

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

## THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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### "YOGA" AND THEOSOPHY

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In the West, the mission of Theosophy has proved successful in various ways. One of these manifests in the fact that Eastern concepts and viewpoints are widely known and discussed. Words "reincarnation," "karma" and "yoga" find common usage in the speech of Westerners.

There has arisen, however, another sort of problem within the network of Theosophic thought. Several popular views and uses of "yoga" run counter to the ideas and practices suggested in Theosophy. To discuss these differences is the purpose of our study. The following three points embrace the present situation.

First, in a category that has arisen in the West, are grouped many books under the heading "yoga." Certain bookstores concentrate exclusively on these "yoga" books which contain descriptions of rules, postures and breathing exercises for the development, and maintenance of health, of certain psychic powers. To the general public, these books come under the auspices of Eastern yogis and swamis; when they learn that Theosophy also comes from the East, they assume that, naturally, it too will be discussing the same topics and advocating the same practices. When they discover that it does not, they wonder why.

Secondly, there are certain schools and mind-cults whose

writings create confusion in the mind of a newcomer to Theosophy. In one of such books one may read an admirable, devoted exposition of an intimate Theosophical subject—the relationship between the teacher, the guru, and his disciple. Then, in the back of the same volume, where other publications are advertised for sale, one learns that several of them claim to give instructions as to the use of certain powers for the attainment of almost anything that the personal man desires—good health, an influential position, financial prosperity, etc. Theosophy is forcibly opposed to such uses of psychic power; this, too, requires discussion.

Thirdly, many have been originally introduced to Eastern thought through books carrying in their titles words such as "Vedanta," "Buddhism," or "Yoga." They have read doctrines that, to them, are identical with the Theosophic exposition of similar subjects. They say, at first, "Why, this is just the same!" But, later, when they find that Theosophic teachings are in many instances opposed to the convictions reached in their former reading, they are genuinely puzzled and ask, "But which, then, is the reliable authority?" This question, often asked, points to a serious lack of appreciation, on their part, of what Theosophy really represents.

Considering this last point first, let us look back a little into the history of the Theosophical Movement. The original Society was founded by H. P. Blavatsky and some co-workers in New York City, in 1875. She remained there until 1878, having, during that time, written *Isis Unveiled*. She then left America to go to India, in order to establish a centre there. What was the condition of affairs in India at that time? First, there was evident a definite feeling of disharmony among the people. This was easily traceable to sectarian differences, resulting in rivalry, quarrels and bitterness in various degrees. Furthermore, the purity of the ancient religions had been all but forgotten by the people generally; while among the educated classes they were looked upon with neither favour nor understanding. The Brahmins, as a class, restricted to their own use any true knowledge they may have had. What they taught their followers led to a sort of superstitious ritualism. In this atmosphere,

a few branches of the Theosophical Society were established and quickly multiplied. In a short time, it is reported, unity and brotherhood had replaced the old disunity. To the annual Convention of the Theosophical Society came Hindus, Parsees, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Christians and Jews, all of them imbued with a spirit of unity which had been totally absent before the advent of Theosophy. This spirit spread to Ceylon, Burma, Siam and Japan. There were public expressions of admiration and gratitude by the representatives of the several groups for the work done by Theosophy in bringing back to their attention the significance of the ancient truths embodied in their religions, and in creating a basis for uniting the hitherto unfriendly and antagonistic sects. It is pertinent to point out here that these conventions became the basis and inspiration for the formation, later, of the Indian National Congress, which finally helped India achieve her political freedom.

For our purpose, now, the important question is: How did all this come about? What did, or could, Theosophy do that so radically transformed the condition of bitterness and bickering into an enthusiastic and co-operative harmony? The answer lies in one significant fact, which the world has either overlooked, misunderstood, or ignored—the fact that every great religion and philosophy in the world's history has had two aspects: that given to the masses, the exoteric; and that given to the few, the esoteric. The great significance of this is discovered when we learn that while on the surface religions and philosophies differ and become antagonistic, under their superstructure the foundation and support is identically the same. This was and is the great Truth and thus an ineradicable bond for unity. In the works of pure Theosophy, one will find an enormous amount of material by which each one may check and prove for himself or herself that this basic similarity does exist.

For example, consider the following. It is a well-known fact that every nation had its "greater" (secret) and "lesser" (public) Mysteries. Theosophy throws some light on this subject, so that now we may appreciate their purpose and performance. Their final

purpose was to teach or initiate candidates into the secrets of Nature. Their method was to test the receptivity of the aspirants on many levels. The result—only those found trustworthy as well as capable were given the final instructions, or initiated. The Kabala of the Jews represented the secret wisdom of the Hebrew religion; and it can be ascertained that its ideas are quite different from those in the popular or exoteric versions. In the East, among the Buddhists are the Mahayana (esoteric) and Hinayana (exoteric) Schools. While in the Hindu religion the Upanishads contain the secret keys that give meaning and understanding to the Vedas.

It was stated earlier that the secret teachings of all lands were basically the same. As an example, the terms "Logos," "Sephira" and "Brahma" were, respectively, used by the Greeks, the Hebrews and the Hindus. Each of these terms, in its own system, represents the same basic concept, *i.e.*, the function of the power of Life or Deity during the opening stages of a Manvantara or Cycle of manifestation. This is so despite the obvious fact that these communities were separated in time as well as by space. But there were more than just these three. Every important religion or philosophy in the world's history was grounded upon identical secret teachings.

The significance of this must be far-reaching, overwhelming to the perceptive mind. Think of it! In spite of the apparent opposition and divergence in concept and system among the many exoteric creeds, unanimity exists in the Teaching of widely scattered Sages and Philosophers—in their Esoteric line.

Here, then, we have a standard, a criterion for judgment. That Knowledge which is acceptable to *all* the Great Sages and Great Souls of the world's history must be the Truth.

And so, returning to the starting problem—*here* is the standard whereby anyone may determine the worth of statements in Zen, in Vedanta, in Yoga books or anywhere else. Theosophy first called attention to this Great Fact. Theosophy is a portion of the Ancient Esoteric Teaching. In the Introductory of her *Secret Doctrine*, H.P. Blavatsky wrote: "I have here made only a nosegay of culled

flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the string that ties them." For those who are confused we say—consult Theosophy. It is literally the Wisdom of the Ages.

Now let us consider the other two points mentioned at the outset and learn what the Great Ones advise us in regard to them. The prevailing mood in the West particularly is to take this life as the be-all and end-all of existence and to make it as pleasurable and comfortable as possible. And so "yoga" postures and breathing exercises for better health generally are in vogue. Books on the development of psychic powers are avidly read. The lady receptionist at a hall where mind-cult literature is available says sweetly: "God meant us to be successful and happy, so we learn to 'think in the right way' and thus receive these benefits from the God-principle." A Rosicrucian book advertises in its back pages: "This volume...points out the wrong and the right way for the use of metaphysical and mystical principles in attracting business, increasing one's income, promoting business propositions...."

What is wrong with these prospects? In a word, short-sightedness, ignorance. Let us elucidate.

Most people believe that just beyond the boundaries of the physical is necessarily the spiritual. To combat this naive belief, the Third Object of the modern Theosophical Movement enjoins: "The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man." It soon becomes evident as a result of such study that a veritable "no-man's-land" lies between the physical and man's cherished goal, the spiritual consciousness. Closest to man's physical consciousness in this "in-between" region is an astral graveyard, where the particles of man's lowest psychic constituents undergo disintegration after the death of the physical body. The only self-conscious intelligences awake there are those thrust out of life before their appointed time—suicides and executed criminals. The sensitive soul, venturing into this region, unprepared and unprotected, is almost certain to find itself a prey to self-conscious vengeful vindictiveness as well as to the general atmosphere of moral depravity. Surely, "fools rush in where angels

fear to tread." Need a Theosophist feel contrite when he pricks the bright balloon of the innocent psychic dabbler's bright hopes of power and excitement? If one may accept the analogy, an older brother bears a responsibility toward the harm-producing pranks of his junior, at least to the extent of sounding a warning.

In another category lies the misunderstanding and misuse of psychic powers. It is a far cry from the bland assurance of the lady receptionist, and the Rosicrucian advertisements, to the definite pronouncement of *The Voice of the Silence*: "Give up thy life, if thou would'st live"; and the warning of H.P.B.: "*Siddhis* (or the Arhat powers) are only for those who are able to 'lead the life,' to comply with the terrible sacrifices required for such a training, and to comply with them *to the very letter*....*True Occultism or Theosophy* is the 'Great Renunciation of SELF,' unconditionally and absolutely, in thought as in action."

What single factor marks the difference between these two views of the Occult life? The answer is—Knowledge, the soul-satisfying knowledge that the Great Ones have given us. Too many pseudo-occult writers gloss over or ignore the dangers of "no-man's-land," whatever their motives. Knowledge is precious. It is here to save men from unnecessary suffering, needless mistakes now and extending through Karmic effects into future lives. It requires merely that one view life anew, in the completer perspective of Theosophic Teaching.

It may be pertinent to inquire here: What then does a student of Theosophy do in regard to these questions? It has been intimated, for one thing, that he benefits from the advice of his Teachers and self-consciously refrains from the aforementioned practices. However, he, too, seeks the Bright Goal of spiritual awareness, the Higher Knowledge with Occult Power as typified in the Mahatma. What then is his procedure?

His chief concern, after the purely theoretic acquisition of the necessary facts, is a programme of preparation. While this may be lacking in glamour, it is rooted in science. All of Nature, high and low, may be attracted to ourselves. But to reach the Higher, one

must go through the lower; and the best way of doing that is to destroy whatever in one's nature may be an attraction for the lower. A diver who expects to emerge, after his plunge into the sea, will not carry weights on his feet. The occultist who would accomplish his high purpose must purge illusion, passion, self-interest from his nature.

The student of Theosophy takes the long-range viewpoint. Implicit, as a background to his hopes and plans, are the perspectives of Reincarnation and Karma. Just as Karmic residues from the past may intensify his present difficulties, so is it the same impersonal Karmic law which guarantees that he will retain all of his present accomplishment in the future. To know this is vital, for this task is not accomplished overnight.

The modern plans for space-travel involve an immense amount of careful thought and preparation, in order to be successful. The earnest student of Theosophy is also "not fooling"; he is no idle dilettante pandering to psychic titillation, but a serious research investigator into the Occult World of the Great Men of all time. Unlike our "space" friends, he is not entirely dependent on his own devices but follows a chart left behind by the Great Ones for his help and guidance. They, too, have travelled this Way, and so become what They are.

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HIGH ideals do not exist of themselves; they are aspirations of individuals, so it would not be a true concept to imagine that there is a storehouse of high ideals somewhere which we can draw upon; we have to perceive, create, and act towards high ideals, in which case our aspirations are re-inforced by the ideals of others upon the same plane of thought and action, due to the interdependence and common spiritual nature of all beings.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

## THE BHAGAVAD-GITA IN DAILY LIVING

"ALL the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players," wrote Shakespeare. The *Bhagavad-Gita* strikes a more serious note and pictures the world as a field of war, Holy War, which is the true *Jehad*. Everyone is a soldier on this battlefield. One might fight well or ill, but fight one *must*. The coward who runs away from his true station in the field is yet a soldier, albeit under trial and discipline. Life's battlefield exists wherever man exists, and it is left to us to prove whether we shall fight according to Law and Justice and Truth, knowingly and consciously, or cut the miserable figure of an ignoramus.

Taking advantage of the historical event of the Great War between the two branches of one tribe, the Kauravas and the Pandavas, the Sage-Seer-Poet who recorded the *Gita* visualized the battlefield of Kurukshetra, a geographical locality, as the field of life's duties—*Dharmakshetra*. In the very opening verse, this image is presented. We must keep that image in mind if we desire to derive the benefit of this great book. This little volume serves many purposes, but of all of them one stands out as most valuable for us—its message to the suffering, toiling, poverty-stricken human soul. And who among us is free from suffering of body or of mind? Who has not to toil to earn the bread of life which feeds, if not the body, then the moral nature? And who is not poor, if not in the goods of this world, then in the possessions of the spiritual realm?

*Dharmakshetra*—the battlefield of *Dharma*, or Duty. Each one carries his own battlefield wherever he goes, in whatever direction he moves. In the marketplace, in the home, in the office, the field of battle exists. Not only does it extend over all space; it also encompasses all time. The central lesson of all history, from China to Peru in the old world, from Tokyo to Washington in the modern, is the same—the "war" is going on. The infant crying with the first gasp of breath, struggling with the first growth of teeth, is engaged in the war of duty, as is the sinner or the philanthropic sage who

parts company with friends and kin when passing through the gate of death. At no time is anyone free from the struggles of life; and when the man becomes a Super-Man, a Mahatma, even then he takes the field of duty to help, to instruct, to inspire. This is what Sri Krishna did, what Gautama the Buddha did, what Jesus did, what all the Great Teachers did—the Sages that have been and that shall be.

So life is the field of duty and each soul a soldier—the sinner, the saint, the sage, the businessman, the housewife, the youth, the aged. That is the first message the *Gita* conveys. If we do not accept this message at the very outset, we shall fail to derive substantial benefit from this Song Celestial.

The next idea is that the war each one has to wage is the war of duty. Whatever our station in life, whatever our vocation, our struggle consists in the performance of duty. Whenever we fail, it is because of the not doing of duty, or doing it wrongly; whenever we succeed, it means the duty is discharged rightly, worthily, with skill and accuracy.

The *Gita* teaches the right performance of duty and it lays down certain principles in reference to *dharma* or duty—principles that apply to all men and women, young or old, rich or poor, at all times, in all countries. These principles are:

(1) Each one has his congenital duties, which must not be neglected and must be discharged.

(2) No one should undertake the duty of another, for another's duty is full of danger.

(3) There are pleasant as also unpleasant duties; all must be attended to, none must be shirked, and our mind should be closed to the pleasure or the pain thereof. Our attention should be fixed only on the discharge of the duty.

(4) Such disinterested discharge of duties ends pain, brings the strength of Wisdom, and gives birth to real peace, not of a passive but of an active kind; not the peace of slumber, but that peace which produces the power to help and to serve.

Thus we see that the *Gita* teaches a very different kind of war;

as a matter of fact it deals with the root-cause of all wars. When the United Nations and all governments recognize this true cause of all wars, then only will there be true peace. When individuals and tribes and nations forget that the real war is with the foe within, not with someone without, they err and all kinds of strifes result. This is the political message of the *Gita* to modern states. It is a recognized fact that internal strifes within the borders of a single state lead, however indirectly but certainly, to a war with another state. An individual who is not at peace with himself is sure to fight with another or other persons. When family members are not united, friends from outside take sides with one or another and immediately the sphere of fight widens.

It is erroneous and dangerous to look upon the *Gita* as a book of bloody revolution, as an advocate of violence for the sake of self-interest. There are some who would use it as a political weapon; that is debasing a sacred text. The war that the *Gita* advocates is against our own lower nature, against our pride, our avarice, our passions. There is within each of us a Duryodhana, and it is that source of wickedness that should be fought. There is within each of us the blind Dhritarashtra who fails to see the way of right advice, of righteous admonition. The war each one has to wage is not with anyone else, but primarily with one's own weaknesses, one's own folly and ignorance. That is why the *Gita* opens and closes with the image of *Dharmakshetra*, the field of Duty. If each individual, each nation, got busy with his or its own vices and limitations, there would be no time or inclination to do violence to another.

It must be borne in mind, however, that our very duties, well discharged, widen our spheres of activity. Each one has family and civic duties, national and international duties. Krishna himself had to take the field against the Kauravas; but the grand teaching of the *Gita* is that we must begin with our own petty self and proceed step by step on the path of duty. Thus, the *Gita* should be looked upon as a book not for the select few, but for the one going through the struggle of life, grappling with his duties as an individual, as a citizen, as a national. The *Gita* is for all of us, so that we may learn

how to live our daily lives, how to discharge our duties, how to be worthy soldiers on *Dharmakshetra*—"fortune's favoured soldiers," as they are called in the second chapter. Without its message, we carry on the wrong kind of warfare. So let us consult the *Gita's* fourfold message as to *dharma* or duty, as outlined above. The four points need to be seen in greater detail.

(1) Each one is born with certain duties. Krishna says to Arjuna that one should perform one's congenital duties—duties with which one is born. This brings us to the doctrine of reincarnation—that as souls we have lived before, and in this life are born in a particular family and country and under particular circumstances because of what we did in prior lives. The universe becomes unjust if we have to suffer through no wrongdoing of our own. What wrong has the infant done—and there are millions of them—who is born in poverty, lives in the slums, without opportunities of education and with a bleak future? All the disparities of life, the *Gita* teaches, are to be understood in the light of soul-evolution through successive lives on earth. As we sow, so we reap, and the duties with which we are born are *our* avenues to further progress. Through the performance of our duties we advance, we evolve.

Reincarnation and Karma are the twin doctrines which spell, not fate, but free-will, not passive resignation to our lot in life, but active effort at improvement of our circumstances and unfoldment of our capacities. Once we get this spur of growth through performance of duties, the latter are no longer drudgeries. We neglect our own duties and longingly look to somebody else's life and lot because we have not made clear to ourselves that only through the right performance of our own duties can growth and progress result. Life is imbued with interest, is clothed with light, when each small duty is looked upon as an avenue to progress, as expanding our vision, as deepening our perception.

(2) Next, the duty of another is full of danger, says the *Gita* (III, 35). One of the greatest sins of this age is interference in the affairs of others. This interference is the wrong, the distorted aspect of interdependence which requires that human beings shall be altru-

istic. The *Gita* teaches that in each person nature is weaving a splendid pattern—one's own nature. Krishna makes Arjuna realize this; Krishna himself could have fought the Kauravas, but the lesson is that Arjuna had to do his duty. Krishna would have failed in his own duty if he had picked up the bow and arrow that Arjuna put down. Each one has to learn certain specific lessons in every life. Much misery would be avoided if this doctrine of the *Gita* were understood. If a proud man swallowed his pride, he would not be hurt. If a gossipy woman controlled her own tongue, she would not only save others but also herself.

Now, the law of our duties towards others, and others' duties towards us, can be summed up in the word Justice. But to be just we require wisdom, and performance of one's own duty brings illumination. Keep your advice till it is asked; watch your impulse to help, lest instead of helping you hinder. It requires knowledge to be of helpful service to others. As we perform our own duties, we gather experience, and out of experience alone real power to serve results.

The *Gita* says that the path of action and inaction is difficult, is obscure. The guiding light comes from the word *necessity*. People like to do certain things, and dislike doing other things. To be just to ourselves as to others, we must not go by likes and dislikes, but invariably ask—Is this action necessary? That which is not necessary is very often the avenue to disease and pain. Do we eat what is necessary for us, or do we eat to satisfy our taste buds? So it is in morals, in politics, in society, in every condition of life.

The *Gita* lays stress on the performance of duties—things necessary for us to do. They may be unpleasant, but, says the text, the unpleasantness will disappear if we do not let our fancy and imagination run away with us. We must determine if a duty is necessary, and then do it. Our business is with the action alone, not with its pleasantness or unpleasantness, nor with its fruits. Certain actions might bring us pain and unhappiness, but what matters is not the pain or the pleasure but the lesson we learn from it. So let us act after determining that it is our duty and leave the results to

## Karma. Says the *Gita*:

Let, then, the motive for action be in the action itself, and not in the event. Do not be incited to actions by the hope of their reward, nor let thy life be spent in inaction. Firmly persisting in Yoga, perform thy duty, O Dhananjaya, and laying aside all desire for any benefit to thyself from action, make the event equal to thee, whether it be success or failure. Equal-mindedness is called Yoga. (II, 47-58)

So let us go through our appointed work in life with strength and fortitude, closing our minds to pleasure as to pain; thus we develop capacities, enhance old powers and beget new ones. This is a difficult doctrine, for it requires higher detachment. Pain will cease if desire dies. It is passion, *Kama*, says the *Gita* in the third chapter, which surrounds us, as smoke surrounds fire. The Buddha taught the same doctrine; the cause of sorrow, he said, is *trishna*, *tanha*, desire of possessions. "Do your duty by every duty" is a phrase we should remember, for thus we "bring the world to duty." It is not what we do, but how we do *our* own duty, which makes for real happiness and progress.

(4) And so to pass on to the fourth stage: Pain comes to an end when we have learnt to perform our own duties without attachment to their fruits. In and by such performance, the inner peace is born. It is that peace which energizes the soul to bring it to others. It is that peace which compels us to walk the path of service. It was that peace which brought Krishna to the gory field of battle. But he did not help by mere sentimentality, mere mushiness; he did not say to Arjuna, "You poor suffering man! let me fight your battle; let me do your work; you go and rest while I do your labour!" Krishna spoke words of strength, even of chastisement, of justice, which revealed to Arjuna what was his duty, made him take up his bow and arrows, and fight his own enemies.

The *Gita* is a book of philanthropy, a book of altruism, a book that can make of a selfish person a servant of humanity, revealing that we are all interdependent, but also showing that we really help others as each discharges his own little duties. In the seeming

hardness of Nature there is compassion; in the very imagery of the *Gita*, the gory battlefield, there is peace; in the apparent sternness of Krishna there is love, mercy, infinite tenderness.

There is the story of Radha crossing the river, with Krishna by her side, holding her hand. But when they were midstream he suddenly disappeared! Radha's screams were in vain, and she realized that there was nothing to be done but to swim on alone as best she could and reach the other shore. Having arrived there exhausted, she realized that Krishna, though invisible to her, was all the time by her side!

What is the moral of the story? Krishna taught Radha to do her own job; to learn to cross unaided. But though invisible, he was with her all the time. Krishna is the Lord within, the god in the human heart. He is always there, but we must realize that and learn to consult him and act according to his advice.

We are all in the ocean of *samsara*, sense-life, trying to cross over to the other shore of Nirvana, of Perfect Knowledge. Each must swim by himself or herself, and if we keep on remembering that Krishna is near, we shall reach our destination. The Spirit in our heart, the Spirit in our mind, is the Celestial Singer of the *Gita*—the Song of Life. So from the *Gita*, the mighty message, we go to the Divine Singer within, and find in the daily drudgery a new interest, in the small, plain duties of life a great instruction, in the daily round and the common task a grand inspiration full of peace and power and love.

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THEOSOPHY, broadly stated, is Universal Brotherhood; and that more particularly analyzed—yet still very broadly—is the effort to convert our lower nature into higher nature, and thus to aid in the great process of evolution going on throughout the macrocosm.

—W. Q. JUDGE

## THE TASK BEFORE US

MANY student-practitioners of Theosophy recognize that their foremost duty is to make the influence of Theosophy felt in the world. But how to go about it is not clear to some. Some discrimination is necessary on our part in the selection of our work. Our task lies in ourselves becoming living, breathing centres of light and hope for others, in spiritualizing the intellectual and moral atmosphere of the world. This noble task can be performed in two ways: (1) by *living* the Theosophical life; and (2) by the propagation of the teachings of our Philosophy.

"Theosophical life" is an expression that is often not fully understood. It is not only a life of service, but service of a particular kind, rendered in a particular manner. All service is noble and good; all work is useful work; but there is a certain kind of service, a certain type of work, which is fundamentally ours. How can a spiritual renaissance take place in the world unless at least a few live the life of meditation, of real devotion, that will flood the atmosphere with the life-currents that purify and build the inner life of the world? What is advocated is not a quiet life, without work, but a life which keeps in view the spiritual and inner basis of things in the midst of worldly activities—a life of consecration to the Masters, a life which understands the hidden phases of outer happenings, and which deals with the latter wisely, according to occult laws and principles. But the hidden phases of outer happenings cannot be perceived unless the Inner Light of the Soul is focused on each world event. The happenings in the world of action proceed from the world of Ideation; and, unless we live and labour in the latter, we are more or less bound to fail in our attempts to handle it successfully.

Now, how can we live and labour in that inner world of Ideation? How are we to obtain the power of spiritual perception? The Light of the Immortal God within us has to be made to illumine our brain-consciousness and, through it, all our activities and all the objects that we contact. Not an escape into the superphysical

regions of the universe, but a descent of the Immortal Inner Ruler into the purified and sanctified temple of the body should be our objective.

H.P.B. has said that one of the necessary qualifications for the spiritual life is an unshakable belief in one's own inner powers, and she speaks of the God within as the "Initiator of Initiates." That Immortal Ruler lives his own life in his own world and unfolds his wonderful spirituality. He is there—the real Self in each one of us, and as human beings ours is the task so to work and so to worship that with the help of a concentrated mind and a purified heart the Inner Ruler is able to manifest his nature through the physical body in the physical world. Therefore the study of the Holy Lore and the Ancient Wisdom is essential; so is constant and regular meditation; for, without these, our activities will but take us round and round the ever-widening circle of materialism, as brought out in this verse of Omar Khayyam's:

Myself when young did eagerly frequent  
 Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument  
 About it and about: but evermore  
 Came out by the same door wherein I went.

In this *Kali Yuga* when class fights against class and nation wars with nation, Theosophists must render the service of showing humanity the way to Real Freedom, not just by precept, but by example, remembering that true Altruism consists in oneself leading a positive Life of Brotherhood. "Lead the life necessary for the acquisition of knowledge and powers, and Wisdom will come to you naturally," said a Master of Wisdom. Therefore the first thing is to live the life—the life of meditation and study.

The second task before us is the spreading of Theosophical teachings. Our work is to prepare the atmosphere for the universal reception of the Three Fundamental Propositions of Theosophy as given by H.P.B. in *The Secret Doctrine*. The application of these Propositions, and all that they imply, to the problems that confront us every day is our task; but let us not forget that, while we are engaged in the work of application, we have the duty of popular-

izing those three Propositions. It may be that there exist in the world people better fitted to apply these and other Theosophical teachings to the work of everyday life; our task is to see that none are kept in ignorance of the teachings. In the great rush of many-sided activities, we are apt to overlook the fact that we in this day and generation are the trustees of the Wisdom which the Blessed Masters gave through H.P.B., and as such it is our solemn duty to make that Wisdom known by Life and by Work.

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THE knowing Self is not born, it dies not; it sprang from nothing, nothing sprang from it. The Ancient is unborn, eternal, everlasting; he is not killed, though the body is killed.

If the killer thinks that he kills, if the killed thinks that he is killed, they do not understand; for this one does not kill, nor is that one killed.

The Self, smaller than small, greater than great, is hidden in the heart of that creature. A man who is free from desires and free from grief, sees the majesty of the Self by the grace of the Creator.

Though sitting still, he walks far; though lying down, he goes everywhere. Who, save myself, is able to know that God who rejoices and rejoices not?

The wise who knows the Self as bodiless within the bodies, as unchanging among changing things, as great and omnipresent, does never grieve.

That Self cannot be gained by the Veda, nor by understanding, nor by much learning. He whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be gained. The Self chooses his body as his own.

But he who has not first turned away from his wickedness, who is not tranquil, and subdued, or whose mind is not at rest, he can never obtain the Self even by knowledge.

Who then knows where He is, He to whom the Brahmans and Kshatriyas are as it were but food, and death itself a condiment?

—From the *Katha Upanishad*

## MAN AND APE

THERE are many definite statements in *The Secret Doctrine* on the connection between man and ape which it is good to keep in mind:

Man...has not one drop of pithecoïd blood in his veins (II, 193). ...a truly pithecoïd species [is] now extinct. (II, 286)

The apes are millions of years later than the speaking human being, and are the latest contemporaries of our Fifth Race....the *Egos* of the apes are entities compelled by their Karma to incarnate in the animal forms, which resulted from the bestiality of the *latest* Third and the earliest Fourth Race men. (II, 262)

...the present apes...are truly "speechless men," and will become speaking animals (or men of a lower order) in the Fifth Round, while the adepts of a certain school hope that some of the *Egos* of the apes of a higher intelligence will reappear at the close of the Sixth Root-Race....In the Sixth Root-Race the fossils of the Orang, the Gorilla, and the Chimpanzee will be those of extinct quadrumanous mammals....Karma will lead on the monads of the unprogressed men of our race and lodge them in the newly evolved human frames of the thus physiologically regenerated baboon. (II, 262-63)

To understand the relationship of these extracts, we have also to remember that, according to the ancient teaching, the human form, like the earth itself, was at first ethereal. If we leave the first three Rounds of the Life Force through the evolving Earth Chain and come to the Fourth Round, we can perhaps begin to follow the evolution of the man-form, and then the "descent" of Manas, making of that form the vehicle of the Ego, from which point begins the evolution of the *human* being. At one time in those early Rounds, "nature had built...around the human astral form an *ape-like external* shape" (*S.D.*, II, 185), but this is not the "missing link." This was in the period when "MAN was, in turn, 'a stone, a plant, and an animal.' "

When we come to the early races of the Fourth Round, we learn that man was then born from the sweat of the body. He was "oozed" out during the First, Second and early Third Races. Hints are given

of this in the story of the sage Kandu who was beguiled by a celestial nymph so that he forgot his meditations for many years. When at last he "woke up" to the state of affairs, the nymph fled in terror. As she passed over the trees in a forest, the sweat from her body dropped on the trees and became in time the beautiful girl Marisha (*S.D.*, II, 174-75). It was in the middle of the Third Race that sweat drops began to become larger drops, which became huge eggs in which the future human being gestated.

In the fifth sub-race of the Third Root Race, human beings began gradually to separate sexually, and it was during the period of these races that the eggs were often "tampered with, before they hardened, by huge animals." The entity thus born was a monster and this hybrid race soon became extinct, not, however, before some of these egg-born men had taken some of the female monsters as mates, and a new race of monsters, part human and part animal, was born. It was with females of this species that some of the men of the Fourth Root Race, the Atlanteans, bred and produced "hybrids...which not only bred freely but produced the ancestors of the modern anthropoid apes" (*S.D.*, II, 195). It is from these that "the orang-outang, the gorilla, the chimpanzee and cynocephalus are the latest and purely physical evolutions.... They have a spark of the purely human essence in them." (*S.D.*, II, 193)

What is the future of these apes? We are told that in the Sixth Root Race of the present Round some of the egos of the apes will reappear, in some unspecified form, while in the next great Round the apes will become speaking animals, or men of a lower order. "The monads of the unprogressed men of our race" will inhabit the newly evolved forms. (*S.D.*, II, 263)

Should this not give us pause and make us think about our treatment of the whole ape family? Let us recapitulate: "The *Egos* of the apes," H.P.B. tells us,

are entities compelled by their Karma to incarnate in the animal forms. ...They are entities who had already reached the "human stage" before this Round...the *present apes*...are truly "speechless men." (*S.D.* II, 262)

To return to the first stages of evolution, we learn that evolutionary law compelled the lunar "Fathers" to pass, in their monadic condition, through all the forms of life and being on this globe; but at the end of the Third Round, they were already human in their divine nature, and were thus called upon to become the creators of the forms destined to fashion the tabernacles of the less progressed Monads, whose turn it was to incarnate. (*S.D.* II, 115)

These "are ourselves, as the *first personalities, and we are they*" (II, 88).

It was to these that came "the Endowers of man with his conscious, immortal EGO...the 'Solar Angels' " (II, 88). Before this, the Monads which incarnated in those forms "remained as unconscious as when separated from their previous incomplete forms and vehicles." (II, 80)

Where did the "Endowers of man with his conscious, immortal EGO" come from? A Master is quoted as saying:

"...there are, and there must be, failures in the ethereal races of the many classes of Dhyān-Chohans, or Devas (*progressed entities of a previous planetary period*), as well as among men. But still, as the *failures* are too far progressed and spiritualized to be thrown back forcibly from Dhyān-Chohanship into the vortex of a new primordial evolution through the lower Kingdoms, this then happens. Where a new solar system has to be evolved these Dhyān-Chohans are borne in by influx 'ahead' of the Elementals (Entities...to be developed into humanity at a *future* time) and remain as a latent or inactive spiritual force, in the aura of a nascent world...until the stage of human evolution is reached.... Then they *become an active force* and commingle with the Elementals, to *develop little by little the full type of humanity.*" That is to say, to develop in, and endow man with his Self-conscious mind, or *Manas*. (*S.D.*, II, 233 fn.)

This is summed up in a further footnote on the same page:

...the pure, celestial Being (Dhyān Chohan) and the great Pitris of various classes were commissioned—the one to evolve their

images (*Chhaya*), and make of them physical man, the others to inform and thus endow him with divine intelligence and the comprehension of the *Mysteries of Creation*.

When did the latter event occur? Over 18 million years ago, we are told. Before that, what we call "man" was mindless and soulless, in the sense of lacking a conscious ego, and therefore did not consciously sin in the early races. It was after he had been endowed with self-consciousness and knew right from wrong that he sinned in the Atlantean race. But it is interesting to note that there would have been no semi-human animal females for him to "sin" with had not some of the Solar Angels refused to incarnate when the forms were ready and deferred their incarnation till the Fourth Race. They then had to use forms "already tainted (physiologically) with sin and impurity." (*S.D.*, II, 228)

If scientists studied this old history of evolution, would they not pause to think what is going to happen to future generations from atomic and other radiation? From birth control? From the many unnatural things being done to the defenceless animals in order to speed up nature's process of breeding? From the injection into the human blood stream of animal material obtained at so great a cost in suffering to the animals and in the hardening of the human characteristics of sympathy and compassion? Are we sure we are going on the right lines of evolution?

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THE physicist-philosopher of the twentieth century must look beyond physics to the borderland of the material and spiritual worlds. For religion has become possible for a man of science mainly because the philosophical trend of scientific thought has been startlingly redirected by the discoveries of men like Einstein, Heisenberg and Bohr in the field of relativity and quantum physics.

—SIR ARTHUR EDDINGTON

## WE ARE NOT ALONE

CAN we achieve alone? Is all our progress the result of our own independent efforts?

The answer comes home to us when we remember that no one can be separated from the rest, for there is a link between all parts of the Universe, and this link hinders or aids us. Even though we seem to succeed through our own efforts, those efforts are based on information given to us by others, through the spoken or the written word, or through the example of others. The memory of the Ego or the Real Man that continues from incarnation to incarnation also bears out that no one is isolated. In fact, isolation is only possible for the one who deliberately closes himself to all contact and who, because of this, finally perishes. Is there anything worse than being *alone* in the infinitudes of space?

The fact that we have contacted Theosophy in this life shows that we receive from others that which brings our previous incarnations' knowledge to a focus; the mere fact that we are deriving benefit from H.P.B.'s message and her books means that we are linked to her, and to those who made printing possible, the transport of goods possible, etc. None of us lives or learns alone.

Naturally it is only as we use the "gifts" offered to us that we profit by them, and in that sense we do progress by our own efforts.

It is salutary to keep in mind that we cannot take rebirth without the aid of parents; we cannot benefit by the thoughts of the Ancients, by the teachings of the Wise, without someone acting as the medium for bringing us in touch with these thoughts and teachings. Just as we need parents to be born in this life, so we need help to be reborn spiritually.

Recognition of this aspect of progress, therefore, breeds humility and calls forth our gratitude to all who help us, whether they be the Great Ones who accept *chelas* when the latter are ready for such help, or whether they be those who help us by the spoken or written word, or whether they be those who show us by their example what is the right thing to do. The whole world is one vast interlinked

Whole, and not one of us can say that he or she has no cause for showing gratitude to all. And gratitude can be shown by our attitude towards life.

The task of the student-practitioner of Theosophy is to discern the meaning of interdependence so that he may contribute his humble share, however silently and indirectly, in fostering the spirit of Brotherhood and Oneness in the world.

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SARIPUTTA: What is the worldly, and what is the supramundane perfection of giving?

SUBHUTI: The worldly perfection of giving consists in this: The Bodhisattva gives liberally to all those who ask, all the while thinking in terms of real things. It occurs to him: "I give, that one receives, this is the gift. I renounce all my possessions without stint. I act as the Buddha commands. I practise the perfection of giving. I, having made this gift into the common property of all beings, dedicate it to supreme enlightenment, and that without apprehending anything. By means of this gift and its fruit, may all beings in this very life be at their ease, and may they one day enter Nirvana!" Tied by three ties he gives a gift. Which three? A perception of self, a perception of others, a perception of the gift.

The supramundane perfection of giving, on the other hand, consists in the threefold purity. What is the threefold purity? Here a Bodhisattva gives a gift, and he does not apprehend a self, a recipient, a gift; also no reward of his giving. He surrenders that gift to all beings, but he apprehends neither beings nor self. He dedicates that gift to supreme enlightenment, but he does not apprehend any enlightenment. This is called the supramundane perfection of giving.

—From *Sayings from the Perfection of Wisdom*,  
Edward Conze trs.

# THE HEALTH OF THE PERSONAL MAN

## III.—EXERCISE AND BREATHING

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, December 1956.]

Just as, verily, the spokes are fastened in the hub, so on this vital breath everything is fastened.

—*Chandogya Upanishad*, VII, 15:1

ONE of the constituents of man is the astral body, the basis of the physical body and the vehicle of *prana*, breath, or life. *Prana*, as Mr. Judge tells us in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, sustains all living forms. Air is necessary for the physical body—not only air, but good air; not only good air, but good lungs in the body to inhale and exhale the air, and good health, so that the air is not unnecessarily polluted. So with the astral body; it must be in good condition in order to benefit from the vital force or *prana*. As air circulates in the physical body, so *prana* circulates in the astral body. As the physical air can be rendered obnoxious, so *prana*, leaving the astral body as magnetism, can pollute the atmosphere or render it health-giving. That which pollutes the air unnecessarily is decomposing matter or diseased tissues. What pollutes *prana* is the aggregation of evil thoughts and feelings—often those which should have been expelled; sometimes those which are consciously built into the nature, the result of the activity of thought ensouled by Kama.

The importance of exercise is recognized by all. The healthy body needs exercise; it is likely to deteriorate and become ill if exercise is denied it altogether. Both the sympathetic and the cerebrospinal systems of the body need exercise. Mental morbidity, psychic sluggishness and bodily lethargy often result from neglect of exercise. Increase of the phlegmatic humour in the body occurs if elimination, dependent upon exercise, does not take place. Perspiration, the elimination of waste matter from the tissues, and excrement from the bowels and kidneys, are all affected by bodily exercise.

From ancient times occultists have fully recognized that a

sound and pure mind requires a sound and pure body. Thus, in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, in Chapter Six on *Dhyana Yoga* or the restraining of the mind for concentration, we find the instruction that a devotee of controlled mind "should in an undefiled spot place his seat, firm, neither too high nor too low...keeping his body, head, and neck firm and erect, with mind determined, and gaze directed to the tip of his nose without looking in any direction, with heart at peace and free from fear," etc. Let us note that heart, mind and body are brought together here. How are we to understand this teaching of the *Gita*? Mr. Judge in his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita* states:

It is not meditation to stare at a spot on the wall for a fixed period, or to remain for another space of time in a perfectly vacuous mental state which soon runs into sleep. All those things are merely forms which in the end will do no lasting good. (pp. 128-29)

Mr. Judge's insight is justified if we turn to Shankaracharya's commentary on this verse:

An erect body may be in motion; hence the qualification "still." He is to gaze *as it were* on the tip of his nose. Here we have to understand the words "as it were"; for, the Lord means to prescribe, not the very act of "gazing on the tip of his nose," but the fixing of the eyesight within (by withdrawing it from external objects); and this, of course, depends on the steadiness of mind. If, on the other hand, the very act of "gazing on the tip of his nose" were meant here, then the mind would be fixed only there, not on the Self. As a matter of fact, the Yogin is to concentrate his mind on the Self, as will be taught in VI, 25—"Making the mind dwell in the Self." Wherefore the words "as it were" being understood, "gazing" means here "the fixing of the eyesight within."

Let us proceed to find out what such a master of Yoga as Patanjali has recorded in his Aphorisms about the postures and poses of the body which bespeak a controlled and calm mind. The posture must be "steady and pleasant," not from the point of view of the body only, but also from that of the mind. Not all postures

named by commentators are by any means easy for the body. There is much confusion and misunderstanding about postures and breathing (*asana* and *pranayama*). Occult science makes a pair of exercise and breathing, and Patanjali's postures are a type of exercises. Vyasa's commentary and Vachaspati's gloss name some of these postures. Since later less reliable teachers and practitioners have misread what is intended, there prevails not only confusion; the practices are a positive danger to the health of both body and mind. What is not fully understood by modern Hindus is that postures and other yogic exercises are intended to *follow* mind training and mind movements. The understanding of exercises of body, including breathing, yields a twofold meaning. It is said by a learned Theosophist and sincere aspirant, Charles Johnston:

Here we approach a section of the teaching which has manifestly a twofold meaning. The first is physical, and concerns the bodily position of the student, and the regulation of breathing. These things have their direct influence upon soul-life, the life of the spiritual man, since it is always and everywhere true that our study demands a sound mind in a sound body. The present sentence declares that, for work and for meditation, the position of the body must be steady and without strain, in order that the finer currents of life may run their course.

It applies further to the poise of the soul, that fine balance and stability which nothing can shake, where consciousness rests on the firm foundation of spiritual being. This is indeed the house set upon a rock, which the winds and waves beat upon in vain.

Now the assuming of postures and breathing exercises commenced in and with the body prove disastrous in the long run. They make the divine discipline of Raja-Yoga almost the demoniac and materialistic discipline of Hatha-Yoga. Mr. Judge's advice is, as usual with him, sane and sanctified common sense:

For the clearing up of the mind of the student, it is to be observed that the "postures" laid down in various systems of "Yoga" are not absolutely essential to the successful pursuit of the practice of concentration and attainment of its ultimate fruits.

All such "postures," as prescribed by Hindu writers, are based upon an accurate knowledge of the physiological effects produced by them, but at the present day they are only possible for Hindus, who from their earliest years are accustomed to assuming them.

They have become dangerous also for modern generations of Hindus. The craze for yogic exercises in the name of *swadeshi* is widespread; there *are swadeshi* exercises that gymnasiums and *talimkhanas* advocate, but even these will be found to be too strenuous in modern times for the fast-deteriorating Hindu bodies.

For the modern "educated" and "civilized" man, Dr. Alexis Carrel has something important to say in his *Man, the Unknown*:

As is well known, a muscular group develops by appropriate drill. If we wish to strengthen not only the muscles, but also the apparatuses responsible for their nutrition and the organs which enable the body to sustain a prolonged effort, exercises more varied than classical sports are indispensable. These exercises are the same as were practised daily in a more primitive life. Specialized athletics, as taught in schools and universities, do not give real endurance. The efforts requiring the help of muscles, vessels, heart, lungs, brain, spinal cord and mind—that is, of the entire organism—are necessary in the construction of the individual.

In another place, he comments:

Golf on Saturdays and Sundays does not compensate for the complete inaction of the rest of the week. By doing away with muscular effort in daily life, we have suppressed, without being aware of it, the ceaseless exercise required from our organic systems in order that the constancy of the inner medium be maintained...

In sum, the intermittent exercises of modern man, such as golf and tennis, are not equivalent to the continuous muscular activity required by the existence of our ancestors. Today, physical effort only takes place at certain moments and on certain days. The customary state of the organic systems, of blood vessels, of sweat and endocrine glands, is that of repose.

Sagacious as Dr. Alexis Carrel is, his suggestions will not altogether suit the student of Theosophy. The Esotericist has to practise Divine Discipline and to maintain a proper balance between body and mind-soul. The body is the vehicle of the embodied Self; desires linger in the body; what effects the desires have on the body, and what the body has on the desires—the balance between soul and body very greatly depends on this. Bodily exercises, therefore, have to be planned by the neophyte, taking into account the desires, the thoughts and the will. "Thy Soul cannot be hurt but through thy erring body." The Divine Discipline is founded upon the principle of the golden Mean, and so we must exercise the body gently and not roughly, keeping especially in mind the brain and the cerebrospinal system.

Every type of bodily exercise affects respiration, and so breathing is the second of the pair which goes with exercise. Even greater harm is done to the body by the practice of *pranayama* than by that of *asana* or postures. Speaking of the three exercises of nostril breathing called *Puraka*, *Kumbhaka* and *Rechaka*, H. P. Blavatsky says that they are "very pernicious to health" (*The Theosophical Glossary*). She also refers to the real *pranayama*, the mental or will breath which regulates and harmonizes bodily breathing. Metaphysically and cosmically, the Divine Spirit breathes, while hovering over the waters of space, before manifestation; this is the archetypal breathing or *pranayama*—from within without. The study of the Great Breath in *The Secret Doctrine* will indicate what true *pranayama* is, and the practising neophyte is always advised to proceed from the universal to the particular. Simple deep breathing fulfils the requirement which Vyasa puts forward: "The drinking in of external air, and expiration, the throwing out of the internal air, is the regulation of breath (*pranayama*)."

In its real meaning, *pranayama* is the rhythmic intake, holding and exhalation of the breath, just as the Macrocosmic Powers breathe into the Universe and receive back the breath. The momentary pause which is present in all actions typifies that moment of awareness which gives control or the reverse, *Libra* or the balance

point.

Just as exercise is necessary for the body, as also are cleanliness and food, so are these things necessary for the astral body. Cleanliness is to be obtained for it by washing away with good thoughts and harmonious feelings the evil or the selfishness that is there. Therefore we are advised to read "holy" books, especially as these have in them the attractive power of good nature forces. Also important is the daily review which makes us aware of what is in our mind and heart and what has been revealed in our actions. But, unless this review ends, as does the devachanic review at the end of that period, in a vision of the future, illumined by this higher state of mind, it is of little practical use.

There is a close relationship between the exercise of the body and the health of the astral body with its senses, nerves, *prana* and *kama*. How often do we say, "I went for a walk to work it off," referring to some emotional or even physical upset! Physical exercise stimulates the breathing, gets more air to the organs and gets rid of much that is decaying. So with its correspondent, *prana*. *Prana* is taken in through the astral body, and when exhaled corresponds to the exhaling of the breath. When we do not feed our bad feelings by thinking of them, those feelings are starved. Though they are not destroyed, they are at least not given more life.

Exercise brings us in contact with the spheres of air; our feelings and thoughts during exercise are an important factor, for sylphs (air elementals) influence our temperament very powerfully for good or ill. When oxygen or ozone is inhaled by the physical lungs, what are our thought-lungs and feeling-nostrils doing? The air in a slum is foul; the air on a mountain top is rare; gales may cleanse as zephyrs may energize. So mental lungs and emotional nostrils have to be taken into account when we exercise the body.

Even in respect of such mundane things as food, dress, exercise, breathing, the great Mother Nature must be thought of by man as he is the thinker.

(To be continued)

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## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Modern science is concerned with objective knowledge; religion, with a subjective attitude towards mankind and the universe, and with the purpose for which scientific knowledge should be used. Though they are mutually complementary, till lately there was thought to be an impassable chasm between the two. The gap is now narrowing, and leading lights in their respective spheres are talking in terms of a "rapprochement."

An article by Margaret Wertheim in the October 1994 *Omni* is devoted to this topic of "blurring the boundaries" between the two. Although much of what is said in the article relates to the Western world and the Christian community, yet the winds of change in matters religious and scientific are blowing in other parts of the world as well. The article gives a purview of what has been achieved along the line so far:

Spanning the chasm between the two cultures, however, is no simple task: On the one hand there is the need to open up the religious community to the insights and discoveries of science, while at the same time encouraging the scientific community to take seriously the genuine value of religion. To that end, Robert Russell [a physicist and a trained theologian] founded in 1981 the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences (CTNS) in Berkeley, California, the leading international center in this interdisciplinary field....

Theology must be kept relevant to the times. That point was stressed by William Stoeger, a Jesuit priest and astrophysicist at the Vatican Observatory. "No religion which is enculturated into the Western world can afford to ignore science," he says. "It plays such a major role in our culture today." Stoeger points out that much of the language we now use and even the very terms in which we think, are deeply influenced by science, so if religious people ignore this fact and "continue to rely on categories of thought from the Renaissance or the Middle Ages, then religion comes to be seen as an anachronism."...

George Ellis has used physicists' knowledge of the funda-

mental constants of nature as evidence for a providential designer....The apparent purposefulness in the construction of nature points to the hand of a purposeful "Designer," emphasizing the importance of ethical issues which, he claims, "cannot be meaningfully included in a world view based solely on physics." Though their work differs significantly, both Russell and Ellis argue that physics has "both criticized and restructured" traditional theological positions. Far from making religion seem redundant, Russell says contemporary science can provide "scope and insight for faith."...

If getting theologians to take science seriously is one-half of the equation, what about getting scientists to take religion seriously? In many ways this is an even harder task, for as Nancey Murphy notes, we live in an age which has "very positive attitudes toward science and very negative attitudes toward religion—especially in the academic world." Yet times are changing and both the general public and the academic community are becoming more open to religion....

Russell stresses the need for respect on both sides. The aim of a dialogue between religion and science is not to *replace* either, but to learn how to have *both* forces co-existing in our lives.

In the words of Einstein, "Religion without science is blind. Science without religion is lame." But one has to be ruthlessly clear in one's mind that religion here does not stand for sectarian creedalism but for the code of ethics; and that by science is not meant materialism but the code of honest intellectual accuracy. Viewed in this light, science and religion can naturally have no quarrel, and the usual parading forth of arguments on either side becomes superfluous. But, while a few—they are still in a minority—are trying to bring about a rapprochement between these great schools of thought, many proponents of both *strive* to create and maintain a wide gulf between their respective ideologies and methods—needless to say, for selfish reasons.

W. Q. Judge rightly defined Theosophy as "a scientific religion and a religious science." And H.P.B. declared, "*de facto*, Theosophy claims to be both 'RELIGION' and 'SCIENCE,' for Theosophy is the essence of both."

The modern Materialist insists on an impassable chasm between the two, pointing out that the "Conflict between Religion and Science" has ended in the triumph of the latter and the defeat of the first. The modern Theosophist refuses to see, on the contrary, any such chasm at all. If it is claimed by both Church and Science that each of them pursues the truth and *nothing but the truth*, then either one of them is mistaken, and accepts falsehood for truth, or both. Any other impediment to their reconciliation must be set down as purely *fictitious*. Truth is one, even if sought for or pursued at two different ends. Therefore Theosophy claims to reconcile the two foes. ("Is Theosophy a Religion?" : *U.L.T. Pamphlet No.1*)

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Turn where we will in the world, it is generally accepted that the ethical barometer is falling and diversity is tearing at the fabric of society. What then can hold it together? To find an answer to the question, two dozen "men and women of conscience" from 16 nations were interviewed by the Institute for Global Ethics. The president of the Institute, Rushworth M. Kidder, states in *The Futurist* for July-August 1994 that the object of the interviews was to find the common values that can bind us together in the years to come—values "so fundamental that they dissolve borders, transcend races, and outlast cultural traditions."

There is a pressing need for shared values in our age of global interdependence without consensus. But there is one very real question unanswered: Is there in fact a single set of values that wise, ethical people around the world might agree on? Can there be a global code of ethics? If there is a common core of values "out there" in the world, it ought to be identifiable through examination of contemporary modes of thought in various cultures around the world. Can it be found?

On that topic, the men and women interviewed had a clear point of view. "Yes," they said, "there is such a code, and it can be clearly articulated."

The interviewees, described as "ethical thought-leaders within their different cultures," agreed on eight common values that can guide our troubled world through a tumultuous future: (1) *Love*, which implies compassion, solidarity and mutual assistance, was described by some of the interviewees as the base of moral behaviour. (2) *Truthfulness*, or honesty, which makes people more comfortable and trustful with one another, is a much-needed value today. (3) *Fairness*, which goes hand in hand with the concept of equality, was related by some to the Golden Rule: treating other people as one would want to be treated. (4) *Freedom*, the right of the individual to express ideas freely, to act according to his or her conscience, implies accountability and equal opportunity. (5) *Unity*, the value that embraces "a global vision capable of moving humanity from unbridled competition to co-operation," includes in its ambit all living things. As one interviewee put it, "the earth and its natural goods are the inheritance of all peoples." (6) *Tolerance*, or decent respect for the right of other people to have their own ideas and points of view, implies respect for the dignity of each of us. One of the interviewees traced the idea of tolerance to the one spirit that animates us all. "So when you look at me, you're looking at yourself—and I'm seeing me in you," he said. (7) *Responsibility*, which has an impact on our common future, will determine whether we will make the world easier or more difficult for future generations. In discussions of world politics or ethics, the important thing is not just to assert rights, but to ensure that they be protected, and achieving this protection rests wholly on the principle of responsibility. (8) *Respect for life* grows out of this idea of responsibility, yet extends beyond it. It is a value known most widely in the West from the Ten Commandments: Thou shalt not kill.

There were other significant values that surfaced in the interviews—values such as courage, detachment, hospitality, peace, stability, racial harmony, respect for the cultures of other communities, respect for women, and protection of the environment.

The article concludes with the words:

So what good is this code of values? It gives us a foundation for building goals, plans, and tactics, where things really happen and the world really changes. It unifies us, giving us a home territory of consensus and agreement. And it gives us a way—not *the* way, but *a* way—to reply when we're asked, "Whose values will you teach?" Answering this last question, as we tumble into the twenty-first century with the twentieth's sense of ethics, may be one of the most valuable mental activities of our time.

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As one researcher trying to trace man's ancestry has put it, palaeoanthropology is filled with surprises. "Just when everyone is comfortable with something, a new fossil is found or a new date. It certainly keeps us on our toes."

Till recently, most anthropologists had held, on the basis of some widely accepted fossil dates, that *Homo erectus*, believed by them to be an early human ancestor, evolved in Africa about two million years ago and spread out to Asia and southern Europe about one million years later. Advanced dating techniques now show that fossils discovered in Indonesia are just as old as those found in Africa, which means that *Homo erectus* lived in Africa and Asia about the same time. This suggests, according to some anthropologists, that "two different populations of *Homo erectus* evolved and no one knows which was ancestral to modern humans." (*Science Update*, August-September 1994)

The new dates indicate that "the whole pattern of human evolution is much more complicated than a simplistic linear explanation," says Bernard Wood, a palaeoanthropologist at the University of Liverpool. Other researchers admit the possibility of a separate, still undiscovered species that was ancestral to modern man.

Such changing hypotheses are evidence of the confused state in which modern science finds itself in the matter of man's origin. The discoveries being made in different parts of our globe might ultimately lead scientists to accept the polygenetic origin that the Secret Doctrine has claimed for man. Man is of vastly greater age

than modern science has any inkling of. Says *The Secret Doctrine*:

Could men exist 18,000,000 years ago? To this Occultism answers in the affirmative, notwithstanding scientific objectors. Moreover, this duration covers only the Vaivasvata-Manu *Man*, *i.e.*, the male and female entity already separated into distinct sexes. The two and a half Races that preceded that event may have lived 300,000,000 years ago for all that science can tell. For the geological and physical difficulties in the way of the theory could not exist for the *primeval, ethereal* man of the Occult teachings. *The whole issue of the quarrel between the profane and the esoteric sciences depends upon the belief in, and demonstration of, the existence of an astral body within the physical*, the former independent of the latter.... To this, all those who refuse to accept the theory of a "boneless," purely ethereal, man, will object. Science, which knows only of physical organisms, will feel indignant; and materialistic theology still more so....

The Occultists, who believe firmly in the teachings of the mother-philosophy, repel the objections of both theologians and scientists. They maintain, on their side, that, during those periods when there must have been insufferable heat, even at the two poles, successive floods, upheaval of the valleys and constant shifting of the great waters and seas, none of these circumstances could form an impediment to human life and organization, such as is assigned by them to the early mankind. (II, 148-50)

It follows that palaeoanthropologists and others who rely on fossils as a guide to human evolution are completely off-track, as they are in their conjectures about where the first men lived. In those days of hoary antiquity, there was neither Africa nor the Americas, still less Europe; nor was there much of present Asia. "The immense Continent Lemuria...once reigned supreme over the Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans" (II, 327). It was "Lemuria which *was* the cradle of mankind—of the physical sexual creature who materialized through long aeons out of the ethereal hermaphrodites." (II, 680)

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As with the age of man, so with the age of the universe, many conflicting theories have been advanced by present-day astronomers. The most recent age estimates come from Wendy Freedman and 13 colleagues of the Carnegie Observatories who announce in the British science journal *Nature* that observations with the Hubble Space Telescope imply the universe is only eight billion years old—a much lower estimate than previously believed.

Astronomers say that the universe is expanding like an inflated balloon, so more distant regions are receding faster than closer ones. The faster the expansion, the less time it took for the universe to reach its present size. Thus measuring the expansion, they argue, reveals the age of the universe. (*Newsweek*, November 7, 1994)

Not all cosmologists agree, and it is admitted that the "age crisis" is nowhere near solution and that "there's sure to be more darkness before there is light." As Sidney van den Bergh of Dominion Astrophysical Observatory in British Columbia describes the quest, quoting Mark Twain: "The researches of many commentators have already thrown much darkness on this subject, and it is probable that, if they continue, we shall soon know nothing at all about it."

*The Secret Doctrine* (II, 68-70) gives figures from an ancient Brahmanical calendar—figures that are not fanciful, but founded upon actual astronomical calculations. According to the esoteric doctrine, the age of our solar system alone is 1,955,884,687 years (this was in 1887). As for the whole Universal System, or "Brahma's age," it requires 15 figures to express its duration!

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