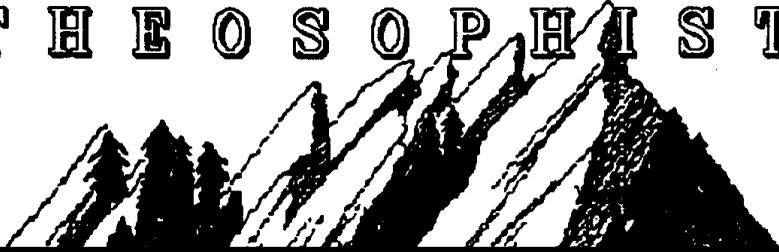


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We continue this month with the third installment of

**Modern Theosophy
Origins and Intentions**
by
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THE SECRET DOCTRINE -- THE GREAT SACRIFICE

Never was an undertaking of such magnitude brought to a successful conclusion under such adversity. Before this statement can be understood it is necessary to put the writing of *The Secret Doctrine* into an historical context.

The Theosophical Society had been founded in New York in 1875 and soon afterwards, in 1877, H.P.B had published her *Isis Unveiled*, a first attempt to bring to the notice of the educated public something of Esoteric Science (Occultism). Up to that time this science had been pursued in separate ways in various countries, both Eastern and Western. Those interested in the subject had, through their literature, made available some knowledge of some of its aspects. *Isis* was in effect a collation of much of this knowledge, with a mass of added illustrative material and commentary which indicated a common underlying source of the normally little known material.



After the publication of Isis H.P.B. produced a large number of articles dealing with subjects associated with the occult. Through these she slowly affected people's thinking, adding a new dimension to conventional views.

In the meantime the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society had been moved to India, near Bombay. In 1882 it again moved its Headquarters to Adyar near Madras. During 1883 Olcott (the President) was particularly busy touring and lecturing in India whilst H.P.B. continued with her literary work.

In February 1884 a party including Olcott and H.P.B. travelled to Europe where, for a time, they settled in Paris. It was here that, according to records, work on *The Secret Doctrine* began. The party returned to India at the end of 1884 but in February 1885 H.P.B. fell gravely ill and was advised to leave India for health reasons. This she did on March 31st, sailing first to Naples and then travelling on to Wurzburg in Germany. It was here that further work on the S.D. was done. In July 1886 she moved to Ostend, presumably at the instigation of her Masters, where she continued the writing. She was looked after competently for much of the time in both Wurzburg and Ostend by Constance, the Countess Wachtmeister, from Sweden.

In May of 1887 she transferred her

residence to London and there continued her work but she now had as editorial assistants Mr. Bertram Keightley and Dr. Archibald Keightley. The S.D. was eventually published in the late autumn of 1888 when, incidentally, the Esoteric Section of the Society was established.

This mere statement of places where H.P.B. did her writing gives no indication of the endless difficulties she had to overcome and the superhuman determination she had to maintain in order to continue her writing.

The book itself is, by any standards, a masterpiece and anyone reading it, whilst marvelling at its content, would have no reason to suspect what lay behind its writing. During the periods of its actual writing, H.P.B. was attended by a number of people but principally by the Countess Wachtmeister.

It was she who recorded her experiences of the time she was with H.P.B. during the book's production, in *Reminiscences of H.P. Blavatsky and the Secret Doctrine*, published in 1893, only two years after H.P.B.'s death.

Apart from describing the main events that overtook H.P.B. during this gigantic task, the Countess gives many intimate details of H.P.B.'s life at the time. We are shown how H.P.B. reacted to the treachery of friends, the accusations against her by

Mr. Hodgson in his report to the Psychical Research Society of London, and so on. These are all very vividly told. Only a few of the incidents of those related by the Countess and others have been used here.

The sacrifices that H.P.B. made in order to complete her great work are illustrated by two incidents. One of them took place at the end of January 1885 when H.P.B. still in Adyar, became gravely ill. Of this Mrs. Cooper-Oakley who was attending H.P.B. at the time, had the following to say:

Very anxious were the hours and days of nursing that I went through those three weeks, as she grew worse and worse and was finally given up in a state of coma by the doctors. It proves how wonderful was the protective influence of HPB, ill or well; for though I was completely isolated with her near the roof of the house ... yet night after night I wandered up and down the flat roof, to get a breath of fresh air between 3 and 4 am., and wondered as I watched the daylight break over the Bay of Bengal, why I felt so fearless even with her lying apparently at the point of death; I never could imagine a sense of fear coming near HPB

Finally came the anxious night when the doctors gave her up, and said that nothing could be done, it was impossible. She was then in a state of coma and had been so for some hours. The doctors said that she would pass away in that condition, and I knew, humanly speaking, that that night's watch must be the last. ...

I cannot here go into what happened, an experience I can never forget; but towards 8 am. HPB suddenly opened her

eyes and asked for her breakfast, the first time she had spoken naturally for two days. I went to meet the doctor, whose amazement at the change was very great. HPB said, "Ah! Doctor, you do not believe in our great Masters."

The following experience of Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, which she refrained from mentioning, was witnessed by others. During the evening:

... in the outer room there sat whispering the two Cooper-Oakleys, Damodar Mavalankar, Bawaji D. Nath and Dr. Franz Hartmann, waiting for any call from HPB.

Suddenly there appeared on the verandah the Master M. fully materialized; he passed quickly through the outer room into HPB's room. Meanwhile, those in the outer room withdrew ... When HPB recovered, she told her intimate friends how her Master had come and given her two choices - the first, to die and pass on into peace, with the end of her martyrdom, and the second, to live on a few years more to [write] *The Secret Doctrine*. [*The Extraordinary Life and influence of Helena Blavatsky*, by Sylvia Cranston, 281]

This incident demonstrates that, whatever might befall her afterwards, she would live in order to complete the *S.D.*, whereas she might have died and been at peace.

There are one or two indications that, in the early days, the *S.D.* was going to be modelled on *Isis* but much enlarged. There

is a reference in an article by W.Q. Judge in which the following appears:

Every convenience was given to our beloved friend and though she continued her writing (this was in Paris in 1884), while I at her request carefully read over, sitting in the same room, *Isis Unveiled*, making indices [as to subject matter] at the foot of each page as she intended to use it in preparing *The Secret Doctrine*.

A circumstance referred to earlier which has to be included in the historical background was the publication by the Society for Psychical Research in London of a report by a Mr. Hodgson whom the S.P.R. had sent to Adyar to investigate the H.P.B. phenomena. This was issued in October 1885. Its importance is that, for those who accepted as fact what Mr. Hodgson had said, the report justified his view that H.P.B. was a fraud and that she was spying for Russia. This report has been widely circulated, quoted and generally accepted.

However, it has since been shown to be very inaccurate. Mr. Hodgson did not take evidence properly and a modern examination of it by Dr. Vernon Harrison recently published in May 1997 completely vindicates H.P.B. The report had very wide repercussions and became regarded as authoritative.

It was held to be official right up till the present time by many influential people, in reference books and in much that was later written about H.P.B. It seriously af-

fected the opinions of academicians who might otherwise have taken respectful notice of such an erudite work as *The Secret Doctrine* and much else that she wrote.

Some of the circumstances surrounding the actual writing of the *SD* are described in Countess Wachtmeister's *Reminiscences* in some considerable detail; she recounts a number of interesting incidents.

The first attempts at writing were made in Paris in 1884. Then for a time H.P.B. went back to India but left Adyar finally in March 1885, having added something to her *The Secret Doctrine* manuscript in the meantime.

It was after leaving Adyar in March 1885 that she went to Europe. It seems that her Master had had some acquaintance with Wurzburg where she stayed for some months. There she was fairly comfortably ensconced in a suite of rooms. She had previously spent some time with a Mme. Gebhard in Elberfeld in Germany but the serious work on the *S.D.* was done in Wurzburg.

Countess Wachtmeister supervised all the domestic details. She was used to looking after a household and provided the conditions for H.P.B. to work in, these being that H.P.B. should have as few interruptions, irritations and annoyances as possible.

When such conditions had been es-

established H.P.B. would say that the ‘currents’ between her and the Masters had been set up. There was evidence of these currents working by way of a series of perfectly regular taps. Other indicators were the ringing of astral bells.

These currents were seemingly necessary to allow H.P.B. to read in the Astral Light from the astral counterpart of books the passages which she needed to consult and incorporate in the S.D.

To all these excerpts references were given and the majority of them were checked, even if the works from which they came were, for example, in the Vatican, the Bodleian or the British Museum libraries. The Countess tells how, in one or two cases, she was able to help with the verification of some references.

Another semi-amusing illustration of the use of these currents happened thus:

H.P.B. and the Countess were sharing sleeping accommodation with merely a screen between the beds. H.P.B. had a bedside oil lamp which was normally turned out on her retiring.

One night, however, the Countess noticed that this light was on so she went and turned it out. Hardly had she done so than it flared up again. Thinking she had not extinguished it properly she went back and turned the wick right down so that no ves-

tige of flame was left.

Hardly had she got back to her side of the room than the lamp flared up again. Again she turned the lamp down and again it flared up; this time in the light of it she saw a brown hand on the wick control and knew thereby that a chela had been instructed to keep the lamp going.

This more than puzzled her so she thought she would seek an explanation from H.P.B. and called her name. She had to do this a number of times before H.P.B. awoke and then it was in great distress. She asked the Countess why she had called her back when she had been with her Master, saying that she might have killed her by so doing. At this of course the Countess was very contrite.

Another time W.Q. Judge was sharing a room adjacent to H.P.B.’s workroom. One night he noticed on waking up at an odd hour that there were some pieces of card on H.P.B.’s desk that he was sure were not there when she went to sleep. These cards had a series of symbols on them and they were there in the morning. He asked H.P.B. about them.

She replied, “The Master has been and left my instructions for the work that I have to do today”.

Later when the writing of the book was much further advanced, one of the Keightleys, who was then editing it as it

was being written by H.P.B., would sometimes when he started work in the morning find sheets of manuscripts which he knew she had not written. The Masters had either written or caused them to be written and deposited on H.P.B.'s desk. It was notable that such manuscript required very little if any editing or correction.

Another witness to such a phenomenon (during H.P.B.'s stay in Wurzburg) was Dr. Hubbe-Schlieden who writes:

I saw a good deal of the well-known blue K.H. handwriting as corrections and annotations on her manuscript as well as in books that lay occasionally on her desk. And I noticed this principally in the morning before she had commenced to work. I slept on the couch in her study after she had withdrawn for the night and the couch stood only a few feet from her desk.

I remember well my astonishment one morning when I got up to find a great many pages of foolscap covered with that blue pencil handwriting lying on her own manuscript, at her place on her desk.

How these pages got there I do not know, but I did not see them before I went to sleep, and no person had been bodily in the room during the night, for I am a light sleeper. [*Reminiscences*, 112/31]

H.P.B. and the Countess were in Ostend, in the autumn of 1885, where again H.P.B. had some comfortable rooms, when the Hodgson report was issued. This caused H.P.B. considerable distress not only because the report itself made her out to be a

fraud but because many members of the Society had written to her indicating that they accepted what Hodgson said. This caused her great pain.

She said to the Countess one evening, 'You can't imagine what it is to feel so many adverse thoughts and currents directed against you: it is like the pricking of a thousand needles and I have continually to be erecting a wall of protection around me'.

The Countess asked whether she knew from whom these unfriendly thoughts came and she answered,

'Yes, unfortunately I do and I am always trying to shut my eyes so as to not see and know'. Afterwards on occasions incidents proved that what H.P.B. had seen was true.

As to how she received information on many abstruse points for the writing of the book, the Countess gives the following account:

As she lent back enjoying her cigarette and the sense of relief from arduous effort [this effort meant that she had spent some hours before she got a passage that she was copying from the Astral Light correctly], I rested on the arm of her great chair and asked her how it was she could make mistakes in setting down what was given to her. She said:

"Well you see, what I do is this. I make

what I can only describe as a sort of vacuum in the air before me, and fix my sight and my will upon it, and soon after scene after scene passes before me like the successive pictures of a diorama, or, if I need a reference or information from some book, I fix my mind intently, and the astral counterpart of the book appears, and from it I take what I need." [*Reminiscences*, 331

When conditions for her writing had been established as she wanted them and there were not too many interruptions and annoyances by way of treacherous correspondence H.P.B.'s writing routine was to start early in the morning, typically it seems around 7 am, to have breakfast at 8 am. and to work through to midday when her main meal was served, then continue again until 7 p.m. On occasions she would work on into the night, maybe also having missed her midday meal.

All her writing was done by hand with pen and ink. On one occasion she could not get the type of ink that she liked so having a suitable recipe she acquired the necessary ingredients and set up what she called an ink factory.

It is difficult to imagine that, as well as her virtually continuous work on *The Secret Doctrine* which necessarily entailed hours of close concentration, she managed to produce, first while she was in India, articles for *The Theosophist* which she had founded, and later, in September 1887, when she was in Europe, articles for a new magazine *Lucifer*. Apart from articles for these two journals she wrote copiously for

newspapers and magazines including many in Russian. ...

Those who had access to H.P.B.'s manuscript as she wrote it were amazed at the number of quotations from a wide variety of other works by many authors.

Dr. Archibald Keightley was one, and later, when H.P.B. had gone to England, he commented:

I knew there was no library to consult and I could see that H.P.B.'s own books did not amount to thirty in all, of which several were dictionaries and several works counted two or more volumes. At this time I did not see the Stanzas of Dzyan though there were several pieces of the Occult Catechism included in the manuscript.

An indication of what this sustained effort cost H.P.B. is instanced in a few passages in Countess Wachtmeister's book. H.P.B. writes:

Ever since you [the Countess] went away, I have felt as though either paralysis or a split in the heart would occur. I am cold as ice and four doses of digitalis in one day could not quiet the heart.

Well, let me only finish my Secret Doctrine. Last night, instead of going to bed I was made to write until 1 o'clock. The triple Mystery is given out - one I had thought they would never have given out - that of

There was another occasion also when she was trying to reproduce a passage out

of a book which she was seeing in the Astral Light but she only managed to get it down correctly after trying many times. Only then did the Master say that she had got it right. This was at the end of a long day when she was already very tired.

As well as her virtually continual writing for the S.D. and articles, she was always concerned for the well-being of the Theosophical Society and interested in what was going on in the various Sections which had been founded round the world.

One of these which particularly concerned her was the English Section. When the writing of *The Secret Doctrine* was nearing completion she was in England.

On one occasion she put in an unexpected appearance at the newly formed Blavatsky Lodge in London. This caused some consternation but she resolved some difficulties in leadership that had arisen.

The Countess is very careful to point out that not everything about H.P.B. whilst she was occupied in her stupendous task was doom and gloom. The Countess recounts how H.P.B. must have had compensations because she lived much in the inner worlds and there saw sights and visions which compensated for the dreariness of her daily life.

She had, however, a distraction of rather a peculiar nature. In front of her writing table, attached to the wall, was a

cuckoo clock, and this used to behave in a very extraordinary manner. Sometimes it would strike like a loud gong, then sigh and groan as if possessed, cuckooing in the most unexpected way.

Our maid, Louise, who was the most dense and apathetic of mortals, was very much afraid of it, and told us solemnly one day that she thought the devil was in it.

“Not that I believe in the devil”, she said, “but this cuckoo almost speaks to me at times”.

And so it did: One evening I went into the room and saw what appeared to me like streams of electric light coming out of the clock in all directions.

On telling H.P.B. she replied, “Oh, it is only the spiritual telegraph, they are laying it on stronger to-night on account of tomorrow’s work”. Living in this atmosphere and coming into contact so continually with these, usually unseen forces, this all seemed the true reality to me, and the outer world was that which appeared vague and unsatisfactory.

All who have known and loved HPB. have felt what a charm there was about her, how truly kind and loveable she was; at times such bright childish nature seemed to beam around her, and the spirit of joyous fun would sparkle in her whole countenance, and cause the most winning expression that I have ever seen on a human face.

Towards the end of H.P.B.'s time in Ostend she had some intimations from the Masters that she should go either to England or be near it.

The writing of *The Secret Doctrine* was nearing completion as far as the first two volumes went and they had given her instructions that she was to form a small group of students to whom she was to teach some of the rudiments of Occultism.

The second incident when the Masters intervened to save her life, so that she could continue her work took place in Ostend, and after H.P.B. had agreed they [were to keep (ed. HCT)] her alive for a few more years.

Before she left for England she had another bout of severe illness. The Countess gives a very moving account of this. It is illustrative of H.P.B.'s willingness to accept any sacrifice necessary to finish her work. The Countess records:

“To my great distress, I now began to notice that she became drowsy and heavy in the middle of the day, and often was unable to work for an hour together. This increased rapidly, and as the doctor who attended her pronounced it to be an affection [infection?] of the kidneys, I became alarmed, and sent a telegram to Madame Gebhard to tell her of my apprehensions, and to beg her to come and help me. I felt that the responsibility was too great for me to cope with alone. ...

When she [Madame Gebhard] came I felt as if a great burden had been lifted from my shoulders. In the meanwhile H.P.B. was getting worse, and the Belgian doctor, who was kindness itself, tried one remedy after

another, but with no good result, and I began to get seriously alarmed and anxious as to what course I should adopt. H.P.B. was in a heavy lethargic state, she seemed to be unconscious for hours together and nothing could rouse or interest her.

Finally a bright inspiration came to me. In the London group I knew there was a Doctor Ashton Ellis, so I telegraphed him, described the state that H.P.B. was in, and entreated him to come without delay....

The next day there was a consultation between the two doctors. The Belgian doctor said that he had never known a case of a person with the kidneys attacked as H.P.B.'s were, living as long as she had done, and that he was convinced that nothing could save her. He held out no hope of her recovery.

Mr. Ellis replied that it was exceedingly rare for anyone to survive so long in such a state. He further told us that he had consulted a specialist before coming to Ostend who was of the same opinion, but advised that, in addition to the prescribed medicine, he should try massage, so as to stimulate the paralysed organs. ...

The night passed quietly, and several times the following day Mr. Ellis massaged her until he was quite exhausted; but she got no better, and to my horror I began to detect that peculiar faint odour of death which sometimes precedes dissolution.

I hardly dared hope that she would live through the night, and while I was sitting alone by her bedside she opened her eyes and told me how glad she was to die, and that she thought the Master would let her

be free at last.

Still she was very anxious about her *Secret Doctrine*. I must be most careful of her manuscripts and hand all over to Col. Olcott with directions to have them printed. She had hoped that she would have been able to give more to the world, but the Master knew best.

And so she talked on at intervals, telling me many things. At last she dropped off into a state of unconsciousness, and I wondered how it would all end.

It seemed to me impossible that she should die and leave her work unfinished; and then, again, the Theosophical Society ... what would become of it?

How could it be that the Master who was at the head of that Society should allow it to crumble away. True, it might be the outcome of the Karma of the members, who through their falseheartedness and faint-heartedness had brought the Theosophical Society to such a point that there was no more vitality in it, and so it had to die out, only to be revived in the course of the next century.

Still the thought came to me that the Master had told H.P.B. that she was to form a circle of students around her and that she was to teach them. How could she do that if she were to die? And then I opened my eyes and glanced at her and thought, was it possible that she who had slaved, suffered and striven so hard should be allowed to die in the middle of her work?

What would be the use of all her self-sacrifice and the agony she had gone through if the work of her life were not to be completed?

Day after day she had suffered tortures, both of mind and body: of mind through the falsity and treachery of those who had called themselves her friends and then had slandered her behind her back, casting stones at her while they in their ignorance thought she would never know the hand that had thrown them; and of the body, because she was compelled to remain in a form which should have disintegrated two years previously in Adyar, if it had not been held together by occult means when she decided to live on and work for those who were still to come into the Theosophical Society.

None of those who knew her, really understood her. Even to me, who had been alone with her for so many months, she was an enigma, with her strange powers, her marvellous knowledge, her extraordinary insight into human nature, and her mysterious life, spent in regions unknown to ordinary mortals, so that though her body might be near, her soul was often away in communication with others.

Many a time have I observed her thus and known that only the shell of her body was present.

Such were the thoughts which passed through my mind, as I sat hour after hour that anxious night, watching her as she seemed to be getting weaker and weaker.

A wave of blank despondency came over me, as I felt how truly I loved this noble woman, and I realized how empty life would be without her. No longer to have her affection and her confidence would be a most severe trial. My whole soul rose in rebellion at the thought of losing her, . . . I gave a bitter cry and knew

no more.

Then I opened my eyes, the early morning light was stealing in, and dire apprehension came over me that I had slept, and that perhaps H.P.B. had died during my sleep - died whilst I was untrue to my vigil.

I turned round towards the bed in horror and there I saw H.P.B. looking at me calmly with her clear grey eyes, as she said, "Countess, come here".

I flew to her side. "What has happened, H.P.B. - you look so different to what you did last night". She replied, "Yes, Master has been here; He gave me my choice, that I might die and be free if I would, or I might live and finish *The Secret Doctrine*.

He told me how great would be my sufferings and what a terrible time I would have before me in England (for I am to go there); but when I thought of those students to whom I shall be permitted to teach a few things, and of the Theosophical Society in general, to which I have already given my heart's blood, I accepted the sacrifice, and now to make it complete, fetch me some coffee and something to eat, and give me my tobacco box.
[*Reminiscences*, 71/5]

The Keightleys eventually persuaded her to go to London and found for her a small house, Maycott, in Norwood. They duly saw to the packing up of her possessions and her manuscript which, however, was done with considerable difficulty as H.P.B. did not stop work until a few hours before the party was due to leave for London and during that time she was continu-

ally asking them for material that had already been packed. It seems that so intent was she on her work that she did not want to waste any time at all.

The same thing happened at the other end on arrival at Maycott - almost before her belongings were established in the house she had restarted her writing.

H.P.B. complained bitterly about the smallness of the rooms in Maycott and it was not long afterwards that a house in Lansdowne Road, Notting Hill was acquired for her. Here she had more space and occupied most of the ground floor.

It was during her stay here that she held many of the soirees for which she became well known. All sorts of people visited her in the evenings after her day's work was done. The Countess tells how H.P.B. was accustomed, when her actual writing was finished for the day, to relax by playing patience.

It was at Lansdowne Road that H.P.B. handed her precious manuscript, a pile over three feet high, to Archibald and Bertram Keightley to arrange and edit.

She asked them to do this work as if it were their own but they both expressed far too much respect for what H.P.B. had done to do that. Nevertheless, the work of arranging the material was very great. It involved both uncle and nephew in the im-

mense task of just reading the manuscript, which of course was in H.P.B's handwriting.

They caused the whole manuscript to be type-written by a professional. It appears that this was double-spaced and provided opportunity for H.P.B. to make considerable alterations, which she continued to do right up to the time when the whole work was set up in type ready for printing. The cost of alterations alone because of this was considerable.

As to the content of *The Secret Doctrine*, little can be said. In an article devoted wholly to the circumstances of its writing but amongst the people who visited H.P.B. was the editor of a journal known as Piccadilly. There is an article in the Countess' book dated December 1888 wherein the author explains how he went to see Mme Blavatsky and how in the evening he attended one of her discourses. He said that,

I found her chez elle at Notting Hill, seated at a table covered with green baize, which she presently makes use of as a blackboard for illustrating her discourse. She is smoking a cigarette; so too are many of those (of both sexes) who are listening to her exposition of the knotty questions which have been propounded.

The subject under discussion as we enter is the definition of "spirit," and presently growing more eloquent and warm as the questions are pressed further and

further back into the regions of the unmanifested, she propounds to us the vast evolution of the soul, the descent of the spirit into matter, and its journey through the manifested universe back to the eternal first cause.

Beginning with this first cause - the causeless cause - which is everywhere yet nowhere; having neither length, breadth, nor height, and represented by a mathematical point, she expounds in Eastern science phraseology the "Days and Nights of Brahma", the outbreathing and inbreathing of the spirit by means of which the manifested universe comes into existence.

This leads on to a discussion on the origins of the Universe, some deep metaphysical exposition, the sevenfold nature of the Cosmos, Unity, Self Consciousness the tremendous evolutionary process, and so on.

Such is but a brief and imperfect sketch of the eloquent words that fall from the lips of this gifted woman. All listen with eager attention, albeit the strain on the imagination is a severe one. To her it is the A B C of the matter, but when she has somewhat relaxed, we forgive the man who exclaimed, "Ah! our Board Schools have not educated us up to that!"

In effect this is a succinct impression of what is virtually the vast content of *The Secret Doctrine*, wherein, however, the teaching is elaborated, enlarged and spelt out in considerable detail with many illustrations.

There are those who, even though well acquainted with the content of the *S.D.*, still regard it as the work of maybe an extraordinarily gifted and clever woman but one not essentially different from other great writers on religion or philosophy.

The one thing that is very apparent to the openminded student of the *S.D.* is that it bears the stamp of a knowledge and authority going beyond ordinary learning.

There have been many who have been loth to acknowledge that it may have been written, at any rate in large part, by one or more of the Masters of the Wisdom, but we do have the following certificates that were sent to Dr. Hubbe-Schlieden. The first certificate¹ alluded to runs thus:

I wonder if this note of mine is worthy of occupying a select spot with the documents reproduced, and which of the peculiarities of the 'Blavatskian' style of writing it will be found to most resemble?

The present is simply to satisfy the doctor that 'the more proof given the less believed'. Let him take my advice and not make these two documents public. It is for his own satisfaction.

The undersigned is happy to assure him that *The Secret Doctrine*, when ready, will be the triple production of [here are the names of one of the Masters and of H.P.B.] and --- most humble servant", [signed by the other].

On the back of this was the follow-

ing, signed by the Master² who is mentioned in the above:

If this can be of any use or help to ---, though I doubt it, I, the humble undersigned Faquir, certify that The Secret Doctrine is dictated to [name of H.P.B.] partly by myself and partly by my brother -

A year after this, certain doubts having arisen in the minds of individuals, another letter³ from one of the signers of the foregoing was sent, and read[s] as follows:

As the prophecy in it has come true, It is now the time to publish it for the benefit of those who know something of how to take and understand such letters. For the outsider it will all be so much nonsense:

"The certificate given last year, saying that The Secret Doctrine would be, when finished, the triple production of [H.P.B.'s name], --- and myself, was and is correct, although some have doubted not only the facts given in it, but also the authenticity of the message in which it was contained.

Copy this, and also keep the copy of the afore-said certificate. You will find them both of use on the day when you shall, as will happen without your asking, receive from the hands of the very person to whom the certificate was given, the original for the purpose of allowing you to copy it; and then you can verify the correctness of this presently forwarded copy.

And it may then be well to indicate to those wishing to know what portions in The Secret Doctrine have been copied by the pen of [H.P.B.'s name] into its pages,

though without quotation marks, from my own manuscript and perhaps from ---, though the last is more difficult from the rarity of his known writing and greater ignorance of his style. All this and more will be found necessary as time goes on, but for which you are well qualified to wait". [*The Path*, April 1893]

Needless to say, when the book was eventually published there were many appreciations of it, particularly by those who had been concerned in its production, and whereas much inspiring material may be taken out of those appreciations, perhaps this paragraph by Bertram Keightley sums it up adequately:

Of the value of the work, posterity must judge finally. Personally I can only place on record my profound conviction that when studied thoroughly but not treated as a revelation, when understood and assimilated but not made a text for dogma, H.P.B.'s *Secret Doctrine* will be found of incalculable value, and will furnish suggestions, clues, and threads of guidance, for the study of Nature and Man, such as no other existing work can supply.

End Notes

1. *Letters From The Masters Of The Wisdom*, 2nd Series - 126. The last sentence reads: It is for his own satisfaction that the undersigned is happy to assure him that *The Secret Doctrine* when ready, will be the triple production of M. . ., Upasika and the Doctor's humble servant.

SECRET DOCTRINE QUESTION AND ANSWER SECTION CONDUCTED BY GEOFFREY A. BARBORKA

Readers of *The Canadian Theosophist* are invited to participate in this feature by sending their questions c/o The Editors to be forwarded to Mr. Barborka.

Question. Here is a citation from *The Secret Doctrine*:

"Three distinct representations of the Universe in its three distinct aspects are impressed upon our thought by the esoteric philosophy: the *PRE-EXISTING* (evolved from); the *EVER-EXISTING*; and the *PHENOMENAL*-the world of illusion, the reflection, and shadow thereof. During the great mystery and drama of life known as the Manvantara, real Kosmos is like the object placed behind the white screen upon which are thrown the Chinese shadows, called forth by the magic lantern. The actual figures and things remain invisible, while the wires of evolution are pulled by the unseen hands; and men and things are thus but the reflections, *on* the white field, of the realities *behind* the snares of *Mahamaya*, or the great Illusion." (I, 278; I, 298 3rd ed.; I, 320-1, 6 vol. ed.)

Please explain Mahamaya in this passage.

Answer. Before considering Mahamaya, let us focus attention upon the

grand concepts that are presented in this citation which, one may state, are not usually considered in Western philosophy. Yet these are fundamental concepts in the Esoteric Philosophy.

The Western mind is tempted to query: How can the Pre-Existing evolve from the Ever-Existing? The clue to the understanding of this statement hinges upon the significance of the concept of evolution, as considered in the Esoteric Philosophy.

In this case the Esoteric Philosophy is not considering evolution in connection with the “form-side” (or matter), but rather with the “spirit-side”. Consequently the word “evolution” is used in its original Latin significance, namely as unrolling, or unwrapping, or emanating potencies and powers which are inherent in what is termed the Ever-Existing; hence these potencies give rise to the Pre-Existing.

Similarly the Phenomenal is unrolled from the Pre-Existing; and the consequent manifestation is termed “the world of illusion”, for the simple reason that it represents the “shadow” rather than the Reality.

Mahamaya means literally “the great Illusion.” It is so termed in contradistinction to the Ever-Existing. Could the latter be cognized in its fullness in connection with the Pre-Existing and the phenomenal world, it would be tantamount to visioning Reality. Nevertheless, so long as the phe-

nomenal world is visioned there is little likelihood that the Ever-Existing may be cognized.

However, here is the point in connection with Mahamaya: it is not as though there is just a single illusion which one may easily surmount; there are several “levels”, or differing “fields of force,” to use a modern scientific expression.

Consequently, while one might surmount a maya (or illusion) on one of the lower levels, there are increasing difficulties in surmounting maya on the “higher” fields of force.

Here “lower” and “higher” are relative terms, simply used in order to give illustrative examples, so that the intended meaning may be rendered more clearly.

Question. But how may one surmount a Maya -- adopting your phraseology?

Answer. The best manner of explaining how this may be done is to make use of the definition of a Maya, which is so frequently utilized in the Orient.

At dusk while walking in a village in the Orient, on approaching a dark corner a traveller jumps back hastily because he thought he saw a coiled snake prepared to spring at him. But as the moon comes out from behind a cloud, its light enables him to see that what he thought was a snake

was simply a coil of rope. The traveller was the victim of Maya -- an illusion.

When his mind grasped the significance that the coil of rope was not a serpent the maya was surmounted -- there is no longer an illusion. Thus the corrective thought enabled him to transcend the maya.

Therefore, one method of surmounting maya is that of creating a thought -- pattern of sufficient intensity to supersede illusion.

Question. In connection with the afterdeath states, we are told that when we die the Reincarnating Ego (a) is withdrawn into the Monad (b). I suppose that an analogous condition occurs when we fall asleep (c).

Now my question: What causes the human Ego (d) to leave the tired body: is it the Ego (e) itself, or the Reincarnating Ego (a)?

Answer. Before giving a definite answer to the question, the terms must be clarified. These will be referred to by the corresponding letters which have been added after the terms used in the query.

(a) The Reincarnating Ego signifies Higher Manas

(b) The Monad is equivalent to Atma-Buddhi; in the after-death states the Monad often is referred to as

Atma-Buddhi-Higher Manas as the three-in-one.

(c) "When we fall asleep" it is the personality which sleeps.

H. P. Blavatsky has given an excellent description of what happens when we fall asleep: first referring to the personality, or the outer man, then to the higher Ego which is referred to as the real man, i.e., the Reincarnating Ego.

"We admit the existence of an immortal Ego in mortal man, independent of the physical body . . . during sleep there remains only an animated form of clay, whose powers of independent thinking are utterly paralyzed . . .

"For our Ego lives its own, separate life within its prison of clay whenever it becomes free from the trammels of matter, i.e., during the sleep of the physical man. This Ego it is which is the actor, the real man, the true human self. But the physical man **cannot** feel or be conscious during dreams; for the personality, the outer man, with its brain and thinking apparatus, are paralyzed more or less completely."

H P. Blavatsky Collected Writings, Vol. X, p. 247)

(d) The human Ego: this term is equivalent to the personality, with particular attention directed to the egoic portion, often referred to as Lower Manas; specifi-

cally Kama-Manas in contradistinction to Buddhi-Manas-Higher Manas or the Reincarnating Ego.

(a) “The Ego” here signifies the human Ego, the personality and not the Reincarnating Ego.

Referring now to the statement covering (a) and (b). It should be borne in mind that the withdrawal of the Reincarnating Ego into the Monad (using the phrase of the questioner) does not take place until the Second Death has occurred, in the afterdeath states, and not with the death of the physical body.

Then reference is made to the analogous condition between sleep and death. While this is so, up to a certain point -- for as the ancient Greeks expressed it, sleep and death are brothers -- there is this difference: during sleep the silver cord is not ruptured, in that the higher triad is not separated from the lower quaternary.

When death occurs the silver cord is loosed (as the Bible phrases it).

Now to the principal part of the question. Omitting consideration of the stand taken by people who regard existence on earth as limited to but one earth-life, so accustomed have we become to viewing human life on earth from the standpoint of the personality, because of the all absorbing demands placed upon one’s calling and

environment, that we neglect to view earthlife from the standpoint of the Monad, which has its cycle of activity to follow (as expressed in one of the *Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, [23A] p. I76).

The matter is admirably presented in *The Secret Doctrine* in this manner:

“Intimately, or rather indissolubly, connected with Karma, then, is the law of re-birth, or of the reincarnation of the same spiritual individuality in a long, almost interminable, series of personalities. The latter are like the various costumes and characters played by the same actor, with each of which that actor identifies himself and is identified by the public, for the space of a few hours.” (II, 306; III, p. 307, 6 vol. ed.; II, 320, 3rd ed..)

Under normal conditions -- barring accidents and calamities which cause untimely deaths -- it is the Reincarnating Ego that withdraws from the physical body, and the Gradual withdrawal is represented in the physical body by the aging processes.

The conclusive statement that the Reincarnating Ego is the determining factor in the withdrawal, is obtained by regarding what occurs at the moment of death in connection with the process that takes place before incarnation. It is described by H. P. Blavatsky:

“At the solemn moment of death ev-

ery man, even when death is sudden, sees the whole of his past life marshalled before him, in its minutest details. For one short instant the *personal* becomes one with the *individual* and all-knowing *Ego*.

But this instant is enough to show to him the whole chain of causes which have been at work during his life.

He sees and now understands himself as he is, unadorned by flattery or self-deception. He reads his life, remaining as a spectator looking down into the arena he is quitting; he feels and knows the justice of all the suffering that has overtaken him . . .

“As the man at the moment of death has a retrospective insight into the life he has led, so, at the moment he is reborn on to earth, the *Ego*, awaking from the state of Devachan, has a prospective vision of the life which awaits him and realizes all the causes that have led to it.

He realizes them and sees futurity, because it is between Devachan and rebirth that the *Ego* regains his full manasic consciousness, and rebecomes for a short time the god he was, before, in compliance with Karmic law, he first descended into matter and incarnated in the first man of flesh. The ‘golden thread’ sees all its ‘pearls’ and misses not one of them.”

(*The Key to Theosophy*, pp. 162-3 orig. ed.)

The Origin and Evolution of Man

During our Christmas retreat, Dick had noticed that our Swamaji used the word *manasaputra* during one of our meditation talks. This inspired us to go back and study Adam Warcup’s seminar on Man’s Origin and Evolution.

In this series there are six ninety minute tapes accompanied by a twelve page hand out. As the fifth sheet was faint and illegible, Dick referred to the page references and re-scanned and reprinted the entire sheet. This led to re-scanning and reprinting the entire handout. In the process, several page reference errors and typos were corrected.

And now we would like to give a brief summary of his talk in hopes to generate discussion. Adam starts the series by citing that most of his information comes from H.P.B.’s Secret Doctrine and The Mahatma Letters. It was run via the classic lecture and question and answer style.

He first states that we should start by studying the Secret Doctrine. H.P.B states herself that the S.D. should be studied by subject so that is indeed what he did. He picked out various passages that related to Man’s Origin and Evolution.

Study of the S.D. should begin with reading the introduction. It should be read not only to get the factual knowledge but also to absorb the wisdom it contains. In studying for the wisdom one needs to keep

in mind that: “This is as far as it leads toward the Truth.”

Studying for Wisdom is a method in itself. It requires an effort, which has an effect on the mind and cognition constitution. As the book builds, so the perception grows.

One of the first requirements is to know man’s seven fold constitution: Atman (Higher Self), Buddhi(Intuition), Higher manas\Lower manas (mind), Kama Rupa (Emotional or Animal Soul), Linga Sarira (Astral or Model body), Prana or Jiva (Life force or Shakti) and Sthula Sarira (Physical Body).

This course will explore the questions: How did this all come into being? Why is it seven fold? What is the nature of these principles? Why do we incarnate the way we do? What is the nature of our personality? and How can we look deeply into man’s nature?

We begin by looking at specific passages in the handout:

11A *So also with man and every ‘man’ in man. Each gets its specific quality from its primary, therefore every man is a septenate. S.D. II 29*

Adam comments: with man and in every man there is a principle which is governed by a planetary spirit, each having its origin in a quality of that special Dhyani. [To those who study Alice Bailey, does this correlate with the seven rays? M.L.]

The Three Streams of Evolution

1. It now becomes plain that there exists in Nature a triple evolutionary scheme, for the formation of the three periodical Upadhis; or rather three separate schemes of evolution, which in our system are inextricably interwoven and interblended at every point. These are the Monadic (or spiritual), the intellectual, and the physical evolutions. These three are the finite aspects or the reflections on the field of Cosmic Illusion of ATMA, the seventh, the ONE REALITY.

1. The Monadic is, as the name implies, concerned with the growth and development into still higher phases of activity of the Monad in conjunction with:

2. The Intellectual, represented by the Manasa-Dhyanis (the Solar Devas, or the Agnishwatta Pitris) the givers of “intelligence and consciousness” to man and:

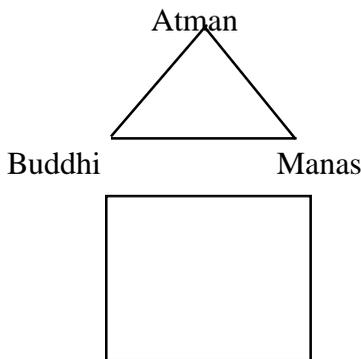
3. The Physical, represented by the Chhayas of the lunar Pitris, round which Nature has concreted the present physical body. This body serves as the vehicle for the “growth” (to use a misleading word) and the transformations through Manas and -- owing to the accumulation of experiences -- of the finite into the INFINITE, of the transient into the Eternal and Absolute.

Each of these three systems has its own laws, and is ruled and guided by different sets of the highest Dhyanis or “Logoi.” Each is represented in the constitution of man, the Microcosm of the great Macrocosm; and it

is the union of these three streams in him which makes him the complex being he now is. S.D. I 181.

Adam states that we “man” are the microcosm of the macrocosm. We are divine. We are the perfect conjunction of all the qualities. This makes us unique as no other creature on this earth. He says we are not divine yet but that we carry the divine qualities. [We are divine, (higher self) but we (ego) don’t know it yet M.L.]

The three higher principles form the triangle. They are: Atman, Buddhi and Higher Manas.



The four lower principles form a square and they are: Human Soul (mind) Kama or emotional body, Astral Soul or Linga Sarira, Prana or Jiva and Physical Body or Sthula Sarira.

The Concise Yoga Vasistha Swami Venkatesananda p. 129

This is a short excerpt from a story which illustrates what happens when the One becomes the many, and the difference between the Seer and the seen.

The diversity that is seen in this creation, O Rama, is but an appearance of diversity. Evolution or involution has the one infinite consciousness as its source and as its goal. During evolution there seems to be an apparent diversity in the one infinite consciousness, in accordance with the notions that appear in that consciousness. Some of these notions intermingle, thus producing infinite variety in this diversity. Some do not thus intermingle. But, in fact, all these notions appear in every atom of existence, and these atoms exist independent of one another. The totality is known as the absolute Brahman.

Each individual sees only those objects which are rooted in his own mind. When the ideas in the mind do not bear fruits there is a change in the mind; there follows a succession of births to suit these psychological changes. It is the psychological connection that crates the conviction in the reality of birth and death, and in the reality of the body. When this conviction is given up, there is the cessation of embodiment.

O Rama, the tree in a seed grows out

of it after destroying the seed, but Brahman creates this world without destroying itself. Hence it is impossible to compare the incomparable Brahman with anything whatsoever. Whereas the tree, etc. are definable material substances, Brahman is a nameless and formless being. It is Brahman alone that becomes what appears to be of a different nature; yet, from another point of view it does not so become, for it is eternal and changeless.

When the self is seen as an object, the seer [Seer? ed. HCT] is not seen (realized); as long as the objective universe is perceived, one does not realize the self [Self?]. When you see the mirage as water, you do not perceive the rising hot air, but when you perceive the hot air, you do not see water in the mirage! When one is truth, the other is not.

It is only when the division between the seer and seen is given up, only when the two are 'seen' as of one substance, that the truth [Truth?] is realized. There is no object which is totally of a different nature from the subject. Nor can the subject (self) be seen as if it were an object! There is no division in such a vision.

Comment: Theosophically we are seeing the Self as distorted through the lens of our samskaras or attachments. As long as we identify the personality with who we think we are, we can not be enlightened. The above passage is taking the position

of a realized Being or Saint.

Each jiva experiences however within itself whatever it has given rise to within itself with the help of its own life-force. O Rama, behold with the eye of your inner wisdom the truth that in every atom of existence there are countless world-appearances. This world appearance is but a long dream. This dream-like appearance is yet true during the period of the dream itself.

Within every atom is the potential experience of every kind. Therefore, give up all your notions of diversity or unity. Time, space, action (or motion) and matter are all but different aspects of the one infinite consciousness.

The rare few realize that the world appearance seen within themselves is illusory, except as the one infinite consciousness which alone is ever true.

On account of this consciousness the world appears in the jiva: and there are jiva within jiva, ad infinitum. It is when one thus experiences the truth, that he is freed from illusion. At the same time one's craving for pleasure is thinned out. This is only proof of wisdom. A painted pot of nectar is not nectar, nor a painted flame fire, and a painting of a woman is not a woman: wise words are mere words (ignorance) not wisdom, unless they are substantiated by the absence of desire and anger.

They who contemplate the absolute Brahman, become Brahman.

Theosophy World
review@theosophy.com)

An Internet Magazine
Dedicated to the Theosophical Philosophy
And its Practical Application in the Modern World

Dear Friends: February 10, 1999

It's been nearly three years since *Theosophy World* was first announced on April 11, 1996.

Since June of that year, the theosophical monthly has continued to reach a growing number of readers. The associated mailinglist, **theos-talk@theosophy.com**, has also provided lively discussion, useful information, and thoughtful commentary to subscribers and readers of its archives.

In December, the top-level web page changed from simply consisting of a table of contents of back issues of the magazine. It now allows the online download (in ASCII or zip format) of the mailing list and back issues of the magazine. The archives are now searchable using a web browser. (The online archives will be updated every month or two, as time permits.) Take a look at it:
<http://www.theosophy.com/index.html>.

Some online audio files have been prepared for downloading and listening, including a rare 1937 radio talk given by G. de Purucker. Others will be available for online listening in the coming months.

Enclosed are a pair of CD-ROM disks, containing the *Theosophy World* Archives as of the start of the year. Included are ASCII copies of the theos-talk mailing list through De-

ember 1998, ASCII copies of *Theosophy World* monthly through January 1999, and a html version of both, searchable with a web browser.

Also included are a series of private classes in Theosophy, given by Boris de Zirkoff, 27 meetings, about 50 hours of listening, in high quality format. (They were recorded at 44,100 kbps, the same speed as CD-ROM music.) These classes are in RealAudio format, and can be accessed through a web browser. They were computerized directly from the original open-reel tapes made of the 1954-56 series of classes.

Other materials on the CD-ROMs include back issues of *The High Country Theosophist*, a recording of G. de Purucker, an electronic book form of *The Key to Theosophy*, and of *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, two substantial theosophical texts, and more.

All the materials on the disks can be accessed using a web browser, where one opens **D:\index.html** (or E:, F:, etc., depending upon which drive letter the CD-ROM drive uses.) If you don't have Adobe Acrobat, or RealAudio Player, there's a link to the web pages where one can download them from the Internet.

The disks are organized so that, if you have about 962 MB of space, You can copy all of both of them to a directory on your hard drive, and point your web browser to the **index.html** file there. You would do this if you want faster access to the materials, and have the spare disk space. (There are a few files that are in common on both CD-ROMs, but they are the same, so it's ok for those from the sec-

ond CD-ROM to overwrite those from the first, as they are copied to the hard drive.) Everything will run fine off of the CD-ROMS, so You don't have to copy the files unless you have the spare disk space and find it convenient to do so.

The CD-ROMs were from a limited run. Fifty sets were produced. Thanks are offered to Lauren Liefer and Compdisk, Inc. of Morton Grove, Illinois, for producing the disks, and for the generous donation of 1/2 of the costs involved.

The disks are offered you in order to further promote Theosophy, to insure wider distribution of Boris de Zirkoff's classes, so they might benefit more people, and to encourage more cooperative networking among theosophists and theosophical projects.

Any comments, feedback, suggestions, offerings of possible additional materials, etc. are all appreciated. A future edition of these disks may include more text and audio theosophical materials, and go out to a wider audience. Your input and support can help make this happen.

Note that *Theosophy World* is independent and is not sponsored nor funded by any theosophical group, and does not charge for what it offers, nor does it regularly appeal for contributions to support its work. Future work with CD-ROM distribution may require some financial support, in order to achieve wider results.

When CD-ROMs are produced in a limited run of 50, it can cost \$7/set. If a larger run

of one thousand sets were done, the cost would drop to a little more than \$2/set (plus postage and the cost of mailers). Later in the year, there will be a revised and enlarged version of the CD-ROM set. Available funds at that time will determine how wide-reaching the next distribution of the archives will be: a run of 50 or a run of a thousand.

You've been sent a complimentary set of the CD-ROMs. Any comments, feedback, suggestions or offers of possible materials to include in the next edition, etc., are appreciated. Feel free to circulate the disks you've been given. They may be freely copied and passed on.

Thanks and best wishes,

Eldon B. Tucker

Theosophy World

Our deep and sincere appreciation and thanks to Eldon Tucker for his efforts in using the state-of-the-art technology to spread theosophical teachings. Abhinyano, please take note

Dick Slusser, editor HCT

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NLQ Dot matrix OK
Good Quality Xerox OK

Unacceptable

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THE HIGH COUNTRY THEOSOPHIST is an *independent* Journal and has the following editorial objectives:

(1) To serve the greater Theosophical Movement as a forum for the free interchange of ideas and commentary in the pursuit of Truth and to facilitate various projects in furtherance of Theosophical principles.

(2) To present articles and essays consistent with source theosophy, otherwise known as the Ancient Wisdom as given by The Masters and H.P. Blavatsky, and other theosophical writers consistent with this tradition.

(3) To examine contemporary ethical,

OBJECTIVES

religious, metaphysical, scientific and philosophical issues from the viewpoint of the source theosophical teachings.

(4) To impartially examine significant events and issues in the history of the theosophical movement which have affected and shaped its present-day realities.

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