

U.S. \$3.00

£1.50

MADAME BLAVATSKY

THE 'VEILED YEARS'

Light from Gurdjieff or Sufism?

PAUL JOHNSON

A startling theory presented at the First International Conference on Theosophical History held in London, 18-20 July 1986. With additional evidence.

THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY CENTRE
LONDON
1987

THE AUTHOR

Paul Johnson is director of The Walter Cecil Rawls Library and Museum, a regional public library system in S. W. Virginia, U. S. A., and edits its monthly Arts newsletter. He has been a member of The Theosophical Society (Pasadena) since 1980, founded its Tidewater branch, and contributes to its journal "Sunrise" and a regional newsletter "Theosophical Branchings". He is a member of the Advisory Committee of The Theosophical Network. His report of The First International Conference on Theosophical History appeared in "The Eclectic Theosophist" (November - December 1986).

Madame Blavatsky was born in 1831 in the Ukraine, the daughter of a famous Russian lady novelist who died young. After a teenage marriage to an army officer nearing forty, Helena became a world wanderer until she appeared in New York in 1873. With others she founded The Theosophical Society there in 1875. Her last years were spent writing and teaching in London, where she died in 1891. Madame Blavatsky's main works were "Isis Unveiled" (1877) and "The Secret Doctrine" (1888). A major scholarly edition of her Collected Writings is nearing completion.

MADAME BLAVATSKY
THE 'VEILED YEARS'

PAUL JOHNSON

First published - January 1987

PREFACE

This is the first paper to be published from The International Conference on Theosophical History; others will appear in 1987 as separate booklets or in the magazine "Theosophical History". One of these, Ian Brown's investigation of the Tibetan Buddhist affiliations of Madame Blavatsky, is complementary to Paul Johnson's paper, though the two scholars worked independently.

Following the publication in 1986 by The Society for Psychical Research of a report that cast grave doubt on their negative 1885 assessment of Madame Blavatsky, the way is especially open for new attempts to understand her life and work. To what extent for example, was she influenced by the Sufis; a Sufi herself; or a Sufi agent; or a precursor of Gurdjieff? Mr. Johnson addresses this issue, and his paper will trigger a lively debate.

If you wish to keep in touch with the flow of research in this area, you are recommended to register for the next Conference, and to subscribe as indicated on the back cover!

Leslie Price

MADAME BLAVATSKY, THE "VEILED YEARS": A NEW INTERPRETATION

The greatest obstacle to wider appreciation of H.P. Blavatsky's teachings has been an understandable suspicion of her claim to act on behalf of an esoteric fraternity. Neither her sketchy, mostly undocumented descriptions of her travels and training nor the content of her early teachings has seemed to support the claim to a background of years of study in Tibet. Yet theosophists and others have found the internal evidence of Blavatsky's writings sufficient to refute the assertion made by some biographers that her tales of masters and Asian travels are total fabrications and that her teachings were derived from research in European libraries.(1) However, even H.P.B.'s most ardent admirers would not assert that we can rely on her testimony for the complete truth about the source of her teachings.

It is unlikely that the mystery of H.P.B.'s "veiled years" prior to her public career will ever be completely solved. But in the twentieth century, evidence has come to light from a surprising independent source, which establishes at least the possibility of a new, coherent explanation of her training and mission. This source is writings by and about G.I. Gurdjieff, including recent material written from the point of view of contemporary Sufism. George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff had a career which parallels that of H.P. Blavatsky in a striking number of details: birth and early childhood in the southern reaches of the Russian Empire, with exposure to the varied races and religions of the Caucasus; youthful rebellion, followed by years of wandering in search of ancient wisdom; claims to have visited Egypt, Persia, India, Tibet and the Far East, but vagueness as to details of time and place; reported injury in battle; sudden emergence as a public teacher after age 40; attraction of a circle of European and American intellectuals; scandals including accusations of fraud and espionage; seeming endless capacity to offend Western sensibilities; troubled relations with disciples; final years of calm spent in teaching a circle of private students; fragmentation of the movement he founded in the years immediately following his death.(2)

The passage in Gurdjieff's writings which most specifically cites a source for his teachings is in Meetings with Remarkable Men. This episode describes the young Gurdjieff's discovery, in the ruins of an ancient Armenian town, of a collection of letters from one monk to another. A society called the Sarmoun brotherhood is mentioned in these letters as a "famous esoteric school, which, according to tradition was founded in Babylon as far back as 2500 B.C."(3) Gurdjieff and his associates in a group called the "Seekers of Truth" proceed to travel throughout Central Asia in search of the Sarmoun brotherhood. At the conclusion of Meetings with Remarkable Men, the pilgrims arrive at the Sarmoun monastery located near Chitral, in the mountainous region north of the Khyber pass along the present border of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Gurdjieff writes "As we later ascertained, among the adepts of this monastery were former Christians, Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists, Lamaists, and even one Shamanist. All were united by God the Truth." He quotes Father Giovanni, a former missionary, about the brotherhood to which he belongs: "Our brotherhood has four monasteries, one of them ours, the second in the valley of the Pamir, the third in Tibet and the fourth in India."(4) Although this account is as subject to skepticism as any of Blavatsky's assertions, evidence in support of Gurdjieff's claims is available from recent sources.

The Teachers of Gurdjieff by the pseudonymous Rafael Lefort describes the author's efforts to contact the sources of Gurdjieff's teachings within the decade following his death. In the course of exploring various leads in Gurdjieff's writings, the author finds himself traveling among Sufi teachers of the Middle East. His search culminates in northern Afghanistan, near the site of the Sarmoun monastery as described in Gurdjieff's account. There he is told that this is indeed the center where Gurdjieff had studied under Sufi masters more than fifty years earlier.(5) There is some suspicion that Idries Shah is the author of this book, which seems to have been written to attract Gurdjieff's followers to contemporary Sufism. John G. Bennett's autobiography, Witness, describes Mr. Shah's successful effort to claim the allegiance of a Gurdjieffian group under Bennett's direction in the 1950s.(6)

In The People of the Secret, author Ernest Scott relates varied references to trans-Himalayan masters to the Khwajagan order, known since the 14th century as the Naqshbandi Sufis ("Masters of the Design") after the Master Bahauddin Naqshband. In an inaccessible spot there is said to be a center of Khwajagan activity known as the Markaz or powerhouse of the "People of the Tradition."(7) Scott cites a traveller's encounter with a center which he equates with the Sarmoun monastery. This article, "Solo to Mecca" by Omar Burke, appeared in Blackwood's Magazine in December 1961 and describes a month spent at a Sufi monastery located three days' travel north of Karachi.(8) Scott suggests that the Sarmoun brotherhood is a specialized subdivision of the Naqshbandi Sufis. In Gurdjieff: Seeker of the Truth by Kathleen Speeth and Ira Friedlander, it is suggested that the Sarmoun brotherhood is distinct from the Naqshbandis but closely related.(9) Both books assert that the Sarmounis ("the bees") are preservers of pre-Christian Middle Eastern occultism, working within the context of Naqshbandi Sufism. Although Scott's book brings together some extremely suggestive material, theosophists will find his treatment of H.P.B. rather presumptuous and uninformed. As a propagandist for Mr. Shah's movement, Scott uses a reductionist approach, attempting to label as Sufic any and all forms of esotericism, and to measure the value of any teaching solely on its supposed Sufi content.

The only comprehensive book on Gurdjieff and the movement he established is The Harmonious Circle by the late James Webb, which was published in 1980. While Webb identifies some of the forms adopted by Gurdjieff as Sufic (e.g. the Stop exercise, the dances and movements used) he stresses a distinction between form and content, and tries to derive the content of Gurdjieffian teaching from Western occult traditions. Although Webb establishes that Gurdjieff's writings show ample evidence of familiarity with the languages and cultures of Central Asia, including Tibet, he regards Gurdjieff as a self-taught innovator rather than as an emissary of any esoteric fraternity.(10)

Clearly, Gurdjieff and Blavatsky present similar problems to biographers. The fact that the teachings each promulgated can be largely traced to published materials has led to doubts regarding the legitimacy of their accounts of initiatory training. Yet there seems to be a deliberate effort in both cases to appear untrustworthy and suspicious and to render the biographer's task impossible. Gurdjieff and H.P.B. seem to be incarnations of the same archetype, successive acts in the same play. This is because we can recognize the same model of the spiritual teacher in each, a model which has been called that of

the magus. It is characterized by a heroic quest, usually involving years of travels, culminating in self-transformation, followed by a return to "the world." After this return, the magus cannot or will not directly describe what has transpired. His personal history is presented in such a mysterious and confusing manner that posterity is left with scant clues regarding mundane details like spouses and children. He also seems somehow compelled to provoke censure from society, and to stimulate turmoil among his followers.

The Sufi doctrine of instrumental teaching demonstrates a possible explanation of the apparently "outrageous" and "fraudulent" aspects of H.P.B. and of Gurdjieff. Instrumental teaching stresses the effect on consciousness rather than the information conveyed as being the essence of a spiritual teacher's role. This has led to Malamata, the "path of blame," in which, at appropriate times, the teacher acts out negative roles in order to test and awaken the student more effectively than can be done through verbal instruction. Sufi teaching-stories abound in examples of this theme.(11) It can be argued that Blavatsky and Gurdjieff both demonstrated mastery of this technique, with comparable results. The Mahatma Letters include the following passage explaining why the writers present themselves in ways likely to arouse suspicion— "...And I wish I could impress upon your minds the deep conviction that we do not wish Mr. Hume or you to prove conclusively to the public that we really exist. Please realize the fact that so long as men doubt there will be curiosity and enquiry, and that enquiry stimulates reflection which begets effort; but let our secret be once thoroughly vulgarized and not only will sceptical society derive no great good but our privacy would be constantly endangered and have to be continually guarded at an unreasonable cost of power."(12) H.P.B.'s instructions to Commander Robert Bowen on study of The Secret Doctrine contain statements which imply instrumental teaching— "If one imagines that one is going to get a satisfactory picture of the Universe from the S.D. one will get only confusion from its study. It is not meant to give any such final verdict on existence, but to LEAD TOWARDS THE TRUTH....Come to the S.D. without any hope of getting the final Truth of existence from it, or with any idea other than seeing how far it may lead TOWARDS the truth. See in its study a means of exercising and developing the mind never touched by other studies..."(13). Finally, this passage on probation from a letter to Mr. Hume from K.H. is clearly congruent with Sufic teaching methods— "The chela is at perfect liberty, and often quite justified from the standpoint of appearances— to suspect his Guru of being a "fraud" as the elegant word stands. More than that: the greater, the sincerer his indignation— whether expressed in words or boiling in his heart— the more fit he is, the better qualified to become an adept."(14) If H.P.B.'s mission is defined more in terms of testing and challenging humanity rather than transmitting specific teachings, she appears to us in a different light. The Sufi model of a spiritual teacher as a paradoxical personality using any available means to awaken the student is much more satisfactory in explaining H.P.B. than is any Buddhist model of selfless transmission of traditional teachings. Yet an either/or approach to Sufi and Buddhist influences on H.P.B. is quite inappropriate. She clearly studied and highly valued Tibetan lamaistic teachings. What does seem likely, however, is that early and continuing Sufi contacts determined her basic world view as well as her teaching methods.

A search through the theosophical literature uncovers many indications that Sufism is a major hidden influence on H.P.B. Her travels so closely parallel those of Gurdjieff that there was considerable opportunity for similar contacts. Immediately upon leaving Nikipor Blavatsky at the age of 18, she proceeded from the Caucasus to Turkey, thence to Egypt and perhaps Lebanon. She studied under the Copt magician Paolos Mentamon and may have been initiated into the Druze order at this period.(15) It is important to note that this precedes her twentieth birthday, which she identified as the time of her first encounter with her Master in London. Thus, this contact may have been arranged in advance, rather than unanticipated as it is usually assumed to have been. Her statement that she was sent to Java in 1854 to work with other chelas of this master indicates his membership in a far-flung fraternity of occultists, whose operations involved Islamic countries. Among the rare acknowledgments in H.P.B.'s writings of Middle Eastern initiations is in "A Few Questions to 'Hiraf'" which appeared in the Boston Spiritual Scientist in 1875. In what she later called her first "occult shot" she claimed personal knowledge of esoteric schools in "India, Asia Minor, and other countries."(16) In 1878, she wrote in a letter to Professor Hiram Corson of Cornell, "I belong to the secret sect of the Druzes of the Mount Lebanon and passed a long life among dervishes, Persian mullahs, and mystics of all sort."(17) She claimed to have traveled to Tibet (a term which she used so broadly in Isis Unveiled as to refer to Ladakh as in "Central Tibet") from Turkey in 1868 and is known to have been in Egypt again in 1871, where her failed first attempt at public work occurred. In its early days, the work of the Theosophical Society was reportedly directed by "The Egyptian Brotherhood of Luxor."(18) In her 1875 Spiritual Scientist article "The Science of Magic" H.P.B. writes "The Brotherhood of Luxor is one of the sections of the Grand Lodge of which I am a member. If this gentleman entertains any doubt as to my statement — which I have no doubt he will— he can, if he chooses, write to Lahore for information."(19) Lahore is known as a center of Sufi activity. In the recently published Sufi Vision and Initiation, a collection of autobiographical writings of Samuel L. Lewis, a noted American Sufi who died in 1971, one finds many references to encounters with Sufi fraternities in Lahore. Nagshbandi, Qadiri, and Chishti orders all appear in the narrative of his visit there, for "The great center for all the Sufi orders in Pakistan is the tomb of Ali b. Uthman Al-Jullabi Al-Hujwiri, known as Data Gang Baksh, where thousands gather constantly... almost within walking distance of our consulate in Lahore."(20) Albert Leighton Rawson, in the article "Two Mme. Blavatskys" cited in Neff's compilation, Personal Memoirs of H.P. Blavatsky as found in H.P.B.'s scrapbook, makes the following statements in regard to H.P.B.'s travels in the Near East: "There is no doubt in my mind that Mme. Blavatsky was made acquainted with many, if not quite all, of the rites, ceremonies and instructions practiced among the Druzes of Mount Lebanon in Syria; for she speaks to me of things that are only known by the favored few who have been initiated. In my visits to the Levant, her name has been frequently met with, in Tripolis, Beirut, Deir el Kamer, Damascus, Jerusalem and Cairo. She was well known to a merchant of Jiddah, who has a ring with her initials, which he said was a present to him from her. His servant, a camel-driver formerly, says he was dragoman and camelji to Mme. Blavatsky from Jiddah to Mecca. I inquired of the Shereef of Mecca, but

heard nothing of her there. She may have been incog. while there for prudential reasons. My visit was made as a Mohammedan divinity student, and secretary to Kamil Pasha, in whose company I journeyed." (21) H.P.B.'s most direct reference to Sufism appears in her posthumous article "The Eastern Gupta Vidya and the Kabalah" which is found in Vol. 14 of the Collected Writings: "This makes it plain that the Kabalah of the Jews is but the distorted echo of the Secret Doctrine of the Chaldaeans, and that the real Kabalah is found only in the Chaldaean Book of Numbers now in the possession of some Persian Sufis." (22) As this Chaldaean Book of Numbers is frequently cited in The Secret Doctrine, and is unknown to scholars in the West, H.P.B.'s knowledge of it must have been acquired in study with the Sufis to whom she attributes its possession. The above passage illuminates two less specific references in The Secret Doctrine. In Volume I we find "...the public knows nothing of the Chaldaean works which are translated into Arabic and preserved by some Sufi initiates." (23) In Volume II, H.P.B. writes "except in an Arabic work, the property of a Sufi, the writer has never met with a correct copy of these marvellous records of the past, as also of the future, history of our globe." (24) The significance she attributes to the Chaldaeans is interesting in light of Gurdjieff's reference to the Sarmoun brotherhood as of Babylonian origin.

The means whereby this Chaldaean Secret Doctrine became the property of the Sufis is explained in Isis Unveiled to have been the absorption, during the reign of Darius, of Chaldaean and Brahmin mysteries by the Magian initiates. They then, according to the Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus, cited in the text, "handed down the whole through their descendants to the succeeding ages." H.P.B. continues, "It is from these descendants that the Sufis, composed chiefly of Persians and Syrians, acquired their proficient knowledge in astrology, medicine, and the esoteric doctrine of the ages." (25)

The statement that the real Kabalah originated with the Chaldaeans and is now in the possession of Sufis is particularly illuminating in light of the veiled hints in the Hiram article. After asserting that Rosicrucianism originated in the 13th century contact of a German traveler with a brotherhood active in Asia Minor, H.P.B. therein stated "The Rosicrucian Cabala is but an epitome of the Jewish and Oriental ones combined, the latter being the most secret of all. The Oriental Cabala, the practical, full, and only existing copy, is carefully preserved at the headquarters of this Brotherhood in the East, and, I may safely vouch, will never come out of its possession." (26) Later in this article, she writes "As it is, the real, the complete Cabala of the first ages of humanity is in possession, as I said before, of but a few Oriental philosophers; where they are, who they are, is more than is given me to reveal. Perhaps I do not know it myself, and have only dreamed it. Thousands will say it is all imagination; so be it. Time will show. The only thing I can say is that such a body exists, and that the location of their Brotherhoods will never be revealed to other countries, until the day when Humanity shall awake in a mass from its spiritual lethargy, and open its blind eyes to the dazzling light of Truth. A too premature discovery might blind them, perhaps forever." (27) At the end of this article, in her scrapbook H.P.B. wrote in pen and ink "Shot No. 1—Written by H.P.B. by express orders from S*****— an apparent reference to the Master Serapis, purportedly an Egyptian." (28) If a further clue is required, we find it in the fact

that the origins of Rosicrucianism have been traced in recent studies to the Qadiri Sufi order, which was indeed active in Asia Minor in the 13th century.(29) Thus we find evidence of links to Sufism from the beginning to the end of H.P.B.'s preparation for her public work.

To all these fairly well-known facts implying Sufi contacts, the objection could be made that the mature theosophical message given in the Mahatma Letters and The Secret Doctrine supersedes H.P.B.'s earlier western emphases with definite Hindu and Buddhist content. H.P.B. explicitly and repeatedly states that Mahayana Buddhism is the nearest exoteric reflection of the doctrines of her masters. Yet the letters, and several references to their reputed authors, reveal a source quite incompatible with the atmosphere of Tibetan monasticism. The major author, K.H., is a Punjabi or Kashmiri Sikh whom Olcott observes acting in a priestly capacity in the Golden Temple in Amritsar.(30) His travels through India, the Hindu Kush and Pamir countries, as well as Tibet, place him in the exact geographic context of Gurdjieff's Sarmoun brotherhood. In one of his earliest letters to Sinnett, he refers to an avalanche he witnessed in the Kunlun mountains while "crossing over to Lhadak on my way home." He then refers to a later stage of the same trip home as being "thirty miles beyond Rawul Pindee."(31) In another letter, he reports that he is writing from Tirich Mir, which lies near the present border of Pakistan and Afghanistan in the Hindu Kush.(32) K.H. refers to having studied in Germany and shows great familiarity with European culture. The possibility that the "home" he refers to is the Sarmoun center described by Gurdjieff is striking. In another letter, he refers to "two of our adepts" joining some "Druze brethren" in Egypt, with more "on the way."(33) The second reputed author of the letters, H.P.B.'s master, M., is also a North Indian who travels frequently in the same regions mentioned by K.H. Sufism is the only known form of esotericism which spans the vast region from Egypt and Turkey to India and beyond. A coherent explanation of H.P.B.'s travels in this region (sometimes in male disguise) which makes sense in terms of the abovementioned facts is that they constitute a pilgrimage from one node to another of a Sufi network. While Tibetan Buddhism was in the 19th century a closed, comparatively homogeneous monastic system, Sufism was an eclectic network of schools which were relatively exposed to encounters with Western culture. Moreover, Sufis have long had a tradition of hospitality to seekers, regardless of nationality or religion. Only the Sufis, of known esoteric bodies, exemplify the nonsectarian, synthetic approach of H.P.B. and her teachers. It is not the intention of this paper to equate Sufism with what Olcott calls the "Universal Mystic Brotherhood" but rather to suggest that its role as a past and present vehicle for that fraternity has been underestimated by theosophists. The hypothesis of Sufic influence provides a plausible historical and geographical context for H.P.B.'s development as an occultist, which has heretofore perplexed theosophists and skeptics.

The most obvious objection to this hypothesis is the lack of evident interest in or knowledge of Islam or Sufism in H.P.B.'s writings. Virtually every other world religion and esoteric fraternity is analyzed in great detail, but Islamic occultism is barely acknowledged. Blavatsky's teachings stress Buddhist, Hindu, Greek and Kabbalistic elements. Given the frequency of her references to "blinds" and pledges of secrecy, we cannot dismiss the possibility that she deliberately avoided direct reference to Sufism in order to protect her

sources (a procedure apparently adopted by Gurdjieff as well.) In her 'Hiraf' article, H.P.B. refers to her teachers as "the Oriental Rosicrucians (for such we will call them, being denied the right to pronounce their true name)." (34) We must also consider whether Sufism is truly Islamic. Indeed, the actual role of Sufism seems to have been to preserve Neoplatonic, Kabbalistic, Hindu and Buddhist esotericism within and in spite of an Islamic cultural milieu. The Naqshbandis, operating in an area of Afghanistan once the world center of Buddhism, have clearly inherited Buddhist emphases on practices of self-observation and meditation. (35) Particularly in the regions near Tibet, there is no reason to doubt that study of Buddhism would continue in the Sufic schools. The eclecticism of Blavatsky's presentation, which has led to suspicions of her claim to initiatory training, seems entirely compatible with Sufi methods.

Contemporary Sufi and Gurdjieffian writings raise once more the question of trans-Himalayan Masters who preserve ancient wisdom and periodically endeavor to enlighten the West. This notion, often regarded by skeptics as the greatest weakness of the theosophical movement, will probably never be vindicated to the satisfaction of skeptics. In striving to understand the origins of the movement, however, one must recognize that outer certainty is impossible and that all explanations are fragmentary and tentative. Within those limits our first priority must be to ask the right questions.

There are two obvious questions theosophists will ask in response to the foregoing suggestions. The first concerns the relative genuineness of Gurdjieff and Blavatsky as emissaries of occult orders. Both may have been charlatans, with Gurdjieff merely exploiting the market created by H.P.B. for ersatz wisdom from the East. Perhaps a genuine mission by H.P.B. inspired a fraudulent imitation by Gurdjieff. But in either of these cases, why are contemporary Sufis validating Gurdjieff's claims? There is also the possibility that Gurdjieff was trained and sent to the West in order to correct mistaken impressions created by the theosophical movement. Gurdjieff's remark that he spent many years uncovering the errors in the S.D. could be taken as support for this interpretation. (36) Or, of course, they may both have been genuine emissaries bringing Asian wisdom to the West.

The second question concerns whether the two missions, if genuine, are related, and if so, how. A point-by-point comparison of their teachings is beyond the scope of the present paper, but is well worth pursuing. To assume two separate and unrelated agencies acting independently, we must dismiss many points of connection between the two teachings, and ignore the striking parallels between the travels and careers of Gurdjieff and H.P.B. Also, the actual historical connection between the two movements suggests that in effect, at least, they are karmically connected. P.D. Ouspensky and A.R. Orage, the two leading disciples of Gurdjieff, were both active theosophical lecturers prior to their involvement with his Work. Theosophy's dramatic proclamation of man's divine potentials evoked some bizarre delusions on the part of theosophists, particularly during the time that Gurdjieff was most active. The Fourth Way teachings elaborately detail the tremendous obstacles preventing humanity from expressing its evolutionary potential, stressing that man is asleep. It is not hard to see these as complementary expressions from the same source. Yet to assume a common source for both teachings imposes its own difficulties, most of which are alluded to above.

In summation, the biographies of Gurdjieff and Blavatsky contain so many parallels that we must ask how they are related. The syntheses they promulgated show a blending of similar strains from Eastern and Western traditions. Since modern Sufis are claiming that Gurdjieff was trained in Sufic schools for a mission to the West, an examination of the possibility that H.P.B. was also indebted to Sufis is in order. Many references in the theosophical literature support this hypothesis. Although some theosophists may be startled or offended by the suggestions made in this paper, others may begin to explore lines of investigation which are suggested by the information presented.

A great part of the theosophic endeavor is the effort to transcend labels and recognize the unity beneath outward differences. Seen in this light, coming to terms with Gurdjieff and contemporary Sufism is both a challenge and an opportunity for theosophists. The objectives of the movement imply that it is our duty to maintain an ongoing effort to synthesize genuine spiritual teachings from varied sources. To do so with discrimination has never been an easy task. However, the survival of the theosophical movement as a relevant contemporary vehicle for theosophy depends upon our success in this endeavor.

FOOTNOTES

1. See Evans-Wentz, W.Y., comp. and ed., Tibetan Book of the Dead, p. 7, fn. 1, in which it is stated that the Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup, translator of the Tibetan Book of the Dead, found the internal evidence in her works sufficient to prove "intimate acquaintance" with the "higher lamaistic teachings." See note 21 below regarding H.P.B.'s status as an initiate Druze.
2. The most complete treatment of Gurdjieff's life and work is The Harmonious Circle by James Webb, from which these parallels were gathered.
3. Gurdjieff, George Ivanovitch, Meetings with Remarkable Men, p. 90.
4. Ibid., pp. 239, 241.
5. Lefort, Rafael, The Teachers of Gurdjieff, pp. 139-146.
6. Bennett, John Godolphin, Witness, p. 256.
7. Scott, Ernest, The People of the Secret, pp. 168-170.
8. Burke, Omar, "Solo to Mecca," Blackwood's Magazine 290:1754 (December 1961), pp. 481-495.
9. Speeth, Kathleen Riordan and Ira Friedlander, Gurdjieff: Seeker of the Truth, pp. 112-116.
10. Webb, op. cit., pp. 540-542.
11. See Shah, Idries, The Magic Monastery, pp. 84, 186.
12. Barker, A. Trevor, compiler, The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett, p. 227.
13. Bowen, Robert, "How to Study The Secret Doctrine," reprinted in Sunrise, August/September 1985, p. 200.
14. Barker, op. cit., p. 231.
15. Ryan, Charles J., H.P. Blavatsky and the Theosophical Movement, p. 18.
16. Blavatsky, H.P., "A Few Questions to 'Hiraf'", Collected Writings, Vol. I, p. 103.
17. Ryan, op. cit., p. 23. This 1878 letter was first published in The Theosophist LII:628 (August 1931).
18. Olcott, Henry S., Old Diary Leaves, Vol. I, p. 76.
19. Blavatsky, H.P., "The Science of Magic", Collected Writings, Vol. I, p. 142.
20. Lewis, Samuel L., Sufi Vision and Initiation, p. 248.
21. Neff, Mary K., compiler, Personal Memoirs of H.P. Blavatsky, p. 131.
22. Blavatsky, H.P., "The Eastern Gupta Vidya and the Kabbalah", Collected Writings, Vol. 14, p. 174.
23. Blavatsky, H.P., The Secret Doctrine, Vol. I, p. 288
24. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 431.
25. Blavatsky, H.P., Isis Unveiled, Vol. II, p. 306.
26. Blavatsky, H.P., "A Few Questions to 'Hiraf'", p. 106.
27. Ibid., p. 113.
28. Ibid., p. 119.
29. Shah, Idries, Special Problems in the Study of Sufi Ideas, p. 28, fn. 44.
30. Olcott, op. cit., Volume II, p. 255.
31. Barker, op. cit., p. 12.
32. Ibid., p. 240.
33. Ibid., p. 116.
34. Blavatsky, H.P., "A Few Questions to 'Hiraf'", pp. 107-108.

35. See "the eleven rules of the Naqshbandiyya" in Shah, Idries, A Perfumed Scorpion, pp. 85-86.
36. Webb, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barker, A. Trevor, comp., The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett. Second, revised ed.. Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1975.
- Bennett, John Godolphin, Witness. Charles Town, W. Va.: Claymont Communications, 1983.
- Blavatsky, H.P., "The Eastern Gupta Vidya and the Kabalah," Collected Writings, Vol. 14, pp. 167-191. Wheaton, Ill.: Theosophical Publishing House, 1985.
- "A Few Questions to 'Hiraf'," Collected Writings, Vol. I, pp. 101-118. Wheaton, Ill.: Theosophical Publishing House, 1977.
- Isis Unveiled. Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1976.
- "The Science of Magic," Collected Writings, Vol. I, pp. 134-143. Wheaton, Ill.: Theosophical Publishing House, 1977.
- The Secret Doctrine. Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1977.
- Bowen, Robert, "The Secret Doctrine and its Study," Sunrise 34:6 (August/September 1985), pp. 198-203.
- Burke, Omar M., "Solo to Mecca," Blackwood's Magazine 290:1754 (December 1961), pp. 481-495.
- Evans-Wentz, W.Y., comp. and ed., The Tibetan Book of the Dead. London: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Gurdjieff, George I., Meetings with Remarkable Men. New York: Dutton, 1969.
- Lefort, Rafael (pseud.), The Teachers of Gurdjieff. York Beach, Me.: Samuel Weiser, 1984.
- Lewis, Samuel L., Sufi Vision and Initiation. San Francisco: Sufi Islamia/Prophecy Publications, 1986.
- Neff, Mary K., comp., Personal Memoirs of H.P. Blavatsky. Wheaton, Ill.: Theosophical Publishing House, 1971.
- Olcott, Henry S., Old Diary Leaves, Vols. I and II. Adyar, Madras, India: Theosophical Publishing House, 1974.
- Ryan, Charles J., H.P. Blavatsky and the Theosophical Movement. Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1975.
- Scott, Ernest, The People of the Secret. London: Octagon Books, 1983.

Shah, Idries, The Magic Monastery. London: Octagon Books, 1981.

A Perfumed Scorpion. London: Octagon Books, 1978.

Special Problems in the Study of Sufi Ideas. London: Octagon Press, 1978.

Speeth, Kathleen Riordan and Ira Friedlander, Gurdjieff: Seeker of the Truth. New York: Harper, 1980.

Webb, James, The Harmonious Circle. New York: Putnam, 1980.

New from the Theosophical History Centre

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ALFRED PERCY SINNETT

Published in full for the first time, his own account of his tragic love affair, his journey round the world, how he rose from penury to riches and back to want, his contact with the "brothers" of H.P.B. and his later attempts to independently obtain such contact.

Published 5 November 1986 ISBN 0 948753 02 1 £3 \$7 (US)

ALSO AVAILABLE

PUBLICATIONS FROM THEOSOPIICAL HISTORY CENTRE

All prices include postage. Dollars are American only
Send to: T. H. C., 50 Gloucester Place, London W1H 3HJ

Theosophy and the Theosophical Society

Professor James A. Santucci

£1.50 (\$3) 35 pages ISBN 0 948753 00 5

A brief historical introduction to Theosophy

Madame Blavatsky Unveiled?

Leslie Price

£2.50 (\$5) 44 pages ISBN 0 948753 01 3

A critical discussion of the 1885 Report, in the context of the wider question of H. P. B.'s work.

J'Accuse; An Examination of the Hodgson Report of 1885

Dr. Vernon Harrison

£1.50 (\$3)

The official S. P. R. offprint of the paper in the April issue of S. P. R. Journal. With a note by Dr. John Beloff, the Editor.

THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY CENTRE

SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY

CALL FOR PAPERS

An International Conference on Theosophical History will be held on July 17-19th 1987, Friday evening to Sunday, at 50, Gloucester Place, London W1H 8HJ, the headquarters of the Theosophical Society in England. It is sponsored by the Theosophical History Centre, from whom registration forms and other information can be obtained after 1st January 1987.

Any person may submit a paper for possible presentation at the Conference. Papers may be on any aspect of Theosophical History. Summaries of proposed papers should reach the Programme Committee by 28th February 1987. They should be double-spaced, typed in black or blue-black, and should not exceed 200 words. Decisions on summaries accepted will be sent to authors in late March. Full papers will be presented in not more than 30 minutes, with discussion to follow.

Conference participants will be expected to make their own arrangements for accommodation in London and for meals, though light refreshments will be available between sessions. All correspondence to Theosophical History Centre, 50, Gloucester Place, London W1H 3HJ.

Subscribe to

THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY

Theosophical History is an independent quarterly journal launched in January 1985 which reports on the expanding historical study of the Theosophical Movement - the persons and impulses associated with H. P. Blavatsky who founded the Theosophical Society in 1875. It prints original papers and hitherto unpublished archives; reviews; and news of research throughout the world. It also reprints important inaccessible material. Without dwelling on personalities for their own sake, it seeks to aid the historical assessment of such pioneers as Alice Bailey, Annie Besant, W. Q. Judge, J. Krishnamurti, C. W. Leadbeater, G. R. S. Mead and Rudolf Steiner. By arrangement with the Society for Psychical Research, most issues carry an unpublished item from its files on theosophical phenomena. The journal is sympathetically neutral to the different expressions of Theosophy, and seeks to promote the common historical enterprise by Theosophists and non-Theosophists alike.

Please enter a subscription for Theosophical History

NAME

ADDRESS

.....

.....

I enclose £/\$ 1 year £8/\$20 2 years £12/\$30

OVERSEAS STERLING PAYERS £9 or 2years £13

Please circle as applicable

I wish to start my subscription with issue:

January April July October 198.....

Please send to:

Mr. Leslie Price, c/o 50, Gloucester Place, London W1H 3HJ

THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY CENTRE

Founded in 1985, the Centre seeks to promote interest in the history of the Theosophical Society and related fields. Its second international conference is scheduled for July 1987 in London. Any person or group may become an associate member of the Centre, and this conveys the right to receive its publications free on issue. The associate subscription will be £6 (\$12 U.S.) in 1987. (Members of the Theosophical Society in England may alternatively become full members of the Centre, and pay their membership dues through the T. H. C.)

Please note that except for full T. H. C. members, the independent journal "Theosophical History" described on the inside cover requires a separate subscription though arrangements can be made for renewing them both together. For more information contact:

The Secretary
Theosophical History Centre
50, Gloucester Place
London W1H 3HJ

Honorary Presidents of The Centre

1986 - Miss Lilian Storey

1987 - Mr. Walter A. Carrithers Jr.

ISBN 0 948753 03 X