things seen to see them actually?

ANSWER: — What do we see? Space? No. We see something in idea and we name that idea “Space.” Do we see matter? No; we perceive forms with our physical senses, and we see them in idea, and then we name them “matter.” To any being the entire universe is his idea of it. In fact, our idea of the universe is what is meant by the term “human being.” There is no relation whatever between the

universe here and now as we see it and experience it, and this identical universe as an animal sees and experiences it, or as a plant sees and experiences or as a mineral sees and experiences it — or as a genuine chela sees and experiences it.

QUESTION: — Must not the blind man have some idea of Space if he reaches out and spans distances?

ANSWER: — Of course, if we consider the case of the blind man or of one with his eyes shut, we shall realize that when we say “Space,” we do not even think what we mean. Space to us is the impression that the sense of sight brings to us; Space ceases if we close that sense of sight. Our sight is through the eye, which is the active or positive pole of what passively and externally we call Space. Our ideas internally are the active aspect of what, externally, we call matter.

There are three ways of regarding Life. Look in the religious books, in the encyclopedia or in the dictionary for the three “hypostases” of God, or what the Hindus call the three Avasthas. The Indians called them the three Laws of Men, and a Greek thinker once called them the three principles of the lever. Theosophists speak of body, soul and Spirit, or the “Three Fundamentals.” These terms all refer to the same thing. The universe can be regarded as Self, and when so regarded, and then only, is the whole universe Life to us. The universe can be regarded as external to oneself, as internal to oneself, or as a mixture of the two — these are the Three Hypostases. When we regard the whole universe as Self, we are Brahms, we are God; when we regard the universe as matter, we are animals; when we regard the universe mentally, we are lower Mamas; when we regard the universe as the field of Life, its actions — that is, its expressions and impressions — we can see that there is nothing outside of Life. So, we have to

understand our Fundamentals in a vital sense.

Q.—Since the real man is in Devachan, can you really say that he exists in Kama Loka?

Ans.—If the real man is in Devachan, can he be said to exist in Kama Loka? No, of course not. That entity which exists in Kama Loka when the Ego is in Devachan is no more the man than the dead body left on earth is the man. If the Ego is in Devachan, then that which is in Kama Loka cannot be the man.

QUESTION: — How do executed criminals inject thoughts of murder and crime into sensitive living people?

ANSWER: — They don't inject them consciously, unless they are waked up by mediumistic practices, but they inject them in the same way as a wire which is connected with the cells of a charged battery; that wire will transmit a current of electricity just as soon as the charge is in the battery. Any one whose nature is open to ill will and bad feeling comes at once into magnetic relation with these "charged batteries" of hate that the executed criminals or murderers represent; a magnetic rapport is set up, and that person becomes a receiver for their villainous content of thought in precisely the same way as you turn on a radio and get whatever is in the air according to the rate of vibration to which your radio is tuned. A study of the radio affords a perfect analogy for innumerable things that go on between thinking men and astral entities, elemental entities, entities in Devachan — in every state.

QUESTION: — How can it be a man's Karma to be murdered or to die in an accident if his natural life span is not finished?

ANSWER: — It simply means the operation of conflicting forces. During this Black Age, the usual limit of earth life for any one — not you or me or this one or that one in particular — is said to be 70 to 100 years. Now, if interfering forces set up by any individual in connection with others cut short his normal span, then he spends it in the after-death states before he can go to Devachan. The natural coherence of the principles is for a given length of time. At any given age, any one of us may interrupt that coherence and throw himself out of the body, but, if he does, he doesn't disrupt the coherence of the rest of the principles and he simply has to remain suspended, so to say, until the natural time of dissolution comes.

QUESTION: — How long does the average man stay in Kama Loka after death?

ANSWER: — Remember, we are speaking about the Ego — the answer is, from a few minutes to a few hours; sometimes a few days, sometimes a few years; but, in the case of ordinary humanity, the man does not stay in Kama Loka very long. If we look deeply, we can see the reason for that. There again is the force of the inner conviction of good and evil. Suppose that a man had thought murder, thought cruelty, thought all sorts of abominations during his life; that, whenever his mind was free, he dwelt upon iniquity. In thought he slew his enemies, he robbed and plundered and betrayed; that was a favorite subject of cogitation with him. This man dies. His consciousness is on the plane of Kama Loka where there is no impediment to the vision of desire on the black side. Now he sees murders he does not change his thinking; he sees crime, gluttony, iniquity, lust of every kind, as it does not shock him at all; he is used to it. How long would he stay there? He might stay there for many years.

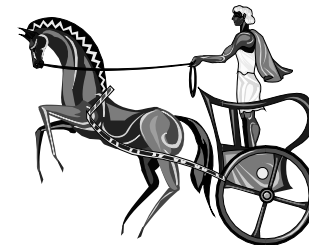
But the average man, no matter if occasional thoughts of murder, or rage, or wickedness, flash into his mind, is revolted by them; he throws them out. He dies and goes to Kama Loka, and the same field of vision, of desire, of the black side of nature is open to him. He sees and participates in that murder or those crimes to the extent that he had thought about them while alive. The moral shock to him is such that it wakes him up; he is out of there right away. It is the same proposition as when we are asleep at night. No matter what kind of dream we are having, if there is something in the dream that actually revolts our moral sense, we are awake in a moment. There is probably not a person who hasn't had some shocking dream — call it a nightmare — and almost invariably he wakes up; the more horrid the nightmare, the more promptly does he wake up. That is the average state of mind after death. The nightmare side of life is open to one and the shock of it throws him out.

QUESTION: — What is the cause of insanity, and what becomes of the Manasic principle when a man is insane?

ANSWER: — Insanity is the condition in which the Ego has lost all control over the psycho — physiological side of his body without losing the body itself; there is the fact. What caused it? Abuse while in the body of the principles now deranged. What becomes of Manas in the case of insanity? Manas sees and knows, but is unable to remedy the difficulty; in other words, Manas in case of insanity is no longer in the body — the body is attached to the man and he can't get rid of it. He is not seated in the body; the body no longer responds to his thinking will. It's like a man who has the palsy or any kind of a nervous disease or nervous paralysis; he knows what is the matter with him, but the connection between his will, the brain and the hand that he desires to use has

been broken, so that it will no longer obey his will. The man is not insane; the hand or the arm is paralyzed or out of control. Apply the same thing to the bodily instrument as a whole. The Ego can't go insane; the Ego is wisdom itself, but its instrument may become deranged through misuse.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



DNYANESHVARI

LVI

[The *Dnyaneshvari* is mentioned many times by Madame Blavatsky, always in glowing terms. The following rendition is extracted from Manu Subedar's translation. The great Sage, Dnyaneshwara Maharaj sang this work to his people when he was quite young. He did it in their native language, Marathi, about 700 years ago. It is his commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*.]

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Shri Krishna says to Arjuna:

What is to be known as 'Dneya' is Brahman, unattainable by any means except those of wisdom (Dnyana), after knowing whom no duties survive. . . . Thoughts cannot cross that region where these questions can be decided. Just as earth in the form of a vessel made of clay (and yet distinct from it), so is Brahman in everything and comprising everything (and yet distinct). At all times and places without being identified with time and place, Brahman actuates the movable and the

immovable. . . . All these discussions of the Supreme Self are merely a means of describing His all-pervading character. Otherwise, all this talk of hands, feet, and eyes, etc., would be absurd where, properly speaking, there is complete non-existence. When a wave meets another wave and breaks it up, is there any difference between the attacker and the attacked? They are both water. So Brahman is one and all these descriptions are merely to indicate that whatever is differentiated into two, is really One. Even when zero is indicated, it is noted down as a point. Thus, unity has to be described by means of duality. If these forms of speech were altogether prohibited, unity itself would be lost except by such description in the continuous link between preceptor and pupil. Now listen, how everything that is known by human mind, is enveloped by Brahman.

Brahman is all pervading in all things in the same manner as space constitutes the sky, thread becomes cloth, liquidity is water, light is the flame of the lamp, the smell of camphor and activity is visible only in the body (or the action of the body). A bead of gold is liked by us, but it is nothing but gold. A stream may go zigzag, but the water in it is running straight. Iron, when it becomes red hot is still iron. Space looks circular in a vessel and square in a monastery, but the shapes do not affect the condition or quality of space. So Brahman is constant, though He may appear changing. He may appear in the form of the mind or the senses and the spiritual qualities, but just as the sweetness of molasses is not restricted when it is made into a lump, so Brahman is not confined to the functions or characteristics of the senses. Butter is concealed in milk, but milk is not called butter. It continues to be called milk.

Though He pervades everything in the world, yet the universe is not Brahman. A bracelet gets its name because of its shape but in reality it is gold. Brahman has neither name nor form, nor correlation, nor species, nor action, nor differentiation. Brahman has no characteristics (Gunas), though He may appear to reside in the Gunas. The unwise attribute qualities to Him, but that is wrong. The clouds cannot be called the sky. Nor can one wear as ornament that is only seen in the looking glass. The reflection of the sun in a pool of water is not the sun and there is no water in the mirage. It is an error to conceive the three-fold characteristics in Brahman. Brahman may appear to pass through the three qualities, but this is as unreal as the enthronement of a beggar in a dream. Brahman is without qualities (Nirguna), Brahman pervades everything alike, just as heat is the same, though the fire may be in a different form. Brahman is indestructible and minutely pervades everything. He is the supreme object of knowledge inside and outside the body, near and far. He is One and there is nothing beyond Him. He is perfect everywhere, just as sweetness in the milky ocean is alike in all its parts. He is the same towards all existence including the meanest. Being One, He is in them all, just as the moon is reflected in a thousand vessels of water. The taste of salt is the same, though there may be different grains. The quality of sweetness is the same, though there may be thousands of pieces of sugar cane. Brahman, while pervading everything in this uniform manner, is also the source of universe. As waves come out of the ocean and as the ocean itself is the cause of the waves, so all life finds its support in Him. Just as the body is the same, though it passes through the three ages, that is childhood, manhood and old age, so Brahman is one and unbroken through origin, existence and

end. Just as the sky does not change in the morning, mid-day and evening, so as creator He acquires the name of Brahmadeva, as supporter, He gets the name of Vishnu, and as destroyer He gets the name Shankar, and beyond these three-fold qualities he remains quality-less (Nirguna).

In this way ... I have indicated the graded method of reaching Me. Steps are wanted to reach such a height. Scaffolding has to be put up to go towards the sky. A boat has to be used in crossing waters. Hence, this minute description. Otherwise the Soul is everywhere. It is in order to adjust these ideas to your intelligence that I have given the four-fold description, as when a child is to be fed, one mouthful is divided into little portions. I have told you about these four, that is existence, wisdom, object of knowledge and non-wisdom.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



CORRESPONDENCE

We give below the review of Vol. I, of *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky* which appeared in the Fall issue of *Fohat*, the magazine of The Edmonton Theosophical Society. Following that is the controversy that arose around this editorial. The material is self-explanatory and makes clear the dangers of allowing "form" — be they societies, religions, or even the human body — to supersede the needs of the Soul. One is the horse and the other the Rider. Beware of inverting the equation:



What a brotherly organization the Theosophical Society has turned out to be. In projects big and small, it is nearly impossible to get theosophists to work cooperatively with others. The compiling

of *The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky* proved to be no different a case. Due to the death of John Cooper and, for some, the consequent nullifying of certain agreements, battle lines were being drawn with various parties lining up on one side or another. John Patrick Deveney makes mention of this in his book review in *Theosophical History*, XI, no.3. Deveney writes:

The editor [John Algeo] in his preface acknowledges the Herculean labors of the late John Cooper in adding to the corpus of letters and in preparing them for publication, but states that, for unspecified reasons, none of Cooper's work could be used "directly," and that even his transcriptions of texts were not used because they were "not accurate." This is a surprising charge, directed as it is toward a person known for his meticulous work and now unavailable to defend himself, and concealed behind the editor's comment undoubtedly lies the dissention [sic] that arose after Cooper's death over the use of his research. (p. 31)

To put it less diplomatically, this excuse by John Algeo is pure politics and to the average member of the Theosophical Society, incomprehensible. The average member of the Theosophical Society is somewhat bewildered as to why the members of a Society dedicated to Universal Brotherhood cannot just put aside their differences and get along. The historians know, and it is not a mystery to them. Until the average member makes an effort to learn their Society's ugly history, they will forever be uncomprehending pawns in the power plays of their respective leaderships.

Fohat received three letters wondering exactly the same thing: why did John Algeo include in this work a letter that for many is a certain fraud, in which Blavatsky describes herself as a political animal and psychic fraud looking to serve her Russian homeland as a spy — an occupation that the Russian nobility

looked upon with great contempt. Also, why did he reprint letters from Vsevolod Solovyov, a known enemy of Madame Blavatsky whose lies were thoroughly exposed in a series of articles by Beatrice Hastings printed in the *Canadian Theosophist* earlier this century. (These articles were collected and re-printed under the title *Solovyov's Fraud* by Edmonton Theosophical Society and will soon appear on the ETS website www.theosophycanada.com.) If there are any originals to these letters, they have not been made available and inspected by any reputable theosophical historians.

There are very good political reasons for including those letters. Adyar and Wheaton embrace a brand of "theosophy" that is built upon the work of Annie Besant, Charles Leadbeater, and their worshipping followers. There were times during the lives of each when they were committed to ideas that were perversions and in direct opposition to the principles as laid down by H. P. Blavatsky, William Q. Judge, and their Masters. What makes this even more reprehensible is that the excuse for adopting these perverse ideas was laid at the feet of these very same Masters. Learn your history!¹ Read the *Krotona of Old Hollywood* collections and read HPB's *Collected Writings* and the *Mahatma Letters* and ask yourself, if all the nonsense espoused by Besant and Leadbeater were not sanctioned by the Masters, would it still be believable in light of the earlier teachings? No! Certainly not.

¹ Read "The Theosophical Movement 1875-1925, A History and a Survey. (Jake Jaqua at jakejaqua@wcnet.org could probably point you in the right direction to get a copy. A second choice would be *The Theosophical Movement, 1875-1950* which can be purchased from Theosophy Company, 245 West 33rd Street, Los Angeles, CA 90007-4108; U.S.A. Neither of these histories are pleasant reading, but they do show why the various stakeholders to the name "Theosophy" are so different in their aims, their methods, their teaching, etc.

Adyar and Wheaton have to believe, and they have to ensure that their members believe in the sainthood of at least Besant. This sainthood cannot be guaranteed if Blavatsky, Judge, and their interpretations of the Masters are not made suspect. The easiest way to accomplish this is to attack the reputations of these two founders of the society and attribute to them base, political motives, to make them as ethical as a Jesuit. Adyar and Wheaton obviously want these letters included in these collections and you can be sure that they will not be the last of their type. There will be other letters of the same ilk in future volumes. If you are members of these organizations, do not let your leadership get away with this.

Finally, on the side of light and truth, Ernest Pelletier is now releasing his book, *The Judge Case*.² This book will be instrumental in identifying the early deceptions that led finally to the necessity of having to destroy the reputations of both Judge and Blavatsky. If they avail themselves of no other historical investigation, the student of Theosophy should buy and study this book. It is a masterful work that allows the misguided villains of our early history to hang themselves with their own words. To understand the demise of the Theosophical Society as a true vehicle for the dissemination of the Ancient Wisdom Tradition, this book is a must read.

The three letters received by *Fohat* follow. [These letters have been included in the article "Let the Reader Beware..."]

² This volume will be available from *The Aquarian Theosophist* approximately November 15th. The Price is \$95 U.S. *The Aquarian Theosophist* subscribers may purchase it from the *A.T.* at a 30% discount — and with free shipping. Those wishing the volume by a transit faster than ground or seemail will be charged extra. — Ed., *A.T.*



In answer to the above Daniel Caldwell wrote in the *Supplement* to the Fall Issue of *Fohat*:

As a member of the editorial board for the letters [*The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky*], I could not disagree more with the view of these writers [Roos, Smith, & Sordo Letters, see *Fohat* VIII, 3] to, in effect, censor¹ these specific letters and not publish them.

Readers should have easy access to these letters. A reader can then decide whether he/she believes a certain letter is a forgery or not.

As far as I know, all of the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters will be included in future volumes, and IF they were excluded I would not want to be a member of the editorial team.

Jean Overton-Fuller in her Blavatsky biography believes OTHER Blavatsky letters are forgeries. Should we therefore exclude those too from future volumes???

I also strongly disagree with the following editorial comments:

"One could conclude...that the powers of Wheaton and Adyar are trying to introduce a perverted understanding of Blavatsky into the world...."

¹ Mixing fraudulent material in with known genuine letters is "censoring" the reader's ability to know what is dependable and what isn't in the volume. Annie Besant in altering Madame Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* and yet leaving the Blavatsky name on it — with no footnotes are explanations, was indulging the dangerous habit of trying to destroy the original material. When Boris de Zirkoff does the same thing — e.g., pp. 177-79, Vol. I, of *The Secret Doctrine*, he destroys HPB's editing of her *own* earlier material and removes from the student the opportunity to study what HPB actually wrote. If you go and compare the two versions it is easy to see that HPB is making more readable and clear her original statement! — ED., A.T.

"There are very good political reasons for including those letters. Adyar and Wheaton embrace a brand of 'theosophy' that is built upon the work of Annie Besant, Charles Leadbeater, and their worshipping followers."

"Adyar and Wheaton have to believe, and they have to ensure that their members believe in the sainthood of at least Besant. This sainthood can-not be guaranteed if Blavatsky, Judge and their interpretations of the Masters are not made suspect. The easiest way to accomplish this is to attack the reputations of these two founders of the society and attribute to them base, political motives, to make them as ethical as a Jesuit. Adyar and Wheaton obviously want these letters included in these collections and you can be sure that they will not be the last of their type. There will be other letters of the same ilk in future volumes. If you are members of these organizations, do not let your leadership get away with this."

All I can say is "Flapdoodle"!

In light of this kind of "reasoning", I ask the editor of FOHAT: do you therefore ascribe the same base motives to the late John Cooper? I ask you this question because Cooper ALSO included these "fraudulent" letters in his "edition" of the letters. See Cooper's dissertation for proof of my statement.

And I must also have the same base motive since I agreed with both Algeo and Cooper that these letters should be included in the published volume.

Daniel Caldwell

Another View

Having two appendices:

1. Of known fraudulent letters
2. Of suspected fraudulent letters

is one thing, MIXING THEM IN WITH LETTERS KNOWN TO BE GENUINE IS DISHONEST.

Even now I am puzzled at such an approach. If you were collecting the letters of George Washington, would you include items that are known to be fraudulent????!!

What canon of editorial ethics are you following Daniel???

Jerome Wheeler

The Answer from the editors of *Fohat*:

A challenge has been put forward by Daniel Caldwell, a respected colleague, to come clean on some editorial comments written in the Fall 2004 issue of *Fohat*. The challenge was at first perplexing as it was uncertain why Daniel was presenting the magazine with a series of straw men to knock down, but when another respected colleague made a few comments (unfortunately off the record), it all became clear as to what was wanted and why. *Fohat* can only appeal to all that is sacred that it is up to the challenge as the principles that are to be examined are crucial for the future of the Theosophical Cause.

First on Daniel's trail of breadcrumbs is the question as to whether base motives have been attributed to John Algeo for the printing of the questionable letters. How can anyone know what motivates John Algeo? The human condition is one in which motivations are often very obscure. The motives of others lie in the dark recesses of their own minds and are for them alone to figure out. For all anyone knows, John Algeo could be the greatest ally that Theosophy has from within the institution that is based in Wheaton. Why should there be any attempt to alienate him?

The editorial clearly identifies Adyar and Wheaton as the problem. Over the last century an organizational culture has grown up in these Theosophical Societies

with many secrets to hide (hence the inaccessible archives many researchers complain about), and this culture is self-protective. Their fear is that if the secrets get out, their organizations could face destruction. This is the base motive referred to (the Societies' self-preservation) that members of these organizations have to battle with if they are to do any good. Unfortunately, secrets are poisonous and will ultimately destroy any good that can be done by these organizations. We can see how John Algeo could be in a no-win situation. On the one hand he might desperately be trying to do good by HPB while on the other the organization is trying to limit any information that might get out shedding further light on its unsavory past. The solution to his dilemma is radical and clear: open the archives wide and weather the storm. The first thing that might be asked of John Algeo then is why he does not do this? If this were done, *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky* would have been handled much differently and this debate would not be occurring.

To give some basis to the above claims concerning Adyar and Wheaton, consider the following. In his latest book, *Krotana of Old Hollywood* Volume II, Joseph Ross points to the inaccessibility of certain archives at Adyar and Wheaton:

Lesser depositories such as major public libraries, for example the Huntington Library, University of California, The Philosophical Research Society, and State Library of Victoria, the British Library, the Theosophical Society Library in Pasadena, California Historical Society, and Edmonton Theosophical Society contain a remarkable amount of material that is accessible. E.S. material in The Olcott Library and Research Center, Wheaton, Illinois, is not currently available. The Adyar Esoteric Archives are also closed to research. Some lesser information can be found at the Adyar Library of the Theosophical Society. (p.502)

Why do Adyar and Wheaton feel compelled to close off parts of their archives? It is because of these types of actions that Edmonton Theosophical Society has made such an effort to collect rare material and republish it — so that it is not lost to future generations. There has been at least one member of the inner circle of the above Adyar-Wheaton connection who has criticized the president of ETS for this very thing. What are they hiding you might ask?

Let us look to Beatrice Hastings in her periodical publication, *New Universe*: "Try" where she quotes a reviewer from the Adyar Theosophist, who signs as "J.R.", concerning her Defence of Madame Blavatsky series. The reviewer makes several snooty comments concerning her efforts and then in an offhand manner states, "Mrs. Hastings has no access to the many private documents at Adyar" (No.3 pp.3-4). Are the august members of Adyar trying to say that their archives have the material that we need to clear up some or all of the charges, once and for all, against HPB? If so, why don't they come forward with them? The only conclusion that can be drawn is that it does not serve their purpose to do so. Then what purpose does the Theosophical Society at Adyar serve? If not the program of Theosophy set forth by HPB, then it must have some other purpose that it parades about in the clothing of Theosophy. Perhaps that purpose is the continuation or evolution of the purpose that Alice Cleather identified in her work, *H.P. Blavatsky: A Great Betrayal*. Cleather's aim in the book was to show:

- (a) That under Mrs. Besant's guidance the T.S. has long ceased to represent H.P. Blavatsky's teaching, or the thought of its Founders.
- (b) That it is now completely dominated by the deluded, impure, and poisonous ideas of an acknowledged sex pervert, to whom this unhappy and misguided

woman believes and openly declares herself to be bound by indissoluble and age-long ties.

- (c) That in adopting and conniving at the promulgation of the teachings of this man, and allowing him virtually to control her Society, Mrs. Besant most impiously gives out that she is acting under the orders of the Trans-Himalayan Masters of Wisdom, and H.P. Blavatsky's directions. (pp.5-6)

Besant has a lot to answer for in allowing the Society to be used in the way that it was. Read the Society's history and learn its 'glorious' past!

Next, on this trail of breadcrumbs is the point that John Cooper published these controversial letters in his dissertation, and would have printed them in his publicly offered "Letters." If John Cooper, a non-member of any Theosophical Society, published the exact same volume through a private publishing company, it would be much less upsetting. John, for all of his sympathies to the Society, was an outside academic motivated by the concerns of the academic; from him this volume would be excusable. However, John Cooper visited Edmonton Theosophical Society, and a kinder and fairer man there never was. His dissertation, it can be quite certain, contained a strong editorial line that would have given a fair perspective to the letters in question.

The next breadcrumb is left at the doorstep of Boris de Zirkoff, a theosophist who it is claimed was also intent on printing the letters. First of all, although some of *Fohat's* readers seemed to indicate the letters should not have been included in this volume, I suspect they meant that the letters should not have been included in the way that they were. The letters must be dealt with, as Paul Johnson points out, but it is obvious in this case that they were not handled very

prudently. It would have been expected that Boris would have included a strong editorial line with these letters explaining the problems that many have with them. The executor of Boris de Zirkoff's literary estate, Dara Eklund, who provided many of the letters in question to the Society could possibly shine more light on this issue. The *Collected Writings* provide evidence that this would be the case. An example can be found in the Fall 2004 issue of *Fohat* where an article ("Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury and Its Connection to The Theosophical Publication Society") looks at an editorial line that was taken by Boris, and then argues against it. That Boris may have been wrong only shows that no-one is perfect.

The question then that Daniel has been leading us all to is: Why did the president of one of the major Theosophical bodies publish through a Theosophical publisher a series of dubious letters without commentary that reflect poorly on the spiritual corner-stone and Founder of the Society that he is elected to represent? Political arguments aside, how does this represent the best interests of the Theosophical Cause? Remember, Theosophists are publishing these letters, not academics. Cannot Theosophists plead their own case through their own representatives through their own publishing companies? By not doing so, are they not giving tacit assent to the authenticity of these letters to the entire world? What was John Algeo, or the forces behind John Algeo, thinking? There are much worse letters coming up. Are they going to be exhibited in the same way?

Do not be fooled by Paul Johnson's line that the honest thing to do is to print the letters as they are, and allow people to make up their own minds as to their authenticity (Naturally, the fact that 20 different academics will create 20 different truths with these letters shouldn't alarm Theosophists). Johnson is not a

promoter of Theosophy, he is an academic, and as such it is better for him and his world to have the letters without attachments. The last thing an academic wants to do is try to undermine arguments before using the material, especially weak and suspect material. An academic would rather waltz in, accept John Algeo's tacit assent of their authenticity and then use them to further muddy the waters. By not appending poison pills to these letters (and there is no better poison than the truth), John Algeo has opened up Blavatsky to a whole new round of attacks. Is it any wonder people are up in arms?

Think of all the work that Daniel Caldwell has done in putting together his web site, and all the work that others have done in putting together works of Theosophical literature. They are hoping that the *Letters* might attract some more people to their work and instead they open the pages and read a work that is only going to lead to the further character assassination of HPB. Daniel, as a member of the editorial board, must have been both embarrassed by and deeply upset at the lack of editorial comment. It is little wonder that he had such a quick reaction to *Fohat's* editorial. Caldwell's "Blavatsky Archives" are dedicated to vindicating HPB in the eyes of her detractors and yet here comes another volume published by the Theosophical Society that can only make matters worse. From the Blavatsky Archives web page we read:

It was inevitable that H.P.B. should make enemies on every hand who published slanderous untruths as to her dishonesty, the fraudulence of her psychic phenomena, the non-existence of her Masters, and the worthlessness of Theosophy. But how much of truth is there in these accusations? Careful, detailed research into the primary source documents clearly shows that the attacks on H.P.B. lack a solid basis.

Now here comes the *Letters* apparently sanctioning all these questionable letters as primary source material. What a let down!

There have been people muttering about a lack of brotherhood in the society and *Fohat* would like to second that. Think of the very few people who now enjoy the bright light that shines through works such as *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Mahatma Letters*, *The Voice of the Silence*, and *Echoes of the Orient*. The only thing between these bright spiritual lights and the mass of humanity is the sullied reputations of Judge, HPB, and the Masters. People look at Theosophy and what they see first is a dark fog that consists of all the crap hurled at the aforementioned over the years. They see this ugly haze, turn away in disgust and look for purer sources. Can anyone blame them? The unfortunate thing is that in order to clear away this haze and allow a suffering humanity in, we are going to have to ruffle each other's feathers in an ungentlemanly manner.¹ Who lacks brotherhood: those fighting for the benefit of all humanity, or those quietly and selfishly accepting the fruits of these great works without concern for others? I know which party is in need of a courageous heart, and heart is what we need now most of all. Our intellects should be clear now as to what the duty is that lies before us.

Again, Beatrice Hastings points to a quotation in *The Mahatma Letters*, to give credence to the above. When asked "Can

¹ It's true that we should state our position loud and clear at least once. Beyond that it seems that a redoubling of our efforts to spread the literature known to have come from Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Judge; a redoubling of our efforts to live the life they indicate will bring a source of energy and support to our efforts not available in the treadmill of those tied to the formalities of structure and scholarship. The Masters, the adepts, the chelas, all have a say in this. Their *work* is outside the ken of those who have no eyes for *process*. — Ed., A.T.

you do anything to help on the Society?", Master M. responded:

Want me to speak frankly? Well, I say No: neither yourself nor the Lord Sang-Yias Himself — so long as the equivocal position of the Founders is not proved due to fiendish malice and systematic intrigue — could help it on. (p.254)

There you have it very clearly from a Master. Only after the Founders' names are cleared will the Society once again move forward. Even for those who doubt the existence of the Masters, the plain common-sense truth of the statement rings out. It does not need the verification of the Mahatma to be understood as true.

Sadly, this is only a sparse outline of what has to be said. It is hoped that this supplement to *Fohat* will aid in filling in some further details and arguments. In the meantime, before another volume is released, we should all give Daniel Caldwell and the rest of the editorial board our proxies to call on the editor of the *Letters* and demand an explanation for this ill-advised release. What was the hurry? We have waited many years for this; a few more would not have killed us if it meant that the job would have been done right. May I be the first to offer him my proxy so that he can undergo this task on behalf of "Blavatsky Archives" and all theosophists still loyal to the Cause. To be fair, my "off the record" source has indicated that it is the intent of John Algeo to expand the commentary in future editions of this first volume and in future volumes. We must aid the board in ensuring there is more than intent, that intent results in action, and that that action is the right action. We need strong editorial arguments clearly stating the Theosophical position on these letters. Much of the work is already done, by the likes of Beatrice Hastings, K.F. Vania, and others. These arguments need only

be collected, assembled together and then tightened for delivery. The heart of all theosophists should go out to suffering humanity and we should all be working feverishly to clear the Founders' names.

Dallas TenBroeck, Michael Gomes, Jerome Wheeler, and all others who are within earshot of this plea, send in your proxies to arm Daniel, and call on others within your e-mail directories to do the same. *Fohat* will contact who it can through e-mail and subscription. Give Daniel and the board the means with which to breach this thickening fog, and I for one will be at the head of the wave that rushes by these courageous souls to disperse and keep dispersing this unwholesome fog until it is gone forever. Lead on Daniel, LEAD ON!



LET THE READER BEWARE!....

[*The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky*, Vol. I, 1861-1879, The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, U.S.A.]

Friend, if you buy the book *beware!* It is not what the cover says it is! The long history of fabricated books published with Madame Blavatsky's name on them is *legion*. In this volume you will find a mixed, polluted, and changed version of Madame Blavatsky's letters offered to the public as if it were actually a faithful testament, a best-effort product.

The Solovyoff letters are included, the product of a bitter enemy of Theosophy, and an unscrupulous liar. He became such because Madame Blavatsky refused to teach him how to produce occult phenomena. Beatrice Hastings did a thorough job of unveiling his lies and contradictions in her book *Solovyoff's*

Fraud. (available as a digital transcription from jakejaqua@wcnnet.org)

Making a mistake in transcription is one thing, but arrogantly mixing of fraudulent material with valid documents is quite another matter. We reprint three letters from the Fall Issue of *Fohat* to give our subscriber's the views of other serious Blavatsky students regarding this volume:

Letters to the Editor:

Thank you very much for your last *Fohat*, Summer 2004, which I received a couple of weeks ago. It has as usual very interesting articles. The only thing that was a little disappointing for me was the Book Review of *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky*, vol. I, by Ted G. Davy, in which there is no mention at all of the inclusion within this book of the Solovyov letters. The Review is rather a description of the book, and of course the reviewer has the right to his own opinion.

The Solovyov letters included in the HPB Letters — due to its contents, its origin and the absence of the original MS — are suspect. Some of them clearly show unmistakable signs of being partial fabrications, especially letters No. 12, 17, 53, 69 and 76. Its source as we know is the book *A Modern Priestess of Isis* written by Vsevolod S. Solovyov, one of the bitterest enemies of HPB, and one who started the most foul calumnies against her.

On the other hand, letter No. 7, seems to be a cunning fabrication done by someone who knew many details of HPB's life, although not enough (one of her many enemies, known or unknown to us).

The content of this letter shows to have the aim to support the Russian-spy-theory of Richard Hodgson-Coulomb conspiracy. The whole tenor and

language used in the letter is so un-Blavatsky! It is addressed to an almost anonymous entity: “The Director of the Third Department”, signed in Odessa in Dec. 1872, when HPB was really in transit from the Ashram of her Master in the Himalayas to her important mission in America for the formation of the Parent Theosophical Society, in New York. The whole thing is so ridiculous and out of place. Whoever wrote this letter was unable to give it a clear aim other than a self exposé. The whole text is a mass of disjointed and unconnected ramblings. In the Introduction of the Letter No. 7, p.23, it says that “The genuineness of this letter has been questioned by a number of researchers. Several attempts to obtain a copy of the original, in order to compare the handwriting have not been successful.” Thus if the Editor was not sure that the letter was authentic, and the content shows unmistakable signs of being a forgery, why publish it with the rest? Under what criterion? What is the hurry? The whole thing is out of place. But most people have no idea of the history of the Theosophical Movement and HPB, and these few letters are like rotten apples in a barrel of good ones, their presence pollutes the image of HPB.

What disturbs me the more is the Editor’s little Jewish tale in his Preface, p.xv, where he says:

There is an old tale that Jewish scribes, when copying manuscripts, ALWAYS DELIBERATELY left something out or INTRODUCED AN ERROR — to show that only God is perfect [ergo, as HPB is not God, she is imperfect]. In that respect, all of us who work with texts are Jewish scribes, perhaps not in our intention, but in our RESULTS. [Capitals mine]

Following this train of thought, are we to expect published in the next volumes the forgeries of Monsieur et

Madame Coulomb, among the authentic letters of HPB, giving simply as a matter of course the references to the Christian College Magazine of Madras?

The whole effort to publish [these] letters is laudable and has involved the cooperation of the best workers in the field. The Editor has done a fine job, his intentions are good, but the inclusion of letter No. 7 — before ascertain[ing] scientifically if it was written by HPB herself — and the Solovyov letters — for which there are no originals extant, and [their] source is one of the worse enemies of HPB — will create bad results. I think that these letters should be taken out of the collection, and produce a 2nd edition free from this extraneous material. This could be done very easily, thanks to the present electronic technology of book making. It could take several weeks, but the effort would be worth while.

Let us not put in the mouth of HPB words that we are not certain she uttered.

Ramon Sordo
Tepoztlan, Mexico

To the Editors of *Fohat*:

Probably many Theosophists, myself included, had been looking forward to see[ing] the first volume of *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky* published. Not only on account of our interest in her life, but also because her Collected Writings would not have been complete without her large correspondence. So I ordered my copy with great expectations and with very little preparation to be disappointed. Some of the letters were just what we expected of H.P.B., however there were many others that surprised me considerably and left me wondering if I had understood them correctly. Also, scattered here and there among her letters were statements so foreign to everything we know about H.P.B. that one could not

help doubting their authenticity. Even Mr. Algeo, the editor of this book, mentions, specifically with reference to Letter 7, that

the genuiness of this letter has been questioned by a number of researchers. Several attempts to obtain a photocopy of the original, in order to compare the handwriting, have not been successful. (p.23)

But since regardless of this fact Mr. Algeo decided to publish this Letter, we must conclude that he personally did not much question its authenticity and that its contents must not have disturbed him. This is a rather alarming situation, for there are still more volumes of *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky* pending, and one wonders what other questionable letters — even more discreditable to H.P.B. than this one — might he not be tempted to publish.

In my opinion Letter 7 must have been fabricated and should never have been published. It is the most offensive of the 136 letters included in this volume, and unless we deny H.P.B. consistency in her way of acting, teaching and writing, such dishonourable thoughts as are revealed in this letter could hardly have been the outcome of her pen. Regretfully this infamous letter will now only serve to perpetuate the calumnies against H.P.B. and give her enemies a new weapon of attack.

It is not enough, however, to state how I personally feel about the authenticity of this letter (and of others in this volume too). I will also have to provide some arguments to uphold my feelings, and if factual evidence is lacking there is still internal evidence to support us. Upon analyzing the letter one finds that its purpose is clearly political. It even specifically states that her “aim is not profit” (p.27). But then the letter

contradicts itself when it alleges that H.P.B. had accepted a payment of 2000 francs for some service she had rendered to a Russian military man (p.28) and “5 thousand francs from the Papal envoy for the time spent with him” discussing affairs related to the Papal Government to whom she made many promises for the future which she never intended to fulfil (p.26). In short, if we are to believe in the authenticity of Letter 7, then we have also to believe that H.P.B. had accepted bribes and had offered her services for the rest of her life to work as a Russian spy by taking advantage of her occult powers in seances that were often frequented by high government officials. She is shown as boasting that she “can find out everything through spirits and by other means, and can extract the truth from the most secretive person” (p.27) by which she meant government officials who carried state secrets, thereby being able to render great service to her country.

This letter, of which there is *no original*, is addressed to the Director of the Third Department, a Russian secret police of the mid 19th century responsible for political security, and is dated December 26, 1872. Its source is the Central State Archive of the October Revolution. I now intend to quote a few more of its spurious declarations and disprove them with H.P.B.’s own words.

On page 24 of *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky* it states — in the alleged words of H.P.B. — that “I have been living abroad almost continuously. During those 20 years . . . I zealously watched current politics . . .”; on page 25 she is said to have written that while in Cairo, and availing herself of “spirits,” “I found out about the secret acquisition of a huge quantity of arms left behind by the Turkish Government; I found out about all the intrigues of Nubar-Pasha [a Turkish prime minister], and of his talks with the German Consul General . . .”;

and again on page 28 H.P.B. supposedly said that “love of struggle and perhaps for intrigues is in my [H.P.B.’s] character.” And so in a similar vein she keeps on boasting in that Letter of all her political knowledge, abilities and cunning.

Now, what has H.P.B. to say about politics in her writings? In C.W. X-294 she wrote: “it so happens that I have never meddled in politics, am innocent of any knowledge of political intrigues, never bothered myself with this special science at any time of my long life,” and in C.W. X-293 she declares that

I have never written in all my life on politics, of which I know nothing. I take no interest in political intrigues, regarding them as the greatest nuisance and a bore, the most false of all systems in the code of ethics. I feel the sincerest pity for those diplomats who, being honourable men, are nevertheless obliged to deceive all their lives, and to embody a living, walking LIE.

These quotations refer specifically to H.P.B.’s personal feelings about politics, but there are in addition the policies of the Theosophical Society and its Journals. In C.W. X-82 H.P.B. wrote that “politics does not enter into the programme of our magazine’s activity.” Then in C.W. IV-454 she adds:

feeling an innate and holy horror for everything connected with it [i.e., politics], we have avoided the subject most strenuously.

In *The Key to Theosophy*, pages 231-32, it is stated that

the whole present system of politics is built on the oblivion of such rights [as justice, kindness, consideration or mercy], and [on] the most fierce assertion of national selfishness.

Also that the Theosophical Society is not a political organization and “as a society it takes absolutely no part in any national or party politics.” And finally on the same page she expresses the worthlessness of meddling in politics because “no lasting political reform can be ever achieved with the same selfish men at the head of affairs as of old.” If such statements as these, together with the whole arsenal of Ethical teachings given to us by H.P.B. in her writings do not convince Mr. Algeo that such contemptible Letter as number 7 could never have been written by H.P.B., then I really do not know what will!

Out of 136 letters published in this volume, 19 of them have no Russian *original* available and were thus translated by Boris de Zirkoff from Solovyov’s book on H.P.B. entitled *Souvremennaya zhritza Isidi*. Concerning the latter Sylvia Cranston writes in her biography of *H.P.B.*, page 298:

Solovyov’s version of his association with H.P.B. was first recorded in a series of articles in *Russky Vvestnik* in 1892 and was published as a book the following year. In 1895 an edited English translation by Walter Leaf was published on behalf of the Society for Psychical Research in London under the title *A Modern Priestess of Isis*.

Both of these versions, the Russian and the English, were meant to expose H.P.B. as a “charlatan” and to offer “some explanation of the remarkable success of her imposture” (Cranston, 299). However, according to Sylvia Cranston, when carefully analyzed “most of Solovyov’s facts turned out to be fiction” (Cranston, 301).

If we only consider the following three facts, namely:

- 1) that this book was requested by the Society for Psychical Research which was already totally prejudiced against H.P.B.;
- 2) that from a great admirer and “friend” of H.P.B. Solovyov “became her bitter enemy,” the reasons being that H.P.B. refused to teach him practical occultism and that “all his prayers to be taken as a Chela were utterly rejected” by her (Cranston, 307), and lastly,
- 3) that Solovyov wrote these articles *after* her death when H.P.B. no longer could defend herself, then we may rightfully ask how trustworthy such source of information can possibly be? How authentic are these 19 letters in this volume of *The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky*?

Much more could be refuted in these Letters, but it would take a volume to do so. Hopefully the few examples given above will serve as a warning sign to all Theosophists who have acquired this book, or intend to do so in the near future. But even more importantly, let us trust that Mr. Algeo will use a little more understanding of H.P.B.’s nature in his subsequent volumes of *The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky*, and take to heart the wise words of Mahatma K.H. when He stated that “so long as one has not developed a perfect sense of justice, he should prefer to err rather on the side of mercy than commit the slightest act of injustice.” (*Letters from the Masters of Wisdom*, II-143.)

Elinor Roos
Victoria, BC, Canada

To the editors of *Fohat*,

I have read the latest compilation of the Letters of H.P.B, volume 1, and have had some doubts as to the truth in some of

those letters. I am aware that perhaps nothing can be proven, and I would say that, most likely, that is a fact. But my question is, shouldn’t the editors be more faithful to H.P.B., and not include those letters where their truth and authenticity is doubtful?

Boris de Zirkoff translated the letters from Solovyov’s works, and I truly wonder how much one can trust Solovyov since he became such a bitter enemy of H.P.B. We can compare what those letters say, to most of the others and see some discrepancies in her character.

I would have my fortune secured if I wasn’t carrying unfortunately my accursed name of Blavatsky. . . . These are the bitter fruits of my youth devoted to Satan, his pomps and works! (Letter 12, p. 49)

And then on page 194:

I am ready to sell my soul for spiritualism, but nobody will buy it, and I am living from hand to mouth and earning from \$10 to \$15 when necessity arises.

Compare it to a previous letter (#37):

I am ready to give my life for the spread of the sacred truth. (p. 143)

These are not only discrepancies, but exactly two totally opposite views. In let. 11 she quotes from something Aksakoff said to A.J. Davis:

I have heard of Madame Blavatsky from one of her parents, who spoke of her as a rather strong medium. Unfortunately her communications reflect *her morals, which have not been very strict.* (p. 44)

Isn’t it strange that it is in those letters taken out of Solovyov’s work where HPB specifically speaks about her lack of morals, her sins, etc. and her materialistic views. Is there anything

anywhere which supports that she actually did write those letters, and if not, shouldn't the reader be warned of their probable inauthenticity, or even better not include them at all?

Quoting Boris de Zirkoff, Collected Writings XII, p. 334, he says:

V.S. Solovyov (1853-1900), who reviewed H.P.B.'s *The Key to Theosophy*, was an outstanding Russian philosopher and writer, most of whose writings have never yet been translated into English. He was the brother of Vsevolod S. Solovyov, the novelist, who, after a brief association with H.P.B. and the Theosophical Movement, became a bitter enemy.

What did this "outstanding" philosopher do, when he reviewed *The Key*? In the words of HPB:

the review by Mr. [Vladimir] Solovyov is no review at all, and not even ordinary criticism, but simply a wholesale *distortion of the book from the first paragraph to the last*, as much of its entirety as of the few and skillfully chosen points which have appeared to the critic as "especially curious." (CW XII, p. 335 "Neo-Buddhism")

Obviously the two brothers were against her.

In Sylvia Cranston's book, *The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky*, [she] quotes the following paragraph from a letter of Vs. Solovyov:

This absolute blindness on the part of people who were perfectly rational in everything but the question of "Madame's" impeccability, forced me finally to adhere to my original plan. Whatever came I would collect such proofs of all these deceptions as should be sufficient not only for me but for all these blind dupes. I would no longer give way to the involuntary sympathy and pity, which in spite of everything, still attracted me to Helena Petrovna. I would in the first place

deal only with Madame Blavatsky, the thief of souls, who was trying to steal my soul too. She was duping me under the veil of personal friendship and devotion; she was trying to entangle and exploit me; and so my hands were free. (pp. 304-305)

Mrs. Cranston's accounts on Solovyov are extant, and shows rather clearly the type of man he was. There will be many who upon reading these letters will be ignorant as to who the Solovyov brothers were. I truly hope that John Algeo and the editors will be more careful in their choice of material especially when they come to the era of the Coulombs.

In letter #7, the editor did write that "the genuineness of this letter has been questioned by a number of researchers", and we still can question it. No one who has read the life of H.P.B. can imagine her setting traps on people to elicit their secrets, hopes and plans for the so called good of Mother Russia. This goes completely against her character and morals, for she was, decidedly, not a deceitful person. Here we are told that the original is in the Central State Archive of the October Revolution, but it also seems that no one has read it. Are we to believe that she was using her "powers" to obtain secrets? Is this the same woman who worked for truth all her life?

Quoting from Jean O. Fuller's book *Blavatsky and her Teachers*, she says: "In it [i.e. *A Modern Priestess of Isis*], Solovioff claims it was Madame Blavatsky who offered him her services as a spy for Russia" (p. 187) while previous to this, Ms. Fuller quotes from a letter of Sinnett saying what HPB told him:

Solovioff is either crazy or acts so because having compromised himself with his *offer of espionage* to me he is now

afraid I should speak and compromise him at St. Petersburg . . .

Solovioff will not forgive me for rejecting his proposition. (British Museum, Additional MSS.45287, LXXX; *Letters*, p. 193) (p. 186)

Here we have again further discrepancies between what allegedly H.P.B. wrote according to Solovyov, and those of other people, including herself to Sinnett.

Perhaps we will never know the truth, but what do we, as Theosophists, gain in bringing out the dirt and lies promoted by others to bring down H.P.B. and possibly the movement. Don't we have a duty to our readers and fellow Theosophists to search for the truth, and if not available, then to ignore those letters, consider them inauthentic, and therefore not include them in HER collected letters? There is already so much controversy about these letters, that I feel one shouldn't add any more.

Karin D. Smith
Toronto, ON, Canada

In the above three letters one gets a fair sampling of what serious students think.

Brotherhood, that fabled *nucleus* to which we all aspire is entered as one climbs a *RAY*, as one walks up the Sunbeam to the World Soul. This journey to the Land of Truth is not made alone anymore than our physical Self can be achieved without a Parent.

“Seek for Him who is to give thee birth in the Hall of Wisdom.” To do this we must attune ourself to the Upadhyā's Mind. That attunement to the Master's Mind is done through the good offices of the *Mediator* — H. P. Blavatsky.

Therefore it is quite dangerous for the aspirant to spit back in the face of one's Teacher — one who takes the place

of Mother and Father, one who teaches you and I from Within-Without so that we may obtain and awaken the *inner faculties* for the acquisition of the *eternal wisdom*. The proof is in the pudding, the work is in the walking.

Those who belittle and obscure the Path opened up for us by the Mediator are, by their acts, by their *choices*, running loose and astray into the Lunar Path. They are our Brothers, Yes, but we cannot ignore the area mapped out by their *choices* — the underground triangle of the of the One Tree of Experience.

Volume I of the *Letters of Madame Blavatsky* exhibits such a series of *choices*, for it contains spurious material calculated to throw the mud of suspicion and contradiction upon the character of the Teacher.

This could be expected from an enemy, but from friends and fellow theosophists!?!?

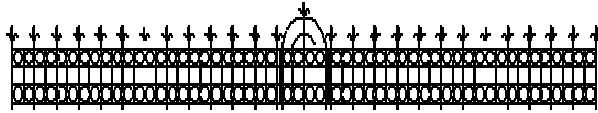
Letter 7 is so patently a fraud that one would have to be unaware of proven facts in Theosophical history to include it in a volume of letters claiming to originate from Madame Blavatsky.

The entire series of Solovyoff letters are fraudulent, originating as they do from a rejected supplicant for occult powers, a proven liar, and one who turned from *soi disant* friendship to bitter enemy.¹

Brotherhood is a word capable of much misuse, for “He who wipeth not away the filth with which the parent's body may have been defiled by an enemy neither loves the parent nor honours himself.”

¹ Beatrice Hastings in *Solovyoff's Fraud*, takes this man's career up point-by-point. Sylvia Cranston in the *H.P.B. Biography* gives more information. The first is available from *The Aquarian Theosophist*, the second from Theosophy Company, 245 West 33rd Street, Los Angeles, CA 90007-4108.

In due time friends of Madame Blavatsky will publish reliable texts. It was friends of HPB who originally printed a facsimile edition of *The Secret Doctrine* — something Adyar and Wheaton do not have even today. The same can be done with the *Letters*.



Madame Blavatsky to her Favorite Aunt

To N de Fadeyev

June 8, 1877¹

I have finished my article on Nirvana and the conceptions of the ancient Buddhists concerning God, the immortality of the soul, and cosmogony, as compared to the modern decadence of religious ideas.² The Editor seems to be very pleased. . . . To be sure, my Master helped me to write it, yet it took me only two evenings. I shall send it to you to look at; possibly someone will translate it for you. I wish Vera would translate it for the Russian press. The article is a good one. Its learning is so great that all the Orientalists will have tremblings in their

¹ "Some Letters of 'H. P. B.,'" *Theosophical Quarterly* Vol. 5, #1, July, 1907; pp. 11-15. Translated by Vera Jelihovsky, a niece of Madame Blavatsky who later married Charles Johnston — both being very actively involved with the *Theosophical Quarterly*. — ED., A.T.

² While this letter is dated June 1877 and "Madame Blavatsky on the Views of the Theosophists," appears in Feb. 1878, *The Spiritualist*, London, Feb. 1878, p. 68-69 (To be reprinted in December issue.), much of the subject matter is similar and does speak of man's *progress toward nirvana*. Also HPB had the help of a Master in writing it, or in the words of K.H.: "It was H.P.B. who, acting under the orders of Atrya ... was the first to explain in the *Spiritualist* the difference there was between *psyche* and *nous*, *nefesh* and *ruach* — Soul and Spirit. She had to bring the whole arsenal of proofs with her, quotations from Paul and Plato, from Plutarch and *James*, etc. before the *Spiritualist* admitted that the theosophists were right . . ." (*The Mahatma Letters*, p. 289).

legs. I also send you Turgenyeff's poem on "the game of croquet at Windsor."³ I have translated it and received compliments for it. Note please that your relative is called "an accomplished lady" in the editorial note. . . . Life in this country is pleasant, just because you can abuse anybody with perfect immunity, not merely the Pope, but even the Editor of the Presidential organ, the *New York Herald*. Yet he is an untold power here. However, print will stand anything! . . .

Do not ask me, friend, what I experience, and how these things come about, for I cannot explain anything clearly to you. I do not understand it all myself. One thing I do know: that toward my old age, I have become a bric-a-brac store for the accumulation of various disused objects of antiquity. *Somebody* comes, winding around me like a misty cloud, and then, in one turn sends me out of my body, and I am no more Helena Petrovna, General Blavatsky's faithful spouse, but somebody else, born in a different part of the world, strong and mighty; as to me, it seems as if I were sleeping meanwhile, or at least dozed; not *in* my body, but *beside it*, as if there was some kind of a thread only binding me to my body and not letting me go more than two paces from it. At other times I see clearly everything done by my body and I understand and *remember* what it says: I see awe, devotion, and fear in the faces of Olcott and others, and observe how the Master looks condescendingly at them out of my eyes, and speaks to them with my physical tongue, yet not with my brain but his own, which enwraps my brain like a cloud. I cannot tell you all, Nadya, and just because, though you are the best, most honest, and noblest of human beings, you are very religious, and you hold to the holy faith of your forefathers; as to me, though God sees

³ Reprinted in *Collected Works*, Vol. I, p. 253-54

that in reality I believe in the same things that you do, — yet I believe *in my* own way. You are accustomed to believe in the interpretations accepted by the Church, and the dogmas of orthodoxy, and though I feel that I *know* them correctly, and firmly, *I do not* understand them from the *human* point of view, but from the spiritual point of view, metaphysically, so to speak. For me, all the symbols, great and holy as they are in the eyes of the Christians, are still merely symbols invented by erring humanity for the sake of a surer and more universal comprehensibility. But I look *through* them — not at them — at their very spiritual significance, and in order to come nearer to this meaning, I do not even notice that often do I overturn the objective in order to reach the subjective the sooner. In my ideal, Christ has incarnated, not in Jesus only, but in humanity in its totality; and as His flesh was crucified, so must all human flesh be crucified, before man—the *inner* man, the Ego, — gets a chance to become the *real* man, the Adam Kadmon, the Heavenly man, of the Chaldean Kabbala. Christ is the symbol of the highest spirit of man, not of the soul. The soul is one thing, the spirit is another. There is a soul (*anima*) in every animal, in every infusoria; but the human spirit is a direct emanation of the Universal, Boundless, Endless Spirit of God, about which we sinful creatures ought not even to think, unless it be in the depth of our hearts, locking ourselves in solitude in the inner chamber, pronouncing His Name mentally, and by no means aloud. (Matthew VI, 5-23). The flesh is the devil, the only devil in the world. There can be no other objective devils of any kind; and the whole world — not our planet alone, but the universe, — is divided into three parts: first, pure spirit; second, half-spirit, half-matter; third, gross matter, our flesh. Every atom of matter (flesh) whether it is earthly, or belongs to the human body,

every grain of dust, before it reached its present aspect, was pure spirit, its own essence, so to speak. It is not in the crude material evolution of the physical world, as Darwin teaches it, that I believe, but in the double evolution, the spiritual walking hand in hand, and having always so walked, with the physical. In this I believe completely, just because I believe in the one Universal God, and the immutable logic and necessarianism of His laws, established once for all. This is why I do not believe in the creation of the world *ex nihilo*, nor in miracles, as the foundation of which we have to accept a temporary stoppage of these immutable laws. Do not be angry, but understand me. I *believe* in the *miracles*, the so-called miracles of both Christ and the Apostles, but I do not believe that the Supreme Power in Its own person, brought natural laws to a stoppage for their sake. These laws I do not understand in the sense of our foolish learned folk; for they have not yet dreamed of a tenth part of them, and it is not of natural, physical law I am speaking, but of *spiritual laws* which become manifest in all their power only when man, having become like unto bodiless spirits, has reached, like some miracle-workers, the divine point of his individuality. It is because of this that their own spirit, rid of every trace of the flesh and the devil, acquires the faculty *apparently* to work miracles. Can't you see that the basis for the springing up of all kinds of heresies consisted exactly in the fact of the Fathers of the Church having anathematized the ancient philosophical conception of the triple individuality of man, and the emanation of the Spirit of man from the essence of Divinity itself. This triple individuality was upheld and believed in by Origen, for which he was exiled, and even Irenaeus, in 178 A.D. Perchance it may be said that Origen was once upon a time a Neo-platonist, but Irenaeus hated this school, and for him the philosophers and Eclectics of

Alexandria were even worse than the Gnostics themselves, whom he so persistently fought. Yet what does he say? — "Carne, anima, spiritu, alteri quidam figurant, spiritu altero quod formatur, carne. Id vero quod inter haec est duo est anima, quae aliquando subsequens spiritum elevatur ab eo, aliquando autem consentiens carni in terrenos concupiscentias" (*Irenceus V. I.*) In other words, the altogether perfect man consists of body, soul and immoral spirit; the Soul stands as intermediary between them; 'Soul' in the Old Testament is *Nephesh*, which word, without either choice or sense is translated indifferently, 'Soul, life, blood' and various other terms; and when this soul, by the power of its own highest aspirations, holds more to its Supreme Spirit, well and good; but when it is more in sympathy with the flesh, the latter absorbs it in itself, and will ultimately bring it to perdition. *Per se*, the soul is not immortal. The soul outlives the man's body only for as long as is necessary for it to get rid of everything earthly and fleshly; then, as it is gradually purified, its essence comes into progressively closer union with the Spirit, which alone is immortal. The tie between them becomes more and more indissoluble. When the last atom of the earthly is evaporated, then this duality becomes a unity, and the Ego of the former man becomes forever immortal. But if whilst still in the flesh, the man has failed to prepare himself to part with joy from his perishable body, if the man has lived only his earthly life, and the fleshly thoughts have strangled all trace of spiritual life in him, he will not be born again; he will not see God (John iii, 3). Like a still-born child, he will leave the womb of earthly life, his mother, and after the death of his flesh he will be born not into a better world, but into the region of eternal death, because his *Soul* has ruined itself for ever, having destroyed its connection with the Spirit. The flesh has

triumphed, and the soul is carried downward, not upward.

And so not all of us human beings are immortal. As Jesus expresses it, we must take the Kingdom of Heaven by violence. Alas, my dear Madam, there are not many of the great parables of Christ which have been understood. Read in Matt. xiii, the parable of the seed, some of which fell by the wayside and the birds devoured them, and some brought forth a hundredfold, because their roots struck deep into their own spirit. As to the grains that were lost forever, they are human souls. Have you never met people who have long ago parted with their souls — people who have nothing left but their animal souls, and of whose spirit there is no more trace? I have met such. When their bodies die, these people will die forever. No resurrection for them, no future life, and not the strongest mediums could call them back any more, because they are nowhere to be found any more. Origen says the same thing. Consequently we are all trinities. Plato, Pythagoras and Plutarch all taught this; but so far these philosophers have been so little understood, that all their terminology is dreadfully mixed up. Both *nous* (immortal spirit) and *psyche* (soul), have been rendered by the same word, "soul;" in the *Acts of the Apostles* you will find the same thing. St. Paul clearly speaks of two principles; the soul and the spirit, but the translators have distorted everything. Look up the epistle of James, Our Lord's brother (Ch. iii. 15).

I do not know how it is translated in Russian, but in the Greek text you will find that James points out directly the kind of thing our soul is, by the following words: this wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, psychical, devilish. The human spirit (man's spiritual individuality) lights up the earthly man, the Adam of the second chapter of Genesis, from above, touching more or less his head only, and the soul (*Nephesh*)

has its seat in the blood and bones, throughout the body. The soul is the spiritual man, merely in the physiological sense. When the soul is imprisoned in a sinning body, it is as if in jail, and in order to get rid of its chains, it has progressively to aspire upward toward its spirit. The soul is a chameleon. It becomes a copy either of the spirit or of the body. In the first case, it acquires the faculty of separating itself from the body with ease,¹ and of setting forth, traveling all over the wide world, having left in the body a provision of vital forces, or animal, instinctive mental movements.

For it, there are no obstacles of either distance or matter. In the measure of its union with the spirit it becomes more or less clairvoyant. It may even become all-seeing and omniscient for a few earthly moments, or even hours. This is the secret of somnambulism and certain kinds of mediumism. But in the second case it is merely an animal soul. In it there is no clairvoyance, not even any glimpse of prescience; yet mediumism is by no means an indication of a man's holiness. It is merely a physiological phenomenon. Usually, the better the medium, the more delicate he is; yet it is not disease that comes as a result of mediumism, but the latter as the result of bodily weakness, of shattered nerves. The walls of the prison being down, the soul will find it easier to tear itself away and go forth into free space. A man may be a blackguard, like H---, and be the greatest of mediums; but in this case his soul will be obsessed by other souls, more or less sinful, in accord with the quality of his own; as is the pastor, so is the parish. But there are thousands of shades of mediumism, and

¹ The purified Kama-rupa becomes Mayavi-Rupa, a vehicle in which man can live and move and have his being. The purpose of philosophy is to learn how to die ahead of time — that is, purify the Kama-rupa. No light of Spirit can dispel the darkness of the nether soul unless all sense-of-self hath fled therefrom. — Ed. A.T.

they cannot all be enumerated in a letter. All the ancient philosophers knew this, and shunned mediumism to such an extent that it was strictly forbidden to admit mediums to the Eleusinian and other Mysteries: those who had a "familiar spirit." Socrates was higher and purer than Plato; yet the latter was initiated into the Mysteries, while Socrates was rejected, and in the course of time he was even doomed to die, because, though not initiated into the Mysteries, he revealed a part of them to the world through the agency of his daimonion, of which he himself was not consciously aware.

The Egyptians also divided man in the same way, and gave the name of *Nut*² to the one Spirit of God. It would seem that Anaxagoras was the first to borrow this name from them, and gave to the omnipotent spirit (Archê tês Kenêseôs) the name of *Nous*,³ or as he puts it, *Nous Autokrates*: "At the beginning of Creation," he says, "everything was in chaos; then appeared *Nous* and introduced order into this chaos." In his idea, *Nous* was the Spirit of God. The Logos was man, an emanation of *Nous*. The exterior senses could cognize phenomena, but *Nous* alone was capable of a mental contemplation of noumena, or subjective objects.

But you are probably tired of all this. I do not know how to write Russian, and cannot express everything I should like to, but, dear soul, please do not imagine that I have become even worse than I used to be in regard to religious matters. Now there is more religion in me than ever before. *Master is teaching me*, and I am irresistibly drawn to study, to know, to learn....

² In the *Glossary*, p. 234, this is spelled *Nout*. *Nous*, the Higher Mind, the self-moving Mind.

³ "The Mind or Spirit self-potent;" this creative Principle being of course the *primum mobile* of everything in the Universe — its Soul and Ideation.

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