

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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### FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITIONS

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What is here in the world is there in Brahman; what is there, is here; from death to death does he go who sees these two as different.

—*Katha Upanishad*

TO be able to stand alone constitutes one of the first steps on the Path which leads to the terrace of enlightenment. The Masters have indicated that the greatest evil which confronts man consists in his mistaken reliance on false external supports. Organized religions, the priesthood and the clergy and sacerdotalism of all kinds have ever blurred the vision which could be properly used if these external obstructions were eliminated and man would have the courage to stand alone and upon nothing depend save on his own innate divinity and the strength which can flow therefrom. It is man's fear of standing alone which is basically responsible for his persisting tendency to personify Principles, Forces, Laws. Anthropomorphism can be regarded as a basic misconception responsible for the sense of separateness man harbours, and for his pertinacious reliance upon dogmatism, the priesthood and its insistence upon prayer to a personal god as the means of redemption and release from the pain and sorrow of physical existence. Students of Theosophy, no less than others, are confronted with this problem. The ability to quote the Three Fundamentals of *The Secret Doctrine* and to assert that Deity is not a Person or Being but a Principle does

not necessarily imply that we are in a position to make application of this Proposition in all directions—very often not even to our own conclusions and attitudes.

*The Secret Doctrine* posits that the Three Fundamental Propositions are applicable to every circumstance, physical, mental, spiritual. Such applications, however, are usually attempted in a mechanical manner. We proclaim the universality, the monistic character, of the First Fundamental, but in so doing often use terms which connote dualism and separateness. Do we consider Deity as separate and distinct from nature and existence? If we do, it is because we cannot conceive of It as Infinite, Absolute, Abstract. If we do conceive of Deity as something beyond us, then immediately we fall into the error of the theologian who interprets God as separate from the creatures He is supposed to have created.

Do we believe that Law as described in the Second Fundamental is immutable in the sense that, once a specific action is performed, a prescribed and identically corresponding effect will inevitably follow? That if we deceive someone, then eventually that same one must deceive us? That if we love someone, then eventually that same one must love us? If this is our conception of the operation of the Law of Karma, then we believe, as do the theologians, in "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" dogma.

Do we believe the Third Fundamental teaches evolution as a natural unfolding from lower to higher forms because of the operation of natural law which *inevitably* brings about the completion of the evolutionary process in a predetermined manner, irrespective of the influence volitional beings may have upon the process? If we do, we fall into the error of the theologian who believes that a personal god arbitrarily determines the course of events and that all creatures are governed by the disposition of a Creator. There remains, however, the fact that Deity is Absolute. Law is immutable. Evolution is inevitable.

H.P.B. refers to the "Great Breath" as symbolizing the perpetual motion aspect of the Absolute. This Great Breath assumes the character of pre-Cosmic Ideation. "It is the *fons et origo* of force and of all individual consciousness." This aspect of the Absolute is thus

both the Cause and the Effect of all individual consciousness. It is the Fountain and the Source and we are fundamentally identified with this aspect of the Absolute. Because we persist in limiting our consciousness to the objective plane with attending separative viewpoints, it is difficult to appreciate the fact that Deity, Consciousness, is both the Noumenon and the Phenomenon. We tend to consider Deity as different and separate from our individual consciousness. To accept Deity as the Fountain and the Source, the Manifested and the Unmanifested, the THIS as well as THAT, is to make universal application of the First Fundamental Proposition. We are identified with THAT but confine our awareness to THIS.

If we can identify ourselves with both THIS and THAT, we shall probably understand how Law can be universal and inevitable, but will not necessarily function on the basis of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Actions always return to their source quantitatively, not necessarily qualitatively. Karma adjusts in terms of force and not in terms of events. The effects of prior actions return to individuals in terms of force, of which events are purely representative. Forces are negotiable on the plane to which they are directed. The materialist will resolve these returning forces, which we call Karma, on the physical plane because he is unable to resolve them on a higher one. The practitioner of *Raja Yoga*, true Occultism, will resolve these forces on the higher mental and spiritual planes. Law is thus immutable. Engendered force must return, but the type of events through which it is precipitated is incidental, not inevitable.

An outstanding example of the manner in which precipitating Karma can be resolved on higher planes can be witnessed in the *Satyagraha* practice advocated by Gandhiji. He insisted that all action must be resolved by the power of soul-force and love. Violence must be met non-violently on the physical plane. This will have a neutralizing effect. At the same time soul-force must also be called forth in the form of tolerance and forbearance; thus transmuted by *Satyagraha*, violence is returned in the form of benevolence. Thus can be exemplified the teaching of the Buddha—"In this world never is enmity appeased by hatred; enmity is ever appeased by Love. This is the Law Eternal."

The Third Fundamental indicates that all beings evolve from simple to complex form by innate intelligence manifesting according to the example set and the help given by more developed beings. "The most intelligent being in the universe, man, has never, then, been without a friend, but has a line of elder brothers who continually watch over the progress of the less progressed." This is a statement of Universal Procedure. All progress takes place because higher beings help those less progressed, not by imposition, but by the power of example, compassion and love. There exists a great Hierarchy of beings who help the less progressed ones to attain satisfactory adjustment with their fellow creatures, thus acquiring emancipation from restricting forms and progressing to conditions which allow greater freedom, growth and responsibility. These applications of Universal Principles are possible only to the extent we realize that "all are the same in kind and differ only in degree." THIS and THAT are really ONE.

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WE keep hammering away on Theosophy; people hear us say the same thing time and again. They get the meaning all the time, but as a matter of fact, they get more and more of the inner meanings as they listen and think, as well as try to apply. Some take the attitude of knowing what is meant by the words used; they get accustomed to them and on hearing them feel that they know them; they would like something new and strange, and oftentimes are simply bored by the repetition. It is clear to us, however, that one can hardly exhaust the shades of meaning and applications that can be made in regard to these apparent commonplaces. Well, some do get their spiritual eyes opened little by little; they are not the ones who are either bored or complain.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

## LIFE IS GOD

IT is a recognized fact today that Law works everywhere in Nature—in the lower kingdoms as also in the human kingdom. Nothing ever happens by chance or accident, and we must learn to discern, not the hand of God, but the working of Law in all things, all beings, all phenomena, all occurrences. Confusion of thought producing moral misery results from the false conception of God; contentment born of understanding results from the correct conception.

All the great scriptures of the world have taught that man is made in the Image of God, and that is also the Theosophical teaching. But the ordinary human conception of God fostered by priestcraft, in East and in West alike, reverses the aphorism, and people pray to and worship a God made in their own human and mortal image. It is the central lesson of Occult history—the struggle between the grand concept of God given by the Sages and the Seers and that puny, debasing view advanced by organized religions and followed by millions of men and women. Let us first memorize that great spiritual axiom: Man is made in the Image of God.

Now put these two ideas together: Law unerring is present everywhere, and is therefore present in the human kingdom. It is that Law which builds fire-mist into atoms, and atoms into universes; it is Law which creates the human body, as also the human mind. The Image of God which man is, is built by Law—nay, *is* Law.

Order, rhythm, harmony, every form occupying its proper place—that is what we perceive all around us. Science reveals it in the visible kingdoms of Nature; Theosophy unveils it in the invisible compartments of Nature as well. The first requirement for every inquirer, be he a believer or be he a doubter, is to brood over and examine this stupendous fact—no chance, no accident, no good or ill luck exist in Nature; but Law, just, unerring, cruel in its appearance perhaps, but supremely merciful in reality, ceaselessly works—everywhere, every moment.

Once that is perceived, one can ask oneself at every turn: Why this event or that happening? What caused it? How did it come

about?

The Theosophical teaching about God is in conformity with the Vedas and the Upanishads and the Buddhist canons, and without this teaching the *Gathas* and the *Yashts* of the Zoroastrians, the *Pentateuch* of the Jews and the Christians, the *Koran* of the Muslims, etc., remain full of riddles and puzzles. That is the value of the philosophy of Theosophy: it makes every religion a living and vital reality, by illuminating obscure tenets which demolish the false values and meanings priestcraft puts on the scriptures and *shastras*. So let us study, not what is false, and why it is false, but rather what is the Truth which helps the mind to understand, which uplifts the heart, and makes life both happy and noble.

The first problem is—*What is God?* Theosophy answers, God is Life. It is a great word, this word Life. It is so commonly used that people do not stop to ask: "But what *is* Life?" Biologists use the word in one sense, physicists and chemists in another; poets sing of it, moralists preach about it, philosophers expound it. Theosophy defines Life as a Principle, but what is a Principle? A Principle is the fundamental source of all things—everything without exception. In discussions and debates, we speak of the underlying principle—the fundamental truth on which all reasoning is based and from which all arguments proceed. We speak of first principles of science or of philosophy, and even of morals. In that sense, then, Life is *the* Principle of the Universe—the source, the basis, the fundamental of the Universe. All things, all beings, spring from Life, are rooted in Life; Life is the basis, the *upadhi*, from which spring all objects and subjects. Life is fundamental, first, primary, persistent in sustaining, and persistent in destroying—and therefore the last. The Christian Apostle describes it well when he says that in It "we live, and move, and have our being." Life creates, Life preserves, Life destroys; Life is first and last; Life is all in all.

To comprehend in some measure this Principle of Life, we must look at its *universal* aspects. Its particular or detailed aspects are many—millions upon millions; but its universal, basic aspects are three. Theologies and philosophies put forward the doctrine of the Trinity, and often either corrupt it or materialize it. The Christian

Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost ought to reveal the truth about God which is Life—but it does not. Similarly, the Hindu Trimurti is grossly materialized, and Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are looked upon as men, which they are not! Life is triple, triune, a Trinity, teaches Theosophy.

First, Life is Motion—perpetual motion, unceasing movement. When we say that a person is dead, what do we mean? Motion is what makes the difference between a living and a dead person. The living body moves; the dead body does not. We say that plants are living because we see motion, growth. Till lately, minerals, rocks and dust were regarded as dead matter, because we could not see movement. Even science divided matter into organic and non-organic, living matter and dead matter, till it was demonstrated that metals and other minerals, too, responded, and thus showed signs of life, *i.e.*, of motion or movement. Nothing in the universe is inert or dead; all is Life, all is Motion.

Life moves in stones as it moves in the mind of man, and this movement is potency. It is said that God is omnipotent, and people interpret it to mean that by his power God can strike down the wicked, but they forget that the good and the saintly too are struck down! Life is omnipotent, in the sense that it is potent, moving, everywhere, all the time. Look at the vast expanse of Nature; there is movement everywhere. Not for a moment is there absence of movement; what looks like death, is itself movement—how else would corpses underground disintegrate and become dust? Potency implies power, and Life is perennially powerful. This Motion of Life we call evolution (some call it God!). The line of evolution from the simple protoplasm to the complex human body is the Line of Life-Motion. From the seed spring roots, trunk, branches, leaves, flowers and fruits; it is the evolution of the seed, the life-motion of the seed. The span of human life, from birth to death, comprises human evolution—the life-motion of the human body. Life is Potency, movement, from within without. Ordinarily we only see half of the Potency of Life. The visible Universe, the vast concourse of Nature, the mighty magic of *Prakriti* or Matter, is the outer shell, the visible aspect of Life, *i.e.*, Life which has become

patent. Life moves, its wonders to perform, everywhere.

Next, if life is omnipotent, potent and becoming patent everywhere, moving from within, outward, from latency to visibility, then Life is also omnipresent. People say that God is omnipresent; God is everywhere because Life is everywhere. Life is God—all-powerful or omnipotent at every point of space, *i.e.*, omnipresent. Life is the Great Presence. When we see the presence of Life in death, we see indeed. The Sage or the Master is spoken of as the *Tattva-jnani*, one who can see and know the Essence of Things—call it Self, *Atman*; *Purusha*, Spirit; call it *Mahat*, the Great Intelligence, call it *Ishvara*, the supporter or *upadhi* of all; call it God, if you like, but do understand that it is Life, omnipotent and omnipresent.

The symbol of omnipotence, its sign or mark, is Motion. The symbol or sign of Life's omnipresence is Space. Modern scientists and scholars have not yet found the secret of Perpetual Motion, nor do they know what Space really is. Is it a plenum or a void? Is it boundless or having a boundary? The ancient Science of Theosophy answers that Space is boundless, and within that boundless Space are solar systems and universes, *i.e.*, forms of Life, or Life become patent, manifest. There is no better symbol or idea to meditate upon if one desires to get a glimpse of what God is—Boundless Space which is Perpetual Motion.

The third aspect of Life is Infinite Time, or Duration. "Time was not, for it lay asleep in the infinite bosom of Duration," says *The Secret Doctrine*. That which we call Time—Past, Present, Future—is but divisions of the all-moving, boundless Space, which is beginningless and endless. We as souls must learn to look for that which is the Eternal in us.

So we have three symbols—Motion, Space, Duration or Infinite Time. Motion which is ceaseless, powerful everywhere; Space which is boundless, thrilling with motion and therefore alive everywhere; and Space existing in Infinite Time, Time which never had a beginning and will never, never have an end. If we work upon these three symbols, think and meditate on them, we may gain some concept of the true nature of God or Deity.

What is God? Life. Where is God or Life? Everywhere. Then who is God?

The Omnipotent Life moves. The *Gita* describes it as "the never-ending stream of conditioned existence." Just as water flows and flows from a spring, so from Life, the Source, a million rivers flow and flow in every direction. The One becomes the many; the Universe is a living whole, the collectivity of all existing things, as one Unit. All forms of Life, visible and invisible, make up the Universe. The Universe is called *Brahmanda*, the Egg of Brahma, the Egg of Life. It is a wonderful simile. The Egg comes from the life of the mother; Brahma is Life, and it, by the power of Motion, by the Potency within it, begets a Universe. It has a form—the elliptical form of the Egg. It is said that just as fish swim in the ocean—millions upon millions of fish—so are there numberless universes. Each universe has its surrounding wall, its "Ring Pass-Not"; therefore it is a form of Life. Similarly, in that universe or solar system there are numberless forms of Life. This Earth is a form of Life within the Egg of the solar system; and on the Earth there are numerous different forms of Life. Forms of Life differ because Life is Motion; and in moving, Life builds, sustains, destroys to build better. Therefore there is what we call progressive evolution—unfoldment. Forms of Life are undergoing the process of unfoldment: some forms are simple, others complex; some are less evolved and others more evolved; but all are forms of Life.

Who is God then? Every form of Life being an expression of God, within every form there is God. Therefore it is absurd to speak of Monotheism as a belief in one God outside of the Universe. Monotheism is correct only if we understand it as meaning that it is one and the same Life which moves everywhere in Space, producing innumerable forms of Life or many gods. What is the truth underlying Polytheism, the doctrine of many gods? Each form of Life is a god; some are more evolved than others. Animal gods, vegetable gods, mineral gods are facts in Nature, as are human gods and goddesses. The collectivity of all forms of Life in any given solar system is the God of that system. This is the truth of Pantheism—God as or in Nature. Monotheism, Polytheism and

Pantheism put together give us the truth about God.

There is a practical, ethical aspect to the Theosophical teaching about God. In the march of progress, human gods are more evolved forms of Life than the gods of Nature. The human form is the most perfect of all forms of Life, and modern science admits this. But Theosophy goes further and says that even among humans there are grades, and higher than a perfected human being there is none. We ordinary men and women are not perfected yet, but we *can* reach that stage of perfection by effort and perseverance.

That is why we say that man is made in the Image of God. But though there *is* God in all, the image most men and women project is not yet God's Image. As the Upanishadic saying goes: "Atman, the Self, is in all beings, but in all it does not shine forth equally." It shines forth in man as it does not in the lower forms of Life. It is said that man is the microcosm of the Universe, the Macrocosm. Each man is a small universe. Every power, every faculty, every aspect, without exception, which exists in Nature has become incorporated in man. The long, long process of evolution has made each of us acquire every power in Life. Therefore our responsibility is great indeed. God is everywhere in the Universe, but the human kingdom is a *direct* expression of that Universe.

What are the characteristic expressions which make us human? Why is this particular form of Life an Image of God? What makes humans superior to other forms of Life? In finding answers to these questions we can acquire the practical and ethical knowledge so necessary for daily living.

Man is superior because of the presence of the thinking power in him. The human soul is capable of understanding the Omnipotence and Omnipresence of Life; other beings, not possessing mind, cannot cognize the action of the One Life in the many forms. By the power of his thought, a man can understand how Omnipotent and Omnipresent Life moves everywhere and shows itself as a mighty assemblage of varying intelligences; how that One Life is made up of many lives.

As we study these ideas and try to see these propositions with our mind's eye, we learn certain definite truths:

*Omnipotence*: If Life is always moving from within without, it is so moving now and here, in each of us. The Motion of Life has not stopped; it is active in a threefold way in man: the power to think, the power to will, the power to feel, are all Life-Motions. Our further growth and evolution depend on the culture and cultivation of these powers which are yet only partially developed and not under our full control.

*Omnipresence*: If Life is everywhere, we must try to see it at the core, at the heart of every form. The Presence of God is in all; the Radiance of the Self is in all; the Light of the Spirit is in all. It is by the exercise of thought, will and feeling in this direction that man evolves in the real sense. The presence of Deity must be seen by each one of us, using our thought; study and meditation are the ways of thought. Think of the Self, the Spirit, as a Presence in everything—in the sage and the savage, in man and beast, in the dust under our feet and the stars overhead. This effort to detect the Presence of Self, of Spirit, of God in all things, will reveal to us the third factor.

*The One in the many, and the many in the One* : This is the truth of Brotherhood, not partial but universal Brotherhood. Atoms make molecules, molecules build cells, cells form organs, organs produce bodies, bodies collect into kingdoms, kingdoms roll into one another and become Nature.

By the power of thought, of reason, we know this, so to speak, *outside* of ourselves. But there is the power of real heart feeling. When we know that one common element is the source and the basis of us all, that one common life binds us all, we naturally begin to feel the attraction and the nearness to us of other forms of life. This is the awakening of Compassion, a principle in Nature. When people say that God is Love, they speak without understanding. The truth is that the power to love, which resides in the heart, is divine. God thinks in us and we call it mind; God feels in us and we call it heart. Life is Love, for life contains the power of attraction. Each of us manifests love, partially, imperfectly, and the measure of love we show is the measure of our evolution. Let us not judge the greatness of men and women only by their thinking capacity; we need to add the measure of the depth of their heart-feeling. Let us

cultivate thought and gain knowledge, but let us not neglect the culture of love, the development of the heart. We all show love in the family, among friends, but it is shown by most in a personal way and we expect a return in kind from the person we love. It is Impersonal Compassion which is the true gauge of human evolution: Are we willing to love even when we are not loved in return? Impersonal love is rooted in Wisdom; it loves with justice, intelligently, and without looking for a reward or a return of love. Love with justice, love without any expectation, is a sign of divinity unfolding in us.

By the power of thought we know, by the power of feeling we love, but there is the third power, the power to will, the creative power. When thought is wedded to feeling, progeny of deeds is the result. Our actions are good and bad, a mixture of meanness and nobility, because our thoughts are not quite pure and our feelings not quite impersonal. Man is a creator, not only by and of body, but also by and of mind. Human souls are spoken of as mind-born Sons of Brahma, the children of Will and Yoga; we must universalize our thoughts and impersonalize our feelings, so that we may use the Spiritual Will to speak every word and to do every deed. We are Kings in reality, yet we labour like slaves in life. How shall we assert our Royalty, our divine inheritance? By acquiring Knowledge of the Science of Kings, the secret of Royalty, the Knowledge which enables the human soul to assert, "I am verily God, the presence of Life is everywhere and in me it is unified."

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GIVE me the liberty to know, to think, to believe, and to utter freely according to conscience, above all other liberties.

—MILTON

## PROPOSITIONS OF ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY

THE first volume of *Isis Unveiled* is entitled "Science," the second, "Theology." The purpose of the first was to compare and contrast ancient and modern science and to show the self-imposed limitations of the latter, and that of both volumes was to elucidate the vital principles which underlie the philosophical systems of old.

Only occasionally does Madame Blavatsky make assertions in the book without adducing corroborative testimony. Generally it is ancient and modern philosophers, religious thinkers, scientists, travellers, spectators at magical and mediumistic feats in different corners of the world, who are brought to bear witness that the realm of the knowable is far vaster than that admitted by modern science, and that the knowledge and achievements of antiquity await due recognition.

It is the arrogance of science that she criticizes most in the first volume, the arrogance that thought it knew the limits of human knowledge. "The human heart has not yet fully uttered itself," she quoted in her Preface, and in the text she likened scientists to miners who work underground by day and, emerging only at night, cannot know the glories of the sunshine. It is a constant theme that the limitations of science are self-imposed, that facts are "selected."

One way to study *Isis* is on the basis of the ten propositions given on pp. 587-590 of the second volume. These are republished in the U.L.T. pamphlet, *Texts for Theosophical Meetings*, under the title "Propositions of Psychology." This is consistent with what Madame Blavatsky suggested, that the keys to every truth in nature are to be sought in "the hitherto unexplored mystery of psychology." Certain general laws have been discovered in the physical world, such as the conservation of matter and of energy, and science attempts to explain the manifestations of human consciousness in terms of these. In *Isis*, intelligence, will, force and matter are shown to be fundamental in the cosmos, although they have other phases in addition to those in human consciousness, and in every phenomenon, even the rustling of leaves and the movement of an earthworm, they are causative factors. In other words, understand

fully in its causative aspects the movement of an arm and you are in a position to understand the movement of a planet in its orbit. It is this relation of man to the cosmos that the Ten Points outline.

These points show the wide gulf that still exists between physical science and occult science or magic, in spite of the profound change that has overtaken the former since the publication of *Isis*. Nevertheless there are bridges across the gulf, and one of the widest is provided by the first proposition that there is no miracle; everything that happens is the result of law. In the Preface, Madame Blavatsky writes: "We believe in no Magic which transcends the scope and capacity of the human mind." The very *raison d'être* of science is the faith that this is a rational universe, that nature will not mock the attempts of man to understand her workings as does apparently the god of many religious sects.

Nevertheless, in so far as a scientist will pause to consider such philosophical questions, he probably interprets his apprehension as an understanding of the laws governing the interconnection of man's experiences through the avenues of his senses, and doubts if there is any possibility of directly comprehending an inner reality. For example, seeing an object such as a chair is the termination of a series of causally connected events: the passage of light to the retina, the excitation of the optic nerve sending an impulse to the brain, and so on. Any knowledge of an external object must be in the nature of an inference from such terminal and subjective experiences as seeing.

The second and third propositions state that man, in his triple nature, stands in relation to all things. Therefore he has the possibility of knowing the invisible, indwelling, energizing nature by direct experience and not simply by inference. If this nature is invisible to him now it is because he is like the wayfarer who stands by a lake. The water may be clear and transparent and he may have the eyes to see, but he cannot penetrate its depths because of the images which are reflected on its surface. Or he is like an actor who advances on the stage to strut awhile before the curtain which has rung down on the changes of scenery taking place behind. But he belongs to that world behind; he is sensitive to its changes and is

intimately connected with its people.

Man's triple relationship gives him potential omnipotence as well as potential omniscience. The astral soul in him is a centre and engine of force fed from the Spirit, the universal supply of all force, and moved by the same general laws which pervade all nature and produce all cosmic phenomena. The powers of the magician do not, like nuclear energy, need machinery for their deployment. They are, so to say, under the control of invisible messengers who spring instantly to do his will like so many genii of the lamp. All his thoughts and feelings become endowed with this hidden potency. Hence, unless these are charged with active beneficence and are devoid of the most fleeting trace of egotism or other impurity, the magician is an infinite danger to himself and to others.

Further light on magic and man's relation to nature is thrown by the tenth proposition and the summing up, which state that the corner-stone of magic is a knowledge of magnetism and electricity, that nature is the material ally, pupil and servant of the magician, that there is one common vital principle pervading all things and that this is controllable by the perfected human will. The creative intelligence of the magician guides the will which directs the forces of magnetism and electricity that move matter. In one place Madame Blavatsky uses the analogy of the electric battery. Scientifically, it is known that the battery does not create electricity. Electricity is everywhere; all matter is a form of electricity. Like the action of the will, it gathers it into a current and directs it to a lamp to produce light and heat, through a coil of wire to produce a magnetic field, through the armature coils of an electric motor to produce motion, and so on. Corresponding to this form of electricity there is that which is directed by man's brain. She describes it as soul electricity, as spiritual, universal ether, as "the *ambient middle nature of the metaphysical universe*." This has to be studied before science will admit its existence, and until it does so it will not understand "the great phenomenon of life."

The analogy between these two kinds of electricity can be extended to explain one phase of mediumship. Wind a length of conducting wire round a bar of iron and pass an electric current

through the former and the latter will be magnetized, or rather its latent magnetism will be developed. The directing influence at a seance uses the medium as a conductor for currents of electricity drawn from the ether. This develops the latent magnetism with which the atmosphere of the room is saturated.

In contrast to the medium, the mediator or adept performs an active function. He forms a link between the world of Spirit and the world of men for the purpose of bringing them into harmonious relationship. He creates by the power of his own soul in close union with Spirit a "heavenly nimbus" around himself which radiates divine beneficence.

This study has not attempted to be exhaustive, nor have all the Ten Points been considered. We have tried to find something of the essential difference between *Isis Unveiled* and modern science. In both, man stands in intimate relationship with all things, but, whereas science investigates external relationships between external appearances, in *Isis*, intelligence, will, force and matter are fundamental causative factors with endless protean manifestations. If we understand their workings in ourselves, we can understand their workings in the cosmos.

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A MAHATMA endowed with power over space, time, mind, and matter, is a possibility just because he is a perfected man. Every human being has the germ of all the powers attributed to these great Initiates, the difference lying solely in the fact that we have in general not developed what we possess the germ of, while the Mahatma has gone through the training and experience which have caused all the unseen human powers to develop in him, and conferred gifts that look god-like to his struggling brother below.

—W. Q. JUDGE

## WILL AND DESIRE

"MIND is a name given to the sum of the states of Consciousness grouped under Thought, Will, and Feeling," states *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 38). When someone criticizes us, our reaction at the feeling level may be: "Surely I am in the right; who is he to criticize me!" At the thought or reasoning level, the reaction may be: "Let me examine myself; perhaps he is right after all." Will is a colourless force which can move either in the direction of thought or in the direction of feeling.

If the Will does not gravitate towards feelings or desires, it remains impotent. As the old Hermetic saying goes: "Behind Will stands Desire." Desire is the basis of action and mover of the Will.

To do good, or even bad, there must first be desire. We are told that Gautama Buddha, long before he was born as Prince Siddhartha, was in one of his prior lives a mere sweeper; but when he saw a Tathagata, Buddha Deepankara, pass by, he was so impressed by his compassionate and calm appearance that in that very incarnation he decided he too would become like him one day. However, it took him many lifetimes of effort to realize that initial desire.

In *The Key to Theosophy*, H.P.B. says that "the purely bodily actions and functions are of far less importance than what a man *thinks* and *feels*, what desires he encourages in his mind, and allows to take root and grow there." There are operating in us what can be called purely instinctive desires, like the desire to eat when hungry, the desire to sleep, etc. These arise out of prior impressions given to the cells in the body. Then there are emotional desires which include our likes and dislikes.

There are also higher kinds of desires—desire to live the spiritual life, desire to do good for its own sake, and so on. But most of our desires are instinctive and emotional, so that there is a vast gulf between understanding and practice. We all know the truth rationally. When we say, "I know this very well," we know it only through our conscious mind. But we have also our emotions and instincts. The emotions are stronger than the reason. To practise what we know to be right, we must have the co-operation of the

emotions. As Sangharakshita writes in his book *Vision and Transformation*:

The Noble Eightfold Path consists of two sections, the Path of Vision and the Path of Transformation. The Path of Vision corresponds to the first stage of the Eightfold Path, Perfect Vision, while the Path of Transformation corresponds to all the other stages. Thus Perfect Emotion is the first stage of the Path of Transformation, and represents the transformation of our emotional nature in accordance with Perfect Vision. In a sense, Perfect Emotion mediates between Perfect Vision and the last six stages of the Path, because we cannot follow the Path—cannot really practise Right Speech, Right Action, and so on—until we have transformed our whole emotional nature, and in that way derived energy for the remaining stages of the Path....There is really no spiritual life until the heart is also involved.

We must watch the desire or feeling as it first arises in our mind. It may be very subtle. We may feel that we are admiring a person or a thing just impersonally. But if we are not on our guard the feeling can easily turn into an attachment or a craving. Before we wake up to the realization, a lot of water might have flown under the bridge. It is good to examine our desire critically, else it can become a fixation. We may tend to identify ourselves with that desire and it may even mean our ruination. As the Buddha says in *The Dhammapada*: "So long as the desire, however small, of a man for woman is not destroyed, so long his mind clings like a suckling calf to its mother." We must learn to regard these desires like an invasion from outside. Let us remember that it is possible, and sometimes even necessary, to conquer instinctive feelings and desires. The body may crave, for instance, for food, but it is within our power whether or not to satisfy that craving. Each one has the instinct for self-preservation, but there are occasions when a person willingly jeopardizes his own safety for the sake of another. So also sudden grief or sudden excitement are at times instinctive, and are said to be "natural," but all that is "natural" is not always helpful to spiritual progress and must be overcome by an effort of the Will.

Will, which is "the force of Spirit in action," as Mr. Judge puts it, must come into play. At times we feel that we have an intense desire to do a thing, yet cannot exert our Will to do it. We may say to a friend, "I wanted to come and see you, but could not." That is because mere "wanting to" is not enough. Our desire nature is so divided that often we ourselves do not know it fully. The *Gita* likens the state of a person who is fully possessed by desire to that of the hungry man who "loseth sight of every other object but the gratification of his appetite." Are we hungering for spiritual life in the same way? Do we have such a burning desire to change ourselves?

Our psychological and moral nature *appears* conditioned, but we are never totally conditioned. We can reform ourselves. The equivalent term for "reform" in Sanskrit is *parivartan*, *i.e.*, a turning around. This is possible when we align our Will with the Divine Will. Valiya Koli could become Valmiki. But very often we do not allow this Divine Will to function. We say, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," but this is only so long as things are going smooth. Generally we want *our* will to prevail. It is only when our desires are frustrated again and again that we are brought to our senses and begin slowly to assert our will. So long as we wish all things to come about according to our choice, we can never really understand the Divine Will.

Actually, if we examine ourselves carefully we find that we do not really desire what we *feel* we desire. As Erich Fromm writes in *The Fear of Freedom*:

Modern man seems, if anything, to have too many wishes and his only problem seems to be that, although he knows what he wants, he cannot have it. All our energy is spent for the purpose of getting what we want, and most people never question the premise of this activity: that they know their true wants. They do not stop to think whether the aims they are pursuing are something they themselves want. In school they want to have good marks, as adults they want to be more and more successful, to make more money, to have more prestige, to buy a better car, to go places, and so on. Yet when they do stop to think in the

midst of all this frantic activity, this question may come to their minds: "If I do get this new job, if I get this better car, if I can take this trip—what then? What is the use of it all? Is it really I who wants all this? Am I not running after some goal which is supposed to make me happy and which eludes me as soon as I have reached it?" These questions, when they arise, are frightening....

Modern man lives under the illusion that he knows what he wants, while he actually wants what he is *supposed* to want. In order to accept this it is necessary to realize that to know what one really wants is not comparatively easy, as most people think, but one of the most difficult problems any human being has to solve. It is a task we frantically try to avoid by accepting readymade goals as though they were our own.... We have become automatons who live under the illusion of being self-willing individuals.

In her article "What Is Truth?" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 17*), H.P.B. quotes F.W. Robertson's definition of conventionality: "*simulation* of feelings according to a received standard." Social conventionalism has created such a stifling atmosphere that if we drift from these conventions we feel that we have no identity.

We are afraid to undertake spontaneous activity. The word spontaneous comes from the Latin root *sponte*, which means "of free will." Given the world as it is today, to aspire for a spiritual life would amount to spontaneous activity. We are not brave enough to do that. We do not want to be isolated. It is easy to swim with the stream. It *seems*, therefore, that we are wholly determined and have no Will of our own.

The Will comes into the picture when there is the question of satisfying a desire. This Will we experience at two levels. There is what can be called *personal will*, as when we talk about a strong-willed person; it only implies that he has a strong drive at the level of lower *Manas*—a drive for making money, for acquiring fame and so on. This really implies weakness of will. Such a person in fact does not have much incentive to say "yes" or "no" to whatever comes to his mind. He just moves along the previously built-in grooves. Choice itself can be explained in terms of preordained

circumstances and factors like one's family background, education, etc. But then in a way this is no choice at all in the real sense. As Sri Krishna tells Arjuna in the Eighteenth Chapter of the *Gita*:

And if, indulging self-confidence, thou sayest "I will not fight," such a determination will prove itself vain, for the principles of thy nature will impel thee to engage. Being bound by all past karma to thy natural duties, thou, O son of Kunti, wilt involuntarily do from necessity that which in thy folly thou wouldst not do.

But then there is a real choice possible, for, at the end of the chapter, Arjuna is told by Krishna: "...act as seemeth best unto thee." Choice and free will go together. It is only at the level of the Will that Karma begins. Evil may arise in one's mind, but it is only when Will acquiesces to it that one creates Karma. Thus, even by mentally accepting or deciding to accept a thought like "he is dishonest," one creates bad Karma for oneself. It is important to see in what direction the Will is fixed.

The most important thing to learn is surrendering of self-will. We often want our personal will to prevail. As Prof. C. S. Lewis writes in *The Problem of Pain*:

We are...rebels who must lay down our arms....To surrender a self-will inflamed and swollen with years of usurpation is a kind of death. We all remember this self-will as it was in childhood, the bitter, prolonged rage at every thwarting, the burst of passionate tears....And if, now that we are grown up, we do not howl and stamp quite so much, that is partly because our elders began the process of breaking our self-will in the nursery, and partly because the same passions now take more subtle forms and have grown clever at avoiding death by various "compensations." Hence the necessity to die daily: however often we think we have broken the rebellious self we shall still find it alive.

In the ultimate analysis, we are required to purify our desire nature, which means in the first place that we must not entertain barren emotions. There is a difference between "passion of pity," where a person is overwhelmed by his emotion of pity and gets

carried away, and compassion as exhibited by the Great Ones. The real function of emotion is either to induce one to take some action or to lead to pure appreciation. Pure appreciation is something that makes one forget one's individual self, as when one is admiring a sunrise or listening to good music. But this does not happen at will. It is, however, possible to do this at will. We must cultivate insight into the real nature of things. This insight would slowly result in detachment. We must ask ourselves from time to time what we have given up since we came in contact with Theosophy. Most of us have so many possessions, not just physical but of mind and feeling nature as well, which we do not really need.

As far as the Will is concerned, we must first learn to use our free will. Once we decide to give up, say, smoking, there should be no vacillation. As Mr. Crosbie writes:

After an explosion of personality, and the ensuing reaction, a Disciple sometimes resolves that in future he will not oscillate so much. This is not the true position—it shows he expects to oscillate *some*. Of course if he *expects* to oscillate, he *will* oscillate. It would be better to expect to hit the mark, instead of expecting to miss it. There is a great difference in the psychological position, as well as in the quality of the energy aroused. (*The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 116)

We can begin by denying small whims and fancies. On the other hand, a strong will is developed if we learn to "accept the woes of birth" and "to drink without a murmur to the last drop, whatever contents the cup of life may have in store for us." Then we shall find that there can no longer be a conflict between what we desire and what we in fact ought to do. All our everyday actions will then be in conformity with the Divine Will. Our Will then becomes *creative*. Using this will, we can break one mould of personality and fashion it into another, till the personality becomes worthy of use by our higher nature. At the Cosmic level, there is no difference between Desire and Will. This is what happens in the case of the spiritual aspirant when he no longer has to control his desire, and his desire flows harmoniously in the direction of his Will.

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## LINKS IN THE CHAIN

"Look not behind or thou art lost."

"Teach to eschew all causes; the ripple of effect, as the great tidal wave, thou shalt let run its course."

—*The Voice of the Silence*

STUDENTS are sometimes apt to look at causes as something to be avoided, and at effects as things to be accepted. They must learn to look at effects as causes, accepting them and using them for the development of character. All of us have to act. How shall we learn what effects our actions will bring about except by acting always in terms of what we know to be right, and by trying to trace effects back to their causes? This aspect of learning is very often ignored and a valuable lesson in discrimination is missed. An effort in this direction will be rewarding.

Roughly we all know the desirability of virtue in action, but there are times when we do not know positively the right method of performing virtuous action, or that course of action which will produce the desired effect. We look at the effect we want to produce—and we act. But, alas! our action so often brings an unforeseen effect!

One of the best ways of learning what is right action and what effects an action will bring, is to trace, if we can, all effects back to causes. The effects we see; the cause may be hidden in actions of yesterday or of prior lives, but the acceptance of effects as "Karma" will not help us to see what caused them. "Know all and you will pardon all," we learn. History is an attempt to trace the causes of actions. Novels, decent novels, are enjoyed because they show us what causes produced what effects during a whole lifetime, and we may learn valuable lessons from them. When a war starts—an effect—we do not wait to find out what brought it about, but concentrate on how to end it and win. When peace comes—an effect—we forget the cause of war and so fail to learn the lesson of war, and thus we go on fighting over and over again, century after century.

Motive is much more important than action, and causes are more

important than effects, for effects follow naturally from causes. Letting the effects run their course does not mean that we are not to learn how to use them or that we are not to try to ascertain the causes which produced them.

Part of the lesson learnt by tracing effects back to causes is that we cease to feel sore about the effects or to blame the one bringing them into manifestation. For example, a driver knocks down a child because his brake is defective (unknown to him)—the result of the negligence of the mechanic who ought to have repaired it. Who is to blame? Who do we blame? We see the accident and we blame the driver. But who or what caused it? We do not pause to find out. Someone loses his temper. We know that he ought not to have done so, and for that he is to blame—but why? Are we not taught: "Woe unto him through whom evil comes"?

We have also to remember that it is prior links that brought the one who lost his temper to the scene of the accident, so again there is no occasion to "blame." It is to *understand* life that we are here—to learn, not to judge. To understand is to be filled with pity, both for those who suffer now and for those who will suffer in the future. Understanding thus, we shall cease to think overmuch of ourselves and what *we* want, how *we* suffer, what *we* have sacrificed, etc. Let us rather ask ourselves: "Are we helping to make the life-journey of others easier? Are we thinking of *their* wants and difficulties? Are our actions turning into causes that bring harmful effects to others?" How often must we read and learn that all that the world needs is "the art of being kind"!

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KEEP a calm spirit towards things that proceed from an external cause, and a just spirit towards those that proceed from a cause within you; that is, let your impulse and action aim at the interest of mankind, for then you know your faculties are in the right posture that Nature has set them.

—MARCUS AURELIUS

## OCCULT PHENOMENA

[This article by H. P. Blavatsky, published in *Bombay Gazette* for October 29, 1880, has to do with the occult phenomena produced by her while she and Col. Olcott were staying at Simla as guests of Mr. and Mrs. A. P. Sinnett. Col. Olcott's "confidential letter" referred to in the opening paragraph was addressed to Damodar K. Mavalankar and was meant for private circulation among T.S. members. This letter, describing H.P.B.'s phenomena, was in some manner obtained by *The Times of India* and published in its issue of October 19, 1880.—EDS.]

IN the issue of the 19th instant of your worthy contemporary, I find over two columns devoted to the doubtful glorification, but mostly to the abuse, of my humble individuality. There is a long confidential letter from Colonel Olcott to an officer of our Society, obtained surreptitiously by somebody, and marked "private"—a word showing in itself that the document was never meant for the public eye—and an editorial, principally filled with cheap abuse, and venomous, though common-place, suggestions. The latter was to be expected, but I would like information upon the following points: (1) How did the editor come into possession of a document *stolen* from the desk of the President of the Bombay Branch of the Theosophical Society? and (2) having got it, what right had he to publish it at all, without first obtaining consent from the writer or addressee—a consent which he could never have obtained? and (3) how is such an action to be characterized? If the law affords no redress for a wrong like this I am content, at least, to abide the verdict of every well-bred man or woman who shall read the letter and comments thereon. This *private* letter having been written about, but not by me, I abandon this special question to be settled between the offended and the offender, and touch but upon the one which concerns me directly.

I have lived long enough in this world of incessant strife, in which the "survival of the fittest" seems to mean the triumph of the most unprincipled, to have learned that when I have once allowed my name to appear in the light of a benevolent genius, for the

production of "cups," "saucers" and "brooches," I must bear the penalty; especially when the people are so foolish as to take the word "Magic" either in its popular superstitious sense—that of the work of the devil—or in that of jugglery. Therefore and precisely because I am an "elderly lady from Russia *via* America," that the latter country of unlimited freedom—especially in newspaper personal abuse—has toughened me to the extent of being indifferent as to the sneering and jeering of newspapers upon questions they do not understand at all; provided they are witty and remain in the limits of propriety and do no harm but to myself. Being neither a *professional* medium nor a professional anything, and making my experiments in "Occult phenomena" but in the presence of a few friends—rarely before anyone who is not a member of our Society—I have a right to claim from the public a little more fairness and politeness than are usually accorded to paid jugglers and even alleged Thaumaturgists. And if my friends will insist upon publishing about "Occult phenomena" taking place in their presence, they should at least preface their narratives with the following warning: *Pukka* Theosophy believes in *no miracle*, whether divine or devilish; recognizes nothing as supernatural; believes only in facts and Science; studies the laws of Nature, both Occult and patent; and gives attention particularly to the former, just because exact Science will have nothing to do with them. Such laws are those of Magnetism in all its branches, Mesmerism, Psychology, etc. More than once in the history of its past has Science been made the victim of its own delusions as to its professed infallibility; and the time must come when the perfection of Asiatic Psychology and its knowledge of the forces of the invisible world will be recognized, as were the circulation of the blood, electricity, and so forth, after the first sneers and lampoons died away. The "silly attempts to hoodwink individuals" will then be viewed as honest attempts at proving to this generation of Spiritualists and believers in past "miracle-mongers," that there is naught miraculous in this world of Matter and Spirit, of visible results and invisible causes; naught—but the great wickedness of a world of Christians and Pagans, alike ridiculously superstitious in one direction, that of their respective

religions, and malicious whenever a purely disinterested and philanthropic effort is made to open their eyes to the truth. I beg leave to further remark that personally I never bragged of anything I might have done, nor do I offer any explanation of the phenomena, except to utterly disclaim the possession of any *miraculous* or *supernatural* powers, or the performing of anything by jugglery—*i.e.*, with the usual help of confederates and machinery. That's all. And surely, if there is anything like a sense of justice left in society, I am amenable to neither statutory nor social laws for gratifying the interest of members of our Society, and the wishes of my personal friends, by exhibiting to them in privacy various phenomena, in which I believe far more firmly than any of them, since I know the laws by which they are produced, and am ready to stand any amount of personal newspaper abuse whenever these results are told to the public. The "official circles at Simla" was an incorrect and foolish phrase to use. I never produced anything in the "official circles"; but I certainly hope to have impressed a few persons belonging to such "official circles" with the sense that I was neither an impostor nor "a hoodwinker of official personages," for whom, moreover, so long as I live up to the law of the country, and respect it (especially considering my natural democratic feelings, strengthened by my American naturalization), I am not bound to have any more respect than each of them personally deserves in his individual capacity. I must add, for the personal gratification of the Editor of your contemporary, and in the hope that this will soothe his irate feelings, that of the five eyewitnesses to the "cup" production, three (two of these of the "official circle") utterly disbelieve the genuineness of the phenomenon, though I would be pleased to know how, with all their scepticism, they would be able to account for it. I do not imitate the indiscretion of the Editor and mention names, but leave the public to draw such inferences as they please.

I am a private individual, and no one has a right to call upon me to rise and explain. Therefore, by causing Colonel Olcott's *stolen* letter to be followed by a paragraph entitled "The way they treat 'occult phenomena' in England," giving an account of the arrest of Miss Houghton, a medium who obtained money under false

pretences, the Editor, by the implied innuendo which likens my case to hers, became guilty of one more unprovoked and ungentlemanly insult towards me, who obtains neither money nor favours of any sort for my "phenomena," and lays himself open to very hard reprisals. The only benefit I have ever derived from my experiments, when made public, is newspaper abuse and more or less unfavourable comments upon my unfortunate self all over the country. This, unless my convictions were strong indeed, would amount to obtaining Billingsgate and martyrdom *under false pretences*, and begging a reputation for insanity. The game would hardly be worth the candle, I think.

H. P. BLAVATSKY

AMRITSAR.

*October 25th, 1880.*

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It is precisely the intelligent and rich classes which would abuse occult powers for their own benefit and profit, much more than the ignorant and poor ones. The first law of the Sacred Science is never to use one's knowledge for one's own interest, but to work with and for others. But how many people could one find in Europe-America ready to sacrifice themselves for their fellowmen? An Adept who is sick has no right to use his magnetic force to lessen his personal suffering as long as there is, to his knowledge, a single creature that suffers and whose physical or mental pain he can lessen, if not heal. It is so to speak the exaltation of the suffering of one's self, for the benefit of the health and happiness of others. A Theosophist, if he contemplates Adeptship, must not revenge himself. He must suffer in silence rather than excite in someone else evil passions or the desire to revenge himself in his turn. Non-resistance to evil, forgiveness and charity, are the first rules of discipleship.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The computer's victory over the world's best chess player has revived the artificial intelligence versus human intelligence debate the world over. A special report in *The Times of India* for May 18 analyses the defeat of Gary Kasparov at the hands of Deep Blue, the two million dollar, 1.4 tonne computer, and looks at what it means for the man-machine equation.

Several scientists and philosophers are cited. While some, like Edward Cornish, president of the World Future Society, believe that the chess-playing machine did show behaviour resembling human intelligence, others say that such statements miss out on what it means to be human. "The term 'intelligent machine' is populist jargon," says P. V. S. Rao, head of the computer systems and communications group, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai. "Let's just say we are in a position to implement software which exhibits intelligent behaviour in a variety of task environments." It is not intelligence but memory, other experts insist. According to V. V. S. Sarma of the department of computer science and automation, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, "Deep Blue's victory means that programming has matured; it means that hundreds of computer designers, hundreds of programmers and chess experts, have worked together to beat one human Kasparov."

The *Times* report goes on to say:

So Deep Blue wasn't "playing." Nor was it "smart." It could only calculate, but at extremely high speeds....Artificial Intelligence (AI) implies the creation of an artificial apparatus that imitates human behaviour. Deep Blue is quick and clever, but is it wise? Robots are willing workers, but can they feel? Do they have intuition?...

"Artificial intelligence is a misnomer in the sense that it is computer simulation process of the network of information," points out R. Raghuram, psychiatrist, National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bangalore. "So at one simple level, even a computer is a network. It's a parallel information process that depends on inputs. But it cannot sustain itself.

It cannot generate or make a creative leap. In other words, intuition cannot happen there. And I don't think an intuition-based computer system is possible, at least in the near future....What does the machine's victory mean? Nothing really. So at times, the whole exercise seems futile."...

"Ultimately, human beings have to be wise rather than intelligent," says Sarma. "The byproduct of all invention is to help somebody find happiness, but what's happening is that while solving one problem, you are creating ten problems. This shows a revolution in information as opposed to a material revolution. When it comes to storing data and information, machines may be better in terms of pure calculation. But they lack intuition, emotions and finer logic. They are just tools without life."

"It's not a question of man versus machine at all. There's absolutely no conflict. It's a happy moment for the programmers," says N. Balakrishnan, supercomputer education and research centre, I.I.Sc., Bangalore.

So a computer can only process, it cannot create. Feeling and will are inextricably intermingled in the thinking process, and a machine, lacking the capacity for enjoyment and satisfaction as well as for aesthetic appreciation, having no power to make purposive decisions on its own, can hardly be called intelligent. Man need fear no encroachment by computers, however intricate, on his prerogatives of self-consciousness and freedom of choice. The higher powers of the mind will remain, apparently, the undisputed prerogative of man—intuition and imagination, compassion and the will to create and to sacrifice and serve.

The thoughtful scientist is more likely to sympathize with this Shakespearean picture of man than with the naive mechanistic view of mind and of intelligence:

What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!

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Peace is more than a reduction of violence or of conflict. In a feature on "Path to Peace: A Vision for a Peaceful World" (*SGI Quarterly*, April 1997), Dr. Johan Galtung offers a more dynamic understanding of peace: it is "the ability to *transform* conflict in a creative and non-violent manner." Conflicts are a fact of human life, and it is futile to expect them to disappear in the present setting; but they can be transformed if we try to learn from them.

Dr. Galtung, who is the founder of the International Peace Research Institute, author of many books, and currently Professor of Peace Studies at the University of Hawaii, views peace in a wider perspective:

Conflicts can be destructive. They can lead to violence. At the same time, they are the raw material and energy of change, both individual and social. Conflicts are the driving force of history. Our task is to bring them to the surface and become aware of them so that we can work them out in a creative way.

Based on this premise, I would like to focus my discussion on seven boundaries or divisions along which conflicts arise. These are: First, humanity versus nature. Second, women versus men. Third, generations. Fourth, race. Fifth, class. Sixth, nationality. Seventh, land or territory, particularly as it is organized into states....

These seven divisions represent vertical relations: that is, they embody a structural dominance of one party over the other. These relations of dominance are the basis for the structural violence of our world....

The study of peace and conflict cannot be limited to interstate or international relations. It encompasses far more than that. A general theory of conflict and peace would have to include the intrapersonal, which takes place within individuals. We need to understand how the inner conflicts of individuals affect the world and even the universe.

Since the structural violence of our world is rooted in the vertical nature of the relationships along these seven boundaries, the fact that they are relationships of domination and exploitation, it should be clear at least in a general way where the solution lies. Structural violence can be reduced, and stability increased, by

making these relationships more horizontal, that is, more equal and just....

The six billion people on Earth should be considered a resource for peace. In most places on Earth, there is peace. The problem is that we take it for granted and don't take enough active steps to protect and promote peace. But we can make a difference because, taken together, those groups and people who seek peace are the vast majority of the world's population.

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That an ancient civilization flourished in Nubia, or what is known today as Sudan, has for long been known to explorers. But now, after decades of digging and research in the lands of the upper Nile River, Nubia has emerged as a leading power in the ancient world. The archaeological finds there predate similar discoveries in Egypt, indicating the antiquity of Nubian civilization. According to *Time* magazine (May 12), these finds, some of which are on exhibition in Paris and later will be on display in other countries, "give back ancient Sudan its rightful place in African history":

Because of an obsession by western archaeologists with Egypt's brilliant kingdoms, these Nubian cultures were regarded as little more than spillovers of Egyptian civilization. When Nubians were noticed at all, they were depicted as one of Egypt's defeated enemies or—as in Hatshepsut's shrine—mercenaries in the service of Egypt.

All that is changing, thanks to the remarkable work of excavators from Sudan and various western countries at several dozen archaeological sites strung hundreds of miles along the Nile from the capital, Khartoum, to the Egyptian border. Digging quietly but steadily since the 1960s, they have uncovered what experts now believe was not only an autonomous culture on the Nile, but one of the greatest civilizations in all of African history...a civilization as profound as it was powerful, a richly inventive society influenced by Egyptian, Mediterranean, African—and even Arabian—cultural currents, but distinctive from earliest times....

According to Hassan Hussein Idris, director of Sudan's National Board for Antiquities and Museums, the finds even

suggest that Nubia "provided part of Egypt's formative roots" rather than the other way around.

Nubian wonders, like those of other ancient lands, are mute reminders of the mighty civilizations of the past, and the world is the richer for having discovered them and saved them for posterity.

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Long before the birth of Jesus, Buddhist missionaries were travelling across Asia and going as far as Egypt and Greece, spreading their master's teachings. Many scholars hold that the religious traditions of the Silk Route regions, including the Levant, "were significantly influenced by the Buddha's philosophy of compassion, his vision of Dhamma, the eternal law that sustains the cosmos and manifests among humans as the moral law," writes N. S. Chandramouli in *The Times of India*. (May 1, 1997)

Against this historical backdrop, some scholars have posed the question: Were the teachings of Jesus a continuation of the philosophical and ethical teachings of Siddhartha Gautama who preceded the Nazarene by some 500 years? In their book, *The Original Jesus*, Elmar R. Gruber, an eminent psychologist, and Holger Kersten, a specialist in religious history, offer compelling evidence of extensive Buddhist influence on the life and teachings of Jesus. Very little is known about Jesus' early life, and in those years, the authors claim, he was brought up by the Therapeutae, teachers of the Buddhist Theravada school then living in the Bible lands.

Chandramouli goes on to say:

Clearly, these Alexandrian Buddhists practised the Buddha's precept that his *bhikshus* should minister both to soul and body: Buddhist thought does not divorce physical balance from the quest for enlightenment. Gruber and Kersten suggest that Jesus' spiritual development, begun under the Therapeutae, was continued by the Essenes. The Dutch researcher Ernest de Bunsen theorized that Buddhist ideas were introduced to the Essenes by Jews living abroad, and that they later influenced the shaping of Christian dogma.

The Essenes believed that holy conduct and the power of healing belonged together. Close, striking parallels exist between the early Buddhist texts and the sayings of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke....

The Buddha's most celebrated dictum is: "Hostility is never conquered by hostility in this world; hostility is conquered by love. That is the eternal law." Again, he says: "Surmount hatred by not hating, surmount evil with good; surmount greed through generosity, surmount lies with truth; speak what is true, do not succumb to anger, give when you are asked." Compare this with Jesus' advice in the New Testament: "...love your enemies, do good without expecting anything in return. Your reward will be great."...

Gruber and Kersten have made a valiant effort to prove that the historical Jesus lived the life of a Buddhist and taught Buddhist ideals to his disciples. Their work follows in the footsteps of the Oxford New Testament scholar, Barnett Hillman Streeter, who established as early as the 1930s that the "moral teaching of the Buddha has a remarkable resemblance to the Sermon on the Mount."

In the second volume of *Isis Unveiled*, H.P.B. has much to say about the derivation of Christianity. She puts in parallel columns the almost identical "Legends of Three Saviours"—Krishna, Gautama Buddha and Jesus of Nazareth (I, 537). Elsewhere in *Isis* (II, 132-33) we are told:

The great similitude traced by some critics between the rites and observances of the earliest Christians and those of the Essenes may be accounted for without the slightest difficulty. The Essenes...were the converts of Buddhist missionaries who had overrun Egypt, Greece, and even Judea at one time, since the reign of Asoka the zealous propagandist; and while it is evidently to the Essenes that belongs the honour of having had the Nazarene reformer, Jesus, as a pupil, still the latter is found disagreeing with his early teachers on several questions of formal observance. He cannot strictly be called an Essene...neither was he a nazar, or Nazaria of the older sect...He is the founder of the sect of the new nazars, and...a follower of

the Buddhist doctrine....

The motive of Jesus was evidently like that of Gautama Buddha, to benefit humanity at large by producing a religious reform which should give it a religion of pure ethics; the true knowledge of God and nature having remained until then solely in the hands of the esoteric sects, and their adepts.

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WHO has declared 1996-97 as the Year of Healthy Cities to focus attention on urban health. Life in cities has been studied from different perspectives over the years, but it is relatively recently that the mental health aspects of urban life are being looked at. The movement "Healthy cities, healthy minds," initiated by WHO about a decade ago, has spread to many countries, including those in Asia and Africa. A symposium was held by the Indian Psychiatric Society at Kanpur to underline the relation between rapid urbanization and mental health. (*Medical Times*, March 1997)

In India, the pace of urbanization in recent times is unbelievable, the fastest growing cities with the most rapid social changes being Mumbai, Calcutta, Delhi, Hyderabad and Bangalore. Statistics reveal that side by side with their growth, suicide rates are also on the rise, and so is alcoholism and drug dependence. In Bangalore, for instance, there has been a tenfold increase, in the past decade, in people seeking help for alcohol dependence. There are also other mental health problems in megacities, and they are increasing at an alarming rate.

In his presentation at the symposium, Dr. R. Srinivasa Murthy, professor and head, department of psychiatry, National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bangalore, stated:

Mental health problems in the cities result from increased stresses, on the one hand, and reduced social support, on the other hand (such as the loss of extended families and child care facilities). Thus city people experience more stresses and less social support than their rural counterparts, which predispose them to common mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression.

The most vulnerable groups are the migrants, people from rural areas who come to cities in search of jobs and a better life, but soon get disillusioned and have difficulty in adjusting to urban ways.

Dr. Murthy noted that urbanization has always been equated with civilization. But have the "benefits" of modern progress and civilization made men and women happier, or better human beings? If civilization has a positive side, it has also its "lethal emanations" which "kill all goodness and truth," as H.P.B. remarked. "It is to its progress that selfishness and materialism, the greatest curses of the nations, are due," she says. The onslaught of civilization expresses itself in our day and age in commercial expansion, and this in turn creates megacities. Slums, vice, juvenile crime, a shifting mass of the rootless proletariat, a handful of moneyed autocrats who control the destiny of great industrial and financial empires—these are some of the symptoms of the resulting social disaster. Millions seek relief from their drab lives in alcohol and drugs; mental illness has become an inevitable corollary of population concentration, and as the emotional tensions grow unbearable, periodic outbursts in crime waves and class and caste conflicts result in this increasingly neurotic society.

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WITH the most ancient men and schools I was best pleased, because poetry, religion and philosophy were completely combined into one.

—GOETHE