



# Theosophical History



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# THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY

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of Emanuel Swedenborg to give but a few examples) that have had an influence on or displayed an affinity to modern Theosophy.

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\* \* \* \* \*

## GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS

The final copy of all manuscripts must be submitted on 8 ½ x11 inch paper, double-spaced, and with margins of at least 1 ¼ inches on all sides. Words and phrases intended for *italics* output should be underlined in the manuscript. The submitter is also encouraged to submit a floppy disk of the work in ASCII or WordPerfect 5 or 5.1, in an I.B.M. or compatible format. If possible, Macintosh 3 ½ inch disk files should also be submitted, saved in ASCII ("text only with line breaks" format if in ASCII), Microsoft Word 4.0–5.1a, or WordPerfect. We ask, however, that details of the format codes be included so that we do not have difficulties in using the disk. Should there be any undue difficulty in fulfilling the above, we encourage you to submit the manuscript regardless.

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There is no limitation on the length of manuscripts. In general, articles of 30 pages or less will be published in full; articles in excess of 30 pages may be published serially.

Brief communications, review articles, and book reviews are welcome. They should be submitted double-spaced.

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**On the cover:** Wanda Dynowska-Umadevi. Photograph taken in 1969 by Mrs. Krystyna Gorazdowska. Reproduced with the permission of Mrs. K. Gorazdowska and Mr. Kazimierz Tokarski

# Editor's Comments

## In this Issue

A long-awaited article by Mr. Kazimierz Tokarski on the life of the Polish Theosophist, poet, and translator and publisher, Wanda Dynowska-Umadevi (1888–1971), is the major research article appearing in this issue. Practically unknown outside of Poland, Miss Dynowska-Umadevi was instrumental in establishing the Polish Theosophical Society and the Order of the Star in the East in Poland (known there as the Aurora Society), for translating Theosophical works and works by J. Krishnamurti into Polish, for being an established Polish poet, and above all for being a seeker of Truth and a humanitarian. Her interest in India and close association with M. Gandhi brought about a cross-fertilization of Indian and Polish cultures through friendship with the Indian poet Harischandra Bhatt (1901–1951): Dynowska-Umadevi establishing the Polish-Indian Library—publishing books in Hindî, Tamil, and English—and producing (under the sponsorship of the Indian Ministry of Education) her greatest work, the six-volume *Indian Anthology*; and Harischandra Bhatt as translator of works in Polish literature. She later wrote, “That bridge which I build with books between the souls of India and Poland is for the distant future. I do not know what its value and significance are...I will only get to know in the moment of my death, then I will see in a flash the very essence of my life, my Dharma and my mission.” Besides her literary work, Dynowska-Umadevi in her later life displayed an inclination toward altruism that one cannot help but admire. Her work with Tibetan

refugees after the Chinese incursion in Tibet in 1960 extended throughout her later years until shortly before her death in 1971. During her lifetime she was greatly admired by her circle of friends and associates. Indeed, it was at the behest of her friends that the author, Kazimierz Tokarski, wrote this biographical essay out of respect and admiration for her. For her service to humanity, she deserves wider recognition. Mr. Tokarski therefore deserves our gratitude for introducing Miss Dynowska-Umadevi to the English-speaking world.

In a past issue (IV/8) Michael Gomes presented his impressions of Theosophical activities at the Chicago Parliament of the World's Religions held almost a year ago. Since that meeting, a number of Theosophical journals have presented enthusiastic and detailed accounts of Theosophical activities at the Parliament. It was my wish to add a concluding statement on the Parliament of the World's Religions from a more global perspective. With this in mind, I asked my colleague, Dr. Robert B. McLaren, to write a short impressionistic essay of the Parliament. Like other attendees, he came back very enthusiastic at having experienced such a gathering. Dr. McLaren's interests are wide-ranging, holding degrees in psychology, religion, and philosophy, having authored numerous books and articles, and serving as Professor of Human Development at California State University, Fullerton for over twenty years.

A recent article by John Cooper, “The Esoteric School Within the Hargrove Theosophical Soci-

ety,” contained an opinion that *The Dream of Ravan* is contained in the 12th century *Jñânesvarî*. This occasioned a response by Dr. Jean-Louis Siémons in *Le Lotus Bleu* (January 1994: 11-12) suggesting otherwise. Dr. Siémons has offered a slightly revised version of that article for the present issue. The communication accompanies Mr. Cooper’s response to the original French article.

The second letter from H.P. Blavatsky to W.Q. Judge (November 3, 1886), housed in the Harvard-Andover library, appears in this issue. Not nearly as long as the first letter, there is still that Blavatskian vituperation that was so evident in the first letter, this time directed at the son of her hosts at Elberfeld, Germany, Arthur Gebhard (1855–1944). The letter also contains some negative remarks about Elliot Coues, an important figure in the early history of the Theosophical Society and some words of concern for Mrs. Emily Bates’ sympathy for Coues. H.P.B.’s admonishing Judge to save her from the wiles of Coues came to naught, however, for Mrs.. Bates married him almost a year later.

Finally, two book reviews appear: one by Professor Ellwood of Mac L. Ricketts, *Mircea Eliade: The Romanian Roots, 1907–1945*, the other by me of Michael Gomes’ just released *Theosophy in the Nineteenth Century: An Annotated Bibliography*. Professor Ellwood himself studied under this preeminent historian of religion at the University of Chicago. Now, for the first time, Eliade’s earlier years in Romania and India are unveiled, and the story of these years will hold some surprise for those who have only a passing acquaintance with Eliade. The second review is of the long-anticipated annotated bibliography by Michael Gomes. Theosophical historians will no doubt find this book to be one of the most valuable research tools to come into print in

many a year.

## Theosophy Seminar

As reported in the last issue, a seminar entitled “Theosophy and Theosophic Thought” has been initiated as part of the program of the American Academy of Religion’s annual national meeting, to be held on November 21 in Chicago. The tentative schedule of discussions will consist of the following:

Theosophy and Theosophic Thought Seminar  
2 hours

James A. Santucci, California State University, Fullerton, Presiding

Theme: Theosophy and its Phases of Development

Antoine Faivre, École Pratique des Hautes Études, Section des Sciences Religieuses, Sorbonne  
“The Place of Theosophy in Relation to Other Modern Esoteric Currents”

Jean-Pierre Laurant, École Pratique des Hautes Études, Section des Sciences Religieuses, Sorbonne  
“Theosophy Disguised in Religion: An Aspect of Secularization in the 19th Century”

Jean-Louis Siémons, Loge Unie des Théosophes, Paris  
“Theosophy in an universal perspective”  
Respondent:  
James B. Robinson, University of Northern Iowa

Michael Gomes, Des Moines, Iowa  
“Laying the Foundations of Belief: The Evolution of Theosophical Literature in the Nineteenth Century”

Marla J. Selvidge, Central Missouri State University

“Anna Bonus Kingsford and Edward Maitland: Twin Souls of Christian Theosophy”

Joscelyn Godwin, Colgate University  
“Theosophy versus theosophers: The Theosophical Society and the Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor”

Leslie Price, London, England  
“Swedenborg’s Understanding of Theosophy”

Respondent:  
John Patrick Deveney, New York, NY

1/2 hour  
Business Meeting

James A. Santucci, Presiding

\* \* \*

### **Peter-Robert König**

Mr. König, the author of “The OTO Phenomenon” (IV/3: 92-98), “Theodor Reuss as Founder of Esoteric Orders” IV/6-7: 187-193), and “Veritas Mystica Maxima” (V/1: 23-29) announces the publication of three books, *Der Kleine Theodor Reuss Reader* (ISBN 3-927890-13-8, 104 pages, DM 28), *Das OTO Phänomen* (ISBN 3-927890-14-6, 280 pages, DM 48), and *Materialien zum OTO* (ISBN 3-92790-15-4, 336 pages, DM 72). All books are partly in German, partly in English and are available through A.R.W., Box 500 107, D-80971, München, Germany (Fax 089-641 41532).

The next installment of his series of articles,

“Stranded Bishops,” will be published in V/5 (January 1995).

\* \* \*

### **Todd Pratum**

Every so often, I receive inquiries from researchers who are in search of titles in the areas of Theosophy, esotericism, Hermeticism, or gnosticism that are no longer available in the general trade. There are many bookshops and dealers throughout the U.S. that specialize in these areas. One such specialist is Todd Pratum (P.O. Box 459, Boyes Hot Spring, CA 95416. Telephone: 707-935-7764; fax: 707-935-9330). Mr. Pratum specializes in old, new, and rare titles on the subjects of Hermetic philosophy, Mesmerism, Spiritualism, folklore, metaphysical philosophy, and much more. He has a number of catalogues available containing not only titles of books but also annotations as well.

### **E-Mail Address**

I now can be reached through e-mail, [jsantucci@fullerton.edu](mailto:jsantucci@fullerton.edu). Please feel free to communicate on any topic whatsoever.

\* \* \* \* \*

# Scholarly Research

From *Shinichi Yoshinaga* (Japan)

I am a lecturer at some Japanese universities and specialize in the religious thought of the 19th century, especially William James and Spiritualism. My present research project is on the idea of “electricity,” “ether,” or “the subtle fluid.” As is well known, these terms were used to designate something that is finer than matter and akin to the spiritual. It was thought to connect two opposite entities, the mind and body—even Descartes had to employ a similar concept to explain this connection. Mesmer used the term “animal magnetism,” which functioned as a link between the inner and the outer world. According to Antoine Faivre, some natural philosophers in the 18th century even thought that electricity was the light on the first day of Creation. In the 19th century Jung-Stilling fused these views together and prepared the way to Spiritualism. I would like to focus my attention, therefore, upon the use of the idea of “electricity,” from the 18th century (including the works of Mary Shelley and Balzac) to the Phreno-mesmerism and Spiritualism of the 19th century. I am also looking for a biographical study (if there is any) of the phreno-mesmerist, John B. Dodds, and the medium, John M. Spear. I would be very glad to receive any advice on this matter.

Shinichi Yoshinaga  
31-4-305, Akaoji, Takatsuki  
Osaka, 569, Japan

\* \* \*

From *Govert Schuller* (Albuquerque, NM)

For a study on how Krishnamurti was evaluated by Theosophists just after he dissolved the Order of the Star, I would appreciate hearing from anyone who can provide copies of articles, reviews, correspondence or other materials related to this subject.

Govert Schuller  
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No. 1085  
Albuquerque, NM 87110

\* \* \* \* \*

# Communications

## Beyond Diversity

Robert B. McLaren<sup>1</sup>

Plurality is not pluralism, a fact which became abundantly clear at the Parliament of World Religions, meeting for its 100th anniversary in Chicago in September, 1993. Pluralism is an intentional effort to bring diverse groups together for interdependent action while preserving their identities. Pax Romana may have been the first, albeit abortive experiment but failed, largely because of the emergence of Cesarean centralism. Many nations, such as India, have harbored a plurality of traditions but never brought them into creative interaction.

A century ago, when the idea was born that leaders of major religious traditions of the worlds could fruitfully meet and discuss their essential tenets, the focus was on “the coming unity of mankind,” with hopes expressed that differences aside, a common ground among the many traditions might be found. Some in fact expressed the belief that a single world religion might emerge. This of course would be diametrically opposed to genuine pluralism. Most delegates were eager to affirm their own system of belief and practice,

while embracing not mere tolerance toward others but a spirit of mutual respect and even affection; all seemed to agree that the religious experience is central to being human.

The primary outcome of that first conference in 1893 may well have been the launching of the serious academic venture called “The Study of the World’s Great Religions.” Courses were instituted in leading universities, and eventually one could earn a doctoral degree in the subject at some of these. Among Christians, the Parliament has been credited with giving impetus to the modern ecumenical movement. But the Parliament itself faded almost to the vanishing point after that initial conclave.

To observe that the world has changed profoundly during the decades that followed would be too obvious for comment. Inventions beyond dreams emerged, from motion pictures to trips to the moon and heart transplants. But so have horrors beyond our worst nightmares in what Winston Churchill once called “this hideous epoch in which we dwell.” The wars of the past century have brought death to untold millions.

Yet the changes for good have also been dramatic. From the Parliament’s point of view, one of the most conspicuous is in the fact that in 1893 many delegates from Asia would not even have been considered for citizenship in the U.S. Today, in Chicago alone, the religious and ethnic population is as varied as the enrollment of the Parliament was a century ago. Further, it may be noted that despite localized and often bloody conflicts there has been no world war in half a century; the planet has been decolonized in less

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<sup>1</sup> Robert McLaren, Ph.D., holds degrees in psychology, religion, and philosophy, and is Professor of Human Development at California State University, Fullerton. He is the author of five books and more than fifty articles in journals as diverse as *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, *Philosophy of Education*, and *The International Gymnast*. He currently has a book in progress on Moral Development in a Pluralistic Society.



than 40 years; the cold war has ended and serious global conferences are being held on disarmament, environmental concerns and economic cooperation.

These evidences of progress are viewed with skepticism by many as being only temporary. Dag Hammarskjöld is remembered at the United Nations for declaring "I see no hope for permanent world peace. Unless the world has a spiritual rebirth, civilization is doomed." His successors as Secretaries General, U Thant, and Javier Perez de Cuellar, have expressed similar concern for the spiritual dimension. It was on this note that Robert Muller, former assistant Secretary General of the U.N., addressed the opening Plenary in 1993 with the words: "This new age we are entering will be an age of communities and of cooperation; it will be an age of family and of the family of nations. The family of religions cannot be absent."

Plans were initiated in 1988 to revive the concept of the Parliament of World Religions a hundred years before. Representatives of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the International Association for Religious Freedom, and other ecumenical groups met at the Evanston, Illinois Baha'i Center. 6,500 delegates from every major nation and religious tradition, and numerous small ones like Theosophy, Swedenborgianism, native American tribal religions, and Wicca finally took part when the parliament opened at the Palmer House in Chicago, in August, 1993.

It was the present writer's privilege to have been invited to be one of the "presenters" of papers. From relatively unknown speakers to the Dalai Lama, almost innumerable points of view were heard on a host of topics. From the 6,500 who attended the opening Plenary, to the 30,000 who gathered for the final session in Grant Park, the Parliament showed a new "face" to the world of religious cooperation. Out of the ten-day event

emerged a document setting forth a declaration, the first of its kind in human history: "The Declaration of a Global Ethic."

Representatives of more than 120 religious groups including Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Taoism, reached common ground, and signed this document which warned that the world is in the throes of economic, environmental and political crises, and affirmed "We are interdependent. Each of us depends on the well-being of the whole, and so we have respect for the community of living beings, for people, animals, and plants, and for the preservation of Earth, the air, water and soil. We consider humankind our family. We commit ourselves to a culture of non-violence, respect, justice and peace."

Some groups abstained from signing, including the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Chicago, and all of the Jewish delegates. But the document represents a paradigm shift toward the development of a universal humanitarianism and a global consciousness.

\* \* \*

## **Two Notes from John Cooper**

Note on "The Esoteric School Within the Hargrove Theosophical Society:"

Mr. Ted Davy of Canada has kindly pointed out two factual errors in my article "The Esoteric School Within the Hargrove Theosophical Society" (IV/6-7: 178-86):

Page 184, second column, line 8 should read, "The 18th question, out of 21 questions asked, was:"

Same column, lines 20-21 should read, “AIDS AND SUGGESTIONS No. 14, dated October 20, 1902, dealt a length....”

I thank Mr. Davy for these corrections. Mr. Davy and I also agree on the probable identity of Cavé and are preparing a joint article on this question. See my footnote at the bottom of page 180.

\* \* \*

## **Note on The Dream Of Ravan And the Jñāneśvarī**

In a footnote on page 185 of the same article, I wrote *The Dream of Ravan* is a portion of the *Jñāneśvarī*, a Marāṭhī poem written in the 12th century A.D. by Jñāneśvar.

This footnote was quoted in *Le Lotus Bleu* for October 1993 on page 198. This led to a reply in the same journal in its January 1994 issue on pages 11-12 by Dr. Jean-Louis Siémons, who correctly points out that *The Dream of Ravan* is not a portion of the *Jñāneśvarī*. He is, of course, totally correct. I have both texts in my library and do not know what led me to confuse the two apart from the fact that in *The Dream of Ravan* on pages 189–93 of the 1895 edition are extracts from the sixth chapter of the *Jñāneśvarī*. Also, Dr. Siémons’ dating of the *Jñāneśvarī* as being completed in 1290, is correct.

The identity of the author of *The Dream of Ravan* in the *Dublin University Magazine* of 1853 and 1854 remains a mystery. What is needed is a

review of the contents of that magazine around the years shown above for possible further articles and items which might provide a clue.

However, it is interesting to note that a later editor of the *Dublin University Magazine* was Dr. Kenningdale R. Cook (1845–86), the husband of Mabel Collins. Isabelle de Steiger in her *Memorabilia*, page 255, states that possibly *The Dream of Ravan* was written by Dr. Cook, but this is impossible in view of his dates.

I thank Dr. Siémons for his correction.

Note: An English version of Dr. Siémons’ comment is published below.

\* \* \*

## **A Note on The Dream of Ravan: Is it a portion of the Jñāneśvarī?**

**Jean-Louis Siémons**

In an article by John Cooper, published in this Journal (vol. IV, No. 6-7), a footnote (p. 185) reads: “*The Dream of Ravan* is a portion of the *Jñāneśvarī*, a Marāṭhī poem written in the 12th century A.D. by *Jñāneśvarī*.” It is recalled that H.P.B. referred to the latter work, as the *Dnyaneshwari*, in her Preface to the *Voice of the Silence*. Also two modern translations are mentioned: the one published in 1967 (George Allen & Unwin Ltd), and the other, in 1989, by Swami Kripānanda.

In view of the importance given by Mme Blavatsky to *both* works<sup>1</sup>, it seems fitting to consider the matter with greater caution. In fact, any one who is possessed of the *two* books, which are available in print nowadays (see bibliography), can easily make sure that *The Dream of Ravan* is not a portion of the *Jñāneśvarī*—which was not written in the 12th century but in the 13th (ca 1290).

Perhaps a few more reflections may be offered in this context. (In the following all references to *The Dream of Ravan* relate to the text published by International Book House, Ltd, Bombay, India<sup>2</sup>).

1. Apparently, the only Theosophical source alluding to *The Dream of Ravan* is the article “Yoga philosophy” (see note 1), in which the anonymous author gave a long quotation of the book, made, for the most part (about 80%), of extracts from the *Jñāneśvarī*—hence the possible confusion. However, in the course of time, Theosophists came to know more; G.R.S. Mead, a close co-worker of H.P.B. in London, treasured *The Dream of Ravan* as one of his favorite books, gave a series of lectures based on it and had it published by the Theosophical Publishing Society in 1895, including a Preface from his own pen.

2. In 1880, the *Jñāneśvarī* was practically unknown to Theosophists—including the Euro-

<sup>1</sup> In an article on “Yoga philosophy”, mainly concerned with the *Dream of Ravan*, communicated to *The Theosophist* (Jan. 1880, pp. 86-7) by a European Theosophist (who signed himself “Truth seeker”), H.P.B., as the editor of this magazine, warmly recommended the paper to Hindu students of yoga. As to the *Dnyaneshvari*, she called it “that king of mystic works” (*Voice*, original ed. p. 77, note 25).

<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately no date of publication is mentioned in my copy, received in London in the year 1948.

pean author of said article. In the passage that he quoted from *The Dream* introducing the “*Dnyaneshvari*,” mention was made of “the more ancient and profounder school of Alandi.” The correspondent concluded his paper with a call for information: Can any one give any account of the *Dnyaneshvari*? Who was Alandi?. etc... thus mistaking Alandi for a man, whereas it was the village of Jñāneśvar (or Jñānadeva), Jñāneśvar the author of the mysterious book. H.P.B. herself in her Preface to *The Voice of Silence* alluded to the “superb mystic treatise,” as a “Sanskrit work,” whereas it is written in old Marāṭhī—a language fairly different from the Sanskrit.

3. In March 1880, *The Theosophist* (p. 142) brought the correct answers to these queries through a letter sent by a Bengālī Babu of Poona: the *Jñāneśvarī* is a long commentary (verse by verse) of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, it is “first of its class in the whole range of Marāṭhī literature,” and “to this day, the text of the Vedāntis.” As to Alandi—Alundi, rather (or Alakāpurī)—it is a place some 10 miles from Poona. Readers were informed that the book had been printed lately in Bombay and could be had “for a few rupees.”

4. *The Dream of Ravan* is a short text—quite different from the lengthy *Jñāneśvarī*. As we know, it was published in *The Dublin University Magazine* in four installments (1853-4), its subtitle being “A Mystery.” A mystery allegory indeed, which the author placed, geographically, in Sri Lanka at the court of King Ravan, the ten-headed Titan, who in the Sanskrit epic *Rāmāyana*, carried off Sitā, Rāma’s wife. An awful dream which had visited the Titan is narrated by him before a great gathering of Rishis, ‘holy men’ or ‘councilors’, that they could give an interpretation of it. This is the pretext for elaborate philosophical and mystical

digressions which, often under the garb of fantasy, prove the profound knowledge and scholarly ability of the writer.

5. The author's name remained unknown. A difficult problem, in fact. At first sight, he may have been an Irish scholar. Who else could have access to the *Dublin University Magazine*? On p. 12 of my copy (see note 2), he speaks, as one familiar with Ireland, of "our fair Ulster friends" and "the native of the barony of Forth." Moreover, the man shows a perfect mastery of English—literary and poetical. The tale, putting on the scene various typical characters, with here and there a chorus of Rishis or Titans, reciting long, melodious tirades in verse, seems conducted with the skilled art of a 19th century playwright. As to the descriptions and commentaries, they reveal the dimensions of a wide culture: Plato, Shakespeare, Pope, Coleridge, Bossuet, and many others, are in turn quoted, directly or by inference, in a quite relevant manner. Occasionally, French phrases are used (pp. 13-29) and even Latin citations (pp. 1, 34, 47).

6. On the other hand, the mysterious author seems quite knowledgeable of Western mysticism—from St. John's Gospel to St. Theresa and Jacob Boehme—Rosicrucianism, and Mesmerism (the name of du Potet appears on p. 8 fn). Also (p. 79), he speaks of "Mr. Braid's hypnotizing"—another form of fascination.

7. Moreover, and above all, the writer shows himself as an accomplished connoisseur of the Orient. His detailed descriptions of each of the elements of the drama—circumstances, personages, places, etc.—reveal a tale-teller admirably familiar with all that appertains to India. And, for sure, he could pass for a scholarly Sanskritist more

than once, quoting from Vālmiki's *Rāmāyana*, or other texts in an English translation, he gives also the original verses with a comment showing his perfect competence.

8. Of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, often cited, he knows Wilkins' first translation (published in 1785), and Schlegel's Latin version (1823). For example (pp. 31-2) he borrows *verbatim* from Wilkin's fourteen ślokas of chapter XIV; elsewhere (pp. 142-3), six ślokas of chapter XIII are taken from the source but paraphrased, this time, in a remarkable poetical language leaving in the shadow the dull prose of Wilkins. With equal mastery, he refers to Manu (p. 136), the *Mahābhārata* and other Sanskrit texts.

9. As concerns the *Jñāneśvarī*, he culls here and there passages therefrom to illustrate his description of a yogi. Borrowed from the 6th chapter (or Adhyāya), one can find (towards the end of the book):

- p. 111-112 verses 172-179
- p. 116-120 verses 157-189 (v. 158 omitted)
- p. 116-120 verses 243-270 (v. 244 omitted)
- p. 116-120 verses 293-297<sup>3</sup>

There is no indication of a printed translation, existing at that time, whence all that matter could have been derived, but again the poetical inspiration of the language is remarkable.

10. One can always suppose that the author of *The Dream of Ravan*, with his stupendous, all-

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<sup>3</sup> An isolated passage (p. 103 fn) attributed to Dnyanadeva (= Jñāneśvar) is obviously taken from the *Jñāneśvarī* - but could not be located in the 6th chapter.

encompassing erudition, was some unknown British academic who had stayed a long time in India, but it must be admitted that, in such a case, his would be a positively unique example of a European Orientalist so widely open to the subtleties of the *Vedānta*, and seemingly so deeply versed in the secrets of mysticism and occultism—that, in the very middle of the 19th century.

11. In 1853, Helena P. Blavatsky was a youth of 22, making the first steps on her path, under her Master's guidance. Curiously enough, the main traits of our enigmatic author are those that were to become hers, in her maturity: her talent as a lively tale-teller, (evident in the *Caves and Jungles*, or in such articles as “Karmic Visions” - *Lucifer* June 1888), her poetical genius (so conspicuous in *The Voice of the Silence*) and her amazing scholarly ability and deep knowledge of the Secret Science, so widely displayed in her major works.

12. In his Preface to the 1895 edition, G.R.S. Mead wrote, about the writer: “...whoever he was, there is no doubt that he was both a scholar and a mystic. That he had studied the ‘Rāmāyana’ from the original texts and was a master of Vedāntic psychology is amply manifested; that he was a mystic himself and spoke of things that were realities to him, and not mere empty speculations, is evident to every student of Indian theosophical literature...”

The question naturally arises: Was he not a kind of Adept?

13. In fact, there are those who “claimed that the young Indian author was Mahātma K.H. himself.”<sup>4</sup> Here let it be observed that nothing

allows to affirm that the man was young, or even Indian. A few obstacles are in the way of this claim:

a - The literary and poetical talent of the author reveals an uncommon mastery of the language. Full passages remind the reader of the style of a genuine British writer like Edwin Arnold. Reviewing the book in *The Aryan Path* (for Sept. 1931), the well-known English critic Huch 'A' Fausset declared that “Much of the dream is told in verse that has qualities of vision and melody which recall at times both Shelley and Pope....”

b - At the end of the book (pp. 142-44), a curious spelling, *Brimb* (and *Para-Brimb*) is used instead of *Brahm* (and *Para-Brahm*), thus imitating the hesitating orthography of the 18th century translators of Hindu writings.<sup>5</sup> It is very doubtful that a true *Indian* author could have written anything but *Brahma*, or *Brahman*, or simply *Brahm*.

c - A quotation (p.147) referring to “the virgin poetess of Alandi” is quite puzzling. Alandi being Jñāneśvar's place of residence, would it be that our writer mistook for a woman the young lad<sup>6</sup> who composed the most popular mystical

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<sup>4</sup> See *Le Lotus Bleu* (Paris, Oct. 1993, p. 198).

<sup>5</sup> For instance, in the first French translation of the *Gītā* by Parraud (from Wilkin's original version), published in 1787, one can find the same word *Brahma* in the various texts quoted by the translator in his Introduction, written in such different forms as - *Bremaw*, *Brahma*, *Bramab*, *Brimab*, *Brum*, *Brimab* (declared as being the genitive case of *Brimb* = God).

<sup>6</sup> Jñāneśvar was in his early twenties when he died in 1296.

work of Mahārāshtra - whom a genuine Indian master could hardly fail to know?

d - A few anachronisms have also a quaint flavor in the text, e.g. the presence of a Buddhist friar, or a reference to the *kali yuga*, which in Rāma's time was still far ahead in the future.

To sum up, the enigma remains unsolved. After all, a real Adept, proficient in Eastern wisdom, may well have inspired a Western author, leaving to the latter the care to compose his text, with his own literary talent. Was not that sort of alliance operative in the production of the great works signed by H.P.B.? As to considering Mahātma K.H. himself as the author, there is no *material* impossibility to it, as he happened to be in Europe and England in the 1850's. Still this hypothesis must remain pure conjecture, in the present state of our knowledge.

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Paris, February 18th, 1994

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# From the Archives

## The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky to W.Q. Judge: Part II: Letter Dated 3 November 1886

With Notes by Michael Gomes

A gap of over a year occurs before the next letter appears in the collection. In the interim, Mme. Blavatsky had written to Judge, for letters survive in the Archives of the Theosophical Society, Pasadena, dated July 27, 1886, August 22 (published in the *Theosophical Forum*, Nov. 1933), and Oct. 3, 1886 (published in the *Theosophical Forum* Aug. 1932). There is also reference to a letter from H.P.B. to Judge of March 24, 1886 in Countess Wachtmeister's *Reminiscences*.

During this time, Mme. Blavatsky had traveled from Naples to Wurzburg, Germany, where she had spent the winter of 1885-86 with the Countess Wachtmeister. In the early summer of 1886, she visited the Gebhard family in Elberfeld, Germany, en route to Ostende on the Belgian sea-coast.

H.P.B.'s main subject for invective in this letter is Arthur Gebhard (1855-1944), a son of her hosts. Although based in New York overseeing his father's business interests there, he frequently returned to Europe. He was at Elberfeld in June 1886, when she stayed with his family, and had also visited her in Ostende in August. She would have had a number of reasons to be irritated with him. He composed a long manifesto with Mohini Chatterji, titled "A Few Words on the Theosophical Organization," critical of the way the Society was run. He sent a terse telegram to the American Board of Control in July on the eve of their annual

meeting in her name advising them to abolish the Board (Blavatsky gives her own version of this message in a letter to Elliott Coues written at the end of 1886, published in *The Canadian Theosophist*, Nov.-Dec. 1984). An equally critical letter from her to Arthur himself is published in the *Theosophical Forum* (Point Loma) Dec. 1933. In spite of his having written a strong defense of Mme. Blavatsky (reprinted in the Supplement to *The Theosophist* for June 1886 from the Rochester *Occult Word*), he soon ceased to play an active part in the Theosophical Society.

As the name of Elliott Coues, mentioned in this letter, will appear with recurring frequency in the subsequent letters from H.P.B. to Judge to be published in this series, all that needs to be said here is that Coues (1842-1899), a noted ornithologist, joined the Theosophical Society in London July 7, 1884, while on a visit from Washington, D.C. On his return to America, he organized a branch of the Society there (of which he was President), and played a prominent part in Theosophical affairs at the time. Background on Coues is available in the Introduction to Blavatsky's letters to him published in *The Canadian Theosophist* commencing in the Sept.-Oct. 1984 issue, and in Volume I of the *Theosophical History Occasional Papers*, 1993.

\* \* \*

private  
& confidential

Ostende Nov. 3 86

My dear Judge,

Yours received—and Mr. Harte's<sup>1</sup> papers read all carefully & with attention. What can I say? Only that I am with you heart and soul but I am not at one with Arthur<sup>2</sup> who acts as no worst enemy could with regard to Olcott. That H.S.O.<sup>3</sup> is a d—d fool, with the best intentions is known; that he bows before Science & titles—is also true, otherwise he would not be the Yankee he is, but that he is the best & the most reliable [2] of friends & faithful to his word to the backbone—is equally true. Once he sees his stupid mistake he will be all right again, that's sure. I sent him the papers with a letter that will make him [sneeze?] & curse me. Well, I don't care. I know he is going against Masters' wish in more than one thing; & yet imagines he is following Their wish but he mistakes the voice of his own flapdoodle Self—for Master's voice. But he is honest & he never backbites. What he has to say he tells a man right to his face.

Please assure Arthur that [3] he may be very wise in the eyes of his generation, but that nevertheless he is damned mistaken when he

writes to his mother that the "O.L."<sup>4</sup> was fooled by Coues. The O.L. was not. She never answered C.'s letters but once for twenty of his letters & she never wrote to him one line ever since the last letter written from Elberfeld. I did not tell right to his face that he humbugged & bamboozled—simply because I did not want to make an enemy; & secondly—because he [is] really a psychic and a [4] crazy man in the bargain who will become a raving madman one of these days if he does not drop certain practices I know of. But the charge of his being with the Jesuits is foolish. He may be a Jesuit himself but he would never have made himself such a transparently idiotic fool if he were really under the advice of Jesuits. It's all Arthur's fancies.

One thing Judge, private & confidential. Try to save the best little woman that ever lived: Mrs. Emily Bates<sup>5</sup> of Philadelphia. She does not know him as we do; she pities [5] him & has almost consented to marry him who feigns love only for her wealth. She stopped with me for over a month—she is fully devoted to me & the Society. But if he gets hold of her—she is lost. Once she knows who & what he really is she will not sacrifice herself. But now without loving him she imagines him a hero, a martyr & with womanly flapdoodle generosity has taken it into her head to save him from himself! I saw the letters he wrote to [6] her immediately after his divorce.<sup>6</sup> Do

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Harte, a member of the T.S. since 1878. Apparently, he only became active in its affairs in 1886, representing the New York branch at the Oct. 30 meeting in Cincinnati that organized the American Section. By 1887 he was in London and in Oct. 1888 accompanied Col. Olcott back to India, where he was to be an irritant to Mme. Blavatsky.

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Gebhard.

<sup>3</sup> H.S. Olcott.

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<sup>4</sup> "Old Lady," one of the many names members used to refer to Blavatsky.

<sup>5</sup> Mary Emily Bates (1835–1906), recently widowed in March 1886. At the suggestion of Coues, she was elected to the American Board of Control at the annual meeting of July 4, 1886. She married Elliott Coues in Oct. 1887.

<sup>6</sup> Coues obtained his divorce from Jeannie Augusta Coues July 27, 1886.



a theosophical work Judge & try to save her. He is a blackguard in more than one way.

Well, there's an answer to the "Cables Brown" manifesto.<sup>7</sup> If you will not, or cannot publish it in "Path" please send it to Adyar. I felt bound to say what I thought of W.T. Brown of Glasgow. The fool changes ideas & Masters like match boxes— & tho' I do not name him he & others will recognize Mr. W.T. Brown in the portrait, too kind, too generous & too good for him. But he [7] is a fool & I pity him.

Well, Sir & my only friend the crisis is nearing. I am ending my S.D.<sup>8</sup> & you are going to replace me or take my place in America. I know you will have success if you do not lose heart; but do, do remain true to the Masters & their theosophy & the names.<sup>9</sup> If you do not like my article send it back.

Thank Mr Harte for his kind letters. I swear I have no time to answer. I hardly find two minutes [8] to answer you & Olcott. Funny things in preparation. May They help you and allow us to give you our best blessings.

I am offered any amount of money—an income, board, lodging, all free to come to America & work without you i.e. against.

Of course I sent them to hell. I rather lose the whole American lot to the last man Arthur in-

cluded than you. Perhaps soon now, you will know why,

Yours ever

H.P. Blavatsky

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<sup>7</sup> A joint article titled "The Theosophical Mahatmas" from Mrs. Josephine Cables, editor of the Rochester *Occult Word*, and W.T. Brown, recently of the Adyar headquarters, had appeared in the Oct.-Nov. issue of Mrs. Cables' magazine. It criticized the non-responsiveness of the Mahatmas to the members. Mme. Blavatsky's stinging reply was published in Judge's *Path* for Dec. 1886.

<sup>8</sup> *The Secret Doctrine*.

<sup>9</sup> This paragraph was printed with other extracts from Blavatsky's letters in *The Path* July 1892, and in *The Irish Theosophist*, June 1895.

# Wanda Dynowska-Umadevi: A Biographical Essay

Kazimierz Tokarski<sup>1</sup>  
[Translated by Anna Sowinska]

Wanda Dynowska-Umadevi<sup>2</sup> was an eminent Polish Theosophist, poet, and translator and publisher of the Polish-Indian Library. She was born on June 30, 1888, in St. Petersburg, Russia, the daughter of Eustachy, a lawyer, and Helena, née Sokolowska. However, her early years were spent on her family's estate at Istalsno in Latvia (the former Polish territory) near the small town of

Lucyn, now the Latvian village of Ludza.<sup>3</sup>

The manor house was situated in a place of unusual beauty near Lake Istal. Her intimate, everyday contact with nature and the elusive charms of the earth, the flowers, trees, animals, and herbs, inspired her with a love for nature. Helena Dynowska, Wanda's mother, was simultaneously the perfect mistress of a large estate and a clairvoyant with great spiritual sensitivity. Neighbors considered the estate haunted because of the spiritual power of the place; this power inspired Wanda's interest in esotericism. As was typical for the landed class, the Dynowski family, though nominally Roman Catholic, was not active in the church.<sup>4</sup> Dynowska's encounter with Theosophy gave a new depth not only to her own inner life, but to her mother's.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mr. Tokarski was born in Cracow, Poland in 1930. He holds a degree from the Jagiellonian University (Cracow) in philosophy and is currently employed as a head librarian in one of Cracow's scientific libraries. For a number of years Mr. Tokarski has been pursuing study in the religions of Asia with a particular interest in employing some Hindu and Buddhist meditation techniques in Christian practices. In his pursuit of these spiritual searchings, he was honored by Wanda Dynowska-Umadevi's friendship. It is in response to her friends' requests that he has written her biography, an abridged version published herein.

The author wishes to express his deep gratitude to Ms Anna Sowinska, who translated the paper from Polish into English, and to all those who helped in editing and printing it. [The author and editor would also like to thank Sara Ann Miskevich of the University of Southern California for providing invaluable assistance in editing the paper.]

<sup>2</sup>The name Umadevi [*Umādevī*] was added to her name while in India by Mahatma Gandhi sometime after 1935, the exact date of which is uncertain. From that time on she sometimes used this or her patronymic name (Dynowska) separately or jointly. The name Umā refers to the goddess Pārvati, the wife of Śiva and the daughter of Himavant. Devi [*devī*] at the end of a compound may be translated as 'Queen'.

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<sup>3</sup>Paszkowska, Adolfinia: "Diary No. 5," 329-37. Manuscript. From the collection of the Ossolinkis' State Publishers Library (Wrocław, Poland).

<sup>4</sup>Stomma Stanislaw, "Dobra Nowina: Spiritual Experiences of the Young Generation of the Interwar Period," *Niedziela*, XXIX/44 (2 Nov. 1986): 1-7. (In Polish).

<sup>5</sup>Irena Korsak, unpublished letters to Franciszek Urbanczyk, dated 26 September 1971, 3 November 1971, 4 November 1971. Korsak was a friend of the Dynowskis and these letters contained information on Dynowska-Umadevi, her family, and details of her life from infancy until she began to organize the Polish Theosophical Society. The letters are in the author's possession.



**WANDA DYNOWSKA, CA. 1905. (Reproduced by permission of the author.)**

Dynowska was tutored privately at home, traveling to Vilna only occasionally for mathematics lessons; while she was in the city she took the opportunity to attend the theater or concerts. She was well-read, and often referred to religious literature such as the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, the Koran and the Bible. She read Polish romantic poetry and nineteenth century philosophy. She had excellent linguistic skills and was fluent in French, Italian, and Spanish. If necessary she could speak Russian, and would also converse with the local country people in Latvian. When she wrote later about her studies prior to 1917 she said,

I studied Romance philology at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow.... These studies were to prepare me for the literary work I have been inclined toward since childhood. My studies at the Lausanne University were to prepare me for farm work at Istalsno. Ultimately,

neither of these became my profession. As a staff member and editor for the *Polish-Indian Library* I listed my occupation as 'writer and social worker'.<sup>6</sup>

The house in Istalsno was open to artists, writers, and political activists who found the quiet and seclusion inspiring. One of these visitors was Tadeusz Micinski, a prominent member of the Warsaw Theosophical Society.<sup>7</sup> As a young girl, Dynowska was able to benefit from the discussions of art, literature, and Polish patriotism in her house.<sup>8</sup> These discussions were an important part of her education.

In her last few years at Istalsno Dynowska fell in love with a man named Szczesny. She remembered this man and this love for the rest of her life; when she was 80 she wrote about this relationship as vividly as if it had just ended. During the first years of the Bolshevik revolution Dynowska and her mother were living in Yalta and Szczesny was their steward at Istalsno. He proposed to Dynowska while on a short visit to Yalta, then returned to his home.

When asked by the Polish occultist Antoni Sobieski about the development of her esotericism she replied, "My beliefs came from my own meditations and, presumably, recollections from previous lives. I came to the conclusion when I was only 18 years old that the only logical explanation of the mysteries of life, including mental, moral, and spiritual inequalities, is reincarnation." She was greatly impressed by the first

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<sup>6</sup>Wanda Dynowska, from an unpublished report supplied by Antoni Sobieski.

<sup>7</sup>Jerzy Tynecki, *Initiations of a Mystic: A Treatise on Tadeusz Micinski* (Lodz: Wydawnictwo Lodzkie, 1976).

<sup>8</sup>During this period Poland was occupied by foreign powers.



**WANDA DYNOWSKA, ca. 1913-14. Most likely taken in her family house at Istalsno, Latvia. (Reproduced by permission of the author.)**

book of Theosophy that she read, *An Esoteric Philosophy of India*. In her memoirs she said about this book: "Unlimited perspectives; life has neither beginning nor end, it is an everlasting creativeness, inseparable attribute of the highest consciousness God."<sup>9</sup> After her interest in The-

osophy developed, she traveled to Moscow to meet some prominent female Theosophists. One of these women was a member of the Order of the Star of the East. Because of her abiding patriotism she did not speak Russian with her roommates in Moscow, instead speaking to them in French. She also chose to join the Italian Theosophical Society rather than the Russian society. She spent 1917 and 1918 in the Crimea making plans for the development of the Polish Theosophical Society (the PTT); she believed very strongly that Poland would be independent of foreign control. As part of her planning for the PTT she produced the first Polish translation of *At the Feet of the Master*, by J. Krishnamurti.

In 1919, Dynowska went to Warsaw. Poland was free at last, and she began the work of establishing the PTT.<sup>10</sup> To do this she contacted several people, including Henryk Münch, a member of the German Theosophical Society, and Jerzy Znamierowski, of the Russian Society. She was also in close contact with Zofia Wojnarowska and other members of the former Warsaw Theosophical Society, which was under Russian domination in partitioned Poland. That same year she pawned her jewelry in order to pay for a trip to Paris to contact Annie Besant for permission to establish the PTT. She did not meet Besant personally, but was able to get written approval in a letter.<sup>11</sup> While in Paris she met J. Krishnamurti and developed plans, in accord with talks she had earlier with Szczesny, according to which Szczesny

<sup>9</sup> Wanda Dynowska, *Together Against the Wind* (Madras: Biblioteka Polsko-Indyjska, 1948), 171. [*Polish Indian Book Series*]

<sup>10</sup> Archives of the Polish Theosophical Society, reconstructed after 1945 by Ewelina Karas, a member of the Society. The originals were destroyed by fire during World War II.

<sup>11</sup> This letter is in the possession of the author.

would organize the Order of the Star in the East in the newly reborn Poland.

On her return to Poland, Dynowska renewed her relationship with Szczesny, who wanted to marry her immediately. He was on a short leave from the army and he wanted to marry her before he had to return to his regiment. His family was opposed to the plan and, to get him to break the engagement, told him lies about Dynowska. The couple did not have the time or peace to clear the air and come to a new understanding. Disillusioned, Szczesny returned to his regiment and volunteered for a particularly dangerous assignment. He was killed at Baranowicze in 1920.

To escape her grief Dynowska threw herself into her Theosophical work, becoming the founder and guiding spirit of the PTT. Her mark is visible in all of the activities of the Society and in the Order of the Star in the East.<sup>12</sup> She inspired much of the work of the society and, with the help of an English woman sent by Annie Besant established an Esoteric School associated with the PTT.

In the second issue of the *Theosophical Review* (*Przegląd Teozoficzny*) Wanda Dynowska published a poem she had written when she was young under the pen name Marta Roszanówna. This poem reflects an inner zeal that characterizes her entire life.

*For Grace of Fire*

With my ardent imploring I call for Your  
grace, Lord!  
With all my heart in upward flight  
I implore it—grace of Fire!  
Strike this frail heart, but not inside,  
With your saint christening's fire.  
Let it to the bottom be immersed in flames'

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<sup>12</sup> In Poland the Order is called the Aurora Union and is presided over by Helena Boloż-Antoniewicz.

storm,  
Let my soul be slashed with rain of Your  
flashes of lightning  
So that in the glowing power of this fire  
All weakness and dirt be turned to ashes.  
And the soul could arise powerful and ardent  
And be turned into Your angel,  
Who on her bright wings and with fiery  
movement,  
Toward the earth is flying as dawn's messenger.

In July 1923, Dynowska received from C. Jinarajadasa a diploma for organizing the independent Polish Section of the PTT at the Vienna Congress. She quickly became the general secretary of the PTT and her Theosophical activity developed very quickly. She lectured in towns all over Poland, initiated a cooperative edition of *Adyar*, participated in the creation of various programs within the PTT and was personally involved in all of its activities. She is credited with translating many works of Theosophical literature into Polish. In Warsaw she was the editor-in-chief of the *Theosophical Review*, which was later called *A Theosophical Idea* (*Mysl Teozoficzna*) and still later the *Theosophical Bulletin* (*Biuletyn Teozoficzny*). Many of her papers were published as well.

The number of PTT members grew steadily; one of them describes his first meeting with Dynowska, in 1922, as follows, "I was shown to a room in which I found a young woman in her thirties with a small, almost maidenly face, beautiful large gray-green eyes and a radiant smile. After a conversation, which made a great impression on me, I was included in the Society."<sup>13</sup> Her

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<sup>13</sup> Wladyslaw Bochenski, unpublished memoirs covering the period 1922-1939 during which he was a member of the Polish Theosophical Society. Manuscript in author's possession.

great personal charm and genuine involvement helped attract people interested in esotericism to the PTT. One of the annual events of the PTT was a vacation in the summer months at the small village of Mezenin on the river Bug, which was where the members of the PTT, in three different groups, took their vacations. Among the vacationers at Mezenin was the prominent English Theosophist Adelaide Gardner.

At the end of the PTT's first five years, Dynowska left in 1924 to create a small Theosophical community in Warsaw, similar to the community in Paris.<sup>14</sup> She had stayed with the Paris community for a time at the invitation of Pasqualine Mallet. While she was with the Polish community she, together with her closest friends, invited Dr. George Arundale and his wife Rukmini Devi to Poland. The Arundales visited Poland twice and their visits were great successes, which left a lasting impression on Dynowska and the entire Polish esoteric community. It was after their visits that some Polish Theosophists, including Dynowska, were admitted to the Order of Servants.

Early on in the second half of the PTT's first decade, Dynowska, along with many other members of the society, began work in other areas of world esotericism. In 1925, she, along with Tadeusz Bibro and Michal Karaszewicz-Tokarzewski, created the first triangle—the Polish Federation of the Order of Universal United Mixed Freemasonry, “Le Droit Humain”—and, up to the time of the establishment of the independent Polish federation, Dynowska, who used the pseudonym Doboszówna in the organization, was a representative of the Mixed Freemasonry in the Highest

Council in Paris.<sup>15</sup>

In the 1920s Dynowska came into contact with the Liberal Catholic Church; she became enthusiastic about the prospect of establishing this church in Poland and translated the liturgy of the church into Polish. She invited Bishops Mazel and Wedgwood to Poland and suggested to a few men of her acquaintance that they take holy orders. In 1926-27 this church began to be represented in Poland.

Her activities in Poland were interwoven with travels abroad. During these travels, she established contacts that were extremely useful to the PTT. Dynowska took part in all of the European congresses of the Theosophical Societies and meetings of the Order of the Star of the East. She made Theosophical contacts in Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, France, Yugoslavia and Great Britain. She was a guest of Johan Cordes in Vienna, and, in 1927, she spent time traveling around Great Britain giving lectures organized by Edwin Bolt and E. Eligsen, friends of the PTT. Dynowska's travels, and those of other prominent Theosophists, kept the work of the PTT on a very high international level.

Dynowska and many other Polish Theosophists were also members of the Order of the Star in the East (called the Aurora Society in Poland). The Order believed that a great teacher would be reincarnated in the person of J. Krishnamurti. Dynowska was influenced by two events in particular that took place in the Order. In 1927, during the August Conference in Ommen, the council for the Order declared that the reincarna-

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<sup>14</sup> The Polish Theosophical Community lasted until 1930.

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<sup>15</sup> Ludwik Chajm, *Polish Freemasonry 1920-1938* (Warsaw: Czytelnik, 1984), 435-36. Ludwik Hass, *Ambitions, Calculations, Reality: Freemasonry in Central-Eastern Europe 1905-1928* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwi Naukowe, 1984), 312-13.



**Warsaw Airport, August 1927. Bidding farewell to Annie Besant (left of center, front) by members of the Polish Theosophical Society and admirers. On Mrs. Besant's immediate left is Wanda Dynowska. The uniformed figure to Mrs. Besant's right is General of the Polish Army Michal Karaszewicz-Tokarzewski. (Reproduced by permission of the author.)**

tion had truly taken place and because of this changed their name to the Order of the Star. New membership declarations were introduced and some changes were made in the program.

Annie Besant, General Secretary of the Universal Theosophical Society, went to Poland immediately after the 1927 Congress. In late August she met with the members of the PTT; Dynowska acted as an interpreter. She also assisted Besant with individual contacts and silent meditations.

The other event that greatly influenced Dynowska was the dissolution of the Order of the Star by Krishnamurti on August 3, 1929. Krishnamurti radically changed the views of the Order. One of the things he said was that in spiritual life no organizations are necessary. This immediately affected Dynowska and the PTT as three of the most ardent and devoted members left the Society. This resulted in some temporary difficulties which Dynowska commented on as follows:

I was told by many people that the Congress was not a happy experience but was, instead, a revolution which came as a great shock and affected everything. My response was that it was a wonderful thing to learn the truth, about which I am fanatic, at the sound of His (Krishnamurti's) words. I saw at the Congress two types of people—those for whom the past no longer exists, has simply fallen into ruins, because they have, up to now, built their lives on untruth. His energy has annihilated their vulnerable houses of cards. I have also seen others in whose lives nothing changed, who simply were confirmed in what was most essential to them. This was the case with me. The rightness of my choices has been confirmed. I will never depart from the only way for me, which is to serve the Masters and work for them.

Another fragment of Dynowska's writings from that period read: "Everybody must find his own way of approaching Him [Krishnamurti]."<sup>16</sup>

Dynowska shared the view of the Theosophist C. Jinarajadasa that it was possible to reconcile participation in the life of the Theosophical Society with a Krishnamurti doctrine.<sup>17</sup> Studying Dynowska's lectures and writings, as well as her translations of Krishnamurti's works into Polish, one can find, throughout the years, her strong ties with this uncommon Searcher of Truth. The study of the development and evolution of Dynowska's views on this matter could be continued for decades.

Among her many publications of the 1930's was her translation into Polish of the sixth English edition of the book *A Search in Secret India* by Paul Brunton. (The Polish edition appeared under the title *Scieżkami Jogęw (Along the Paths of the Yogi)* and was printed by one of the best Polish printing houses, Książnica.

In the autumn of 1935, Dynowska left Poland and moved to India. She attended the Congress of the Theosophical Society in Adyar in December of that year. The first years of her stay in India witnessed a number of very formative events in her life. She met with Mahatma Gandhi and visited him frequently at his main quarters in Magavadi-Wardha. She became one of Gandhi's close co-workers. She involved herself passionately in the Indian independence movement; in this milieu she established many enduring contacts. Her letters from India contain valuable information on

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<sup>16</sup> Wanda Dynowska, fragment of a recorded lecture, manuscript in author's possession.

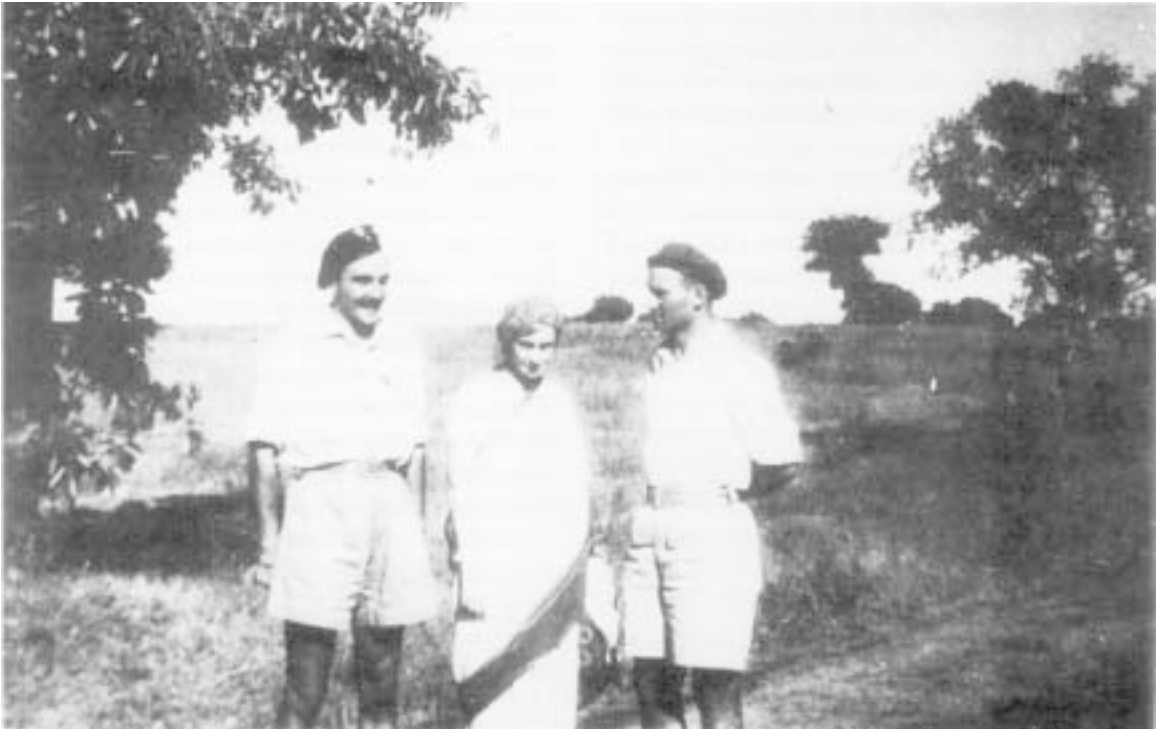
<sup>17</sup> C. Jinarajadasa, "Can't Theosophy and Krishnamurti's Doctrine Be Reconciled?", *Mysl Teozoficzna*, 1933, XII/1: 281-83.



the social conditions at the time, and on the situation of the rural population. She took part in meetings with various Hindu groups, spoke in public on the necessity of instilling the love of one's country into one's children, and, at every step, she taught her listeners to recognize the grandeur of India. Her attempt to participate fully in the life of the Indian people is reflected in the fact that, as a rule, she traveled third class with the Hindu peasants.

In these important first years of her stay in India, Dynowska-Umadevi wrote prolifically. Her works included a poem, "Awichi," written at Magawadi-Wardha in December 1936 and a poem,

"An Everlasting Longing for Maharshi," written at Asram Tiruwannamalai at the foot of the Holy Flame in January 1937. Feeling united by inner ties with Sri Ramana Maharshi she often returned to the holy mountain Arunchala; she said that it was Maharshi who had spiritually effected her arrival in India. Her future correspondence revealed some similarities between the doctrines of Maharshi and Krishnamurti. She was initiated into deeper and deeper levels of the inwardness of Hinduism, and learned yoga from some prominent yogis. At Mysore, on the holy mountain of the goddess Chamundi, she wrote a poem—"Where Are You?"—devoted to Swami Lakshman-



**Wanda Dynowska-Umadevi accompanied by two Polish Boy Scouts. Taken at Valivade, India, where there was a camp of Polish refugees. (Reproduced by permission of the author.)**

joo<sup>18</sup> of Ishwar Ashram in the Himalayas. Swami Lakshmanjoo had shown her the beauty of Kasmīri Śaivism, and took care of her during her long and strenuous pilgrimage to the holy place in the heart of the Himalayas.<sup>19</sup> In July, 1937, she wrote a poem, “The Night of Shiva,” dedicated to Maurycy Frydman [Maurice Friedman], who had the Hindu name Bharatananda, who had reached India before her and introduced her to India and supported her undertakings.<sup>20</sup> She also represented the India Pen Club.<sup>21</sup>

Dynowska-Umadevi’s activities were interrupted by the outbreak of World War II. She attempted to return to Poland, and got as far as Romania, where she found internment camps for the Polish military and met many of her acquaintances and friends. In the periodical *Harijan*, Mahatma Gandhi published a farewell letter (dated September 8, 1939) from Dynowska, along with his reply.

Another part of Dynowska’s Indian activities was her work among the Polish people who were able to succeed in leaving the Soviet Union and reached India via Iran. She was particularly asso-

ciated with a camp at Valivade, and although she was not accepted by everybody because of her beliefs and because she wore a sari, she did her best to introduce those Poles to the local culture and Indian living conditions. According to an account by Jerzy Krzysztan: “She was on friendly terms with Gandhi and tried to get him interested in the situation of the Poles. . . It was us who, with the crowds of Hindus, scattered his ashes into the Ganges.”<sup>22</sup> Of particular value to the youth from the camp was a Polish folk dance ensemble that Dynowska organized; they made their living touring in southern India.

Due to her activity against the English at Gandhi’s side her employment at the Polish Consulate in Bombay was opposed in some circles. Her writing developed in cooperation with a Hindu poet Harischandra Bhatt (1901–1951), who translated Polish literature. Articles by Wanda Dynowska appeared in the Indian press, informing the Indian people of the Polish cause.

At the beginning of 1944 Dynowska, together with Maurycy Frydman, began publishing the Polish-Indian Library. The first volume was titled *A Hindu Pilgrimage up to the Himalayas*. She also began publishing The Indo-Polish Library, the first volume of which contained a reprint of Peter Jordan’s book *First to Fight*. It was an account of the September campaign of 1939. In the Indian-Polish series, Dynowska published books in Hindi, Tamil and English.<sup>23</sup>

During this period she put some money aside from her modest wage at the Consulate to purchase Polish types. Dynowska worked with others on a project of collecting Polish poetry beginning with Jan Kochanowski and ending with the

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<sup>18</sup> The suffix *-joo* is the Kasmīri equivalent to the Hindi *-jī*, both denoting respect.

<sup>19</sup> Wanda Dynowska, *A Hindu Pilgrimage into the Heart of the Himalayas and Kashmir*, in the Polish-Indian Book Series, (Biblioteka Polsko-Indyjska, 1959).

<sup>20</sup> Maurycy Frydman, fragments of writings from three pamphlets:

a) “On India, On Wise Men, On Yoga, On Life, On Myself” (No place or date of publication).  
b) “From the Country of Wise Men” (No place or date of publication).  
c) “The Last Words—Notes for a Biography” (Warsaw, 1978).

<sup>21</sup> Władysław Blotnicki, *Polish Indian Bibliographical Notes, 1942-1948* (Beirut: offprint from “Beirut Collection”, 1949), 146-72.

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<sup>22</sup> Jerzy Krzysztan, from a letter to the author, 5 April 1981.

<sup>23</sup> Blotnicki, 146-72.

clandestine poetry of World War II; these works were translated into English and published in India as the volume *The Scarlet Muse*. This work is another example of a very obvious Polish theme in her writings. This theme is also illustrated by a work she co-authored, titled *All for Freedom—the Warsaw Epic*, which was published in English in 1946.

In ensuing decades many volumes in the Polish-Indian Library appeared, on a variety of different topics. Dynowska translated a great number of Theosophical works and published them under the auspices of J. Drobny of the United States. Some of the income from the sales of these books was used for editing the volumes of Krishnamurti.<sup>24</sup> In this project she again had the assistance of Frydman.

Her true opus magnum was her six-volume *Indian Anthology*.<sup>25</sup> This project was sponsored by the Indian Ministry of Education. She did most of her studying in the splendid Library of the Theosophical Society at Adyar. For her exegesis of the classical texts she consulted the native experts; for example, she was helped by Swami Anirwan while working on volume 6. The work on these volumes was particularly difficult. She was both the translator and the proof-reader on the project, and had to procure paper and funds. She also had to deal with the printing houses which often abused her confidence in them. In most cases she herself packed the books and

shipped copies to readers in Poland, other countries in Europe, and the United States. She was constantly facing financial worries while working on the *Indian Anthology*, and had to struggle to get enough money to finish the printing and shipment of each volume of the book. Also her work on the Polish-Indian Library was ongoing at this time, and contributed to both her workload and her financial worries. The financial strains of this project, as well as the labor of the translating and proofreading were a burden to her, but the work was a labor of love. Some volumes were particularly dear to her heart, especially the first volume of the *Indian Anthology—Sanskrit*—and Kahlil Gibran's *Jesus*. She wrote that the latter was so beautiful that each time she read it she was deeply moved.

Dynowska continued to work on the Polish Indian Library and in 1969, she handed over the bulk of her editorial work to Frydman. In a letter she wrote, "That bridge which I build with books between the souls of India and Poland is for the distant future. I do not know what its value and significance are. . . I will only get to know in the moment of my death, then I will see in a flash the very essence of my life, my Dharma and my mission."

Dynowska's spiritual union with Krishnamurti, which began in the early 1920s was ongoing, though interrupted temporarily by World War II and her work with Polish refugees in India. In 1948 her connection with Krishnamurti was renewed and she developed a new understanding and a lifestyle according to his ideas. In a letter she states,

Today we must not pause, today Krishnamurti takes care of man, of the salvation of humanity, of Truth, and I have given myself to Him for this great experiment of awakening a

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<sup>24</sup>The volumes are numerous. They include *Commentaries on Living* (translated by W. Dynowska under the title *Uwagi o zyciu*), *The Transformation of Man* [translated by W. D. as *Przemiana człowieka*], and *A New Approach to Life* [translated by W.D. as *Nowe podejście do zycia*].

<sup>25</sup> Dynowska-Umadevi, W. *Indian Anthology*. Six volumes. Madras: Wanda Dynowska-Umadevi, 1958 (vol. 2), 1959 (vol. 1, second edition; vol. 3), 1960 (vols. 4 and 5), 1964 (vol. 6).

higher human consciousness. One heart is a living part of the whole. He needs such hearts which can be transformed to the very core and will be evolved into a new dimension of life.<sup>26</sup>

It was about at the end of the 1940s or the very early 1950s that Dynowska officially broke contact with all the organizations she had belonged to, including the Theosophical Society, although she did maintain occasional contact with the Adyar seat.<sup>27</sup> Also, the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society were forever open to Krishnamurti and also to Dynowska; occasionally she would visit the Memorial Park on the T.S. compound.

In letters to her friends in Poland she tried to explain how to understand Krishnamurti. She wrote in one,

If one does not understand, which is quite common in the West, the mind and thoughts are obstacles in searching for unconditioned Truth and it will be difficult to feel Krishnamurti. However, everyone who has at least some philosophical education knows that we, with our present cognitive abilities, i.e. ideas and senses, we move about images of things created in our own minds, without touching the thing *per se*. That is why our attempts to call and define the Aim, the Truth, and God will result in mere images of our own ideas which will be, of necessity, conditioned and relative. People pray to a God created by their

own conception, and when they are suddenly seized by an admiration of Nature or an affection for somebody, they do not suppose that it is just then that they face God, the One who can not be enclosed within any limited concepts, who is permanently around us and in us. The entirety of Krishnamurti's so called doctrine tends to deliver people from 'mentalization' in order to show what a cage the mentalization is and what immensity and happiness is the life outside it. Let everyone assume (from Krishnamurti's doctrine) what impresses them, even if it is only a few sentences, and let them then experiment with it.<sup>28</sup>

When she was requested to say more about him she wrote in a later letter,

It is very difficult, because it is imperceptible. Once when I was still pretty far from Him, Mor (Maurycy Frydman), who was closer to Him, told me, 'there are three Krishnamurti's of whom one is a private man'. This one is delicate, shy, extremely sensitive, especially to beauty, to life, to people, sympathizing and soft. The second is a teacher, philosopher, thinker, psychologist, unusually keen and penetrating; severe, strict, at times scolding. . disclosing lies, falseness, appearances, and human nonentity. This Krishnamurti is unrivaled in his logic and consistency; unveiling his true visage before any person who asks that he do so, his visage, denuded from psychic superstructure, naked. . .He is unrivaled in forcing people to keep a level head, to see clearly in truth. Sometimes, very seldom, when somebody asks Him seriously about Love, He changes, becoming silent. He sinks into himself, all His face is silent, and

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<sup>26</sup> Wanda Dynowska, from a letter to Zofia Wilczynska of 21 May 21 1950. Letter in author's possession.

<sup>27</sup> We know from accessible sources that she resigned from the Theosophical Society and all other organizations sometime in the late 1940s or early 1950s because of the teaching of the J.Krishnamurti. Krishnamurti himself resigned from the T.S. in 1929 since he believed that no organizations are necessary for those on the spiritual path.

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<sup>28</sup> Wanda Dynowska, from a letter to Stefania Krasowska of 11 October 1955. Letter in author's possession.

when He utters a few words slowly, something begins to happen. In such moments somebody still greater appears for a second, a Great Teacher, with whom He is unified indivisibly. Those are the moments of actual revelation. We are facing pure love which takes us away into its incommensurable world. He himself undergoes a transformation, that is difficult to believe; His voice becomes subdued as if it came from a long distance. A mystery is happening. Such moments are extremely rare, I can remember three or four of them, no more, they are of short duration but their power can last for a very long time.

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Dynowska's correspondence from 1949 to 1964 contains many ideas that were developed out of her connection with Krishnamurti. She writes of her own mystical experiences, of her understanding of his doctrine, and how to read his writings,

Tell Mr. S to read Krishnamurti without thinking and analyzing—like he listens to the whisper of the trees or waves splashing or music and let him experience by himself how it works. Intellect must be thrown through the door!<sup>30</sup>

Even in her period of deep interest and involvement with the Tibetan religious traditions, her concern with spreading Krishnamurti's teaching continued; during this period she edited his lectures in Polish.

After World War II, Dynowska again visited Poland, once in 1960 and again in 1969. From her

correspondence it appears that she made several attempts to return home. Many passages in her letters testify to her homesickness, and her continuing interest in problems in Poland was very genuine. Both of her visits lasted a few months, and while she was in Poland, she visited people, delivered many lectures, and met with different organizations. Wherever she went she was given a warm welcome and aroused great interest. During her first visit she spoke on a wide range of topics, including Gandhi, Krishnamurti, Sri Ramana Maharshi, and others. During her second visit to Poland she spoke mainly about Tibet and "Triangles," a movement initiated by Alicja [Alice] A. Bailey, in which a friend of Dynowska, Helena Potulicka, was involved. During both of these visits Dynowska spent much of her time in Cracow and Zakopane, spending many hours in meditation in the Wawel Cathedral.

In August, 1960, during her first visit, she was received by Bishop Karol Wojtyła (now Pope John Paul II). During her visit she presented to him some volumes of the *Indian Anthology* that she had edited. During her second visit to Poland she had another visit. She went to special effort to delay her departure from Cracow to be able to meet with the Cardinal<sup>31</sup>, who was returning from a long tour abroad. She described to him the tragic situation of the Tibetan nation and its people. He expressed his deep sympathy and promised to say a mass for the Tibetan people, both the dead and the living.<sup>32</sup> At the time she predicted that Cardinal Wojtyła would be the first Slav pope.

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<sup>29</sup> Wanda Dynowska, from a letter to Dr. Magdalena Jasinska, dated October 1967.

<sup>30</sup> Wanda Dynowska, from a letter to Stefania Krasowska (undated). Letter in author's possession.

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<sup>31</sup> Rev. Karol Wojtyła was nominated subsidiary bishop in Cracow in 1958; in 1964 he became archbishop. In 1967 he was appointed cardinal by Pope Paul VI.

<sup>32</sup> Adam Boniecki, *Calendarium of Karol Wojtyła's Life*. (Cracow: Znak, 1983), 180-354.

After leaving Poland she mentioned many times her deep inner contact with the Cardinal and the hours she spent at the Wawel Cathedral asking for remembrance and prayers.

In 1960 the last and one of the most important chapters of her life began. She began to work with Tibetan children who had lost their parents in the Chinese invasion and the passage across the Himalayas. She went to Northern India, and in late December, 1960, wrote from the village Upper Dharmsala how she had yearned for contact with these children, “people in their sixties retire, while I am, at seventy-three, undertaking a new sphere of activity.” In future years she wintered in Adyar or Mysore and traveled to Upper Dharmsala, a home of the Dalai Lama, in the spring and would stay until late autumn.

While she was there, she worked in every possible way to help the Tibetan refugees. She dressed wounds, fed the hungry, made clothes, and became more and more enchanted by the national character of the Tibetan people and by Mahāyāna Buddhism. She was in permanent contact with the Dalai Lama and his inner circle, and obtained a deeper insight into Tibetan Buddhism. Over the years she devoted more and more of her time and effort to the Tibetan culture, and to educating the Tibetan youths. She founded schools and boarding schools for them in various parts of India. She was instrumental in obtaining fellowships for a great number of the youths in Switzerland and in general she kept close contact with those she had assisted in this way. She spent time talking with the older boys about questions of culture, intelligence, science, and giving them advice about how to work for the independence of Tibet. In her letters she often mentioned the friendliness and simplicity surrounding her and giving her strength.



**Wanda Dynowska-Umadevi sitting at the feet of the former teacher of the Dalai Lama, with other Tibetan lamas. Photographed in 1966 in a Tibetan village near Mysore. (By permission of the author.)**



**With a Tibetan girl. In the background is a Tibetan lama. Photographed on 5 Feb. 1962. (By permission of the author.)**

Despite all of these duties with the refugees she did not abandon her writing, translating and editorial work. During this period, *The Polish Indian Book Series* included works by Krishnamurti and books on Buddhism. The volume titled *Buddha's Doctrine* by Paul Carus was edited in 1962 and was used by Dynowska for teaching religion with tales, when the young Tibetans

living in Madras would visit her during the winter time. In 1965 a volume on Mahāyāna Buddhism was published, and in 1967 a volume titled *A Precious Selection of Poems on Buddha's Dharma Among Birds—A Tibetan Folk Song*. In 1964, Dynowska is known to have cooperated with a Tibetan monk on a book about Mahāyāna, which was to be published in English. She authored a paper on a Tibetan religious dance and delivered the paper at the Meeting of Orientalists in New Delhi in 1964. This paper was eventually published.

In a letter to Frydman, written in February, 1969, she wrote that she had decided to fulfill three tasks: to initiate Montessori's method in schools for infants, to found a Tibetan School, and to support the idea of establishing a two-year course for the Tibetan teachers. The first of these tasks was accomplished when she wrote the letter, and the second had almost been realized.

In a letter from Upper Dharmsala she wrote, "I know I am here, delegated, to help them maintain, preserve (and maybe to develop) their culture, individuality, specificity. . . I have some evidence of it."<sup>33</sup> Thus the main theme of her activity among the Tibetans was to help them maintain their national identity, and having been born Polish under Russian occupation she might have understood the importance of this better than many of the others who were helping the refugees.

In a letter to Frydman written in October 1970 she wrote that she had left Dharmsala forever because her health did not allow her to live at that altitude. This last period of her life with the Tibetans was difficult, she was very advanced in age and in rather poor health, yet she lived the

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<sup>33</sup> Wanda Dynowska, from a letter to Maurycy Frydman, dated 14 October 1970.

majority of the year in austere conditions at a high altitude in order to work and care for the Tibetan people in exile. In another letter she wrote, "I find comfort in my youths who are already students. Boys are young oak trees, gifted and intelligent. I myself do not work anymore, only watch and keep in touch with them. There are schools at Mysore, so it is not difficult. . . ."

The year 1970 marked a definite breakdown in Dynowska's health. In August of that year she wrote to Frydman, "Dog [her body] has survived a journey from Upper Dharmasala to New Delhi but is half-conscious. . . ." Her poor health was associated in her mind with her psychic experiences, "the situation of the Tibetan people and her inability to help them was her personal tragedy. At the same time some latent Polish tragedies echoed back—and an abyss opened. . . ."

In the autumn of 1970 she moved to a Roman Catholic convent in Mysore, where the Tibetan girls under her charge lived and learned. The prioress Sister Barbara, Wanda Dynowska's friend, took care of her, and she was tended every day by two Tibetan girls. She was visited by Tibetan lamas and, thanks to a Catholic Archbishop at Mysore, Rev. Marian Batogowski<sup>34</sup> established contact with Dynowska and they shared long talks. He read her poetry and brought crumbs of Polish bread, and they discussed many questions of mutual interest. At the end of March she grew suddenly worse. She refused drugs and received the Sacraments. On the day of her death, March 20, 1971, she meditated together with Father

Batogowski and died at about 11:00 p.m. In accordance with her wishes, and with the assent of the Archbishop of Mysore, her body was taken on that same night to Bylakuppe by some Tibetans. On the next day the lamas and the Tibetan people performed funeral rites for her. Her memory was honored very solemnly by erecting stupas bearing her Tibetan name, *Tenzin Chodon*, and short memoirs appeared in print.

In her contacts with people and in her letters Dynowska emphasized that it was not appropriate for others to follow her life's path. She never played the part of a guru but was one who incessantly searched for the Truth by pursuing very broad views on life and religion.

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<sup>34</sup> Marian Batogowski, Diary. Dates: Feb. 14-27, 1971; 2-5 March 1971; 10-16 March 10 1971; 18-21 March 1971; 6 April-15 May 1971; 29 July-2 Sept. 1971; 28 Nov. 1971. Xerox copies in author's possession.



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*There is a respectful reference to Wanda Dynowska-Umadevi's activity on page 173.*

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*In September, 1939 Mahatma Gandhi published a letter written by Wanda Dynowska-Umadevi in his periodical Harijan expressing her shock over the invasion of Poland by Nazi Germany. He also published his reply. Dynowska has translated those letters into Polish and inserted them in her Indian Anthology (volume IV: 174–76).*

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# Book Reviews

## MIRCEA ELIADE: A THEOSOPHICAL ANTITHEOSOPHIST

### MIRCEA ELIADE: THE ROMANIAN ROOTS, 1907 - 1945.

By Mac Linscott Ricketts. Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1988. Distributed by Columbia University Press, New York. 2 vols., pp. 1453, \$250.00.

The life of the distinguished historian of religion and polymath Mircea Eliade (1907-1986) should be of some interest to historians of Theosophy. First, he was well aware of modern Theosophy and had definite, albeit unfavorable, opinions about it, though he could well be called a theosophist with a small “t.” Second, his general history of religions work has, I believe, been of immense help in defining and interpreting for the modern world that archaic worldview which must have some connection with what Theosophists mean by the Ancient Wisdom. But before coming to Theosophy, let us look at some facets of this remarkable twentieth century life with the help of a monumental new resource, Mac Ricketts’ two-volume study of Eliade’s Romanian roots.

The master historian of religion’s life divides neatly into two parts. The years until 1945 were lived in, or in relation to, his native Romania, where he emerged in the years between the wars as probably the best-known and most controversial of the passionate young Romanian intellectuals of his generation: a prolific and provocative newspaper columnist whose political and cultural views kindled fiery debate, a novelist whose

works were praised extravagantly and denounced as pornographic; a dynamic lecturer at the University of Bucharest who virtually established history of religions and Indology as disciplines there; a political activist who was to be accused of fascism, but who suffered imprisonment for his loyalties under the rightist dictatorship of King Carol II.

Then there was the second “life,” when, in exile from his homeland after it fell behind the Iron Curtain, Eliade—now apparently non-political<sup>1</sup> and non-controversial unless on arcane scholarly levels—became the pre-eminent historian of religion of his time, widely known through such classics of that field as *The Sacred and the Profane*, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, and *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, among many others. After 1945 he taught first at the Sorbonne in Paris, and then from 1956 at the University of Chicago. I myself had the privilege of studying under Professor Eliade in the 1960s, and was first drawn to the history of religion through his luminous books.

Until recently little was widely known in the West about Eliade’s prewar and wartime life. When I was a graduate student at Chicago, only a few rumors—some of them wildly inaccurate, it turned out—floated about among his docents.

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<sup>1</sup> Apart from some articles directed against the Communist regime in his homeland which appeared up to 1954 in Romanian émigré periodicals.

The professor himself talked about his past very little, and though kindness and graciousness itself in his relationship to students, he was not the sort of person into whose life one pried freely. But now it has been reconstructed, first through Eliade's own two-volume *Autobiography* (*Vol. I: 1907-1937, Journey East, Journey West*, San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981; *Vol. II: 1937-1960, Exile's Odyssey*, University of Chicago Press, 1988). Now Mac Linscott Ricketts, the splendid translator of the autobiographies and other Romanian works of Eliade, has compiled a massive and definitive documentary portrait of the years up to 1945, based on countless hours of digging in Romanian archives and libraries, and with the help of Professor Eliade himself up until his death.

Several matters which have long been the subject of scuttlebut, at least among Eliadians, are much illumined here. We have a reasonably full story of the years 1928-31 which he spent in India studying philosophy and religion, and living, some of the time, at the Calcutta home of the eminent philosopher Surendranath Dasgupta. That relationship came to an abrupt halt when Eliade was forced to decamp overnight for a yoga retreat after Dasgupta became aware of a relationship between his young daughter, Maitreyi, and the Romanian guest. (Back in Romania, Eliade was to publish a 1933 novel, *Maitreyi*, obviously based on the intercultural romance and which became a scandal and a success. Eliade also published a 1936 Romanian study of yoga which became the basis of the postwar French/English masterpiece, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*.)

One can also trace the problematic story of Eliade's relationship to the Legion of the Archangel Michael, a political/spiritual movement with fascist and anti-Semitic leanings powerful in Romania during the Thirties; out of a wing of the Legion emerged the pro-Nazi and virulently anti-

Semitic Iron Guard influential in Romania's tilt toward the Axis powers in 1940-41. Although Eliade had always been a cultural nationalist who liked to speak of Romanian "messianism," meaning that the country had a cultural heritage to redeem and a special destiny to fulfill, these views usually were relatively non-political. As for anti-Semitism, on several notable occasions he befriended Jewish colleagues and acquaintances in his notoriously anti-Semitic land. But in late 1936 the brilliant young commentator began publishing articles clearly showing disillusionment with democracy and the tilting of his favor toward the Legion. What appealed to him most about that militant movement was its "spirituality," the dedication of its young cadres who went into the villages to help peasants and the movement's own ostensible dedication to social rebirth and the creation of a "new man." Though perhaps with distaste, he seemed willing to accept the Legion's occasional violence and anti-Semitism as a price that had to be paid for national resurrection; he wrote columns of a "Romania for the Romanians" sort, suggesting that the influence of the country's numerous minorities—Jews, Hungarians, and others—was excessive and needed to be curbed.<sup>2</sup>

Though nothing can excuse such sentiments today, two factors may at least help us to understand them: first, the abysmal corruption and incompetence of the nominally democratic monarchy that ruled Romania in those days; and second, the natural attraction of the Legion's romantic, spiritual and mythic rhetoric for one of

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<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Ricketts, *Mircea Eliade*, II, 909-12, 915-17. It should be pointed out that in some places Eliade urged merely that the minorities be assimilated, and unlike other Rightists even at his harshest did not urge any particular action against them, such as the use of force or restrictive legislation

Eliade's susceptibilities. The way in which all fascist movements appealed to deep instinctual yearnings for communal solidarity, spiritual re-birth, and enacting deeds of mythic dimension, feelings not far removed from the religious, is not to be underestimated.

During most of the Thirties the King had tacitly encouraged the Legion and its nationalism. But in 1938 Carol II squelched the squabbling parties to establish a royal dictatorship, and turned against the Legion as a rival source of power. Eliade, with many others, was imprisoned after refusing to sign a document dissociating himself from the Legion. (He said, first, that he had never joined so could not leave it; and, second, that he did associate himself with many of its aims.) Eliade was released after four months and, in 1940, enabled to depart his increasingly desperate country to become its cultural attaché first in London, where he endured the Blitz, and then, when Britain declared war on Romania in 1941, in neutral Lisbon, Portugal, until 1945. During the latter years Eliade (who had never completely endorsed the Mussolini or Hitler regimes) found time to compose a book in praise of Portugal's "benevolent" dictator António Salazar, a fellow professor raised to a position of power whose administration he recommended as an example to his countrymen. (The book, he earnestly says in the introduction, was written to answer a question: "Is a [national] spiritual revolution possible?" The answer, he now found, is Yes! Salazar has "achieved a miracle"; "a totalitarian and Christian state, built not on abstractions, but on the living realities of the nation and its tradition.")

What has all this to do with Theosophical history? First, the influence of Theosophy. Judging from a 1923 journal entry, Eliade's first readings in Indian religion, and his first intention to

study Sanskrit, seems to have been from books published by Theosophists, who had established a chapter of the T.S. in Bucharest in 1921. (Eliade, though precocious, was only sixteen in '23, but his teenage life and thought is very fully preserved in journals, letters, papers, articles, and even an autobiographical novel; Ricketts remarks that "probably there are few adolescences so thoroughly documented as that of Mircea Eliade." [31]) Thus, like not a few others throughout the world, Eliade was first awakened to orientalism through Theosophy, though he may have gone on to other levels or styles of that study; providing this awakening to sensitive souls has been a fairly common function of Theosophy.

However, by his college years, in 1926, Eliade was writing articles disparaging Theosophy as guilty of lack of precision in definition and rigorous scholarship in the documentation of its sources, resulting in "dilettantism" and "fantasy"; he preferred, at least for a while, the Anthroposophy of Rudolf Steiner. Later the same year, in a series of articles called "Spiritual Itinerary," Eliade declared that "true theosophy" is "horribly perverted and compromised" by Madame Blavatsky. He went on to say that "the Theosophy of the Theosophical Society is dangerous to deep souls," upsetting the balance of the consciousness. [257]

Later, in writing about his visit to the Theosophical headquarters at Adyar in India in late 1928, Eliade makes more clear why he regards Theosophy as a "pseudo-religion": not because its founders or leaders are insincere, but because of its essential character. Though they talk of a God revealed in all religions and tolerate all, Theosophists don't know what religion is. They lack the experience of the Absolute. "And because they have lost [religion's] meaning, they have tried to

reconcile it with science . . . two things which are contradictory.” They have thus made the concept of evolution a part of their theology: “as if the Absolute could be perfected later; as if the Incarnation could be revealed more fully in the future.” [377]

Nonetheless, Eliade was disappointed in not being able to find any of the leaders of the Society—Annie Besant, Leadbeater, Krishnamurti—at Adyar; they were away at a meeting in Benares. But he did spend a day on the Adyar grounds and left with a real respect for the Society’s well-regarded library. He later met and formed a warm friendship with the Theosophist and scholar Johan van Manen, secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. [358] It may be mentioned also that the Indian writings contain high praise for Gandhi together with scorn for the English in India and vitriolic denunciations of British rule in the subcontinent. [e.g. 392-99]

Later, after his return to Romania, in 1932 Eliade had a relationship with a well-known actress name Sorana Topa, a plump, blonde, voluble woman of strong temperament. It appears the initiative was largely on her part; Eliade found her good company on occasion, but remarked that “she could be exasperating.” That was no doubt particularly the case when he discovered that she was a fervent devotee of Kirshnamurti. As a consequence, Eliade wrote a “scathing denunciation of Theosophy and related modes of ‘feminine mysteries.’” “Theosophy and the teachings of Krishnamurti are only two of the most recent instances of a long line of cheap ‘mystagogues’ which have appealed to ‘mediocre, feminine spirits’”; the author refers such gullible persons to René Guénon’s *Le Theosophisme: Histoire d’une pseudo-religion*. Warming to his invective, he proceeds to speak of Krishnamurti,

“who speaks charmingly with women and rolls his eyes, who refuses to seclude himself in a Himalayan ashram but roves chimerically and luxuriously over the five continents. . .” [543-44]

The title of this jeremiad, “Spiritualitate si mister feminin” (Spirituality and feminine mystery; *Azi*, April 1932) suggests well enough the leitmotiv. Without disparaging Eliade’s serious intellectual objections to Theosophy, I would like to suggest two other perhaps more deepseated reasons that may explain the passion that seems to lurk in his animus—and perhaps his preference for Steiner: Theosophy’s feminine and Anglo-American character.

With the sole exception of the famous Indologist Stella Kramrisch, whom he met in India and who seems to have rather overwhelmed him [416-17], Eliade appears never to have been impressed by a woman’s intellect. One can imagine, then, that he would not have been predisposed to accept a system whose principals bore such titles as “Madame” or “Mrs.” or “Countess,” and whose imposing female as well as male following and leadership was well known.

On top of that, at this time Theosophy’s world leadership was largely British or British-Indian—Besant, Leadbeater, Arundale, Krishnamurti, Jinarajadasa—and Eliade’s bias at the time against that culture is apparent. (On a later visit to Oxford, however, he was much impressed by the Buchmanite or Oxford Group movement, which, though Protestant, helped lead him to believe that the Legion of the Archangel Michael could do something similar for the young of Orthodox Romania.) While his outrage at the brutality of British rule was no doubt often well taken, it is not balanced and does not sit well against his equivocal attitude, or silence, toward similar fascist or Legionary savagery a little later. At the least, he

does not appreciate Theosophy's ambivalent and sometimes mediating role in the complex Indian situation. Nor was he probably aware that, ironically, both he and the Gandhi he so admired had first been introduced to classics of Indian spirituality through Theosophical editions!

It is also ironic that, though so chary of Theosophical pseudo-religion, Eliade should nonetheless have succumbed to another and more political form of dubious mysticism. Theosophists may well be relieved by his disdain of their tradition; enough accusations alleging some kind of connection between Theosophy and fascism are around as it is. Such charges are, I am convinced, almost entirely spurious. Apart from a few embarrassing exceptions, like El Salvador's murderous Theosophical dictator General Maximiliano Martínez, the political instincts of active Theosophists have characteristically been in the line of the democratic, progressive reformism represented by persons like Annie Besant, Katherine Tingley, or George Lansbury. But the very ethnic resonance of names like these may have half-consciously suggested to a person like Eliade a cultural world far removed from beleaguered Orthodox Romania, one resented for its imperialism and despised for its pretensions to virtue, and not as applicable as the case of another small Latin state like Portugal. After serving his country in both, as least as an example for Romania Eliade obviously preferred Salazar's neutral Portugal to Winston Churchill's democratic but embattled Britain—in which country, incidentally, Clement Attlee's predecessor as head of the opposition Labour Party, the high-principled reformer and pacifist George Lansbury, had been an active Theosophist.

Finally, the great virtues of Eliade's gifts to the world—which vastly outweigh his defects—must

be appreciated. Apart from making the realms of the archaic world/Ancient Wisdom resonate, he has, as this monumental work particularly illustrates, held up to us the mirror of an authentic twentieth century life. To a remarkable degree, in *Eliade* we see so much of the twentieth century brilliantly, sometimes glaringly, reflected: its lust to know and do everything, its doubt and faith, its journeys to the East, its political and other temptations, its lives riven by apocalyptic war, its harsh experiences of the collapse of worlds and exile, its intercultural and intertemporal encounters, its moments of love and recovery. If he missed whatever help Theosophy may bring to the interpreting of this chaotic century, so have many others; from *Eliade* we at least learn incomparably what these times, and so many other times as well, were like.

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## **THEOSOPHY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY.**

By Michael Gomes. New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc. 1994. Pp. vi + 582, with author index. ISBN 0-8240-8094-7. [Religious Information Systems, vol. 15; Garland Reference Library of Social Science, vol. 532]. \$88.

The Theosophical Movement has been blessed with an enormous number of writers, far more so than one would expect given the size of the parent Theosophical Society and its offshoots. The task of assembling a complete catalogue of articles, pamphlets, and books published in every country and language where the Theosophical Movement is present would no doubt test the physical and financial resources of any one individual. Nevertheless, no researcher has come closer to reaching this goal than has Michael Gomes.

Assembling his list from the holdings from libraries scattered over the landscape of four countries—Canada, the U.S., England, and India—Mr. Gomes has collected 2,057 titles (numbered sequentially) of books, articles, pamphlets, manuscripts, and periodicals authored by over 800 Theosophists and non-Theosophists. The titles are divided into eight chapters (of nine chapters, the first of which serves as the “Historical Introduction”), focusing on major issues, major writers, Theosophical history, and literature that has influenced the major Theosophical works.

One of the strong points of the *Bibliography* is Mr. Gomes’ solid and informative introductions to each of the chapters on the main historical events and personalities of this era. Where difficulties arise, he is not averse to admitting it. One such example is the question of defining the term

Theosophy. Just what is meant by it at the inception of the Theosophical Society in 1875 by its founders, how it developed during the latter quarter of the nineteenth century is not an easy matter to ascertain. That Gomes recognizes this dilemma [p. 8] is the sign of a scholar well-acquainted with the literature and personalities of this period. What Theosophy meant to the varied membership of the T.S.—varied in cultural, religious, philosophical, and linguistic backgrounds—should cause hesitation on the part of any discreet scholar. Of course, the authority of H.P. Blavatsky’s writings, especially her *Secret Doctrine*, offers a convenient locus for identifying the Theosophy of the T.S. in the framework of the Three Propositions provided therein. This is now the approach *de rigueur* taken by most commentators today, certainly not incorrect but rather inexact. One must be mindful that the Propositions and for that matter the Three Objects of the T.S.—another means of identifying Theosophy—appear many years after the Society’s inception. It is a pity, nonetheless, that there was no section devoted exclusively to an attempted incremental definition of Theosophy (at least as it appears in print) although Chapter 7 provides the titles that could serve the purpose quite well.

Turning to Chapter Two, “Histories and Biographies,” written by Theosophists [entry numbers 1–283], and non-Theosophists [no. 284–468] in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Gomes makes the curious and intriguing observation that Theosophists deal more with personalities, non-Theosophists more with events. In addition to the principals of the Theosophical Society (H.P.B., H.S. Olcott, W.Q. Judge, A. Besant, A.P. Sinnett, C.W. Leadbeater, T. Subba Row), early members (in no particular order) such as Anagarika Dharmapala, Damodar Mavalankar, Bertram



Keightley, Archibald Keightley, G.R.S. Mead, Sir William Crookes, A. Fullerton, Norendranath Sen, the Countess Wachtmeister, Dominique Albert Courmes, Alexandra David-Neel, D.T. Suzuki, Beatrice Lane Suzuki, Alan Watts, Edward Conze, George E. Wright, C.W. Sanders, Dr. A. Marques, Katherine Tingley, A.L. Rawson, James Pryse, Tookeram Taty, Isabel Cooper-Oakley, G.N. Chakravarti, Abner Doubleday, Dr. J.D. Buck, E.B. Rambo, Claude Falls Wright, E.T. Hargrove, Wilhelm Hübbe-Schleiden, Charles Johnston, and T.A. Swaminatha Aiyar are also included in the first section. Non-Theosophists are more concerned with the Society itself and how it fits in with the larger religious or philosophical universe. It is to be expected that authors of earlier times are more often parochial and sometimes hostile [no. 293, 383, 392, 401- 404] in their discussions, whereas more recent writers take a more detached and balanced view of religion in general and Theosophy in particular [no. 299, 301, 306, 334-349, 351-353, 361, 370, 437, 441, 455].

The next chapter includes those titles that served as sources for Blavatsky's books, *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*. This brings up the old argument advanced by William Emmette Coleman, namely the sources employed by H.P.B. for her books and the issue of plagiarism, which is raised in the beginning of the chapter but discussed in greater detail in Chapter 8 [p. 493f.]. A lengthy excerpt dated May 8, 1912 from Prof. William Gates, the Mayan scholar and Theosophist connected with the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society under Katherine Tingley, on the question of plagiarism in *Isis* is here published for the first time, his conclusion being that *Isis*, "apart from everything else one must think of it and her, as a triumph of straight literary scholarship—and I do not care who says the

contrary." [p. 147] This from an academician with impeccable credentials! As for the sources themselves, Gomes includes fifty titles each for *Isis Unveiled* [no. 469-518] and *The Secret Doctrine* [no. 519-565], the number being restricted since they are not, strictly speaking, Theosophical works. This listing nonetheless adds insight to the literature that existed prior to Blavatsky. I find it noteworthy that many of the titles have stood up to the passage of time in either scholarship or utility, examples being Burnell's and Hopkins' *The Ordinances of Manu* [no. 522], Edkins' *Chinese Buddhism* [532], Wilson's *The Vishnu Purana* (edited by Fitzedward Hall) [563], Dowson's *Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion, Geography, History and Literature* [531], Telang's *The Bhagavadgita with the Sanatsugatiya and the Anugita* [561], and Darmesteter's *The Zend-Avesta* [526]. Other books of special interest from a more historical perspective include, for example, Higgins' *Anacalypsis* [493], Inman's *Ancient Faiths Embodied in Ancient Names* [497], Jacolliot's *The Bible in India: Hindoo Origin of Hebrew and Christian Revelation* [500] and *Christna et le Christ* [501], Jenning's' *The Rosicrucians* [503], King's *The Gnostics and their Remains, Ancient and Mediaeval* [504], and Müller's *Chips From a German Workshop* [509]. The rest of the chapter includes occult works that were published in the nineteenth century. Well known works by Hardinge Britten [567], Bulwer-Lytton [581-582], Mathers [585-587], Waite [592-604], and Westcott [606-615] are listed. Gomes has enriched the bibliography by undertaking one of the most tedious tasks for any bibliographer, listing all the editions, publishers, and reprints. A good example in this chapter is Bulwer-Lytton's *Zanoni* [581], but it is evident in the works of H.S. Olcott [no. 190-193, 196-199, 1073], H.P. Blavatsky

[616, 616-638, 642, 644-646, 648-658], W.Q. Judge [137-138, 925-93], and Mabel Collins [1575].

Chapters 4 (“Works of H.P. Blavatsky”) and 5 (“Works about H.P. Blavatsky”) comprise the central portion of the Bibliography: the fourth chapter containing her books and articles (the newspaper and extended magazine articles is left to the fourteen volumes of *Collected Writings*.<sup>1</sup> Still, forty-two English works (or translated into English) are cited<sup>2</sup>, a sizable number considering a writing career of less than twenty years in a non-native language. Of the 595 titles given in Chapter 5, those that are especially interesting to me are the articles of G. Bloede (“D.D. Home on Some Recent Developments and Isms of American Spiritualism,” no. 723), F. de Bedenhausen (“Madame Blavatsky and Her Accusers,” no. 725), Jack Brown (“Reminiscences: I Visit Prof. Einstein,” no. 733), P. Brunton (“The Secret Doctrine of the Khmers,” no. 734), “A Coming Buddhist Book”<sup>3</sup> (no. 771), D.N. Dunlop (“Interview with Mr. W.B. Yeats,” no. 798), P. Fussell (“E.M. Forster’s Mrs. Moore: Some Suggestions,” no. 824), M. Gomes (“R.B. Westbrook’s ‘Reminiscences of Original American Theosophists,’” no. 839), and Kurt Vonnegut (“The Mysterious Madame Blavatsky,” no. 1190).

Chapter 6, “The Mahatma Letters and A.P. Sinnett,” opens with an informative overview of

what and who the Masters or Mahatmas were, followed by 207 titles. The controversy whether the Masters actually existed and if so, in what form, is still an on-going one judging from the reactions to Dr. Vernon Harrison’s “J’Accuse” [pp.365-66, 394, and no. 1851], who argued that the letters were not written by H.P.B., and Paul Johnson’s controversial *In Search of the Masters: Behind the Occult Myth*<sup>4</sup> [no. 1380], who argues that the Masters were real figures, an opinion not far removed from that of A.O. Hume [p. 366] and other writers, including H.P.B. [nos. 1299-1301], S. Das [no. 1331], and those quoted by Gomes [no. 1343].

Chapter 7, “Other Nineteenth Century Works by Theosophists,” lists 355 titles, most dated in the last decade of the century, including the prodigious output of Mrs. Annie Besant [no. 1476-1541], Franz Hartmann [1641-1653]<sup>5</sup>, W.Q. Judge [1665-1689].

Perhaps the most informative chapter is the one which discusses “Critical Issues” (Chapter 8), those important and controversial events in the nineteenth century that have repercussions for the Theosophical societies to this day. Included are the Coulombs and the Hodgson Report (for the Society for Psychical Research), V. Solovyov’s *A Modern Priestess of Isis*, the charges of plagiarism against H.P.B. by William Coleman, the libel case brought by Blavatsky against Elliott Coues and the New York *Sun*, and the Judge Case and the subsequent schism within the Theosophical Society. Gomes’ introduction to this chapter is a

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<sup>1</sup> For the complete listing of the *H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, see III/6 (April 1991): 171-73. See also numbers 1232, 1234-1240, 1243-44, 1246, 1249, 1251-52.

<sup>2</sup> One notes, however, further entries in the following chapter (703–715) and Chapter 6 (1299-1302).

<sup>3</sup> It is fortunate that this article from the *New York World* (Jan. 23, 1877) was reprinted by *The American Theosophist* (May 1913), since the only record of the page on which this article was printed—the microfilm record—was photographed out of focus!

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<sup>4</sup> A new edition of this work will be published by SUNY press in the latter months of 1994 or early 1995.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Hartmann’s total literary output is quite extensive when his German language works are taken into account. There will be a listing of these works in a future issue of *Theosophical History*.

model of clarity, providing the background to the titles that cover these issues. Of special interest is the fact that there was a non-committal preliminary report issued by the S.P.R. in 1884 (no. 1886 and 1857), as well as the more famous 1885 Report (no. 1859, 1904). Too often, recent scholars and commentators cite only the damaging 1885 Report without acknowledging that it is not the viewpoint of the S.P.R. but rather of the committee set up to investigate H.P.B. to say nothing of its questionable methodology. Nor is Vernon Harrison's investigation of the Mahatma letters mentioned, thus giving only an incomplete version of the events and the general conclusion that the results of the Report are final and uncompromising.

The final chapter ("Theosophical Periodicals") lists some fifty-five titles of periodicals in English and non-English languages that were initiated in the nineteenth century, including *Antahkarana* (no. 2002), a Spanish journal, and *Le Lotus Bleu* (no. 2019), the French monthly.

The value of this annotated bibliography as an indispensable research tool should be obvious to all who engage in research in the field of Theosophical history. The fact that the price is \$88 will no doubt deter many from purchasing it, but the fact remains that no Theosophical library would be complete without it. The book is also recommended for undergraduate and graduate libraries.

**James Santucci**

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