

*Theosophy brings the wisdom
of love before the eye of the soul*



Contents and abstract of central ideas¹

Three Metaphysical Keys to The Secret Doctrine.

Opening thoughts.	3
The Three Fundamental Propositions of the Secret Doctrine.	6
Proposition 1. Cosmogenesis	6
Proposition 2. Law governs Cosmos and Man	6
Proposition 3. Anthropogenesis	7
The Gordian knot of the Second Proposition unravelled.	9
Assimilation of universal laws is the first key to manhood.	12
Theosophists described metaphysically.	13
Theosophists described ethically.	13
Sacrificing the ephemeral to the eternal is the final key.	14
Two courses of conduct.	14
Three golden precepts.	14
To sum up, we and every particle of matter are dual, ephemeral aspects of One Omnipresent though Invisible Reality, Immutable and Unconscious in its Eternity, absolutely independent of matter, an Intra-Cosmic Breath.	17
Notes for prospective students.	19
Approach, qualifications, method.	19
How to read the Secret Doctrine.	20
What to read in the Secret Doctrine.	21
Suggested reading for students.	
From our Theosophy and Theosophists Series.	23



¹ Frontispiece by Stephanie Piu-Mum Law.

Three Metaphysical Keys to The Secret Doctrine.

Opening thoughts.

This is the pre-publication draft of an article entitled “Keys to The Secret Doctrine: bringing the wisdom of love before the eye of the soul,” published in *Brahmavidyā: The Adyar Library Bulletin*, Supplement commemorating the 125th year of publication of *The Secret Doctrine* by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. Adyar: Library and Research Centre, 2013; pp. 47-85. This article is an abridgment of the “Opening Thoughts” of a Philaletheians’ e-book by C.A. Bartzokas (Comp. & Ed.). *Compassion: The Spirit of Truth*, Gwernymynydd: Philaletheians UK, 2005; v. 05.88.2021; 398pp. This is our first Major Work.

EMANATING FROM THE HIGHEST REALMS of sentient existence, and irrigated by Compassion and Charity immortal throughout the ages, arose a stupendous body of occult knowledge that explains the interplay of Non-being, Being, and Becoming. This corpus of inner wisdom is variously referred to as Archaic Wisdom-Religion, Aletheia, Atma-Vidya, Eclectic Philosophy, Esoteric Knowledge, Secret or Heart Doctrine, Theosophia.¹ Being the quintessence of our spiritual inheritance, it unravels the mystery of Consciousness and helps sincere enquirers to learn the Science of Life and practice the Art of Living. But only those of exceptional moral purity and loyalty to its cause and aim “may approach nearer to It, and receive, in that state, true knowledge and wonderful insight.”² That knowledge is the Wisdom of Love and the common property of all men.

These are not mere words, they are Divine Truths. They sustain Heaven and Earth. Their veracity has been corroborated by the experience of an unbroken line of Higher and Lower Avatars, Gautama Buddha and his Incarnations, Rishis and Mahatmans, Thinkers and Metaphysicians who promulgate them from generation to generation orally and through certain texts that, on account of the reverence in which they are held as well as their antiquity, are referred to as sacred: they touch the heart and enlighten the mind.

It is to guide Humanity through the deepening darkness and dangers of our age that in 1875 a group of GREAT SOULS launched the modern Theosophical Movement,

. . . to show that Nature is not a “fortuitous concurrence of atoms,” and to assign to man his rightful place in the scheme of the Universe.³

Madame Blavatsky, its chief exponent and author, has assembled in *The Secret Doctrine* the oldest tenets of Asiatic and early European religions, as well as the major schools of philosophy, into a breath-taking comparative exegesis of the world’s most

¹ Greek term Anglicised as Theosophy.

² *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (WHAT IS THEOSOPHY?) II p. 93; [quoting Porphyry.]

³ Cf. *Secret Doctrine*, I p. viii

profound mysteries — carefully stripped of blinds, superstitions, dead-letter interpretations, and purposeful distortions. “Its teachings antedate the *Vedas*.”¹

In the ancient Cosmogonies, the visible and the invisible worlds are the double links of one and the same chain. As the invisible *Logos*, with its seven hierarchies (represented or personified each by its chief angel or rector), form one POWER, the inner and the invisible; so, in the world of Forms, the Sun and the seven chief Planets constitute the visible and active potency; the latter “Hierarchy” being, so to speak, the visible and objective *Logos* of the invisible and (except in the lowest grades) ever-subjective angels.²

No Theologian, any more than an Orientalist, can ever understand the genealogies of the Prajāpatis, the Manus, and the Rishis, nor the direct connection of these — or their correlation rather — with the Gods, unless he has the key to the old primitive Cosmogony and Theogony, which all the Nations originally had in common. All these gods and demi-gods are found reborn on earth, in various Kalpas and in as various characters; each, moreover, *having his Karma distinctly traced, and every effect assigned to its cause*.³

It is the Secret Doctrine alone that can trace the kinship of ancient myths and world-faiths to each other, and demonstrate their common basis with science.

. . . the tendency of even the most erudite Hellenists is to confine their speculations to the exoteric images of mythology and to lose sight of their inner meaning . . . [In a] future day it will be perceived that the esoteric key to the mysteries of the Christian as well as of the Grecian Theogonies and Sciences, is the *Secret Doctrine* of the pre-historic nations . . . It is that Doctrine alone which can trace the kinship of all human religious speculations or even so-called *Revelations*, and it is this teaching which infuses the Spirit of life into the lay figures on the Mounts of Meru, Olympus, Walhalla, or Sinai.⁴

One month before his death, George William Russell (Æ) confided to his close friend Sean O’Faolain:

“The real source of her influence is to be found in *The Secret Doctrine*, a book on the religions of the world suggesting or disclosing an underlying unity between all great religions.” Having “bathed in” that work and other writings of H.P.B., he said: “I marvelled what I could have done to merit birth in an age wherein such wisdom was on offer to all who could beg, borrow, or steal a copy of those works.”⁵

¹ *Secret Doctrine*, I p. xxxvii

² *ibid.*, II p. 23

³ *ibid.*, II p. 248

⁴ *ibid.*, II pp. 766, 767

⁵ Cf. Boris De Zirkoff. “Æ – Poet and Theosophist.” In: *Theosophia: A Living Philosophy for Humanity*, Vol. XXIV, No. 2 (112), Fall 1967, pp. 4-5

Madame Blavatsky's intellectual power, clarity, and philosophical finesse are unparalleled.

She follows

. . . precisely that method of investigation which is termed by Spinoza "the scientific method." It starts from, and proceeds only on "principles clearly defined and accurately known," and is therefore "the only one" which can lead to true knowledge.¹

In his *Theory of Scientific Method*, Spinoza expounds how abstract ideas can be seized by concrete minds:

So long as we are dealing with the Investigation of things, we must never infer anything from abstractions, and we shall take very great care not to mix up the things that are only in the intellect with those that are real. But the best conclusion will have to be drawn from some particular affirmative essence, or, from a true and legitimate definition. For from universal axioms alone the intellect cannot descend to singulars, since axioms extend to infinity, and do not determine the intellect to the contemplation of one singular thing rather than another.²



¹ Cf. *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (FOOTNOTES TO "THE SWAMI OF ALMORA") IV p. 569

² E. Curley. *A Spinoza Reader: The Ethics and Other Works*. Princeton University Press, 1994; pp. 51-52.

The Three Fundamental Propositions of the Secret Doctrine.

Pre-eminent in the firmament of Eternal Ideals and Truths that have been brought into the open for the first time by the august authors of *The Secret Doctrine* are three universal conceptions, three stars guiding and lighting Humanity's or the Great Orphan's¹ homeward journey. They inform and confirm all other doctrines.² Their philosophy may be summarised as follows:

Proposition 1. Cosmogenesis

The Universe is underpinned by an Omnipresent Reality, One and Secondless, Attributeless, Eternal, Impersonal, Perfect Consciousness. Although Parentless itself, It is the Universal Parent of All. It is *That* of the *Chhândogya Upanishad*, the *Parabrahman* of the Vedāntist, *The One Life* of the Buddhist, *The Absolute* of Hegel. *That* contains within itself the root of self-consciousness and the substratum of matter, different aspects of which It, the Infinite, exhibits periodically "to the perception of finite Minds"³ through:

- First Logos: Unconscious Universal Mind, or Divine Intelligence *in potentia*, an ever-concealed fount and origin of powers and potencies.
- Second Logos: Semiconscious Universal Mind, or Dawn of Intelligence.
- Third Logos: Conscious Universal Mind, or Light of Intelligence and Life, a Son of Necessity.

On the plane of manifestation, Spirit and Matter or duality pre-eminently, are two illusionary aspects of One Reality. They are inseparable, interdependent, and interchangeable permutations of One Consciousness, the One and only Capacity of Perception ever reflecting upon Itself through the self-modifying apperceptions of lower minds.

Proposition 2. Law governs Cosmos and Man

Volitional impulses from a quenchless desire for self-analysing reflection give rise to an eternal procession of Divine Consciousness from Darkness to Light, through countless worlds and planets, cycles and epicycles. At the end of a premeditated duration, the objective world withdraws and regresses Klein bottle-like into the subjectivity of itself.

The appearance and disappearance of the Universe are pictured as outbreathing and inbreathing of the "Great Breath," which is eternal, and which, being Motion, is one of the three aspects of the Absolute — Abstract Space and Duration being the other two.⁴

Periodicity is indissolubly linked with Necessity. Compassion, Necessity, and Periodicity constitute the highest "deity" or LAW that human intellect can ever hope to approximate. Their unmanifested essence is Universal Love and Harmony. And the ev-

¹ Cf. *Mahatma Letter* 8 (15) p. 32; 3rd Combined ed.

² e.g., karma and reincarnation, death and devachan, round and races, etc.

³ *Secret Doctrine*, II p. 487

⁴ *ibid.*, I p. 43

er-pulsating Great Heart that in contracting forgets and in expanding remembers the TRUTH of Truths, brings about the “Eternity of the Pilgrim” or Man.

Man is that noble endogenous plant which grows, like the palm, from within without.¹

Amnesia and memory of the One Reality alternate within us cyclically as day and night, consciousness and unconsciousness. Life goes around in circles like the flow of blood that, when the Central Spiritual Heart contracts, is thrust away from Being; and when It expands, Life returns the experience of Being into the adytum of Non-Being.

Proposition 3. Anthropogenesis

Once more, from the Circle of Infinity or Zero arises a Circle of Necessity or relative finiteness. It marks the dawn of another Manvantara, or Consciousness’ recurring pilgrimage to the deepest recesses of materiality before rising from the bowels of the underworld, onward and upward, to higher realms of Unconscious Immateriality.

By successive incarnations and by the toils and drudgery of life, souls keep spiralling up toward their immortal counterpart. Individually, men are companions along a journey of Self-discovery, of finding Self through self. Collectively, Man is One, a Son of Necessity.

Starting upon the long journey immaculate; descending more and more into sinful matter, and having connected himself with every atom in manifested *Space* — the *Pilgrim*, having struggled through and suffered in every form of life and being, is only at the bottom of the valley of matter, and half through his cycle, when he has identified himself with collective Humanity. This, *he has made in his own image*² . . . and acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma).³

This periodic apostasy of the Great Mind, from the asylum of unconscious subjectivity to the discord of conscious objectivity (that we all know too well) endows every part with

. . . Infinite Potency born from the concealed Potentiality.⁴

Eventually, those who understood the purpose and fundamental integrity of life will begin renouncing their worldly egos by acting altruistically for the whole. Only then will they be able to identify anew with the “Over Soul” of Love, Truth, and Wisdom, and bring back the nectar of personal experience to the Spiritual Heart.

Just as, at the close of the cycle of the sidereal year [25,868 years], the heavenly bodies return to the same relative positions as they occupied at its outset, so at the close of the cycle of Initiation the inner man has regained the pristine

¹ Cf. R.W. Emerson, *Uses of Great Men*, ¶ 6

² Cf. *Secret Doctrine*, I p. 268

³ Cf. *ibid.*, I p. 17

⁴ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (E.S. INSTRUCTION No. II) XII p. 552; [on the Universal Principle, being Simon’s summit of all manifested creation, i.e., Fire or Ilup.]

state of divine purity and knowledge from which he set out on his cycle of terrestrial incarnation.¹

This onward and upward march “from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel”² is our Natural Duty, Religion, and Ultimate Destiny. Metaphysically, humanity is an emanation of the World’s Soul here on Earth; Mystically, she is the “Love of Gods.”³



¹ *Secret Doctrine*, I p. 314; [on the Pyramids, record and symbol of the Mysteries and Initiations on Earth. “The cycle of Initiation was a reproduction in miniature of that great series of Cosmic changes to which astronomers have given the name of tropical or sidereal year.”]

² *ibid.*, I p. 17

³ *Oxyrhynchus Papyrus*, 1380.109 (c2 CE)

The Gordian knot of the Second Proposition unravelled.

Without a good grounding in theoretical Theosophy, the basis for the conduct advocated by the *Bhagavad-Gita*, *Nārada Bhakti Sutra*, *Voice of the Silence*, and other mystical texts cannot be readily grasped by the ordinary mind. Equally, without fathoming out two enigmatic verses in the *Gita* and the *Bhagavata-Purana*, the quintessence of *The Secret Doctrine* cannot be fully apprehended either.

Let's see how Lord Krishna touches upon the heart of *The One Infinite Life and Law*, and Its triple finite manifestation on the plane of progression and rebirth. Since Compassion and Sacrifice are intrinsic to such exalted states of Benevolence, the same verses may also be viewed as the “mission statement” of an Avatar:

I produce myself among creatures, O son of Bhārata, whenever there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world; and thus I incarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness.¹

And “what is the most just thing” according to Pythagoras?

To sacrifice.²

Enlightening is Bahman Pestonji Wadia's analysis of the triple LAW in the light of Lord Krishna's affirmation to Prince Arjuna:

The manifested universe is called in *The Secret Doctrine* the Son of Necessity. Every microcosmos is a Son of Necessity. The rising of the Wave — the universe — in the Ocean of Absoluteness is under Law. . . . In the Circle of Infinity³ arises, under and as Law, the Circle of Necessity⁴ or finiteness. This Law has three aspects corresponding to the three in the Ever Concealed Unity — the Law of Karma (Action), of Cycles (Yugas) and of Yajña (Sacrifice-Compassion) . . . This three-fold function of the One Law is not outside of man or the universe. It is within each.⁵

In the *Bhagavata-Purana* Prahlada addresses Narasimha, a half-man half-lion avatatic appearance of Vishnu, with remarkable similarity:

. . . O All-powerful Lord! Incarnating Thyself as man, animal, fish, Rishi and celestial, in different Yugas (ages), Thou dost destroy the wicked and protect the worlds. Though Thou protectest the Dharma appropriate to every age, Thy

¹ *Bhagavad-Gita* 4 vs. 7-8. Cf. “We do not send any Messiah until and unless there is extreme suffering and distress.” *Koran* vii, 94

² Thos. Taylor. (tr. & Com.) *Iamblichus on the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Assyrians, and Life of Pythagoras*. (Vol. XVII of the Thomas Taylor Series); Sturminster Newton: The Prometheus Trust, 2004; *Life of Pythagoras*, pp. 229-30.

³ [The “boundless circle” or zero.]

⁴ [Κυκλος Αναγκης, “Unavoidable Cycle.”]

⁵ B.P. Wadia. *Studies in the Secret Doctrine*. (A series of articles in three books) First publ. in: *Theosophy* (Los Angeles), 1922-25; repr. in: *The Theosophical Movement* (Bombay), 1959-61. Bombay: Theosophy Company (India) Private Ltd, 1961. Bk. I (3rd Series) v p. 135

presence is hidden in the age of Kali. Thou art therefore known as Triyuga, or one whose manifestations are confined to the three Yugas.¹

Yet, Sacrifice is not conspicuous in *The Secret Doctrine*. Of the space devoted in the Proem to the First Proposition, less than a quarter is given to the Second, the Law of Periodicity or Yugas-cycles. Karman-action and Yajña-Compassion-Sacrifice, the other two aspects of the same Law, are not mentioned here — although Karman is linked with Yugas in the Anthropogenesis of the Third.

Compassion-Sacrifice has always been paramount in the writings of H.P. Blavatsky though not always phrased in a manner that we are accustomed to or expect to hear. (One hundred forty-two qualifying epithets and descriptive statements, where Divine Love or “One for All,” and Devotional Love or “All for One” are implicit, are listed in the endnote.²)

In 1888, the year *The Secret Doctrine* was published, Madame Blavatsky wrote:

If there is one thing that *Lucifer* proposes to preach and enforce throughout the next year, more than any other subject, it is — CHARITY; unrelenting charity toward the shortcomings of one’s neighbour, untiring charity with regard to the wants of one poorer than oneself. Charity is the scope of all theosophical teachings, the synthesis of all and every virtue. . . . how true and great these words of the eminent American poet, Joaquin Miller:

“ALL YOU CAN HOLD IN YOUR COLD DEAD HAND,
IS WHAT YOU HAVE GIVEN AWAY . . . ”³

¹ *Shrimad Bhāgavata* vii, 9, 38

² Absolute Being and Non-Being, Absolute Root of All, Absolutely Boundless, Absoluteness, Abstract Light penetrating all, Abyss, Agape, Alaya’s Self, Aletheia-Truth, All is One, All plus Universal Mind, Altruism, Arche, Argo, Ark, Beneficence, Benevolence, Bhakti-Devotion, Boundless, Brotherhood, Brotherly Love, Cause of the “Great Architect,” Causeless Cause, Central point from which all emerges and around and toward which all gravitates, Changeless Law, Chaos, Charity, Chastity, Chrestos in humiliation, Clemency, Compassion itself, Dedication, Deity itself, Dhyāni-Chohans of sentient life, Dianoia-Ennoia, Disinterestedness, Divine substance-principle, Essence plus Spirit of the Universe, Eternal, Eternal Egg, Eternal Harmony, Eternal Intelligence-Wisdom, Ever-acting Cause, Ever-concealed Spiritual Fire, Ever-periodically recurring, Forbearance, Forgiveness, Fraternal feeling, Fundamental Principle, Generosity, Gentleness, Goodness, Goodwill, Grace, Harmony itself, Heart, Homogeneity, Humaneness, Humanity, Immutable, Immutably Infinite, Impersonal Reality, Infinite, Infinite Expansion, Intelligent, Jivātman, Kindness, Knowledge of the Higher Soul or Spiritual Self, Latent in every atom, Life Principle, Love itself, Love of humanity, Love of mankind, Loving-kindness, Martyrdom, Mercy, Monad, Mother-Matter, Natural Law, Neith, Never-erring Law, Nirguna, Nous, Nux, Omnipresent Reality, Parabrahman, Parentless, Perfect equilibrium, Perpetually Reasoning Divinity, Philaletheia, Pity, Privation, Probity, Purity, Radical Cause, Rendering good for evil, Renunciation, Repression of the physical senses, Resignation, Rootless Root, Ruling Principle, Sacrifice itself, Self-abnegation, Self-analysing reflection, Self-denial, Self-existent, Self-immolation, Selflessness, Self-sacrifice, Surrender, Sympathy, Temperance, Tenderness, The Fundamental Law in Theosophy, The Good, The Great Law, The Law of Brotherhood, The Law of Compassion-Sacrifice, The Law of Laws, The Lawgiver of the Universe, The Monarch of the Universe, The One, The One and Only Reality, The One Existence, The One Life, The One Reality, The Operating Law, The Spirit of Truth, The Supreme One, Tolerance, True Philanthropy, True Philosophy, Unbound, Unconscious Deity, Uncreated, Universal Law, Universal Over-Soul, Universe itself, Unselfishness, Without attributes, Worship of Truth, Yajña. — ED. PHIL.

³ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (OUR THIRD VOLUME) X p. 95. Also cf. “. . . Charity, generosity, high morality, kindness, truthfulness and all the virtues inculcated by ethics, are of vastly more importance than learning and study without them. Much study will lead to book-knowledge, but unless the waking man follows to the best of his ability the ethical precepts he will lose most of his work by death. At death he leaves the brain that learned, that pored over books and knew by heart all the formulae of Kaballism, alchemy, and what not, but he saves only so much of real character as he made during life.” *Echoes of the Orient*, (ASTRAL BODIES) III: 1st ed. p. 460; 2nd ed. p. 488.

Colton and Bacon echo Miller's reason:

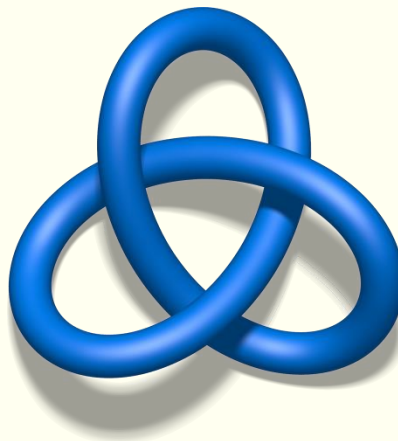
Posthumous charities are the very essence of selfishness when bequeathed by those who, even alive, would part with nothing.¹

He that defers his charity until he is dead is, if a man weighs it rightly, rather liberal of another man's than of his own.²

The colossal task that the Masters of Wisdom and Madame Blavatsky undertook to compare "several dozens of philosophies and over half-a-dozen of world-religions"³ is another manifestation of Compassion in action. *The Secret Doctrine* is their deed. No sooner does one begin going through it page by page, that gratitude for our Watchers and Guardians sweeps over the heart, empathy motivates mercy, and the feeling of kinship for all beings becomes as natural as breathing.

Divine Love is what makes the Great Heart throb when "the Seventh Eternity Thrills through Infinitude."⁴ That is why *The Secret Doctrine's* first premise is the most important: because Universal Sympathy, Impersonal Love, and Respect for all that lives are more dear to the Spiritual Heart than anything else. Right conduct cannot be exacted. Neither canons nor commandments can bring out humaneness. Otherwise, with so many of them and so often repeated, our planet would have been a better place for all to live. But because it is Selfishness that dulls insight, it is up to us to remove this impediment "by studying and assimilating [Theosophy's] eternal verities"⁵ and by selfless conduct. Not by divine intervention but through unfaltering devotion to each other we can honour the Wisdom of Love.

You will best honour God by making your mind like unto Him, and this you can do by virtue alone. For only virtue can draw the soul upward to that which is akin to it.⁶



¹ Charles Caleb Colton, in: F.S. Mead. (Comp. & Ed.) *12,000 Religious Quotations*. Grand Rapids MI: Baker Brook House, 1989.

² Francis Bacon, *Collection of Sentences* (55), *ibid*.

³ Cf. *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (MISTAKEN NOTIONS ON *THE SECRET DOCTRINE*) XII p. 235

⁴ *Secret Doctrine*, I p. 62

⁵ Cf. *Key to Theosophy*, § IV (RELATIONS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY TO THEOSOPHY) p. 57

⁶ A. Zimmern (tr.). *Porphyry's Letter to His Wife Marcella*. (1st ed. 1855); Grand Rapids: Phanes Press, 1986; ¶16 p. 49

Assimilation of universal laws is the first key to manhood.

Altruism and idealism, fellowship and brotherhood, philanthropy and humaneness, ahimsa¹ and harmlessness — they are all shades of One Great Ethic that is borne out of *The Secret Doctrine's* first proposition.

The deer, the fish, and the virtuous, living on grass, water and contentment respectively [find] in this world unprovoked enemies [in] the hunter, the fisherman, and the wicked.²

BP Wadia will now explain how virtue can bring about the dramatic metamorphosis asserted in the Third Proposition.

Understanding by the higher mind and apperception by intuition are not sufficient unless these produce the action, which is altruism. . . . *The lower fourfold man, the quaternary, has to become triune, and The Secret Doctrine, which is a book of practical occultism, helps us to achieve this task. The higher triad has to be transformed into the Sacred Tetractys — that is the goal taught in the message of H.P.B.* The single energy of altruism unifies all actions, which are undertaken in terms of the understanding of the universals and executed in terms of the intuitive apperception of the Heart.³

If we decide to acquire the knowledge about universals, which is the one sure way to free our mind from the hooks of kāmīc particulars, we are bound to touch the plane of intuition in due season, and then naturally our Creative Will will work altruistically. But we must not wait for compassion to express altruism and only ponder over the cosmic ultimates, determined to see the one in the many; while thus occupied we must devote time in paying attention to *The Voice of the Silence* and making use of *The Key to Theosophy*, so as to help the awakening intuition and the awakening altruism.⁴

Shri Wadia went further and defined the objectives of would-be Theosophists in metaphysical, mystical, and ethical terms:

- To perceive the interrelation and interdependence of man and nature;
- To correlate the correspondence subsisting between universals and particulars;
- To cognise our minds as the playground of the energies of the Spirit and of the shadows cast by the movements of Matter;
- To practice the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood;
- all these are the descriptions of one and the same process, in different tongues, of metaphysics or of ethics.⁵

¹ Dynamic compassion.

² Bhartrhari, *Niti Shataka*, 61 (tr. Kale)

³ Wadia, *Studies in the Secret Doctrine*, op. cit., Bk. I (2nd Series) iv p. 77

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 79

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 81

And for the benefit of those who think that morality differs from moral philosophy, he highlighted two passages from the writings of H.P. Blavatsky, where “the same identical truth” of altruism is put across in a metaphysical and an ethical presentation.

Theosophists described metaphysically.

He who would be an occultist must not separate either himself or anything else from the rest of creation or *non-creation*. For, the moment he distinguishes himself from even a vessel of dishonour, he will not be able to join himself to any vessel of honour. He must think of himself as an infinitesimal something, not even as an individual atom, but as a part of the world-atoms as a whole, or become an illusion, a nobody, and vanish like a breath, leaving no trace behind. As illusions, we are separate distinct bodies, living in masks furnished by Maya. Can we claim one single atom in our body as distinctly our own? Everything, from spirit to the tiniest particle, is part of the whole, at best a link. Break a single link and all passes into annihilation; but this is impossible. There is a series of vehicles becoming more and more gross, from spirit to the densest matter, so that with each step downward and outward we get more and more the sense of separateness developed in us. Yet this is illusory, for if there were a real and complete separation between any two human beings, they could not communicate with, or understand each other in any way.¹

Theosophists described ethically.

He who does not practise altruism;

He who is not prepared to share his last morsel with a weaker or a poorer than himself;

He who neglects to help his brother man, of whatever race, nation, or creed, whenever and wherever he meets suffering, and who turns a deaf ear to the cry of human misery;

He who hears an innocent person slandered, whether a brother Theosophist or not, and does not undertake his defence as he would undertake his own;

[He] is no Theosophist.²



¹ Blavatsky *Collected Writings*, (TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE) X p. 395. [Commentary on Stanza IV.1.]

² *ibid.*, (THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY) X p. 69; [quoting Émile Burnouf from an editorial in: *Lucifer*, Vol. I, November 1887, p. 169.]

Sacrificing the ephemeral to the eternal is the final key.

If *The Secret Doctrine* is the definitive text of Esoteric Philosophy, *The Voice of the Silence* gives away its hidden aim — the Heart Doctrine. *The Voice*'s stirring ethics are in perfect harmony with the humbling metaphysics of Theosophy. Sylvia Cranston noted the similarity between the GREAT SACRIFICE and the Pledge of Kuan-Yin, the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy, in this poignant quatrain:

Never will I seek nor receive private individual salvation;
Never will I enter into final peace alone;
But forever and everywhere will I live and
Strive for the redemption of every creature throughout the world.¹

An in-depth analysis of *The Voice*, “the only true exposition in English of the Heart Doctrine of the *Mahayana* and its noble ideal of self-sacrifice for humanity,”² is outside the scope of this article. Only salient features will be touched upon here so that the defining selections on sacrifice by B.P. Wadia and William Q. Judge that follow immediately after can be fully appreciated.

Two courses of conduct.

When, by contemplation upon the TRUTH of Truths and self-surrender, a soul sets about identifying with its spiritual counterpart, it can be said that its journey toward repatriation has begun in earnest. Two entirely different motives inform and impel two antithetical courses of conduct: the Eye Doctrine and the Heart Doctrine.

1 Eye Doctrine | Appalled and depressed by the hopelessness of embodied existence, the vulgar masses seek to exchange fleeting enjoyments and thrills with everlasting joy and peace. They set about a process that is commonly known as the (Open) Path of Liberation or Yoga. Their aim is to evade personal responsibility and bask instead in a supernal Shangri-La. The motive is selfish, not materially but spiritually.

2 Heart Doctrine | *The Voice* proposes an alternative to the well-trodden solitary path of oblivion from our world, the Path of Compassion or Secret Path that the Elect of Humanity pursue to a conclusion out of boundless pity for the world of mortals.³

Three golden precepts.

1 The Voice of the Silence | The First Fragment is an overview of the Heart Doctrine or Path of Compassion. At a certain stage of inner development, a “still small voice”⁴ will be heard by those who are intellectually and ethically fit to follow its behests. *That Voice* is not *any* voice. It is the Voice of our planet's Highest Chohan. It is Divine Thought universally manifested and diffused, Logos. It is Sound Eternal, Vāch. It is our Divine Consciousness, our Inner God that speaks *audibly* to the

¹ Sylvia Cranston [nom de plume of Anita Atkins]. *HPB: The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement*. New York: G.P. Putman's Sons, 1994; p. 407.

² Cf. *Voice of the Silence* (Peking ed., fo.)

³ Cf. The Doctrine of Raja-Yoga and its preferred “Path” to spiritual ascension, in: *Blavatsky Collected Writings, (A FEW MORE MISCONCEPTIONS CORRECTED)* XIV pp. 439-40

⁴ Cf. *1 Kings* xix, 12, KJV

heart. It comes from *That Wondrous Being*¹ who, having renounced Its own rest and peace, remains on Earth shielding “mankind invisibly from still worse evils”² by Its quintessence and occult influence.

2 The Two Paths | The Middle Fragment is the heart of this moving poem, where Personal Liberation is compared to Sublime Renunciation. By stepping to the rugged Path of the fourfold Dhyāna with false learning and pride, the crowd plans to escape from the world and abandon those still ensnared by it to their fate. On the other Path, the steeper Path of Virtue, “the Few” or the Elect of our Race, humbled³ by true knowledge, rise up to the Pāramitā Heights. Upon reaching the summit of intellectual and moral excellence, they renounce personal rest and bliss so that they can be of service to the world, unthanked and unperceived,

Humble because of knowledge; mighty by sacrifice.⁴

For,

Compassion and humility meet in Love.⁵

Slaying the personal mind is a prerequisite for stepping over either Path. But menticide is a relatively minor sacrifice: it only frees the soul from the perpetual roll of births and deaths. The Voice directs disciples towards a much greater course of action, the Path of Woe and Self-immolation which commands a second sacrifice immediately after the fruition of the first: *the renunciation of the liberty itself*. That is the overriding aim of *The Voice of the Silence*, and that is why this little book is so precious.

3 The Seven Portals | The Third Fragment contrasts the Arya Path with the Blissful Path of Yogīns that leads to the “heaven” of nirvana. This is one of the most stirring invocations of Compassion for our world, humanity and all creatures, and their worsening afflictions. The anxiety of its celestial author to bring out Humaneness and Mercy is touching, almost palpable. Only by sacrificing “individuality” at the altar of Humanity and by bitter duty to Nature and all beings can animal man come of age and reclaim his long-forgotten divinity. As Theosophy’s purpose and application are inextricably related, so is *The Voice’s* Cause when galvanised by Compassion: it lights up the “Secret Path” and brings Universal Brotherhood on Earth, which is Its noble end and living fruition.

Here is how BP Wadia counterpoints “The Two Paths”:

Just as Fohat is related to the One Life metaphysically, so the central teaching of this real Wisdom of the Great Sages is related to the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood. That central teaching is called the Path of Great Renunciation and is distinct and different from the Path of Liberation or Emancipation. This

¹ Corresponds to the “Seven Dhyāni-Buddhas.”

² *Voice of the Silence*, frag. III, note 111 to vs. 293 p. 68; p. 94 in glos. of Chinese & Centenary eds.

³ Cf. “. . . With the Pythagoreans . . . humility was no virtue, though in modern times it is considered to be the greatest of the virtues. With Aristotle likewise it is no virtue: for in his *Nicomachean Ethics* he says, ‘that all humble men are flatterers, and all flatterers are humble.’” Iamblichus, *Life of Pythagoras*, p. 280 fn.

⁴ Rudyard Kipling, *The Islanders*

⁵ Bhagavan Das. *The Science of the Emotions*. (1st ed. 1900); Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1924 (3rd ed.); p. 90.

path of Great Renunciation is *not* the one ordinarily known among Eastern yogis and Sannyāsis, swamis and fakirs. That Path of Renunciation (*Tyaga* and *Sannyāsa Margas*) is walked in the hope, for the purpose, and with the motive of gaining Liberation or Moksha. The Path of Great Renunciation taught in Esoteric Philosophy is *not* the means and the channel for liberation of the human spirit, but leads to the conscious and deliberate Renunciation of that liberation — “Nirvanas, gained and lost from boundless pity and compassion for the world of deluded mortals.” The path of renunciation of actions, and of fruits of actions which leads to Liberation is called in Esoteric Philosophy the Open Path; the Path of Great Renunciation leads the Mukta and Nirvānī “to don the miseries of ‘Secret life,’” and produces “mental woe unspeakable; woe for the living Dead and helpless pity for the men of karmic sorrow.” This is called the Secret Path.¹

Altruism, therefore, is the key to Theosophy. And Theosophists are those philanthropists who strive to help all that lives through thick and thin. Not those who, blinded by Spiritual Selfishness, forsake their own kin by crossing “to the other shore”² or nirvana³

. . . which is oblivion of the World and men for ever.⁴

Altruism or “other-interest” is a synthetic word implying impersonal, unconditional love of other-self, brotherly love, vivre pour l’autrui. Altruism is the antonym of egoism or “self-interest.” It is as if Auguste Comte coined it to coincide with the launch of the Theosophical Society in 1875, just as great music was often composed for special occasions.

Continues Shri Wadia:

Without hesitation it can be asserted that the teachings contained in *The Secret Doctrine* will not be thoroughly understood by one who is not actively altruistic. It will remain a sealed book in spite of higher understanding and intuitive perceptions, unless these two are made use of on the plane of action. What distinguishes a Theosophist from a student of Theosophy is this altruism. In *The Key to Theosophy* it is said, “Theosophist is, who Theosophy does” — not thinks, not studies, not feels, but *does*. Speaking of the pledged member of her esoteric school, H.P.B. said that he “has to become a thorough altruist” (*Key*, p. 20) . . . “The only palliative to the evils of life is union and harmony — a Brotherhood IN ACTU, and *altruism* not simply in name.”⁵

W.Q. Judge, in his analysis of the second chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, reflects upon the reasons for the secrecy surrounding the First School of Initiation:

¹ Wadia, *Studies in the Secret Doctrine*, *op. cit.*, Bk. II (2nd Series) iii p. 46

² Cf. *Voice of the Silence*, frag. III vs. 206 p. 47 & vs. 251 p. 58

³ Personal nirvana is *Ātyantika*, i.e., one of four kinds of pralaya: “*Ātyantika*, does not concern the Worlds or the Universe, but only the individualities of some people; it is thus individual pralaya or NIRVANA; after having reached which, there is no more future existence possible, no rebirth till after the *Mahā-Pralaya*.” *Secret Doctrine*, I p. 371

⁴ Cf. *Voice of the Silence*, frag. II vs. 186 p. 42

⁵ Wadia, *op. cit.*, Bk. I (2nd Series) iv p. 78; [quoting *Secret Doctrine*, I p. 644.]

It is secret, because, founded in nature and having only real Hierophants at the head, its privacy cannot be invaded without the real key. And that key, in each degree, is the *aspirant himself*. Until that aspirant has become in fact the sign and the key, he cannot enter the degree above him. As a whole then, and in each degree, it is self-protective.¹

The Voice of the Silence sheds light on the path of self-immolation. It is Krishna in His song of life. It is Nārada in His exaltation of Devotional Love. It is The Voice of Mercy, the hidden author of the *Book of the Golden Precepts* that speaks. When the last soul has returned home safely, The Voice will finally resume Its “Mercy Seat on the Throne.” And who knows? Some of those who have listened to It and acted upon Its promptings, may be destined to keep the torch of Truth alight in another world, watching over and protecting another “orphan” at some future kalpa. And “the last shall be the greatest.”²

To sum up, we and every particle of matter are dual, ephemeral aspects of One Omnipresent though Invisible Reality, Immutable and Unconscious in its Eternity, absolutely independent of matter, an Intra-Cosmic Breath.

Our consciousness is an individualised modification of One Consciousness, ever shifting between wakefulness and dreamless sleep, forgetfulness and remembrance, life and death. An appreciation of our shared ancestry and core identity with the One Life and Soul inspires loyalty to the “heart of all mankind,” and kindles respect of each other in thought and deed — untainted by personal interest. For, we are our brother’s keepers. This is what is meant by *living Theosophy*. A true Theosophist . . .

. . . *is one who makes Theosophy a living power in his life.*³

These awe-inspiring cosmic ultimates of *The Secret Doctrine* are reliable signposts to the perennial “archaic *Wisdom-Religion*.”⁴ They point the way to “*mutual-culture before self-culture to begin with*”⁵ and hopefully to *self-actualisation*, not “self-realisation.” Lofty concepts such as Franz Hartmann’s “shining centre,” or William Quan Judge’s “presiding spirit,” can disperse the smog of materialism if pondered upon with “*an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect*.”⁶

Without a spiritual recognition of the fundamental principles of Nature, a seeking from a superficial point of view for a discovery of the mysteries of being is like an unfruitful wandering in a fog. It resembles a search from the periphery of a sphere of unknown extent for a centre whose locality is unknown; while if we have once a correct conception of the situation of that shining centre, its

¹ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (PRACTICAL OCCULTISM) IX p. 162 fn. [Boris de Zirkoff quoting *The Path*, II (11), February 1888, p. 330.]

² *Voice of the Silence*, frag. II vs. 188 p. 42

³ Cf. *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (“GOING TO AND FROM IN THE EARTH”) XII p. 28

⁴ *ibid.*, (WHAT IS THEOSOPHY?) II p. 89

⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, (“ORIGINAL PROGRAMME” MANUSCRIPT) VII p. 160

⁶ *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (E.S. INSTRUCTION No. III) XII p. 591

light will act as a guiding star in our wanderings through the fogs which pervade the realm of phenomena.¹

. . . the substratum, or support, for the whole Cosmos, is the presiding spirit, and all the various changes in life, whether of a material nature or solely in mental states, are cognizable because the presiding spirit within is not modifiable. Were it otherwise, then we would have no memory, for with each passing event, we, becoming merged in it, could not remember anything, that is, we would see no changes. There must therefore be something eternally persisting, which is the witness and perceiver of every passing change, itself unchangeable. All objects, and all states of what western philosophers call Mind, are modifications, for in order to be seen or known by us, there must be some change, either partial or total, from a precedent state. The perceiver of these changes is the inner man — Arjuna-Krishna.²

When the law of ethical causation (karman-action), implicit in the Second Proposition, and the law of activity ever alternating with rest (yugas-cycles) are assimilated, personal responsibility is restored and hope dawns for the sore-footed traveller. When the sober condition of the Third Proposition is enacted, self-reliance energises inner growth by strengthening Will. By the intuition of the spiritual soul (buddhi-manas) the worldly soul begins perceiving the “One Life for All” and acting accordingly, and with alacrity. Thus, action becomes altruism as much as “inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin.”³

The power and far-reaching significance of these deceptively simple ideas cannot be fully grasped without effortful study, unyielding perseverance, and thoughtful application. Living the life commanded by Theosophy will one day afford a mystical perception of the Great Self within, the “Heavenly Man.” Then we will all live for each other, forgetting ourselves in the midst of so many selves who, as formerly and forever, are but our own . . . phantasms of thinking throbbles . . .⁴



¹ Franz Hartmann. *Occult Science in Medicine*. London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1893; p. 88.

² *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, p. 23

³ Cf. *Voice of the Silence*, frag. II vs. 135 p. 31

⁴ Cf. *Isis Unveiled*, I p. 219 & *Theosophical Glossary*: Diakka

Notes for prospective students.

Approach, qualifications, method.

The student will have to “ascend several ladders and wander in darkness in a cave with many doors,” all of which are locked.¹ But he should not be put off by these challenges if armed with sincerity, diligence, perseverance, an open mind, and a pure heart. These are not only prerequisites to learning, they are shields from peril and pitfall. Those who approach *The Secret Doctrine* unprepared, dragging the highest ideals down to their level, dissecting them with the sceptic’s scalpel and arguing about them, will be sorely disappointed.

The student must embrace Plato’s deductive reasoning from universals to particulars, not Aristotle’s inductive bottom-up approach. That is, he should raise his mind to the highest level and concentrate on learning Cosmogony and Theogony first, no matter how many years this might take; (for most, it will take many). Then after, holding tight to any apperceptions and insights gained — a veritable Ariadne’s thread — he may begin descending slowly and cautiously down to the shadows of uninformed sentient life, while constantly keeping in mind the essential unity underpinning the First Proposition. The intellectual soundness of the descent will determine the success of the ascent.

What the student has first to do is to *comprehend* these axioms and, by employing the deductive method, to proceed from universals to particulars. He has then to reason from the “known to the unknown,” and see if the inductive method of proceeding from particulars to universals supports those axioms. This process forms the primary stage of true contemplation. The student must first grasp the subject intellectually before he can hope to realise his aspirations.²

Monographs and pamphlets about *The Secret Doctrine* should be avoided because their approach, structure, and viewpoints often reflect the judgement and interpretations of their authors, who may be sincere and learned but not at par with Madame Blavatsky. Prospective students should make the effort to study *The Secret Doctrine*, and any other doctrine for that matter, unprepossessed and give themselves ample time and space to draw their own conclusions.

Do not adopt any conclusions merely because they are uttered by one in whom you have confidence, but adopt them when they coincide with your intuition. To be even unconsciously deluded by the influence of another is to have a counterfeit faith.³

Anyone who is thus qualified and willing to follow the advice of *The Secret Doctrine*’s author can move forward single-handed, particularly nowadays that all her works are freely available through the Internet. However, the magnetic sympathy and dy-

¹ Cf. *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (TRACES OF THE MYSTERIES) XIV, p. 288

² D.K. Māvalankar. *Contemplation*. In: *Five Years of Theosophy*, London: Reeves & Turner, 1885; p. 48

³ W.Q. Judge. *Letters that have helped me*. Los Angeles & New York: Theosophy Company, 1946; I (ix) pp. 20-21

namics of group study are of great help in the beginning, if one has the good fortune to be in the midst of kindred souls.

How to read the Secret Doctrine.

Four key concepts that students should bear in mind when approaching *The Secret Doctrine*. They were dictated by Madame Blavatsky to Captain Robert Bowen.¹

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 [theosophical] study a means of exercising and developing the mind never touched by other studies. Observe the following rules: No matter what one may study in the *S.D.* let the mind hold fast, as the basis of its ideation, to the following ideas.²

These concepts may be summarised as follows:

- 1 [The first idea is] the fundamental unity of all existence. . . . Fundamentally there is one being. The being has two aspects, positive and negative. The positive is Spirit, or consciousness. The negative is substance, the subject of consciousness.³
- 2 The second idea to hold fast is that THERE IS NO DEAD MATTER. Every last atom is alive. It cannot be otherwise since every atom is itself fundamentally Absolute Being. . . . every atom of substance no matter of what plane to be is itself a LIFE.⁴
- 3 The third basic idea to be held is that Man is the MICROCOSM. As he is so, then all the Hierarchies of the Heavens exist within him. But in truth, there is neither Macrocosm nor Microcosm but ONE EXISTENCE. Great and small are such only as viewed by a limited consciousness.
- 4 [The] fourth and last basic idea to be held is that expressed in the Great Hermetic Axiom. It really sums up and synthesises all the others:

As is the Inner, so is the Outer;
as is the Great, so is the Small;
as it is above, so it is below:
there is but ONE LIFE AND LAW;
and he that worketh it is ONE.
Nothing is Inner, nothing is Outer;
nothing is GREAT, nothing is Small;
nothing is High, nothing is Low,
in the Divine Economy.⁵

¹ Robert Bowen. *Madame Blavatsky on how to study Theosophy*. (1st ed. 1960); London: The Theosophical Society in England, 1991. First published under the title *Madame Blavatsky on how to study Theosophy*, in: *Theosophy in Ireland*, 1932. Reprinted by various organisations, they became known as the "Bowen Notes."

² *Bowen Notes*, p. 8

³ *ibid.*, p. 8

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 9

⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 9-10

If these ideas are kept in mind at all times, they will gradually open up the “Divine Eye”¹ or Devāksha, and the Dharmakāyic ear to their secret content. Says Master KH:

A higher faculty belonging to the higher life must see, and it is truly impossible to force it upon one’s understanding — merely in words. One must see with his spiritual eye, hear with his Dharmakāyic ear, feel with the sensations of his *Ashta-vijnana* (spiritual “I”) before he can comprehend this doctrine fully; otherwise it may but increase one’s “discomfort,” and add to his knowledge very little.²

Let us now see how the epigrammatic Éliphas Lévi sums up the entire science by its principles:

Analogy is the final word of science and the first word of faith. Harmony consists in equilibrium, and equilibrium subsists by the analogy of contraries. Absolute unity is the supreme and final reason of things. Now, this reason can neither be one person nor three persons; it is a reason, and reason eminently. To create equilibrium, we must separate and unite — separate by the poles, unite by the centre. To reason upon faith is to destroy faith; to create mysticism in philosophy is to assail reason. Reason and faith, by their nature, mutually exclude one another, and they unite by analogy. Analogy is the sole possible mediator between the finite and infinite. Dogma is the ever ascending hypothesis of a presumable equation. . . . The analogy of contraries is the connection of light and shade, of height and hollow, of plenum and void. . . . Analogy is the key of all secrets of nature and the sole fundamental reason of all revelations.³

What to read in the Secret Doctrine.

It is Law and Ideals, modestly called “propositions,” that are our real teachers. Even adepts rely on them to progress further, once they have mastered the rhythm, see the inner symmetry, and heard the divine melody of the Wisdom of Love. Says Madame Blavatsky:

Without the study of cosmogony and Theogony which teach the hidden value of every force in Nature and their direct correspondence to, and relation with, the forces in man (or the principles), no occult psycho-physics or *knowledge of man*

¹ Cf. “Enoichion (Gr.). *Lit.*, the ‘inner Eye’; the ‘Seer,’ a reference to the third *inner*, or Spiritual Eye, the true name for Enoch disfigured from *Chanoch*.” *Theosophical Glossary*. Also cf. *Ενρηχος* is sounding within, of wind-instruments; opp. *εγχορδος*. H.G. Liddell & R. Scott R. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. (1st ed. 1843); Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996; (9th ed. & suppl.).

² *Mahatma Letter* 25 (104) p. 197; 3rd Combined ed. [Reply to Query No. 6 on Devachan.]

³ A.E. Waite (tr.) *Transcendental Magic: Its Doctrine and Ritual by Éliphas Lévi* (nom de plume of Alphonse Louis [Abbé] Constant). London: George Redway, 1896. In KEY OF THE FOUR SECRET SCIENCES, pp. 165-66. Cf. “In other words, the form is proportional to the idea; the shadow is the measure of the body calculated in its relation to the luminous ray; the scabbard is as deep as the sword is long; the negation is in proportion to the contrary affirmation; production is equal to destruction in the movement which preserves life; and there is no point in infinite extension which may not be regarded as the centre of a circle having an expanding circumference receding indefinitely into space. Every individuality is, therefore, indefinitely perfectible, since the moral order is analogous to the physical, and since we cannot conceive any point as unable to dilate, increase and radiate in a philosophically unlimited circle. What can be affirmed of the soul in its totality may be affirmed of each faculty of the soul. The intelligence and will of man are instruments of incalculable power and capacity.” *ibid.*, (THE CANDIDATE) p. 34

as he truly is, *is possible*. No one is forced to study esoteric philosophy unless he likes it . . . ¹

Continues Captain Bowen:

In addition to how to read the *S.D.*, Madame Blavatsky also advised that:

- 1 Reading the *S.D.* page by page as one reads any other book will only end in confusion.
- 2 The first thing to do, even if it takes years, is to get some grasp of the “Three Fundamental Principles” given in the Proem [Vol. I, pp. 14-20].
- 3 Follow that up by study of the Recapitulation — the numbered items in the Summing Up to Vol. I [Pt. I, pp. 272-76].
- 4 Then take the Preliminary Notes [Vol. II, pp. 1-12], and
- 5 The Conclusion [Vol. II, Pt. I, pp. 437-46].²

BP Wadia had not been aware of the “Bowen Notes” when he proposed a similar approach to the study of *The Secret Doctrine*:

The ordinary student’s mind, as it is constituted today, in the East as in the West, may gain quicker and better comprehension if it is aided in the selection of pages to be read. While the following plan may not suit all, it has been found useful by a fair number during the last twenty-five years and more.

- Vol. I, pp. 272-73, Item 1 [Source and origin of the Secret Doctrine].
- Vol. I, pp. 297-99 [Truth and Occult Sciences].
- Vol. I, pp. 13-18 (The Three Fundamentals).
- Vol. I, pp. 269-80 [Summing up the Secret Doctrine].
- Vol. I, pp. xvii-xxvii (Introductory).
- Vol. I, pp. 1-24 (Proem).
- Vol. II, pp. 1-12 (Preliminary Notes).
- Vol. I, pp. 303-25 (Symbolism, etc.).³

Implicit in all these recommendations is that students of *The Secret Doctrine* will be enthused by what they read so far and will resolve to study this awesome book in its entirety.

“The beginning is half of the whole” said Pythagoras.⁴



¹ Blavatsky *Collected Writings*, (WHAT SHALL WE DO FOR OUR FELLOW-MEN?) XI p. 473

² Bowen *Notes*, p. 6

³ Cf. Wadia, *Studies in the Secret Doctrine*, *op. cit.*, Bk. II (1st Series) vi p. 20

⁴ Iamblichus, *Life of Pythagoras*, *op. cit.*, p. 259

Suggested reading for students.



From our Theosophy and Theosophists Series.

- A DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO LORD LYTTON
- A LAY CHELA ON OCCULT STUDY
- A LAY CHELA ON THE SECRET DOCTRINE
- A THEOSOPHICAL LOVE FEAST IN FRANCE
- ALETHEIA IS OUR GOD AND DOGMA
- ANCIENT ETHICAL WORSHIPS
- ARCHAIC THEOSOPHY IS PRE-BUDDHIST WISDOM-RELIGION
- BLAVATSKY DEFENDS BLAVATSKY
- BLAVATSKY DEFENDS THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY
- BLAVATSKY ON ANNA KINGSFORD
- BLAVATSKY ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOUL AND SPIRIT
- BLAVATSKY ON THE ORIGIN AND SOURCE OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE
- BLAVATSKY ON THE THEOSOPHY OF DR. N.I. PIROGOV
- BLAVATSKY REFUTES ARGUMENTS AGAINST THEOSOPHY
- BLAVATSKY REFUTES THE ASSERTIONS OF A FRENCH THEOSOPHIST
- BLAVATSKY'S OPEN LETTER TO FELLOW THEOSOPHISTS
- BUCK ON THE NATURE AND AIM OF THEOSOPHY
- COLD METAPHYSICS VERSUS DIVINE WISDOM
- CONDUCT AND DUTIES OF A TRUE THEOSOPHIST
- CORY'S ANCIENT FRAGMENTS (1832)
- COSMOPOLITANISM IS FAR HOLIER AND NOBLER THAN GRASPING GREEDINESS CLOAKED IN PATRIOTISM
- DE ZIRKOFF ON CHARLES JOHNSTON
- DE ZIRKOFF ON EDWARD DOUGLAS FAWCETT
- DE ZIRKOFF ON FRANZ HARTMANN
- DE ZIRKOFF ON GERALD MASSEY

- DE ZIRKOFF ON HP BLAVATSKY COLLECTED WRITINGS
- DE ZIRKOFF ON SUBBA ROW
- DE ZIRKOFF ON THE COUNTESS OF CAITHNESS
- DE ZIRKOFF ON THE DREAM THAT NEVER DIES
- DE ZIRKOFF ON THE SECRET DOCTRINE
- DE ZIRKOFF ON THE SIBYLLINE ORACLES
- DE ZIRKOFF ON THE THIRD VOLUME OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE
- DE ZIRKOFF ON THREE EMINENT THEOSOPHISTS
- DE ZIRKOFF ON WILHELM HÜBBE-SCHLEIDEN
- DE ZIRKOFF RECALLS HIS FORMATIVE YEARS IN RUSSIA
- EASTERN LIGHT SHINES ON WESTERN MINDS
- EASTERN THEOSOPHY IS NEITHER A CREED, NOR A RELIGIOUS BODY
- ESSENTIAL THEOSOPHICAL DOCTRINES
- HARTMANN ON HOW TO ENTER THE PATH TO INFINITE LIFE
- HARTMANN ON THE HARMONICAL SOCIETY
- HOW THEOSOPHY REKINDLED TRUE BROTHERHOOD IN INDIA
- HUMANITY SEEMS TO PROGRESS BY INVENTING ONE DISCOVERY AFTER THE OTHER
- IMPORT AND POTENCY OF NUMBERS AS SYMBOLS
- IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT
- ISIS UNVEILED IS THE MAJESTY OF TRUTH UNVEILED
- JUDGE AND DE ZIRKOFF ON GEORGE MEAD
- JUDGE ON THE HEART DOCTRINE
- JUDGE ON THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT
- JUDGE ON THE TRUE THEOSOPHIST'S PATH
- JUDGE ON THEOSOPHICAL STUDY AND WORK
- KEYS TO THE MYSTERY LANGUAGE
- LET THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY PERISH, THAN FORSAKE THE CAUSE OF TRUTH
- MYSTERY IS NOT UNREVEALED KNOWLEDGE
- OCCULT TRUTH IS NATURE WITHOUT THE ILLUSORY VEIL OF THE SENSES
- OUR GOD IS HUMANITY AND OUR CULT THE LOVE OF OUR FELLOW-MAN
- OUR ONLY DELIVERER AND SAVIOUR
- PLEDGED STUDENTS' PRESCRIBED GUIDE FOR CONDUCT
- PREREQUISITES TO MEMBERSHIP OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

- SPURNED THE SUBSTANCE AND CLUTCHED THE SHADOW
- STUDENTS HAVE A CHOICE OF TWO PATHS
- SUBBA ROW DEFENDS ESOTERIC BUDDHISM
- SUBBA ROW'S ESOTERIC WRITINGS (1895)
- THAT WHICH IS FALSE CAN ONLY BE KNOWN BY TRUTH
- THE AIMS AND MISSION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY FULFILLED
- THE CHALDEAN ORACLES OF ZOROASTER
- THE CROWN JEWELS OF THEOSOPHY (PHOTO ALBUM)
- THE POWER OF THE TRINITY OF KOSMOS MANIFESTS THROUGH THE FOUR PRINCIPLES OF MAN
- THE REVIVAL OF EASTERN OCCULT PHILOSOPHY
- THE SUN OF TRUTH FEARS NO LIGHT AND NEEDS NO LIES
- THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IS NOT A NURSERY FOR BUDDING ADEPTS
- THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ARCANE TERMS
- THEOSOPHIA - FOUNTAIN, PERSPECTIVES, PRACTICE (DRAWING)
- THEOSOPHIA: INNER WISDOM
- THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, THE GREAT MORAL BUT SILENT FORCE
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - ESOTERIC SECTION (LETTERHEAD)
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - MISSION AND FUTURE
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - MONOGRAM 1 (LOGOTYPE)
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - MONOGRAM 2 (LOGOTYPE)
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - OBJECTS AND EARLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - SEAL 1 (LOGOTYPE)
- THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY - SEAL 2 (LOGOTYPE)
- THEOSOPHICAL SYMBOLS (TRUE TYPE FONT)
- THEOSOPHIST IS WHO THEOSOPHY DOES
- THEOSOPHISTS DEFINED ATTITUDINALLY, ETHICALLY, PHILOSOPHICALLY (DRAWING)
- THEOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHISTS
- THEOSOPHY IS DEEPER MONISM THAN SECULARISM, AND MORE PHILOSOPHICAL
- THEOSOPHY IS RELIGION ITSELF AND SUBLIME CODE OF ETHICS
- THEOSOPHY IS THE SCIENCE OF TRUTH AND THE RELIGION OF JUSTICE
- TRIBUTES TO WILLIAM QUAN JUDGE
- TRUE THEOSOPHISTS ARE ALWAYS UNDER THE MASTER'S EYE

THEOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHISTS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- TRUTH IS ALWAYS MIXED WITH ERROR AND HINDERED BY TECHNOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE
- TWO JOURNALS DEVOTED TO THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN
- VERNAL BLOOMS BY WILLIAM QUAN JUDGE
- VISTAS OF VIRTUE AND TRUTH
- WADIA'S RESIGNATION FROM THE TS
- WHAT SORT OF MAN THE REAL PHILOSOPHER SHOULD BE?
- WHEN PURE LOVE IS PERVERTED, HUMANITY QUIVERS
- WHO CAN MEND THE BROKEN SOCIETY?
- WHO CAN READ THE RIDDLE OF THE SERPENT?
- WHO SHOULD BE INVITED TO THEOSOPHICAL MEETINGS?
- WHY A BRAHMIN ABANDONED HIS CASTE
- WHY PAGAN SYMBOLISM IS INDESTRUCTIBLE?
- WILDER ON THE WISDOM RELIGION OF ZOROASTER

