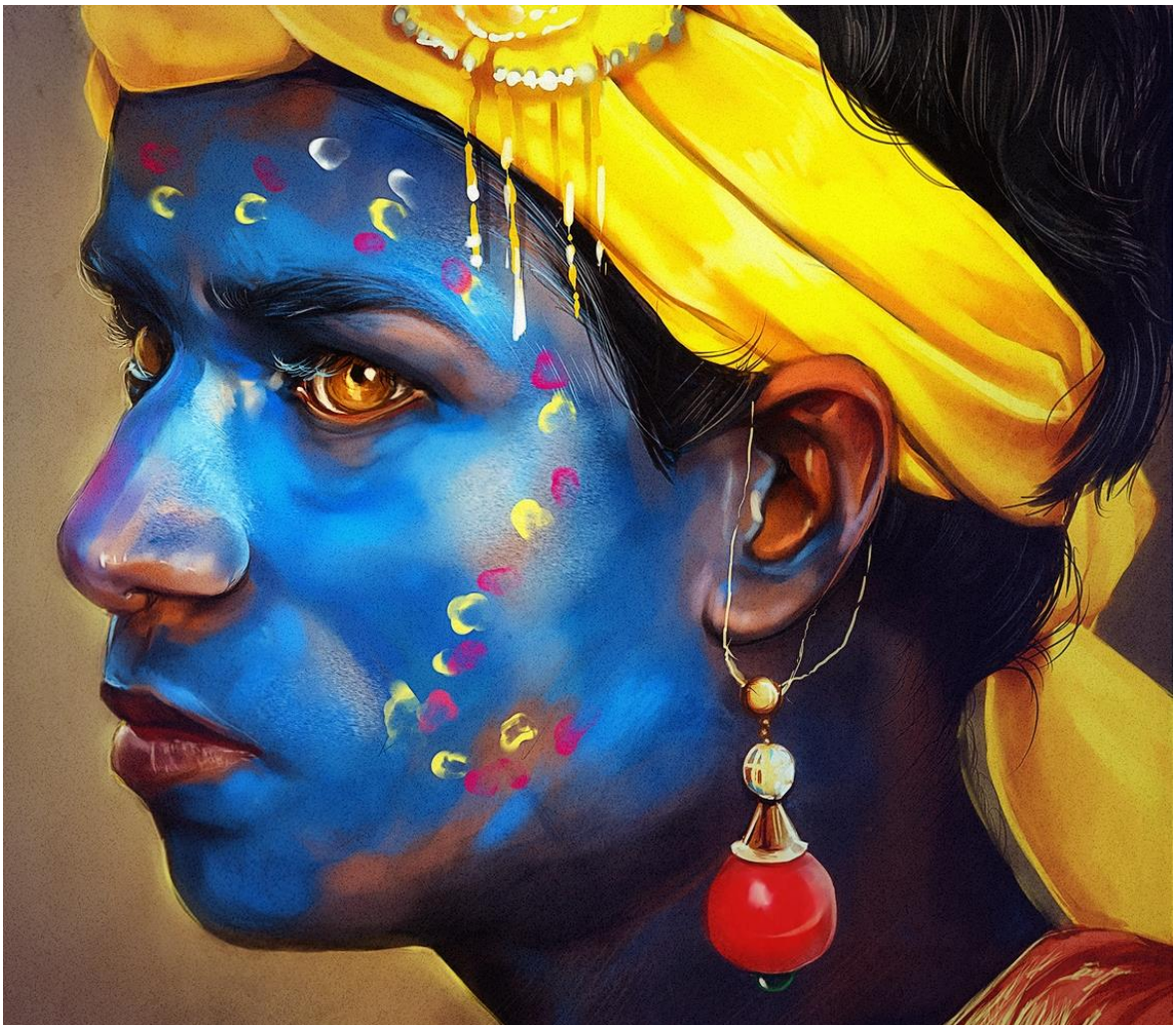


*Modern India is
spiritually degraded*



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If India is the birthplace of the Theosophical philosophy, and if the Hindus have more natural capacities for occult knowledge than we, should we not accept those of them who come here and offer themselves as our teachers rather than waste time at Branch meetings in discussing questions concerning which we really know but little?

Doubtless India is now the most ancient storehouse of Āryan philosophy which may be called theosophical — but no one is able to say that it is the birthplace. Egypt with its tremendous civilization, its philosophy and magic, is silent, and there is no one to put forward its claim. Beyond question also, the Hindus of today have more metaphysical acumen than we have. But the West is creeping up. And intellectual, metaphysical gifts are not spiritual gifts. We have all the intellect we need, active and latent. The Hindu of today is a talker, a hair-splitter, and when he has not been altered by contact with Western culture he is superstitious. Such we do not want as teachers. We will hail them as brothers and co-workers but not as our Magisters. But those Hindus who come here are not teachers. They have come here for some personal purpose and they teach no more nor better than is found in our own theosophical literature: their yoga is but half or quarter yoga, because if they knew it they would not teach a barbarian Westerner. What little yoga they teach is to be read at large in our books and translations.

The craze for present-day India is an eminently foolish one. If one will calmly examine the facts he will find the nation as a whole superstitious to the last degree; the few theosophists and Anglicised ones being but as a drop in the ocean. It is not a united nation and cannot itself help the West. For centuries it has helped no one outside itself. As a whole — there are grand exceptions — the Brahmans keep up the superstition and proud isolation. We have the words of Master K.H. — an Indian — that India is spiritually degraded.² Fakirs and wonder-workers and hypnotizers do not prove spirituality. It is the destiny of India to hold as a storehouse good things to come out later; the West, as newest, youngest, and hence least degraded spiritually, has to work and learn so as to help the East.

And the questioner speaking only of India seems to forget great Tibet and all Buddhist countries. What of those? What of their ignorance and superstition? Is India to be talked of alone, and all these others left out? It is time to call a halt, and for theosophists to broaden their conception of what and where the East is, and to stop talking as if the sun in the morning shone only on India.



¹ [This magazine was distributed free of charge to members-at-large of the Theosophical Society in America, who were invited to “send questions, answers to questions, opinions and notes upon Theosophical subjects.” Usually they were handled by the editor, Alexander Fullerton, with the assistance of Mr. Judge. Though some of the editor’s answers (signed Ans.) may have been by Judge, we include only those contributed under his own name, initials, or pen-names. — DARA EKLUND, Compiler.]

² [Cf. *Mahatma Letter* 31 (17); 3rd Combined ed.]