

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

**A Magazine Devoted to  
The Living of the Higher Life**

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सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

## THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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W. Q. JUDGE

### A RESUSCITATOR OF EASTERN LORE

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...a sign of the Cycle....points to India as the conserver of the ancient wisdom-religion, and to America as its new and vigorous champion who will adopt those old truths without fear of caste or prejudice, and exemplify them through the new race to be brought forth in the old Fifth continent.

—W. Q. JUDGE

IN *The Key to Theosophy*, H.P.B. has given the following formulation of the second object of the Theosophical Movement:

To promote the study of Aryan and other Scriptures, of the World's religion and sciences, and to vindicate the importance of old Asiatic literature, namely, of the Brahmanical, Buddhist, an Zoroastrian philosophies.

One of the ways to implement it, she said, was

to put into written form correct information upon the various ancient philosophies, traditions, and legends, and disseminate the same in such practicable ways as the translation and publication of original works of value, and extracts from and commentaries upon the same, or the oral instructions of persons learned in their respective departments.

The great contribution made by the Theosophical Movement towards the revival of genuine interest in the literature of the ancient religions and philosophies of the Orient is known to many. Gems of ancient learning, entombed and forgotten, were brought to light for the benefit of modern civilization by H.P.B., assisted by Col. H. S. Olcott. Not only this, but H.P.B.'s own writings provide the key to the correct and profound understanding of ancient Scriptures, philosophies, traditions, legends.

Less widely known is the important part played by W. Q. Judge in presenting Eastern lore to the vast American public. Not only did he render into English Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* (1889) and the *Gita* (1890), of which editions after editions have been published and which are still in great demand; but more—he organized a scheme, and worked it successfully, of procuring articles or translations relating to Eastern religions, philosophies, literature, folklore, social customs and observances, from competent Hindu and other Asiatic friends and co-workers, and publishing them in his *Oriental Department Papers*, in order to carry out more effectually the second object of the Theosophical Society. In *The Path* for February 1891, Mr. Judge published the intimation of the establishment of his Oriental Department, of which he was the General Secretary. Its object was described by him thus:

Through this Department the General Secretary hopes to be able to furnish a fund of valuable and interesting information such as cannot be otherwise obtained except at great expense for books and other means of study. It is certain that what little has been said to our people by interested missionaries and travellers has been very wide of truth in respect to the people of Asia, their manners, customs, literature, and social life. Indeed, but little can be got from Asiatics by such agents, and it is believed that only through our Society the real truth may be reached. Such a general and correct knowledge of distant people, all brothers of the human family, will do much to enlarge the boundaries of our thoughts, to abate race prejudice, and in all ways tend to strengthen the feeling of brotherhood which it is the aim of the Theosophical Society to arouse. Nor is there any

reason why the T.S. should not be a great Asiatic investigating Society.

Mr. Judge's work, through this Department and other channels, to dispel the ignorance of his countrymen about the religions of India, especially Hinduism, may not strike the modern man as something grand; 1891 was a day of small beginnings, but the interest that many in the U.S.A. have evinced since then in India's spiritual inheritance is to a considerable extent the result of the work of the Theosophical Movement there, under Mr. Judge's clear-sighted and wise leadership.

The Lodge he founded in New York was called by him the "Aryan Lodge"; and in volume after volume of the magazine *The Path*, edited by him, can be found articles which served the spread of Indian religions and culture. In the opening editorial of the very first volume of that magazine, started in April 1886, he wrote:

What is wanted is true knowledge of the spiritual condition of man, his aim and destiny. This is offered to a reasonable certainty in the Aryan literature, and those who must begin the reform, are those who are so fortunate as to be placed in the world where they can see and think out the problems all are endeavouring to solve, even if they know that the great day may not come until after their death. Such a study leads us to accept the utterance of Prajapati to his sons: "Be restrained; be liberal, be merciful"; it is the death of selfishness.

Mr. Judge's work in the U.S.A. contributed substantially to the holding of the famous Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893.

His aim was not only to increase respect among Westerners for Indian metaphysics, science and life and to counteract the false notions then prevalent, thus serving the cause of Universal Brotherhood, but also to effect a spiritual renaissance in India itself by making its people turn to and use their own spiritual heritage. The degradation of India, as a Master asserted, was largely due to the suffocation of her ancient spirituality. Many of the Brahmans of those days were theologically and metaphysically fixed and dogmatic: they also kept up idol-worship and a great number of

degrading caste observances, and were unwilling to divulge teachings which had for long centuries been their secret possession. The poor, uneducated common people were steeped in ignorance and superstitions, and many of those who took up Western education had lost faith and become materialists.

Following the example of his teacher and colleague, H.P.B., Mr. Judge advocated that special effort should be made to reform and raise the country. This had to be done not along sectarian lines but by bringing to light the soul-satisfying philosophy of her ancient sages. This noble and elevating philosophy alone could drive out degrading superstition and still more degrading brutal materialism from the country and elevate and save the entire world. India as the conservator of the ancient Wisdom-Religion thus occupies an important place.

This aspect of Mr. Judge's manifold Theosophical work, which was not restricted to any one country but was for all humanity, should not be overlooked by students of Theosophy. Since his passing on March 21st, 1896, there has been a gradual percolation of Eastern ideas into Western thought. By a filtering process of thought, terms and doctrines purely Oriental in their origin have emerged in the literature of the 20th century. Widespread interest in such ideas was already in evidence towards the close of the 19th century; and, as Mr. Judge wrote, though some understood them in a distorted way, yet "the flowing of the tide of old Brahmanical pondering" was clearly in evidence.

All of this pictures to me a new conquest of the West by India, the great land for conquerors. It is the rising from the grave of the mighty men of some thousands of years ago that constitutes this invasion and will bring about our conquest...

It is not a single small nation we should look to. The fountain-head is better than a secondary receptacle, a mere cistern that takes the overflow from the source. The fountain is old India, and to that the members of the Theosophical Society who are not only desirous of saving time but also of aiding the sages of the past in the evolution of doctrines which, applied to our great new civilization. can alone save it from failure. will bend

themselves to the task of carrying out our second object—the investigation of Aryan literature, religion, and science....

Let us then get ready to use the material in the ancient storehouse of India, treasures that no man can be called a thief for taking, since the truths acquired by the mind respecting man's life, conduct, constitution, and destiny are the common property of the human race, a treasure that is lost by monopoly and expanded by dissemination. ("India a Storehouse for Us": *The Heart Doctrine*, pp. 195-97)

Mr. Judge has pointed in more than one place to the unique relationship between India and America as affecting world progress in the not-too-distant future. If the power and energy of the West were wedded to the metaphysics and spiritual inheritance of the East, both would be saved from greater darkness and we might hope for the earlier dawn of a better day, as Mr. Judge with his clear vision saw. The redemption of our humanity depends on its realization that Wisdom is neither Eastern nor Western but Universal, that Sages and Seers and Occultists transcend all limitations of space and time.

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THE occultists hold that *spirit* has not as yet incarnated fully in the existing race, but will do so in future ages; then men can say that they have a spirit. At present the men who are incarnated spirits are Adepts or Mahatmas. Toward the moment of this grand incarnation we are hastening, and the experience now being undergone is to settle the question whether we will become fit for such a tremendous event or whether we will fail. Assuredly all are called to this grand work, but just as certainly some will not be chosen.

—W. Q. JUDGE

## WORDS AND IDEAS

WE are all too prone to read, or to listen, and we pay scant attention to the ideas or information imparted to us. From the Theosophical point of view, it is all the more necessary for us to change our method of reading. Skimming over the pages of a book—which often passes for "study"—is of no value to us and rather tends to fill the mind with *cliches*, mere empty words, which are often misapplied because they have not gone deep into our consciousness.

What does it mean, to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest"? Taking it point by point, we may see if we can begin to change our method of observation of life in all fields of activity.

Reading and listening are methods by which various words or sounds are transmitted through the senses and sense-organs to the brain. Accuracy in recording and using the senses, therefore, is the first step. Patanjali attaches importance in his aphorisms to accuracy in seeing, or listening, and recording, followed by the testimony of others to see if we have recorded correctly. The sense of sight and the sense of hearing must therefore be controlled by the user.

Having read or listened to the words, the next step is to "mark" them, to pay attention to them. Concentrated attention is necessary in order that the brain may record accurately and its attention may be directed to the true facts. We often hear the expression: "in at one ear and out at the other." This means that we have not "marked," have not paid attention to, what we have been told.

The paying of attention is an important step, because we can hardly expect to make any headway if what we have learned is inaccurate. H.P.B. said in her *Five Messages*: "Learn, then, well the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation." Why learn these doctrines? Surely the recognition of them as facts is necessary. But can we truthfully say that we have learnt them well, thoroughly? The ramifications of such learning are many, and if applied would revolutionize all our thinking as also make us more careful in generating fresh Karma.

The next stage is difficult but necessary—digesting inwardly, that is, meditating upon, thinking about, dwelling on a subject with

the mind. Here it is good to remember what H.P.B. wrote in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, xlvi): "Every reader will inevitably judge the statements made from the standpoint of his own knowledge, experience, and consciousness, based on what he has already learnt." We should realize that we have to go beyond what we have accepted as true and probe deeper to get at a fuller, more universal aspect to the question. We all know that the tendency of the mind, when trying to understand something new, is to view it merely in terms of our existing knowledge, following an easy line of thought which perhaps makes us fly off at a tangent, so that we rarely get beyond speculating. Speculation is viewing the information in the light of our own experience and knowledge and is quite useless to us. Realizing that "the writer cannot do the reader's thinking for him" (Preface to *The Key to Theosophy*), we see why it is that to the mentally lazy or obtuse Theosophy will always be a riddle.

To reach beyond speculation or mere acceptance we need to realize that words and sounds are merely outer expressions of an idea. It is this fundamental idea or soul of the words that we have to reach in order to turn information into knowledge. To reach this inner basis it is absolutely necessary for us to apply what we learn. Only through application does the information become knowledge, become realized, and only then do we touch the universal aspect or soul of the information. Let us watch, therefore, if our application of what is learnt is in line with other aspects of the Teaching—whether they all fit into the puzzle of life.

We are given two hints as a basis for this inward digestion: the basis of our life and thought must be altruism, and we must be devoted to the Law. Hence the *Gita* says, "Seek this Wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility." The truth is there to be uncovered by us; if we do not see it, it is our loss; the Teachings will not alter to fit into the framework of our ideas.

Inwardly digesting, we meditate, rising to contemplation and union with the soul of the words that we have read and studied. And we descend from those heights to apply that brilliant light of

understanding in our daily life. What we need is more thinking and less reading; more attention to daily activities so that they become avenues of service to others; more and deeper devotion, not only to the Masters but also to the poor and suffering, to all men and creatures. Digesting the teaching of the unity of life, we can bit by bit dwell in the Eternal, bring out the highest in ourselves and in others, and lift up by our creative thinking the level of world thought.

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THERE is, and can be, but one absolute truth in Kosmos. And little as we, with our present limitations, can understand it in its essence, we still know that if it is absolute it must also be omnipresent and universal; and that in such case, it must be underlying every world-religion—the product of the thought and knowledge of numberless generations of thinking men. Therefore, that portion of truth, great or small, is found in every religious and philosophical system, and that if we would find it, we have to search for it at the origin and source of every such system, at its roots and first growth, not in its later overgrowth of sects and dogmatism. Our object is not to destroy any religion but rather to help to filter each, thus ridding them of their respective impurities. In this we are opposed by all those who maintain, against evidence, that their particular pitcher alone contains the whole 'ocean. How is our great work to be done if we are to be impeded and harassed on every side by partisans and zealots? It would be already half accomplished were the intelligent men, at least, of every sect and system, to feel and to confess that the little wee bit of truth they themselves own must necessarily be mingled with error, and that their neighbours' mistakes are, like their own, mixed with truth.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

## ASTRONOMY—AN ANCIENT SCIENCE

[Collated from Theosophical writings]

ASTROLOGY is the mother of Astronomy, and Alchemy is the mother of Chemistry, just as the plastic soul is the mother of primitive physical man. Astrology and Alchemy are equally the soul of the two modern sciences. As long as this truth is not recognized, Astronomy and Chemistry will continue to run in a vicious circle and will produce nothing beyond materiality.

Astrology, notwithstanding the scorn of the nineteenth century, is not always a vain pretence. Astronomy and astrology are twin-sisters, that were equally respected and studied in antiquity. It is but yesterday that the dogmatic arrogance of Western astronomers reduced the elder sister to the position of the Cinderella in the household of Science: modern astronomy profits by the works of ancient astrology and kicks it out of sight. "The contemplation of celestial things will make man both speak and think more sublimely and magnificently when he descends to human affairs"—says Cicero. The West will yet return to astrology and thus vindicate the intuition of the East, where it has been always cultivated.

And now, "Adepts" are asked to meddle with astronomy—a science which, of all the branches of human knowledge, has yielded the most accurate information, afforded the most mathematically correct data, and of the achievements in which the men of science feel the most justly proud! It is true that on the whole astronomy has achieved triumphs more brilliant than those of most other sciences. But if it has done much in the direction of satisfying man's straining and thirsting mind and his noble aspirations for knowledge, physical as to its most important particulars, it has ever laughed at man's puny efforts to wrest the great secrets of Infinitude by the help of only mechanical apparatus. While the spectroscope has shown the probable similarity of terrestrial and sidereal substance, the chemical actions peculiar to the variously progressed orbs of space have not been detected, nor proven to be identical with those observed on our own planet. In this particular,

Esoteric Psychology may be useful. But who of the men of science would consent to confront it with their own handiwork? Who of them would recognize the superiority and greater trustworthiness of the Adept's knowledge over their own hypotheses, since in their case they can claim the mathematical correctness of their deductive reasonings based on the alleged unerring precision of the modern instruments; while the Adepts can claim but their knowledge of the ultimate nature of the materials they have worked with for ages, resulting in the phenomena produced.

Occultists have asserted and go on asserting daily the fallacy of judging the essence by its outward manifestations, the ultimate nature of the life-principle by the circulation of the blood, mind by the grey matter of the brain, and the physical constitution of Sun, stars and comets by our terrestrial chemistry and the matter of our own planet. Verily, and indeed, no microscopes, spectroscopes, telescopes, photometers or other physical apparatuses can ever be focused on either the *macro-* or *micro-cosmic* highest principles, nor will the *mayavirupa* of either yield its mystery to physical inquiry. The methods of spiritual research and psychological observation are the only efficient agencies to employ. We have to proceed by analogy in everything, to be sure. Yet the candid men of science must very soon find out that it is not sufficient to examine a few stars—a handful of sand, as it were, from the margin of the shoreless cosmic ocean—to conclude that these stars are the same as all other stars—our earth included; that, because they have attained a certain very great telescopic power, and gauged an area enclosed in the smallest of spaces when compared with what remains, they have, therefore, concurrently perfected the survey of all that exists within even that limited space. For, in truth they have done nothing of the kind. They have had only a superficial glance at that which is made visible to them under the present conditions, *with the limited power of their vision*. And even though it were helped by telescopes of a hundredfold stronger power the case would not alter. No physical instrument . . . can give them, as they themselves are well aware—the faintest idea. For, though an Adept is unable to cross bodily (i.e. in his astral shape) the limits

of the solar system, yet he *knows* that far stretching beyond the telescopic power of detection, there are systems upon systems, the smallest of which would, when compared with the system of Sirius, make the latter seem like an atom of dust imbedded in the great Shamo desert. The eye of the astronomer, who thinks he also knows of the existence of such systems, has never rested upon them, has never caught of them even that spectral glimpse, fanciful and hazy as the incoherent vision in a slumbering mind—that he has occasionally had of other systems, and yet he verily believes he has gauged INFINITUDE! And yet these immeasurably distant worlds are brought as clear and near to the spiritual eye of the *astral* astronomer as a neighbouring bed of daisies may be to the eye of the botanist.

Thus, the "Adepts" of the present generation, though unable to help the profane astronomer by explaining the ultimate essence, or even the material constitution of star and planet, since European science, knowing nothing as yet of the existence of such substances or more properly of their various states or conditions, has neither proper terms for, nor can form any adequate idea of them by any description, they may, perchance, be able to prove what this matter *is* not—and this is more than sufficient for all present purposes. The next best thing to learning what is true is to ascertain what is *not* true.

We have already furnished sufficient proofs that modern science has little or no reason to boast to originality....The ancient Hindus...fixed the calendar, invented the zodiac, calculated the precession of the equinoxes, discovered the general laws of the movements, observed and predicted the eclipses.... M. Bailly, the famous French astronomer of the last century, Member of the Academy, etc. etc., asserts that the Hindu systems of astronomy are by far the oldest, and that from them the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and even the Jews derived their knowledge.

If the Hindus possessed in 1491 a knowledge of the heavenly motions sufficiently accurate to enable them to calculate backwards for 4,592 years, it follows that they could only have obtained this knowledge from very ancient observations. To grant them such

knowledge, while refusing them the observations from which it is derived, is to suppose an impossibility; it would be equivalent to assuming that at the outset of their career they had already reaped the harvest of time and experience. While on the other hand, if their epoch of 3102 is assumed to be real, it would follow that the Hindus had simply kept pace with successive centuries down to the year 1491 of our era. Thus, time itself was their teacher; they knew the motions of the heavenly bodies during these periods, because they had seen them; and the duration of the Hindu people on earth is the cause of the fidelity of its records and the accuracy of its calculations.

From John Bentley down to Burgess' "Surya-Siddhanta," not one astronomer has been fair enough to the most learned people of Antiquity. However distorted and misunderstood the Hindu Symbology, no Occultist can fail to do it justice once that he knows something of the Secret Sciences; nor will he turn away from their metaphysical and mystical interpretation of the Zodiac, even though the whole Pleiades of Royal Astronomical societies rise in arms against their mathematical rendering of it. The descent and re-ascend of the Monad or Soul cannot be disconnected from the Zodiacal signs, and it looks more natural, in the sense of the fitness of things, to believe in a mysterious sympathy between the metaphysical soul and the bright constellations, and in the influence of the latter on the former, than in the absurd notion that the creators of Heaven and Earth have placed in heaven the types of twelve vicious Jews.

In Babylon was a series of Chaldean astronomical observations, ranging back through nineteen hundred and three years, which Calisthenes sent to Aristotle. Ptolemy, the Egyptian king-astronomer possessed a Babylonian record of eclipses going back seven hundred and forty-seven years before our era. As Prof. Draper truly remarks: "Long-continued and close observations were necessary before some of these astronomical results that have reached our times could have been ascertained. Thus, the Babylonians had fixed the length of a tropical year within twenty-five seconds of the truth: their estimate of the sidereal year was

barely two minutes in excess. They had detected the precession of the equinoxes. They knew the causes of eclipses, and, by the aid of their cycle, called *saros*, could predict them. Their estimate of the value of the cycle, which is more than 6,585 days, was within nineteen and a half minutes of the truth. Such facts furnish incontrovertible proof of the patience and skill with which astronomy had been cultivated in Mesopotamia, and that, with very inadequate instrumental means, it had reached no inconsiderable perfection. These old observers had made a catalogue of the stars, had divided the zodiac into twelve signs; they had parted the day into twelve hours, the night into twelve. They had, as Aristotle says, for a long time devoted themselves to observations of star-occultations by the moon. They had correct views of the structure of the solar system, and knew the order of emplacement of the planets. They constructed sundials, clepsydras, astrolabes, gnomons."

Europe prides herself upon the discoveries of Copernicus and Galileo, and now we are told that the astronomical observations of the Chaldeans extend back to within a hundred years of the flood; and Bunsen fixes the flood at not less than 10,000 years before our era. Moreover, a Chinese emperor, more than 2,000 years before the birth of Christ (i.e., before Moses) put to death his two chief astronomers for not predicting an eclipse of the sun.

Wilkinson, corroborated later by others, says that the Egyptians divided time, knew the true length of the year, and the precession of the equinoxes. By recording the rising and setting of the stars, they understood the particular influences which proceed from the positions and conjunctions of all heavenly bodies, and therefore their priests, prophesying as accurately as our modern astronomers, meteorological changes, could, *en plus*, astrologize through astral motions. Though the sober and eloquent Cicero may be partially right in his indignation against the exaggerations of the Babylonian priests, who "assert that they have preserved upon monuments observations extending back during an interval of 470,000 years," still, the period at which astronomy had arrived at its perfection with the ancients is *beyond* the reach of modern calculation....If

several thousand years B.C., Chinese and Chaldean astronomers predicted eclipses—the latter, whether by the cycle of Saros, or other means, matters not—the fact remains the same. They had reached the last and highest stage of astronomical science—they *prophesied*.

Thus, gradually but surely, will the whole of antiquity be vindicated. Truth will be carefully sifted from exaggeration; much that is now considered fiction may yet be proved fact, and the "facts and laws" of modern science found to belong to the limbo of exploded myths. When, centuries before our era, the Hindu Brahmagupta affirmed that the starry sphere was immovable, and that the daily rising and setting of stars confirms the motion of the earth upon its axis; and when Aristarchus of Samos, born 267 years B.C., and the Pythagorean philosopher Nicetas, the Syracusan, maintained the same, what was the credit given to their theories until the days of Copernicus and Galileo? And the system of these two princes of science—a system which has revolutionized the whole world—how long will it be allowed to remain as a complete and undisturbed whole?

The doctrine of a common origin for all the heavenly bodies and planets, was, as we see, inculcated by the Archaic astronomers, before Kepler, Newton, Leibnitz, Kant, Herschel and Laplace. Heat (the Breath), attraction and repulsion—the three great factors of Motion—are the conditions under which all the members of all this primitive family are born, developed, and die, to be reborn after a "Night of Brahma," during which eternal matter relapses periodically into its primary undifferentiated state.

The assertion that all the worlds (stars, planets, etc.)—as soon as a nucleus of primordial substances in the *laya* (undifferentiated) state is informed by the freed principles of a just *deceased* sidereal body—is a teaching as old as the Rishis. Thus the Secret Books distinctly teach, as we see, an astronomy that would not be rejected even by modern speculation could the latter thoroughly understand the teachings.

The Secret Doctrine teaches that every event of universal importance, such as geological cataclysms at the end of one race

and the beginning of a new one, involving a great change each time in mankind, spiritual, moral and physical—is pre-cogitated and pre-concerted, so to say, in the sidereal regions of our planetary system. Astrology is built wholly upon this mystic and intimate connection between the heavenly bodies and mankind; and it is one of the great secrets of Initiation and Occult mysteries.

Modern Wisdom is satisfied with astronomical computations and prophecies based on unerring mathematical laws. Ancient Wisdom added to the cold shell of astronomy the vivifying elements of its soul and spirit—ASTROLOGY. And, as the sidereal motions *do* regulate and determine other events on Earth—besides potatoes and the periodical disease of that useful vegetable—(a statement which, not being amenable to scientific explanation, is merely derided, while accepted)—those events have to be allowed to find themselves predetermined by even simple astronomical computations. Believers in astrology will understand our meaning, sceptics will laugh at the belief and mock the idea. Thus they shut their eyes, ostrich-like, to their own fate.

This because their little *historical* period, so called, allows them no margin for comparison. Sidereal heaven is before them; and though their spiritual vision is still unopened and the atmospheric dust of terrestrial origin seals their sight and chains it to the limits of physical systems, still they do not fail to perceive the movements and note the behaviour of meteors and comets. They record the periodical advents of those wanderers and "flaming messengers," and prophesy, in consequence, earthquakes, meteoric showers, the apparition of certain stars, comets, etc., etc. Are they soothsayers for all that? No, they are learned astronomers.

It is now amply proved that even horoscopes and judiciary astrology are not quite based on a fiction, and that stars and constellations, consequently, have an occult and mysterious influence on and connection with individuals. And if with the latter, why not with nations, races, and mankind in bulk? This, again, is a claim made on the authority of the Zodiacal records.

## THE THEOSOPHY OF THE KORAN

### II

AS to the *Koran* itself: Arabic literature developed at the time of Mohammed. Arab life being nomadic had not encouraged books or libraries, although oratory and poetry had always been highly prized among the tribes; their culture and history had been transmitted from generation to generation, by word of mouth.

One soon notices the diverse and disconnected nature of the contents of the *Koran*. History ascribes this to the way in which the existing text was compiled. After Mohammed's death, when Islam was being widely spread, the leaders realized that internal dissensions threatened, due to imperfectly remembered, recorded and repeated *Suras* (chapters). They therefore resolved that there should be one authorized version, if Muslim unity and the Book were to be preserved. They entrusted its compilation to Zaid, one of Mohammed's close companions. After it had been compiled from existing versions and agreed upon, one of the early Khalifs had burned all the other copies of the *Koran* that could be found. Many passages in these were omitted from the final authorized version, of which six copies were made to be used as originals and distributed to important centres.

The order of the *Koran* as we now have it is not entirely chronological and many chapters assigned to one period are found interspersed with verses delivered at other times. In 1925, *The Manchester Guardian* reported that an English library had acquired a Syriac manuscript of the *Koran* containing passages not to be found in the authorized version. This is probably one that escaped the general destruction of the "unauthorized" versions.

The verses of the *Koran* recorded during Mohammed's years in Mecca presented, in greater part, the metaphysical and ethical aspects of his non-violent and reformatory philosophy. In the verses composed during his ten years in Medina, a greater emphasis on the temporal appears. No doubt, by this time it had become clear that Islam required the organizing of a community with its own

laws and government.

Mohammed aimed at a threefold reform of his people: (1) Civil—through the establishment of reasonable laws that would appeal to the conscience of man; (2) Military—through the uniting of the tribes and the abolishing of fratricidal wars; and (3) Religious—by offering a degraded and superstitious people the noble concept of Unity—One Source, One Force, that pervades all nature. These three were closely interlinked in his system.

In translations of the *Koran*, the English word "God" is widely used in the place of various words used by Mohammed to indicate the Most High. These words detailed in moral terms the "excellence" of That which was beyond the range of thought or description. Sir Edwin Arnold in his *Pearls of the Faith* has used these attributes of "Names of God" as a basis for interpretation of the Islamic teachings.

In many places Mohammed made God and Law synonymous. Law was declared to be everywhere, but the understanding of Law and the realization of God were only to be attempted by the man of morality, at peace with his brothers, in whom God was said to be especially interested.

Set thou thy face steadfast towards the religion as an Hanif (one rightly inclined), according to the constitution whereon God has constituted man; there is no altering the creation of God. That is the standard religion, but most men do not know. (*Sura xxx, 29*)

Allah says: Whoso seeketh to approach Me one span, I seek to approach one cubit, and whoso seeketh to approach Me one cubit, I seek to approach two fathoms; and whoso walketh towards Me, I run towards him. (*Sayings of Mohammed*, p. 81)

According to Mohammed, men were originally of one religion, which he named Islam—peace. When differences arose among them, prophets were born in their midst to guide them back to truth.

Mankind were one community and Allah sent (unto them) Prophets as bearers of good tidings and as warners....And Allah

by His will guided those who believed unto the truth of that concerning which they differed. Allah guideth whom He will unto a straight path. (*Sura* 209)

In the spirit of true tolerance, he pointed to the Teachers who had come before him, and to the gradual deterioration of their teachings, due to misinterpretation and falsification of them by their disciples. For illustrations he drew mainly upon Jewish and Persian sources, which were best known to the Arabs. He said: "Mohammed is only (a man) charged with a Mission, before whom there have been others who received heavenly Missions and died." (*Sayings of Mohammed*, p. 30)

The *Koran* makes no distinction between the Prophets, which should do away with differences between followers of Islam and other religions, since all are recognized as having sprung from the same source. Speaking of Mohammed's own position as a Prophet, the *Koran* implies that he came during "the interval of apostles" (*Sura* v, 23) and it should be noted that he is called in the *Koran* "a seal of the Prophets," and not the "last of the Prophets."

*El* or *Al* was a term widely used among Semitic peoples to designate their Supreme Deity. *Allah* was one among the names used by early Arabic tribes to designate the Mighty, the Supreme, vaguely conceived of as the progenitor of the tribal deities and the gods and goddesses of elements, days and seasons. In Arabic, *Illah*, standing alone, means any god; combined with the article *Al*, it becomes *Al-Illah* or, through shortening, *Allah*, the One God, whose sons and daughters—the minor gods—were particularly respected by the tribes.

Mohammed's appeal for the recognition of divine Unity is based on rational recognition of the all-pervading harmony of Nature—one Law, one Mind, one Will—regulating and guiding the universe.

While in many verses of the *Koran*, Allah seems to be personified as the actor or speaker, in others, Mohammed states unequivocally that It is a Principle and cannot be known by the physical senses. One instance may be given here:

Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude

of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is as it were a shining star. [This lamp is] kindled from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West, though no fire touched it. Allah guideth unto His light whom He will. And Allah speaketh to mankind in allegories, for Allah is knower of all things. (*Sura* xxiv, 35-36)

Explaining that this Principle is ever-existing and all-inclusive and therefore cannot be visualized as a form, Mohammed, paraphrasing, as it were, the ancient *Mandukya Upanishad's* "unthinkable and unspeakable," said:

Vision comprehends him not, but He comprehends all visions. (*Sura* 104)

Unto Allah belong the East and West, and whithersoever you turn, there is Allah's countenance. Lo! Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing. (*Sura* n, 109)

There is no secret conference of three but He is their fourth, nor of five but He is their sixth, nor of less than that or more but He is with them wheresoever they may be. (*Koran*, Lvin, 8)

The Divine Spirit is nearer to man than his life-vein. (*Sura* L, 16)

He who knoweth his own self, knoweth God.... Learn to know thyself. (*Sayings of Mohanuned*, pp. 94-5)

Expressing an idea similar to Krishna's declaration in the *Bhagavad-Gita* (x, 42), "I established this whole universe with a single portion of myself, and remain separate," Mohammed declared:

There is no God but He, the living, the self-subsistent. Slumber seizeth Him not, nor sleep. To Him belongeth whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth.... He knows what is before and behind.... His knowledge extends over all. (*Sura* 256)

Moreover, he warns against the personal-god-idea by teaching: "Do not associate any one thing with God although they kill or burn thee." (*Sayings of Mohammed*, p. 71)

Man, declared the Prophet, has a special relation to the Deity;

the Laws of Nature could only be understood by a being of Mind, and while man was ruled by the destiny he had created for himself through lawful or unlawful action, he had also the power to choose for himself. Mohammed always pointed to the evidence in the common phenomena of nature and addressed himself to the conscience of man and to his reason, not to his weaknesses or his credulity:

Fools! Do you want a sign, when the whole creation is full of the signs of God? The structure of your body, how wonderfully complex, how beautifully regulated; the alternations of night and day, of life and death; your sleeping and awakening; your desire to accumulate from the abundance of God; the winds driving abroad the pregnant harmony and order in the midst of diversity; the variety of the human race, and yet their close affinity; fruits, flowers, animals, human beings themselves—are these not signs enough of the presence of a Master-Mind? (*The Spirit of Islam*, p. 33, quoting from the *Koran*)

A significant and widely used designation of the Deity is Malik or "Master," not in the local sense of a king, or judge, or any person; but bringing out the impersonality of the law of retribution which brings punishment to the doers of evil through readjustment, and justice tempered with mercy to all, because it is an unerring law of nature. This leads to a comparison of Mohammed's teachings with the second of the Three Fundamental Propositions of Theosophy: the Law that rules the universe and mankind.

In the *Koran* we find many references to the universality of law, which is declared to be constantly in operation in all departments of nature. Mohammed declared the laws of the One God to be immutable. He offers this as a basis for realization that the moral law which rules in the human kingdom is as immutable and as just, though men, being self-deluded through the wrong use of their minds, do not see it. The working of the moral Law of Retribution, Karma, depends upon man's hidden motives. "Actions will be judged according to intentions," he declared. (*Sayings of Mohammed*, p. 49) "The most honourable among you is the one

who has the greatest regard for his duty." (*Sura xL*, 13)

In dealing with human destiny, full responsibility was placed upon man as a chooser to whom two paths were open:

Every soul is held in pledge for what it earns. (*Sura Lxxx*, 41)

He who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it, and he who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it. (*Sura XLIX*, 7-8)

He also taught that mankind formed one great family. From the record of his sayings we can extract a few verses in which he draws particular attention to human solidarity:

And all people are nought but a single nation, but they disagree. (*Sura x*, 20)

The following passage is suggestive of the ancient Indian teaching about the *Skandhas* or lower attributes that cling to a person and are the seeds of his Karma:

And we have made every man's actions cling to his neck, and we will bring forth to him on the resurrection day a book which he will find wide open. Read thy Book! Thine own self is sufficient as a reckoner against thee this day. Whoever goes aright, for the benefit of his own soul does 'e go aright; and whoever goes astray, to its detriment does, he go astray, and no bearer of a burden shall bear the burden of another. (*Sura xvii*, 13-15)

It is your own conduct which will lead you to reward or punishment as if you had been destined therefor. (*Sayings of Mohammed*, p. 106)

The Prophet also taught that exertion had the power to change circumstances and therefore destiny:

The good deed and the evil deed are not alike. Repel the evil deed with one which is better, then Lo! he, between whom and thee there was enmity (will become) as though he was a bosom friend. (*Sura xu*, 34)

The *Koran's* teaching of a resurrection day when all will be

judged according to their thoughts and actions, is found also in the Jewish and Christian religions. Theosophy teaches that upon the death of the body a "judgement" or a separation indeed takes place between the lower personal part of man and his spiritual individuality. That which is selfish, impure or evil remains in *Kama-Loka* to disintegrate, while the noble, unselfish feelings and thoughts of the life last lived go with the Ego into *Devachan*, the place of the Gods, and there are assimilated into character. On reincarnating, the Ego that returns to birth in order to work out that which was left undone in the past, must necessarily re-attract those lower aspects of itself which had been dispersed but which carry its impress. In the *Koran*, the Prophet declares:

And we will set up a just balance on the day of Resurrection, so no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least, and although there be the weight of a grain of mustard seed, we will bring it and sufficient are we to take account. (*Sura xxi*, 48)

That man lives more than once can also be taken as implied by him, when he asks:

How can ye disbelieve in God, when ye were dead and He made you alive, and then He will kill you and then make you alive again, and then to Him will ye return? (*Sura ii*, 26)

This life is but a tillage for the next; do good that you may reap there. (*Sayings of Mohammed*, p. 74)

H.P.B. writes in *The Theosophical Glossary*: "The *Koran* is a grand poem, replete with ethical teachings proclaiming loudly Faith, Hope and Charity." We can offer from *The Sayings of Mohammed* but a few which may encourage those interested to seek for the many "Pearls" concealed in this declaration of Faith:

The proof of a Muslim's sincerity is that he payeth no heed to that which is not his business.

No man is a true believer unless he desireth for his brother that which he desireth for himself.

That which is lawful is clear, and that which is unlawful is also clear; but there are certain doubtful things between the two from which it is well to abstain.

The best of alms is that which the right hand giveth, and the left hand knoweth not of.

No man is true in the truest sense of the word but he who is true in word, in deed and in thought.

Give the labourer his wage before his perspiration be dry.

Every good act is charity.... Your smiling in your brother's face, is charity; and your exhorting mankind to virtuous deeds, is charity; and your prohibiting the forbidden, is charity; and your showing men the road, in the land in which they lose it, is charity; and your assisting the blind, is charity.

Riches are not from abundance of worldly goods, but from a contented mind.

The central message of Islam is surrender. Surrendering what to what? Surrendering all that one possesses to the Universal Life that moves according to Law—and this we see is also the summation of the teaching in the *Gita*: complete self-surrender. This self-surrender includes the concept of a holy war against one's own lower self; for one cannot offer to the One Higher Self, that is, to Allah, that which is polluted and ugly, and therefore the concept of *Jihad*, the holy war, is also the same as that in the *Gita*.

The *Koran*, when rightly understood, may become a book of devotion. It implies war against the lower self and surrender to the Universal One Self manifesting as Universal Brotherhood. Those who surrender the personal nature to the Higher are the followers of Islam, and true students of Theosophy may therefore claim to be such.

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MAN lives not in a world of hard facts to which thoughts make no difference, but in a world of thoughts; if you change the moral, political and economic theories generally accepted by the society in which he lives, you change the character of his world.

-COLLING WOOD

## ARE WE GRATEFUL?

A thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue, but the parent of all other virtues.

-CICERO

WE are often told that gratitude is a necessary adjunct to spiritual living, for to be grateful is to recognize that we do not live alone but are linked with other living beings. At its root lies also the recognition of the fact that unless we make a return in some way for benefits received we miss the value of the gift.

Do we pause to think to whom or what we owe our character, our opportunities, our environment? We often feel a sense of injustice when we lack opportunities or capacities, or find ourselves in a bad environment, and we blame "past Karma." And as we in our present personality did not create that Karma we feel the effects to be unjust. H.P.B. says that it is because of this feeling in the personality that *Devachan* is necessary.

But have we paused to ask where our good character, our good opportunities and our capacities come from? To whom do we owe them? Did they come to us by chance? Are they, too, unmerited? Ought we not to feel a sense of gratitude for these things, not only to the LAW, but to the personalities our Ego had clothed itself in, in prior lives, and whose sufferings and struggles are bearing fruit in the form of the good character that we have today, the opportunities and good environment that we now enjoy? Our body is weak—we blame past Karma! Our body is strong and healthy—we take this for granted! Good opportunities come our way—we take them for granted! But when faced with lack of opportunities we feel life is hard! A good environment in the present has been earned, not by our present personality, but through the efforts of other personalities the real "I" in us has lived in, in the past. Let us pause and send a thought of gratitude to those dead and gone personalities, whose efforts and endeavours are not dead and gone and are responsible for placing us where we find ourselves today.

Will the new personalities our Ego will have in the future feel

grateful to the "us" of today for what we are suffering and struggling to achieve in this life? It is good to think that perhaps our new personalities will spare a thought of gratitude for what we are giving them as a gift, won by "blood and sweat," struggle and strife!

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IF the future enhancement of agriculture and medicine is not thought enough to merit conservation, then consider survival. The biosphere gives us renewed soils, energy, clean water and the very air we breathe, all free of charge. The more species that compose wild communities, the more stable and resilient becomes the planet as a whole.

Then consider ethics. More and more leaders of science and religion now pose this question: Who are we to destroy or even diminish biodiversity and nature, they say; every species is a masterpiece, exquisitely adapted to the particular environment in which it has survived for thousands to millions of years. It is part of the world—part of Eden if you prefer—in which our own species arose.

The profligacy of the 20th century has led humanity into a bottleneck of sources. Through this bottleneck humanity and the rest of life must now pass. By the end of the new century, if we are both lucky and wise, we will exit in better shape than we entered, with the population peaked around eight billion or less and a gradual decline begun. People everywhere will have acquired a decent quality of life, with the expectation of more improvement to come. One of the defining goals of the century must also be to settle humanity down before we wreck the planet. To that end it is important to accept the challenge and responsibility of global conservation—and to do so right now, before it is too late. We will be judged by the amount of biodiversity we carry through the bottleneck with us.

-EDWARD O. WILSON

## WHAT THEOSOPHY IS

[A talk by W. Q. Judge, summarized in the *San Francisco Chronicle* for September 28, 1891.]

WILLIAM Q. Judge of New York told an audience of several hundred ladies and gentlemen in Odd Fellows' Hall last night all about "Theosophy, What It Is and What It Is Not." Mr. Judge is a fluent, ready talker, and his address was frequently interrupted by applause. He certainly had no reason to object to Jerome Anderson's introduction. "Mr. Judge," he said, "has devoted a lifetime—perhaps many of them—to the great subject of which he will speak tonight."

"All of us," began Mr. Judge, "are in vain pursuit of happiness. The rich, with wealth and power, are unhappy; the poor, being poor, are unhappy. Neither religion nor science, as now presented, will solve the problems of our daily and inner life, of the political and social systems that annoy from the cradle to the grave. We think that Theosophy will. Let us first tell what Theosophy is not.

"It is not spiritualism; it is not a mass of mystic humbug, although it accepts the facts of spiritualism. It is not Buddhism, the religion which, with its high and pure morals, involves two-thirds of the human family, but it accepts that part of Buddhism which is true. It is not Brahmanism. It is not Christianity. It has in it what is good in both. Above all it should not be confounded with the Theosophical Society, a movement primarily of investigation—a studied, continuous crusade that knows no doctrine and fights under the motto 'no religion is higher than truth.' Can we not all accept it and seek as best we may the true destiny of the human family?

"We can now say what Theosophy is. The word Theosophy will range in meaning as does your conception of the universe and God. It is the wisdom-religion. It accepts the complete evidence that evolution is the greatest law of nature; not that evolution which declares man has come from the ape; not that evolution which evolves mind from matter, but that evolution which postulates the

inseparable coexistence of mind and matter, that asserts man to be a spiritual being progressing by the use of matter.

"Man is a spiritual being revolving in seven different planes. He must be considered as a body, being used by a spiritual being. Man's first aspect is his body, which does not include the forces within it. The second is the life principle, which is universal in nature. The third is the astral body, which the newspapers love so well to ridicule. It is of the ether and a little more. It is invisible to ordinary sight, but it is there. It is the design for the mortal body, the first link between that body and the man within, and the fact which will account for spiritualism and clairvoyance."

Mr. Judge completed his sevenfold characterization with "human passions, the mind and the principle of spirituality."

"We will assume man's immortality," he continued. "When did it begin? If it always existed, where? We say, in common with millions of others, that as we are immortal and must have existed somewhere it is probable that we existed here and we arrive at the old doctrine of reincarnation. We have taken up body after body to develop, to suffer and to enjoy. There is no spot in the cosmos that is without consciousness; nothing in the universe is dead. Let us bring into the problem the doctrine of action and reaction, the moral law of compensation, of cause and effect. Its solution has then been made. Reincarnation alone will explain the terrible inequalities of life, will clear away the apparent power of chance and accident, and show to men and nations that as they sow so shall they reap.

"Theosophy will explain all the perplexing problems of life. It will vindicate the sublime and just laws of the universe. It will implant once more in human affairs that compulsion to right which the fading doctrine of hell once made. Reincarnation is the balance wheel, the equalizer, the avenger who knows no end till justice is done. You must come and take that which you have earned."

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The devastation wreaked by the recent earthquake in Gujarat has once again aroused speculation about the cause of such calamities. While scientists attribute them to physical causes, Theosophy has this to say:

It is absolutely *false*, and but an additional demonstration of the great conceit of our age, to assert (as men of science do) that all the great geological changes and terrible convulsions have been produced *by ordinary and known physical forces*. For these forces were but the tools and final means for the accomplishment of certain purposes, acting periodically, and apparently mechanically, through an inward impulse mixed up with, but beyond their material nature. There is a purpose in every important act of Nature, whose acts are all cyclic and periodical. But spiritual Forces having been usually confused with the purely physical, the former are denied by, and therefore, have to remain unknown to Science, because left unexamined. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 640)

*The Secret Doctrine* (I, 644) also states: "It is a law of occult dynamics that 'a given amount of energy expended on the spiritual or astral plane is productive of far greater results than the same amount expended on the physical objective plane of existence'." And W. Q. Judge says in *The Ocean of Theosophy*:

Man is a great dynamo, making, storing and throwing out energy, and when masses of men composing a race thus make and distribute energy, there is a resulting dynamic effect on the material of the globe which will be powerful enough to be distinct and cataclysmic.

Occult philosophy holds that all the forms of major cataclysms are manifestations of electrical and magnetic changes, proceeding under the rule of cyclic laws. "Not only is man ruled by these laws, but every atom of matter as well, and the mass of matter is constantly undergoing a change at the same time with man. It must therefore exhibit alterations corresponding to those through which

the thinker is going." The effects of these cyclic changes occur on many planes; on the lowest, the physical, they are brought about through "the electrical and other fluids acting with the gases on the solids of the globe." Mr. Judge has" written:

Earthquakes may be brought on according to this philosophy by two general causes; *first*, subsidence or elevation under the earth-crust due to heat and steam; *second*, electrical and magnetic changes which affect water and earth at the same time. These last have the power to instantaneously make the earth fluidic without melting it, thus causing immense and violent displacements in large or small waves.

Although the exigencies of evolution make cataclysms necessary, still their reaction on man in the form of suffering need not be. It is only because man has violated the laws of harmony that the convulsions of nature bring death and destruction in his midst.

The sympathy of the world has been aroused by the devastating earthquake in Gujarat, and we add our humble thought-energy to the cumulative flow of condolence towards our brethren who are sufferers.

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*Newsweek*, in its Special Edition dated December 2000-February 2001, looks at the issues that will dominate the world during the year and how they can be met. Prominent among the challenges is the intersection between human beings and technology.

What makes us who we are? What is the measure of man? asks Peter McGrath in his essay "Building a Better Human":

Today some researchers believe that machines might be so assimilated to us—or we to them—as to raise the most fundamental questions. As technology fills you up with synthetic parts, at what point do you cease to be fully human? What part of us is irreplaceably human? The brain? Or is the brain merely a conductive medium, our humanity defined more by the content of our thought and the intensity of our emotions than by the

neural circuitry? At bottom lies one critical issue for a technological age: are some kinds of knowledge so terrible they simply should not be pursued? If there can be such a thing as a philosophical crisis, this will be it....

There have always been dangerous technologies. The 20th century, which might as well be called the age of industrialized murder, is only the most obvious example. But technology is upping the ante by creating fields where benign intentions could lead to brutal outcomes....

Is human civilization equipped to keep pace? Engineers tend to associate history with progress. But what in our history inspires confidence in our ability to channel technology away from destructive uses? "Technology is evolving a thousand times faster than our ability to change our social institutions," says Bill Joy [chief scientist at Sun Microsystems].

But if bioengineering really can "turn off" cancer cells, what's wrong with that? If nanotechnology can develop devices that extend our physically active lives for decades, is that a problem? If robots can for most purposes end our need to do physical labour, should we object? Joy's answer was that "with each of these technologies, a sequence of small, individually sensible advances leads to an accumulation of great power and, concomitantly, great danger."....

In the end, the measure of humanity is a philosophical matter. Philosophy, however, has almost nothing to say about such things....As Bernard Williams wrote in his 1972 book "Morality": "Contemporary moral philosophy has found an original way of being boring, which is by not discussing moral issues at all."

Who, then, can speak on moral issues? Certainly not the engineers....They are the last people "to understand what is an acceptable risk."

This will be the great decision of the next decade. It goes well beyond the mere commercial viability of new technologies, though many will think that is all we need to know. It goes to who we think we are. One way: every possibility is welcome, no matter how dangerous, because we are a species that loves knowledge. The other: we don't want to be overcome by technology.

But that's what it means to be human. You have a choice. Take your pick.

What all this boils down to is that knowledge alone, without the moral perspective to use it wisely, can prove a dangerous thing. The present is an age of which a characteristic is its failure to understand the status of its own creations, and this, perhaps, is the inevitable fruit of the divorce of science from metaphysics. The dignity of Man is seldom considered. That man was not made for science and technology, but science and technology for man, who remains more and greater than his creations, is often lost sight of.

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After its retreat in the face of modernity's march from the West, spirituality is once again on the ascendant in India, writes Sudhir Kakar in the *India Today Special Millennium Issue*:

From ancient times, travellers from other civilizations—starting with Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to Chandragupta Maurya's court—have remarked on the Hindu preoccupation with the spiritual quest. For centuries, every cultural endeavour, whether in the sciences or in the arts, explicitly acknowledged the fostering of the spiritual dimension of life as its ultimate goal. Spirituality in India, in spite of dissenting voices in the past and even more so in the present, continues to be regarded as the highest knowledge—*sarva vidya pratishtha*.

At the beginning of the new millennium, this ancient Indian preoccupation that had been shaken by the blasts of modernity coming from the West is once again on the ascendant. Ironically, whereas it was the hopes for human progress held out by modernity which made a large number of educated people doubt the spiritual message, it is now that the ills of modernity—ecological exploitation and political oppression, economic inequality and the loss of meaning—which is leading to a call for the revival of the spiritual dimension of life. In this era of global markets and triumphant capitalism, a large number of

thinkers from around the world are advocating a turn inwards as a remedy for contemporary ills....They all agree that real freedom is liberation from desire, not from circumstances.

If spirituality has formed at the core of the Indic world image, it would be reasonable to expect that it has also conditioned the Hindu mind, colouring its intellectual, artistic and emotional responses in certain distinctive ways. One of these is the pervasive presence of hope, even in the most dismal of life circumstances. For centuries, the Indic civilization has conveyed to the growing child an almost somatic conviction that there is a hidden, even if unknown order to our visible world. That there is a design to life, which can be trusted in spite of life's sorrows, cruelties and injustices. From the very beginning, the Hindu mind has been instilled with a vision of the world in which virtue will ultimately be rewarded in spite of life's trials and tribulations....

Another gift of the spiritual preoccupation is tolerance. Over millennia, the Hindu spiritual quest has traversed many paths. In the absence of a single religious orthodoxy, the seekers have worn many garbs and held different, often contradictory opinions on the nature of spiritual truth and the best way to realize it. At its core, then, the Hindu mind has come to be pervaded by the idea that truth is relative, not absolute, leaving it no choice but to be tolerant of the truth of others.

What, after all, is a spiritual renaissance? Wherever we see enlightened thought and action helping people find freedom from selfishness, separativeness, sensuality and vice, we see the blossoming of the spiritual. Wherever we see the sacrifice of self-interest and the emergence of concern for the betterment of all life, we are seeing the flowering of the spiritual potential of humanity.

India has much to give to the West, but merely priding itself on its past glory is of little use today. Mr. Judge, in his article on "India and her Theosophists," which originally appeared in *The Theosophist* for September 1893, refers to "spiritual pride" as having caused India's decadence. That pride must be rooted out if a regeneration of this ancient land is to be brought about. The

Indians of today also need to understand truly their ancient teachings. This would be greatly facilitated by a study of the Theosophical writings of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge.

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The United Nations General Assembly has designated the year 2001 as the "Year of Dialogue Among Civilizations." The transition to a global society is a major concern today, and a series of international and interdisciplinary dialogues are scheduled for the year.

Way back in 1993, Samuel Huntington, Director of the Institute for Strategic Studies at Harvard University, wrote in a widely quoted article, "The Clash of Civilizations":

Differences among civilizations are basic, involving history, language, culture, tradition, and most importantly, religion. Different civilizations have different views on the relations between God and Man, the citizen and the state, parents and children, liberty and authority, equality and hierarchy. These differences are the product of centuries. They will not soon disappear.

Commenting on this, Rene V. L. Wadlow states in *World Union* (December 2000):

While recognizing the truth that civilizations change slowly and that the past is always in the present, we must also recognize that we are at a time of a major change in history. The accelerating pace of change in the political, social, technological, economic, cultural, and spiritual arenas of human affairs has created new opportunities for dialogue as the world is inexorably being transformed into a global society. The term "globalization" is increasingly used to characterize these changes. Some writers on globalization stress the economic forces at work pushing globalization, but many recognize that there are deeper currents at work.

One of the central tasks of today is to develop a problem-solving, future-oriented global view which addresses the

important concerns, issues, and problems of humanity as a whole....

The year 2001 should provide real opportunities for dialogue among civilizations. It is true that to an unprecedented degree people are meeting together in congresses, conferences, schools and universities all over the globe. In itself such meetings are not dialogue. There is a need to reach a deeper level. Reaching such deeper levels takes patience, tolerance and an ability to take a long-range view.

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Why is there life? Cosmologists have offered several possible explanations. British Astronomer Royal, Martin Rees, theorizes that it took innumerable "big bangs" giving birth to a multitude of universes—"and one turned out just right." (*Discover*, November 2000)

Some scientists and philosophers argue that our life-friendly universe is "one of a kind." Rees objects, and proposes that our universe is a small corner of what he terms the "multiverse." His theory is that a possible infinite array of separate big bangs erupted from a primordial dense-matter state. "If there are many universes, each governed by a differing set of numbers, there will be one where there is a particular set of numbers suitable to life. We are in that one."

Another scientist, Andrei Linde at Stanford, speaks of the "self-reproducing inflationary universe." The multiverse, Linde contends, is like a growing fractal, sprouting inflationary domains that sprout more inflationary domains, with each domain spreading and cooling into anew universe. Our universe, says Linde, is just one of the sprouts. In his view, each particular part of the multiverse, including our part, began from a singularity somewhere in the past, but that singularity was just one of an endless series that was spawned before it and will continue after it.

What intrigues Rees is that Linde's theory permits differing fundamental constants and differing numbers of dimensions in

this ever-blooming collection of universes. Universe A could feature six dimensions, universe B could sport ultraweak gravity. The possibilities are literally endless....Rees is also tantalized by the fact that our universe displays a certain "ugliness and complexity" that goes along with the idea that it is a subset of a larger series....

The totality of the mystery, he emphasizes, will most likely never ultimately yield to the prying of cosmologists. "Why are we here?" is a big question, but Rees concedes that a bigger mystery probably resides outside the grasp of science altogether. "The fundamental question of 'Why is there something rather than nothing?' remains the province of philosophers," he concedes.

*The Secret Doctrine*, drawing from archaic astronomy, has much to say about the origin and development of the world and why and how life originated.

The doctrine of a common origin for all the heavenly bodies and planets, was, as we see, inculcated by the Archaic astronomers, before Kepler, Newton, Leibnitz, Kant, Herschel and Laplace. Heat (the Breath), attraction and repulsion—the three great factors of Motion—are the conditions under which all the members of all this primitive family are born, developed, and die, to be reborn after a "Night of Brahma," during which eternal matter relapses periodically into its primary undifferentiated state. The most attenuated gases can give no idea of its nature to the modern physicist. Centres of Forces at first, the invisible sparks of primordial atoms differentiate into molecules, and become Suns—passing gradually into objectivity—gaseous, radiant, cosmic, the one "Whirlwind" (or motion) finally giving the impulse to the form, and the initial motion, regulated and sustained by the never-resting Breaths—the Dhyān Chohans. (S.D., I, 103)

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