

SCIENCE, OCCULTISM, PHILOSOPHY, MYSTICISM & HISTORICAL ANECDOTE

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THE CASE OF A RUSSIAN VAMPIRE



THE FOLLOWING ANECDOTE IS TAKEN FROM 'THE SECRET DOCTRINE' (PAGES 454-456 VOL. 1) BY HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY (PUBLISHED IN 1888 BY THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE), A SEMINAL TWO-VOLUMED WORK WHICH SOUGHT TO RECONCILE MYSTICISM AND SCIENCE.

About the beginning of the present century [19th century], there occurred in Russia one of the most frightful cases of vampirism on record. The governor of the Province of Tch— was a man of about sixty years, of a malicious, tyrannical, cruel and jealous disposition. Clothed with despotic authority, he exercised it without stint, as his brutal instincts prompted. He fell in love with the pretty daughter of a subordinate official. Although the girl was betrothed to a young man whom she loved, the tyrant forced her father to consent to his having her marry him; and the poor victim, despite her despair, became his wife. His jealous disposition exhibited itself. He beat her, confined her to her room for weeks together, and prevented her seeing anyone except in his presence. He finally fell sick and died. Finding his end approaching, he made her

swear never to marry again; and with fearful oaths, threatened that, in case she did, he would return from his grave and kill her. He was buried in the cemetery across the river; and the young widow experienced no further annoyance, until, nature getting the better of her fear, she listened to the importunities of her former lover, and they were again betrothed.

On the night of the customary betrothal feast, when all had retired, the old mansion was aroused by shrieks proceeding from her room. The doors were burst open, and the

“...and from a slight puncture on her neck, drops of blood were oozing.”

unhappy woman was found lying on her bed, in a swoon. At the same time a carriage was heard rumbling out of the courtyard. Her body was found to be black and blue in places, as from the effect of pinches, and from a slight puncture on her neck drops of blood were oozing.

EDITORIAL



In any specific place and time, its people are almost entirely concerned with what are called 'the current issues.' They prefer to discuss these issues exclusively. The understanding is that they are current because they are important. The proposition here is that those same issues are only current because they are discussed.

Newspapers don't discuss Climate Change because it is important; it has been an important issue since the Industrial Revolution kicked off. The discussions of the day are mostly reactions. The words "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you" are far from outdated, despite their time of authorship. Buddhist and Hindu texts – even older — wrote that we are all interconnected. Then Einstein, Tesla and others helped to prove that on a physical and electrical level. Einstein didn't discover something new; he confirmed something old. Our time-centricity is just another prejudice. We have the same interests and problems that we've had for centuries (like food, sex and war). Our progress amounts to being more efficient at being the same.

The politics of the day are like soap operas; there is never any resolution. The Veil is an attempt at detaching itself from the orbit of its own day. And, from that space, publishing articles on their own merit. The idea is that an article that is relevant to today, need not necessarily have been written today.

Inside The Veil you will find entertaining anecdotes, letters, articles and documents of interest from a range of different eras and countries.



Levin Diatschenko
Editor

[Case of a Russian Vampire cont.]

Upon recovering, she stated that her deceased husband had suddenly entered her room, appearing exactly as in life, with the exception of a dreadful pallor; that he had upbraided her for her inconstancy, and then beaten and pinched her most cruelly. Her story was disbelieved; but the next morning, the guard stationed at the other end of the bridge which spans the river, reported that, just before midnight, a black coach and six had driven furiously past them, toward the town, without answering their challenge.

The new governor, who disbelieved the story of the apparition, took nevertheless the precaution of doubling the guard across the bridge. The same thing happened, however, night after night; the soldiers declaring that the toll-bar at their station near the bridge would rise of itself, and the spectral equipage sweep by them despite their efforts to stop it. At the same time every night, the coach would rumble into the courtyard of the house; the watchers, including the widow's family and the servants, would be thrown into a heavy sleep; and every morning the young victim would be found bruised, bleeding and swooning as before. The town was thrown into consternation. The physicians had no explanations to offer; priests came to pass the night in prayer but as midnight approached, all would be seized with the terrible lethargy. Finally, the archbishop of the province came, and performed

“He stationed fifty Cossacks along the bridge, with orders to stop the spectre-carriage at all hazards.”

the ceremony of exorcism in person, but the following morning the governor's widow was found worse than ever. She was now brought to death's door.

The governor was finally driven to take the severest measures to stop the ever-increasing panic in the town. He stationed fifty Cossacks along the bridge, with orders to stop the spectre-carriage at all hazards. Promptly at the usual hour, it was heard and seen approaching from the direction of the cemetery. The officer of the guard, and the priest bearing a crucifix, planted themselves in front of the toll-bar, and together shouted: "In the name of God, and the Czar, who goes there?" Out of the coach-window was thrust a well-remembered head, and a familiar voice responded: "The Privy Councillor of State and Governor, C—!" At the same moment, the officer, the priest and the soldiers were flung aside as by an electric shock, and the ghostly equipage passed by them, before they could recover breath.

The archbishop then resolved, as a last expedient, to resort to the time-honoured plan of exhuming the body, and pinning it to the earth with an oaken stake driven through its heart. This was done with great religious ceremony in the presence of the whole populace. The story is that the body was found gorged with blood, and with red cheeks and lips. At the instant that the first blow was struck upon the stake, a groan issued from the corpse, and a jet of blood spurted into the air. The archbishop pronounced the usual exorcism, the body was re-interred, and from that time no more was heard of the vampire.

[A Grim Experiment cont.]

front of me, wrapped from head to foot in a species of shroud, which seemed more grey than white. He was lean, melancholy and beardless, and did not altogether correspond to my preconceived notion of Apollonius. I experienced an abnormally cold sensation, and when I endeavoured to question the phantom I could not articulate a syllable. I therefore placed my hand upon the Sign of the Pentagram, and pointed the sword at the figure, commanding it mentally to obey and not alarm me, in virtue of the said sign. The form thereupon became vague, and suddenly disappeared. I directed it to return, and presently felt, as it were, a breath close by me; something touched my hand which was holding the sword, and the arm

“...and as the flame again burst up, I beheld distinctly, before the altar, the figure of a man of more than normal size, which dissolved and vanished away.”

became immediately benumbed as far as the elbow. I divined that the sword displeased the spirit, and I therefore placed it point downwards, close by me, within the circle. The human figure reappeared immediately, but I experienced such an intense weakness in all my limbs, and a swooning sensation came so quickly over me, that I made two steps to sit down, whereupon I fell into a profound lethargy, accompanied by dreams, of which I had only a confused recollection when I came again to myself. For several subsequent days

my arm remained benumbed and painful. The apparition did not speak to me, but it seemed that the questions I had designed to ask answered themselves in my mind. To that of the lady an interior voice replied “Death!” it was concerning a man about whom she desired information. As for myself, I sought to know whether reconciliation and forgiveness were possible between two persons who occupied my thoughts, and the same inexorable echo within me answered— Dead!

STALACTITES VS. STALAGMITES

Consider it significant that most of us find it impossible not to overeat at Christmas time. Likewise, we cannot avoid company on New Year’s Eve. It could be a proverb. Just try it—and afterwards, ask yourself whether you believe in free will. Look at all the women lined up and packing the halls in shopping centres before Christmas, purchasing last-minute presents for their kids and relatives. They are sweating in trolley jams. Their money drains away as their stress levels rise. There must be an enormous percentage of people who dread the festive season, yet they keep participating. Why? Don’t tell me it is free will.

Christmas could well be proof of astrology. At the least it gives astrology some credibility. The basic idea of astrology is that large invisible forces nudge us along in herds (or ‘types’) according to the position of the planets. This is another way of saying ‘according to the time of year.’ And because these forces are invisible, we are never conscious of them. So we assume Christmas time was a deliberate decision by us. We don’t think to question whether we could stop Christmas if we tried.

Some will point out that the date of Christmas existed long before Christ’s birth, and was preserved from pagan

religions as the ‘Winter Solstice.’ This only strengthens my point: they tried to change religions but the date would not budge.

Muslims believe in astrology. Ramadan might well be an attempt at resisting overeating at Christmas time. Lent may be a similar crack at achieving free will by the Catholics, at Easter. This gives a new spin to religions that are often criticised as being controlling. The stars are controlling. Disciplined practices like meditation, prayer, fasting and giving your money to the poor all take will power. Free-will power.

This is not to say that people don’t get controlled through religion. That much is obvious. What I am saying is that the religion is only the medium. Any institution or philosophy can be abused, and is abused. This is because our average underdeveloped psychological condition makes us prone to outside control. Science is no exception. The atom bomb, the industrial revolution, the pharmaceutical industry, pesticides and herbicides, asthma, cancer, pollution and other weapons of mass destruction all owe their existence to the employment of ‘scientists’ in one way or another. The Enlightenment is as ignored in science at least as much as The Golden Rule is in Religion.

But people drift yet towards one or the other, until they polarise. We might call each camp the stalagmites and stalactites. The left wing and right wing in politics are the Stalagmite Party and the Stalactite Party. They react against one or the other just like water flowing downwards. There is no reason and logic, not without free will first—just emotional reaction. There is no free will in Palestine.

Those who are developing free will are found in either camp. The religious of free will founded groups like the Salvation Army or Oxfam or World Vision. These are Quakers becoming human shields and Buddhist monks creating ethical economics in Sri Lanka. The religious of free will champion ethics to money-driven science (or ‘speak truth to power,’ as Quakers say).

The scientific of free will champion Reason and Logic to money-driven religion. They dispel illusion and cry out warnings of environmental destruction based on evidence. They prove our unity on an atomic level.

Inevitably, the free of both camps overlap. The scientific become ethical and the religious become reasonable. We can see this happening at least as well as we can see the invisible forces of Christmas.

HINDU GENTLEMAN WITH CURIOUS MENTAL POWERS

THE FOLLOWING ANECDOTE IS TAKEN FROM "THE SEVEN RAYS" BY ERNEST WOOD (PAGES 27-300), FIRST PUBLISHED 1925 (THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE).



I will recount an experience that I had in a South Indian town with an old gentleman who was expert in wielding the powers of the mind. Among the many interesting experiments that he showed me was one with a pack of cards. First he wrote something on a piece of paper, and folded it up and gave it to me to put in my pocket. Then he told me to shuffle the cards and spread them face downwards on the platform on which I was sitting in the Indian Style. When this had been done he told me to pick up any card I liked, so quite casually I let my hand drop on one of them and lifted it up. "Now," said he, "look at the card, and also at the paper which I gave you." I did so, and when I unfolded the paper I found written upon it the name of the card that I picked up. At the old gentleman's request I then handed the cards to two Hindu friends who had accompanied me to his dwelling, and then he repeated the experiment twice more, having given a new paper to each of them, and without touching the cards himself.

It then occurred to me to try a little experiment on my own account, so I requested him to give me a new paper and try again, which he was perfectly willing to do, as he was interested not merely in showing his powers but in instructing me with regard to them as far as that was possible. I shuffled the cards and spread them as before, but this time as I was about to pick one up I fixed my mind upon his and addressed him silently, saying, "Now, what ever card you have chosen, I will not have that card." Then I picked up one of the cards, took out the paper and unfolded it, and found that this time the two did not agree. No one could have been more visibly astonished than the old gentleman when I held up the paper and the card together for his inspection. He had apparently never before failed. Thereupon I told him

what I had done, and he said that that perfectly explained the matter and he would tell me how he performed the experiment.

"First," he said, "I decide upon a particular card and write down its name. Then I concentrate upon it steadily and transfer the thought to your mind, where under these conditions it is also held very steady, though without your conscious knowledge. Now, the subconscious mind has its own powers of perception, and when properly directed it is quite capable of seeing what is on the underside of these cards although the physical eye cannot do so: and further, that image in the mind next directs the hand and arm to the exact spot where the card is lying. But when you set your will against mine you must have destroyed the image that I made." In his oriental way he complimented me on the strength of my will, but it is quite possible that had he been forewarned of my intention he could have carried out the experiment successful all the same, as was indeed

along with two friends, one of whom was a member of my staff—professor of political science. This gentleman, a Hindu who had graduated with honours from Oxford university, had picked up while in England some very clever conjuring tricks with cards, and he was that evening entertaining us with some of them for the sake of relaxation. My thought was far away from any matter of psychical research; it was rather occupied with the serious troubles of the moment connected with the political movement working among the college students, and calculated in my opinion to injure their future and the country very seriously. Suddenly, without warning, I heard a full-bodied man's voice speak right in the middle of my head. It spoke only six words: "Five of clubs; try that experiment," but somehow I knew that it referred to the experience I had had at Trichinopoly some time before. I obeyed the voice, and at once wrote down 'five of clubs' on a piece of paper, folded this up, and asked my friend the professor to put it in his pocket. Next I requested him to shuffle his

“I shuffled the cards and spread them as before, but this time as I was about to pick one up I fixed my mind upon his and addressed him silently...”

”

the case with my two Hindu friends immediately after wards, when they tried not to pick up the chosen card but were literally compelled to do so every time. It may be suggested that the old gentleman ought by thought-transference to have been aware of what I was doing, but I think he was too intent upon his own part in the experiment to notice it.

Later on, I had a surprising continuation of this experience, which occurred in my own College at Hyderabad in the province of Sind, two thousand miles away from the town of Trichinopoly, where I had spent a morning with that old gentleman. One evening, after a hard day's work, I was sitting in my room

cards, which I had not touched at all, and to spread them face downwards on the floor on which we were sitting, and then pick one up at random, and compare it with what was written on the paper. When he turned up his card it proved to be the five of clubs, and you can imagine his surprise when he found that written upon the paper which was in his pocket. I do not know for certain how the voice directed me in this case; but knowing what I do of thought-power, I consider it quite reasonable to believe that the old gentleman living two thousand miles away had become aware of our occupation, had suggested the experiment to my mind, and has assisted in making it a success. As an exhibition of the way in which thought-power and the will may act in the subconscious part of the mind this experience was valuable.

THE DEMOCRACY OF THE DEAD

BELOW IS SAMPLED FROM 'ORTHODOXY' BY G.K. CHESTERTON (FIRST PUBLISHED 1908 BY DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY). THIS IS AN ABRIDGED SECTION FROM THE CHAPTER "THE ETHICS OF ELFLAND."



When the business man rebukes the idealism of his office-boy, it is commonly in some such speech as this: "Ah, yes, when one is young, one has these ideals in the abstract and these castles in the air; but in middle age they all break up like clouds, and one comes down to a belief in practical politics, to using the machinery one has and getting on with the world as it is."

Thus, at least, venerable and philanthropic old men now in their honoured graves used to talk to me when I was a boy. But since then I have grown up and have discovered that these philanthropic old men were telling lies. What has really happened is exactly the opposite of what they said would happen. They said that I should lose my ideals and begin to believe in the methods of practical politicians. Now, I have not lost my ideals in the least; my faith in fundamentals is exactly what it always was. What I have lost is my old childlike faith in practical politics. I am still as much concerned as ever about the Battle of Armageddon; but

I am not so much concerned about the General Election. As a babe I leapt up on my mother's knee at the mere mention of it. No; the vision is always solid and reliable. The vision is always a fact. It is the reality that is often a fraud. As much as I ever did, more than I ever did, I believe in Liberalism. But there was a rosy time of innocence when I believed in Liberals.

I take this instance of one of the enduring faiths because, having now to trace the roots of my personal speculation, this may be counted, I think, as the only positive bias. I was brought up a Liberal, and have always believed in democracy, in the elementary liberal doctrine of a self-governing humanity. If any one finds the phrase vague or threadbare, I can only pause for a moment to explain that the principle of democracy, as I mean it, can be stated in two propositions. The first is this: that the things common to all men are more important than the things peculiar to any men. Ordinary

things are more valuable than extraordinary things; nay, they are more extraordinary. Man is something more awful than men; something more strange. The sense of the miracle of humanity itself should be always more vivid to us than any marvels of power, intellect, art, or civilization. The mere man on two legs, as such, should be felt as something more heartbreaking than any music and more startling than any caricature. Death is more tragic even than death by starvation. Having a nose is more comic even than having a Norman nose.

This is the first principle of democracy: that

the essential things in men are the things they hold in common, not the things they hold separately. And the second principle is merely this: that the political instinct or desire is one of these things which they hold in common. Falling in love is more poetical than dropping into poetry. The democratic contention is that government (helping to rule the tribe)

“Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes, our ancestors.”

is a thing like falling in love, and not a thing like dropping into poetry. It is not something analogous to playing the church organ, painting on vellum, discovering the North Pole (that insidious habit), looping the loop, being Astronomer Royal, and so on. For these things we do not wish a man to do at all unless he does them well. It is, on the contrary, a thing analogous to writing one's own love-letters or blowing one's own nose. These things we want a man to do for himself, even if he does them badly. I am not here arguing the truth of any of these conceptions; I know that some moderns are asking to have their wives chosen by scientists, and they may soon be asking for all I know, to have their noses blown by nurses. I merely say that mankind does recognize these universal human functions, and that democracy classes government among them. In short, the democratic faith is this: that the most terribly important things must be left to ordinary men themselves—the mating of the sexes, the rearing of the young, the laws of the state. This is democracy; and in this I have always believed.

But there is one thing that I have never from my youth up been able to understand. I have never been able to understand where people got the idea that democracy was in some way opposed to tradition. It is obvious that tradition is only democracy extended through time. It is trusting to a consensus of common



human voices rather than to some isolated or arbitrary record. The man who quotes some German historian against the tradition of the Catholic Church, for instance, is strictly appealing to aristocracy. He is appealing to the superiority of one expert against the awful authority of a mob. It is quite easy to see why a legend is treated, and ought to be treated, more respectfully than a book of history. The legend is generally made by the majority of people in the village, who are sane. The book is generally written by the one man in the village who is mad. Those who urge against tradition that men in the past were ignorant may go and urge it at the Carlton Club, along with the statement that voters in the slums are ignorant. It will not do for us.

If we attach great importance to the opinion of ordinary men in great unanimity when we are dealing with daily matters, there is no reason why we should disregard it when we are dealing with history or fable. Tradition may be defined as an extension of the franchise. Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes, our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead. Tradition refuses to submit to the small and arrogant oligarchy of those who merely happen to be walking about. All democrats object to men being disqualified by the accident of birth; tradition objects to their being disqualified by the accident of death. Democracy tells us not to neglect a good man's opinion, even if he is our groom; tradition asks us not to neglect a good man's opinion, even if he is our father. I, at any rate, cannot separate the two ideas of democracy and tradition; it seems evident to me that they are the same idea. We will have the dead at our councils. The ancient Greeks voted by stones; these shall vote by tombstones. It is all quite regular and official, for most tombstones, like most ballot papers, are marked with a cross.

I have first to say, therefore, that if I have had a bias, it was always a bias in favour of democracy, and therefore of tradition. Before we come to any theoretic or logical beginnings I am content to allow for that personal equation; I have always been more inclined to believe the ruck of hard-working people than to believe that special and troublesome literary class to which I belong.

I prefer even the fancies and prejudices of the people who see life from the inside to the clearest demonstrations of the people who see life from the outside. I would always trust the old wives' fables against the old maids' facts. As long as wit is mother wit it can be as wild as it pleases.

BIG-ENDERS & SMALL-ENDERS

BELOW IS TAKEN FROM GULLIVER'S TRAVELS BY JONATHAN SWIFT (FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1726). THIS IS THE LOW-DOWN THAT THE PRINCIPLE SECRETARY GIVES TO GULLIVER IN THE ISLAND OF LILLIPUT OF HOW AND WHY THE LILLIPUTIANS ARE AT WAR (GULLIVER IS A GIANT COMPARED TO LILLIPUTIANS.)



Besides, our histories of six thousand moons make no mention of any other regions than the two great empires of Lilliput and Blefuscu. Which two mighty powers have, as I was going to tell you, been engaged in a most obstinate war for six-and-thirty moons past. It began upon the following occasion. It is allowed on all hands, that the primitive way of breaking eggs, before we eat them, was upon the larger end; but his present majesty's grandfather, while he was a boy, going to eat an egg, and breaking it according to the ancient practice, happened to cut one of his fingers. Whereupon the emperor his father published an edict, commanding all his subjects, upon great penalties, to break the smaller end of their eggs. The people so highly resented this law, that our histories tell us, there have been six rebellions raised on that account; wherein one emperor lost his life, and another his crown.

These civil commotions were constantly fomented by the monarchs of Blefuscu; and when they were quelled, the exiles always fled for refuge to that empire. It is computed that eleven thousand persons have at several times suffered death, rather than submit to break their eggs at the smaller end. Many hundred large volumes have been published upon this controversy: but the books of the Big-endians have been long forbidden, and the whole party rendered incapable by law of holding employments. During the course of these troubles, the emperors of Blefuscu did frequently expostulate by their ambassadors, accusing us of making a schism

in religion, by offending against a fundamental doctrine of our great prophet Lustrog, in the fifty-fourth chapter of the Blundecral (which is their Alcoran). This, however, is thought to be a mere strain upon the text; for the words are these: 'that all true believers break their eggs at the convenient end.' And which is the convenient end, seems, in my humble opinion to be left to every man's conscience, or at least in the power of the chief magistrate to determine. Now, the Big-endian exiles have found so much credit in the emperor of Blefuscu's court, and so much private

“ This, however, is thought to be a mere strain upon the text; for the words are these: 'That all true believers break their eggs at the convenient end.' ”

assistance and encouragement from their party here at home, that a bloody war has been carried on between the two empires for six-and-thirty moons, with various success; during which time we have lost forty capital ships, and a much a greater number of smaller vessels, together with thirty thousand of our best seamen and soldiers; and the damage received by the enemy is reckoned to be somewhat greater than ours. However, they have now equipped a numerous fleet, and are just preparing to make a descent upon us; and his imperial majesty, placing great confidence in your valour and strength, has commanded me to lay this account of his affairs before you.”

THE MYTH OF THE MISTLETOE

DECEMBER 1916. TAKEN FROM ISSUE NO. 2 OF "RAYS FROM THE ROSE CROSS." THIS WAS THE IN-HOUSE JOURNAL OF THE ESOTERIC SOCIETY, THE ROSICRUCIAN FELLOWSHIP. THE ARTICLE IS WRITTEN BY THE EDITOR AND FOUNDER, MAX HEINDEL.



The contest between light and darkness is described in innumerable myths, which are alike in the main features, though circumstances vary according to the evolutionary stage of the people among whom they are found. Generally, they appear fantastic to the normal mind because the picture drawn is highly symbolical, and therefore, out of tune with the concrete realities of the material world. But great truths are embodied in these legends which appeal when they are stripped of their scale of materialism. In the first place, it should be borne in mind that the contest between light and darkness, as fought here in the physical world, is but the manifestation of a similar contest fought also in the moral, mental, and spiritual realms. This is a fundamental truth and he who would know truth should realize that the concrete world, with all the things which we now think so real, solid and enduring, is but an evanescent manifestation created by the Divine thought, and it will dissolve into dust millions of years before the other worlds which we think of as unreal and intangible are similarly dissolved and we once more return to the bosom of the Father, to rest until the dawn of another and greater Cosmic Day.

It is particularly at Christmas or Yuletide, when the light is low and the night long, that humanity turns its attention to the Southern Sun, and waits in an attitude of expectancy for the moment when it shall again commence its Northward journey to bring back the light and life to our frozen hemisphere. In the Bible we learn how Samson, the Sun, waxed strong while his rays grew longer and how the powers of darkness, the Philistines, ferreted out the secret of his power and had his hair, or rays, cut, to rob him of his strength; how they deprived him of his light by piercing his eyes and finally slew him at the temple of the Winter Solstice. The Anglo Saxons speak of the victory of Saint George over the dragon; the Teutons call to mind how

Beowulf slew the fire drake and how Siegfried conquered the dragon Fafnir. Among the Greeks we find Apollo victorious over Python and Hercules over the dragon of the Hesperides. Most of the myths tell only the victory of the newborn Sun, but there are others which, like the story of Samson just recited, and Hiram Abiff of the Masonic legend, tell also of how the old year's Sun was vanquished after having completed its circle and was then ready to give birth to a new Sun, which rises from its ashes like the Phoenix to be the Light-bearer of a new year.

It is in such a myth that we learn of the origin of the Mistletoe, a tale which is told in Scandinavia and Iceland particularly, at Yuletide, when the red holly mingles in decorative effect with the white mistletoe—a shadow symbol of the blood that was scarlet with sin but has become white as snow. The story follows: In ancient days when the Gods of Olympus reigned over the Southland, Wotan with his company of Gods held sway in Walhall, where the icicles reflected the winter Sun in all tints of the rainbow and the beautiful coverlet of snow made light the darkest night, even without the aid of the flaming Aurora Borealis. They were a wonderful company: Tyr, the God Of War, still lives in memory among us; for him we have named Tuesday. Wotan the wisest among them is remembered in Wednesday. Thor still is with us as the God of Thursday. He was the hammer swinger; when he throws his hammer after the giants, the enemies of God and man, he made thunder and lightning by the terrific force with which his hammer struck the clouds. The gentle Freya, the Goddess of beauty, for whom we have named Friday, and the treacherous Loki, whose name lives in the Scandinavian Saturday, are other present-day fragments of a forgotten faith.

But there was no one like Baldur; he was the second son of Odin and Freya. He was the noblest and most gentle

of the Gods, beloved of everything in nature. He exceeded all beings not only in gentleness but in prudence and eloquence also, and was so fair and graceful that light radiated from him. In a dream it was revealed to him that his life was in danger and this weighed so heavily upon his spirit that he shunned the society of the Gods. His mother, Freya, having at length prevailed upon him to tell her the cause of his melancholy, called a council of the Gods and all were filled with sad forebodings, for they knew that the death of Baldur would be the forerunner of their downfall—the first victory of the giants, or powers of darkness.

Wotan therefore cast runes, magic characters, which were used to foretell the future, but all seemed dark to him, he could gain no insight. The "Vessel of Wisdom," which might have served them in their need was in the keeping of one of the Norns, the Goddesses of Fate, so that could not help them now. Ydun, the Goddess of health, whose golden apples kept the Gods ever young, had been betrayed into the powers of the giants by the trickery of Loki, the spirit of evil. But a delegation was sent to her, in order that she might be consulted on the nature of the sickness which threatened Baldur, if such it be. However, she only answered with tears and finally after a solemn council held by all the Gods, it was determined that all the elements, and everything in nature should be bound by an oath not to harm the gentle God. This was done and a pledge was obtained from everything, except one insignificant plant which grew westward of the Palace of the Gods; this seemed so frail and fragile that the Gods deemed it to be innocuous.

However, Wotan's mind still misgave him, that all was not right, it seemed to him that the Norns of good fortune had flown away. Therefore he resolved to visit the home of a celebrated prophetess by the name of Vala. This is the spirit of the earth, and from her he would learn the fate in store for

the Gods. But he received no comfort from her and returned to Walhall more cast down than formerly.

Loki, the spirit of evil and treachery, was in reality one of the giants, or powers of darkness, but part of the time he lived with the Gods. He was a turncoat, who could be depended upon

destruction must sooner or later follow and that the gentle God's life was at that time threatened by some as yet undiscovered danger. Loki replied that the anxiety of the Gods was already at an end for Freya had bound everything in nature by oath not to injure her son. But the dark

his apprehensions, they made him the butt of all their weapons. Loki repaired there also with the fatal spear, and seeing the blind and strong God Hodur, standing apart from the rest, asked him why he did not honor his brother Baldur, by tilting with him also. Hodur excused himself on account of his blindness and because he had no weapon. Loki then put the enchanted spear into his hands and Hodur, unsuspecting of malice, pierced Baldur through the breast with the spear made from the mistletoe, so that he fell lifeless to the ground to the unspeakable grief of all creatures.

Baldur is the Summer Sun, beloved by everything in nature, and in the blind God, Hodur, who slays him with the spear, we may readily recognize the sign Sagittarius, for when the Sun enters that sign in December, it is nearly without light and is therefore said to be slain by the blind God Hodur. The bow of Sagittarius, as pictured on the zodiac of the south, presents symbolically the same idea as the spear of the story in the Eddas. The legend of Baldur's death teaches the same Cosmic Truth as all other myths of kindred nature, namely, that the Spirit in the Sun must die to the glories of the Universe while, as Christ, it enters the earth to bring it the renewed life, without which all physical manifestations on our planet must cease. As death here precedes a birth into the spiritual realms, so also there is a death upon the spiritual plane of existence before a birth can take place into the physical body. As Osiris in Egypt is slain by Typhon, ere Horus, the Sun of the New Year may be born, so also Christ must die to the HigherWorld before He can be born into the earth and bring to us the needed annual spiritual impulse. Our Holly season commemorates no greater manifestation of Love than that of which the mistletoe is emblematical. Being physically the extreme of weakness, it clings to the oak which is the symbol of strength. And it is the very weakness of the weakest of beings, that pierces the heart of the noblest and gentlest of Gods so that compelled by this love for the lowly he descends to the shades in the under world, even as Christ for our sake dies to the spiritual world each year and is born into our planet that He may permeate it anew with His radiant Life and Energy.

“Saxons speak of the victory of Saint George over the dragon; the Teutons call to mind how Beowulf slew the fire drake and how Siegfried conquered the dragon Fafnir. Among the Greeks we find Apollo victorious over Python and Hercules over the dragon of the Hesperides.”

by neither party, and therefore, he was usually distrusted and despised by both Gods and giants. One day while he was sitting bemoaning his fate, a dense cloud began to rise from the ocean, and after a time the dark figure of the Giant King issued from it. Loki, in some terror, demanded what brought him hither, and the monarch began to reproach him with the contemptible part he, a demon by birth, was acting in consenting to be the tool of the Gods in their warfare against the giants; to whom he owed his origin. It was out of no affection for himself that he was admitted to the society of the Gods; but because Wotan knew well the ruin which he and his offspring were destined to bring upon them and thought by thus conciliating him to defer the evil day. He who from his power and cunning might have been a leader with either party, was now despised and rejected by all.

The Giant King further reproached him with having already frequently saved the Gods from ruin and even with furnishing them with weapons against the giants, and ended by appealing to the hatred which rankled in his bosom against Wotan and his whole race as a proof that his natural place was with the giants.

Loki acknowledged the truth of this and professed his readiness to aid his brethren by all means in his power.

The Giant King then told him that the moment was now at hand when he might seal the fate of the Gods; that if Baldur was slain their

monarch said that one thing only had been omitted; but what that was lay concealed in the breast of the Goddess and was known to no other. He then sank down again to his dark abyss and left Loki to his darker thoughts.

Loki then, having assumed the figure of an old woman, appeared to Freya and by his cunning, drew from her the fatal secret that presuming on the insignificant nature of the mistletoe she had omitted to obtain from it the pledge wherewith she had bound everything else. Loki lost no time to repair to the place where the mistletoe grew, and tearing it up by the roots gave it to the dwarfs, who were cunning smiths, to form into a spear. This weapon was made with many magic incantations and when the spear was completed one called for blood to temper it; a child free from all taint was brought in, the dwarf plunged the spear into its breast and sang:

The death-gasp hear,
Ho! Ho!—now 'tis o'er—
Soon hardens the spear
In the babe's pure gore—
Now the barbed head feel,
Whilst the veins yet bleed,
Such a deed—such a deed—
Might harden e'en steel.

In the meantime, the Gods, and the dead braves who are with them, assembled for a tournament, and as Baldur's life was now deemed to be charmed, and in order to convince him how groundless were

THE ETERNAL QUEST

THIS IS AN EXERPT (THE BEGINNING OF CHAPTER ONE) FROM THE LOST KEYS OF FREEMASONRY OR THE SECRET OF HIRAM ABIFF BY MANLY P. HALL. ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN 1923 BY THE PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY (WHICH HALL FOUNDED). HE WROTE OVER 150 BOOKS ON OCCULT AND PHILOSOPHICAL SUBJECTS. BEING BASED IN L.A., HALL WAS ALSO A WELL-KNOWN 'GURU' TO MANY HOLLYWOOD STARS, THIS APPARENTLY INCLUDING ELVIS PRESLEY.



The average Mason, as well as the modern student of Masonic ideals, little realizes the cosmic obligation he takes upon himself when he begins his search for the sacred truths of Nature as they are concealed in the ancient and modern rituals. He must not lightly regard his vows, and if he would not bring upon himself years and ages of suffering he must cease to consider Freemasonry solely as a social order only a few centuries old. He must realize that the ancient mystic teachings as perpetuated in the modern rites are sacred, and that powers unseen and unrecognized mold the destiny of those who consciously and of their own free will take upon themselves the obligations of the Fraternity.

Freemasonry is not a material thing; it is a science of the soul; it is not a creed or doctrine but a universal expression of the Divine Wisdom. The coming together of medieval guilds or even the building of Solomon's temple as it is understood today has little, if anything, to do with the true origin of Freemasonry, for Masonry does not deal with personalities. In its highest sense, it is neither historical nor archaeological, but is a divine symbolic language perpetuating under certain concrete symbols the sacred mysteries of the ancients. Only those who see in it a cosmic study, a life work, a divine inspiration to better thinking, better feeling, and better living, with the spiritual attainment of enlightenment as the end, and with the daily life of the true Mason as the means, have gained even the slightest insight into the true mysteries of the ancient rites.

The age of the Masonic school is not to be calculated by hundreds or even thousands of years, for it never had any origin in the worlds of form. The world as we see it is merely an experimental laboratory in which man is laboring to build and express greater and more perfect vehicles. Into this laboratory pour myriads of rays descending from the cosmic hierarchies. These mighty globes and orbs which focus their energies upon mankind and mold its destiny do so in

an orderly manner, each in its own way and place, and it is the working of these mystic hierarchies in the universe which forms the pattern around which the Masonic school has been built, for the true lodge of the Mason is the universe. Freed of limitations of creed and sect, he stands a master of all faiths, and those who take up the study of Freemasonry without realizing the depth, the beauty, and the spiritual power of its philosophy can never gain anything of permanence from their studies. The age of the Mystery Schools can be traced by the student back to the dawn of time, ages and aeons ago, when the temple of the Solar Man was in the making. That was the first Temple of the King, and therein were given and laid down the true mysteries of the ancient lodge, and it was the gods of creation and the spirits of the dawn who first tiled the Master's lodge.

The initiated brother realizes that his so called symbols and rituals are merely blinds fabricated by the wise to perpetuate ideas incomprehensible to the average individual. He also realizes that few Masons of today know or appreciate the mystic meaning concealed within these rituals. With religious faith we perpetuate the form, worshipping it instead of the life, but those who have not recognized the truth in the crystallized ritual, those who have not liberated the spiritual germ from the shell of empty words, are not Masons, regardless of their physical degrees and outward honors.

In the work we are taking up it is not the intention to dwell upon the modern concepts of the Craft but to consider Freemasonry as it really is to those who know, a great cosmic organism whose true brothers and children are tied together not by spoken oaths



but by lives so lived that they are capable of seeing through the blank wall and opening the window which is now concealed by the rubbish of materiality. When this is done and the mysteries of the universe unfold before the aspiring candidate, then in truth he discovers what Freemasonry really is. Its material aspects interest him no longer for he has unmasked the Mystery School which he is capable of recognizing only when he himself has spiritually become a member of it.

Those who have examined and studied its ancient lore have no doubt that Freemasonry, like the universe itself, which is the greatest of all schools, deals with the unfolding of a three-fold principle; for all the universe is governed by the same three kings who are called the builders of the Masonic temple. They are not personalities but principles, great intelligent energies and powers which in God, man, and the universe have charge of the molding of cosmic substance into the habitation of the living king, the temple built through the ages first of unconscious and then conscious effort on the part of every individual who is expressing in his daily life the creative principles of

these three kings.

The true brodaer of the ancient Craft realized that the completion of the temple he was building to the King of the Universe was a duty or rather a privilege which he owed to his God, to his brother, and to himself. He knew that certain steps must be taken and that his temple must be built according to the plan. Today it seems that the plan is lost, however, for in the majority of cases Freemasonry is no longer an operative art but is merely a speculative idea until each brother,

reading the mystery of his symbols and pondering over the beautiful allegories unfolded in his ritual, realizes that he himself contains the keys and the plans so long lost to his Craft and that if he would ever learn Freemasonry he must unlock its doors with the key wrought from the base metals of his own being.

True Freemasonry is esoteric; it is not a thing of this world. All that we have here is a link, a doorway, through which the student may pass into the unknown. Freemasonry has

nothing to do with things of form save that it realizes form is molded by and manifests the life it contains. Consequently the student is seeking so to mold his life that the form will glorify the God whose temple he is slowly building as he awakens one by one the workmen within himself and directs them to carry out the plan that has been given him out of heaven.

WHETHER THE EXISTENCE OF GOD IS SELF EVIDENT

FROM SUMMA THEOLOGICA BY THOMAS AQUINAS. HE BEGAN THIS WORK IN THE YEAR 1267, NEVER FINISHING IT. THIS ENGLISH TRANSLATION IS BY THE FATHERS OF THE ENGLISH DOMINICAN PROVINCE. IT IS FASCINATING THAT THE IDEA OF GOD WAS QUESTIONED EVEN BACK IN THE 1200'S. NOTE THAT AQUINAS WROTE IN A STYLE WHEREIN HE WOULD ANSWER OR ARGUE WITH HIMSELF. AND SO THE SECOND PARAGRAPH IS A REPLY TO THE FIRST.



Those things are said to be self-evident which are known, which the Philosopher [here he is referring to Aristotle] says is true of the first principles of demonstration. Thus, when the nature of a whole and of a part is known, it is at once known that every whole is greater than its part. But as soon as the meaning of the word "God" is understood, it is at once seen that God exists. For by this word is signified that thing than which nothing greater can be conceived. But that which exists actually and in the intellect is greater than that which exists only in the intellect. Therefore, since as soon as the word "God" is understood it exists in the intellect, it also follows that it exists actually. Therefore the proposition "God exists" is self-evident.

Reply: Perhaps not everyone who hears this word "God" understands it to signify something than which nothing greater can be thought, seeing that some have believed God to be a body. Yet, granted that everyone understand that by this word "God" is signified something than which nothing greater can be thought, nevertheless, it does not therefore allow that he understands that what

“For by this word is signified that thing than which nothing greater can be conceived.”

the word signifies exists actually, but only that it exists in the intellect. Nor can it be argued that it actually exists, unless it be admitted that there actually exists something than which nothing greater can be thought, and this is what is not admitted by those who hold that God does not exist.

“THE THIRD WAY OF PROVING GOD.”

From the same work. Thomas Aquinas listed five ways all up. We present two of them here.

The third way is taken from possibility and necessity, and runs thus. We find in nature things that are possible to be and not to be, since they are found to be generated, and to be corrupted, and consequently they are possible to be and not to be. But it is impossible for these always to exist, for that which is possible not to be at some time is not. Therefore, if everything is possible not to be,

then at one time there could have been nothing in existence. Now if this were true, even now there would be nothing in existence, because that which does not exist only begins to exist by something already existing. Therefore, if at one time nothing was in existence, it would have been impossible for anything to have begun to exist; and thus even now nothing would be in existence—which is clearly false. Therefore, not all beings are merely possible, but there must exist something the existence of which is necessary. But every necessary thing either has its necessity caused by another, or not. Now it is impossible to go on to infinity in necessary things which have their necessity caused by another, as has been already proved in regard to efficient causes [he refers to an earlier paragraph not shown here, where a 'first cause' is considered necessary]. Therefore, we must admit the existence of some being having of itself its own necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God.

“THE FOURTH WAY OF PROVING GOD.”

The fourth way is taken from the gradation to be found in things. Among beings there are some more and some less good, true, noble, and the like. But "more" and "less" are predicated of different things, according as they resemble in their different ways something which is the maximum, as a thing is said to be hotter according as it more nearly resembles that which is hottest. There is then, something which is truest, something best, something noblest, and consequently, something which is most being; for those things that are greatest in truth are greatest in being, as it is written in the Metaphysics [by Aristotle]. Now the maximum in any genus is the cause of all in that genus; as fire, which is the maximum of heat, is the cause of all hot things as is said in the same book. Therefore there must also be something which is to all beings the cause of their being, goodness, and every other perfection. And this we call God.

HOW TO RENDER ONESELF INVISIBLE



FROM THE KEY OF SOLOMON, FIRST PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH IN 1889, BY S. LIDDELL MACGREGOR MATHERS (FOUNDER OF THE HERMETIC ORDER OF THE GOLDEN DAWN). HE TRANSLATED IT FROM HEBREW AND LATIN MANUSCRIPTS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM. THE WORK IS ATTRIBUTED TO KING SOLOMON BUT THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT IS DETERIORATED, AND OVER THE CENTURIES IT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED IN VARIOUS LANGUAGES. TRANSLATORS HAVE ADDED OR EDITED VARIOUS PARTS—SOMETIMES ENTIRE CHAPTERS.

PRESENTED FOR YOUR INTEREST IS A SMALL EXCERPT OF THE INVISIBILITY RITE, WHICH CANNOT BE PROPERLY PERFORMED FROM WHAT IS PROVIDED HERE.

Make a small image of yellow wax, in the form of a man, in the month of January and in the day and hour of Saturn, and at that time write with a needle above the crown of its head and upon its skull which thou shalt have adroitly raised, the character following (See Figure 5.) After which thou shalt replace the skull in proper position. Thou shalt then write upon a small strip of the skin of a frog or toad which thou shalt have killed, the following words and characters. (Figure 6.) Thou shalt then go and suspend the said figure by one of thy hairs from the vault of a cavern at the hour of midnight, and perfuming it with the proper incense thou shalt say:—

Metatron, Melekh, Beroth, Noth, Venibeth, Mach, and all ye, I conjure thee, O Figure of wax, by the Living God, that by the virtue of these Characters and words, thou render me invisible, wherever I may bear thee with me. Amen.

And after having censed it anew, thou shalt bury it in the same place in a small deal box, and every time that thou wishes to pass or enter into any place without being seen, thou shalt say these words, bearing the aforesaid figure in thy left pocket:—

Come unto me and never quit me whithersoever I shall go.

Afterwards thou shalt take it carefully back into the before-mentioned place and cover it with earth until thou shalt need it again.

Fig 5



Fig 6



THE HUMAN MACHINE

A REDEFINING OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Imagine a robot that has a limited number of responses. If you say hello to it, the robot automatically reacts with: “Hi, how are you today?” If you keep greeting the robot, the repeated response would get annoying and it would not take long for you to recognise it as a machine.

But say the creator programs it so that at every third time someone greets the robot, it changes its response to a second sentence: “Fine day, isn’t it?” In this case you would take longer to catch on it was a robot, but not much longer.

Now picture a robot with hundreds of programmed responses to a wide range of everyday interactions, so that it might take a whole year before it repeats itself. Even then, humans repeat themselves a lot too. Mistaking complexity for consciousness, you might confide in the

robot. You might argue with it, try to convince it of your political views. It would respond each time according to its pre-recorded programming. How long would it take before you cottoned on that it was a machine?

It is not uncommon to refer to the human body as a machine. But of course, people have ‘internal’ thoughts and feelings and because of this we are thought of as conscious. We even have political and religious views and if somebody attacks them we react emotionally.

This is an interesting occurrence. Because we ‘identify’ with the beliefs that were ‘programmed’ into us, we feel it is us who are being attacked when the beliefs are challenged. That is, we identify with belief systems because we have no identity of our own; like machines. As such, we

‘borrow’ a belief system for which to use as a surrogate identity.

It is this phenomenon of ‘getting emotional’ that we usually associate with sentience. But this same phenomenon actually proves our lack of free will. We respond automatically – an emotional exchange is something like a pinball machine.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The study of Artificial Intelligence, or A.I., allows another approach to the subject. British computer scientist Alan Turing (died 1954) thought that the human brain must be a machine – and that as such we should be able to emulate brains with computers. Therefore, he reasoned, computers can be intelligent. He invented what is known as the Turing Test, which became the bar for testing artificial intelligence. No computer has

passed it yet.

However, as Jeff Hawkins with his associates of Numenta Inc. (Donna Dubinsky and Dileep George), have noticed, most computers are not modelled on the human brain. After studying the brain and finding it naturally hierarchical in its recording, organizing and contextualizing of information, Hawkins and his associates came up with the invention of the Hierarchical Temporal Memory (or HTM). From the Numenta Inc. website, we find this explanation: —

“Hierarchical Temporal Memory (HTM) is a technology that replicates the structural and algorithmic properties of the neocortex. HTM therefore offers the promise of building machines that approach or exceed human level performance for many cognitive tasks.”

The HTM is a memory system that doesn't just perform a function, but can learn from the past, infer causes and make predictions. This sounds frighteningly promising.

But what would it mean if a machine could consistently beat the Turing test?

I would like to reverse Turing's reasoning: the human brain is a machine; therefore we can emulate brains with computers; therefore, what we previously considered to be intelligent is in fact a machine. The idea here is that rather than man creating artificial intelligence, I propose that man is artificial intelligence.

In Mary Shelley's fiction, Dr. Frankenstein created a dangerous automation that reacted to external stimuli with little rumination. Upon discovering this, the townspeople reacted dangerously to it with little rumination.

Later, I will show that this idea is not new.

IDEAS

What we call the evolution of ideas shows evidence in itself of the absence of evolution in humans. This is because a distinction between the ideas and their carriers becomes apparent. How many of us actually understand Einstein's general theory of relativity? What percentage of the population, I wonder. Most of us know the catch phrases associated with it, sayings like 'everything is relative.' Einstein himself saw this when referring to the genius Jan Smuts. In a recent article of *The Beacon*, Ivan Kovacs says:

“Albert Einstein who, after reading Smuts' *Holism and Evolution*, wrote that two mental constructs will direct human thinking in the next (now present) millennium, his own mental construct of relativity and Smuts' holism. He further remarked that Smuts was 'one

of only eleven men in the world' who conceptually understood his Theory of Relativity.”

Similarly, how many people are really familiar with Charles Darwin's theories? Many people faultily sum it up with, “We evolved from apes.”

What people do know well is what ideas are up-to-date. We know what we are supposed to believe these days, and what terminology to use.

In Islam, there is an old metaphor of the donkey. A donkey is a beast that can carry many books on its back but it cannot use them. It cannot read, let alone understand the information. The masses of humanity are not unlike the donkey.

“It is this phenomenon of getting emotional that we usually associate with sentience. But this same phenomenon actually proves our lack of free will.”

The belief that there has been increased development is based on the development of the ideas, rather than their carriers. Instead of change, we have generally remained constant as receivers—not necessarily users—of information. Here is an extract from the science fiction book *Venus Plus X*, by Theodore Sturgeon:

“[...] no item of man's language, or religion, or social organization [is] carried in his germ cell. In other words you take a baby, any colour, any country, and plank it down anywhere else, and it would grow up to be like the people of the new country. And then there was that article he saw containing the same idea, but extending it throughout the entire course of human history; take an Egyptian baby of the time of Cheops, and plank it down in modern Oslo, and it would grow up to be a Norwegian, able to learn Morse code and maybe even have a prejudice against Swedes. What all this amounted to was that the most careful study by the most unbiased observers of the entire course of human history had been unable to unearth a single example of human evolution. The fact that humanity had come up out of the caves and finally built an elaborate series of civilizations was beside the point; say it took them thirty thousand years to do it; it was a fair bet that a clutch of modern babies, reared just far enough to be able to find their own food and then cast into the wilderness, might well take just as long to build things up again.” (Pages 33, 34.)

Ouspensky the Russian occultist had trouble with this idea when his teacher Gurdjieff presented it to him at the beginning of the First World War. In Ouspensky's book, *In Search of The Miraculous*, he relates the conversation: —

“For a man of Western culture, I said, 'it is of course difficult to believe and to accept the idea that an ignorant fakir, a naive monk, or a yogi who has retired from life may be on the way to evolution while an educated European, armed with 'exact knowledge' and all the latest methods of investigation, has no chance whatever and is moving in a circle from which there is no escape.'

“Yes, that is because people believe in progress and culture,” said G. “There is no progress whatever. Everything is just the same as it was thousands, and tens of thousands, of years ago. The outward form changes. The essence does not change. Man remains just the same. 'Civilized' and 'cultured'

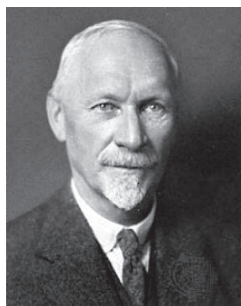
people live with exactly the same interests as the most ignorant savages. Modern civilization is based on violence and slavery and fine words. But all these fine words about 'progress' and 'civilization' are merely words.”

Most people I've discussed this idea with agree with to an extent, but not all the way. More especially, they would not go as far as to believe it applies to them. In fact, everybody you ask will no doubt say they are individuals. It would be most individual to admit you are not.

But the conviction of occultists like Gurdjieff is that for the most part humans have very little free will. His proposition is that the vast majority, educated or not, are controlled almost exclusively by external influences, and therefore could be called machines.

Alice A. Bailey, an English occultist around the same time, in her *Esoteric Psychology Volume 2*, gives us five definitions of the human personality, to be considered sequential. The first one runs: —

“A personality is a separated human being. We could perhaps say equally well a separative human being. This is the poorest and most loosely used definition; it applies to common usage and regards each human being as a person. This definition is consequently not true. Many people are simply animals with vague higher impulses, which remain simply impulses. There are those also



who are primarily nothing more or less than mediums. This term here is used to apply to all those types of persons who go blindly and impotently upon their way, swayed by their lower dense desire nature, of which the physical body is only the expression or medium. They are influenced by the mass consciousness, mass ideas, and mass reactions, and therefore find themselves quite incapable of being anything definitely self-initiated, but are standardised by mass complexes. They are, therefore, mediums with mass ideas; they are swept by urges which are imposed upon them by teachers and demagogues, and are receptive—without any thought or reasoning—to every school of thought (spiritual, occult, political, religious, and philosophical). May I repeat they are simply mediums; they are receptive to ideas which are not their own or self-achieved.”

Gurdjieff agrees with the above, but puts it in another way:

“Man has no individuality. He has no single, big I. Man is divided into a multiplicity of small I’s.

“And each separate small I is able to call itself by the name of the Whole, to act in the name of the Whole, to agree or disagree, to give promises, to make decisions, with which another I or the whole will have to deal. This explains why people so often make decisions and so seldom carry them out. A man decides to get up early beginning from the following day. One I, or a group of I’s, decide this. But getting up is the business of another I who entirely disagrees with the decision and may even know absolutely nothing about it. Of course the man will again go on sleeping in the morning and in the evening he will again decide to get up early. In some cases this may assume very unpleasant consequences for a man. A small accidental I may promise something, not to itself, but to someone else at a certain moment simply out of vanity or for amusement. Then it disappears, but the man, that is, the Whole, has to meet them. People’s lives often consist of paying off the promissory notes of small accidental I’s.”

This admittedly seems too black and white. But as said, Alice A. Bailey listed five stages all up of a human personality, from automation to master. As they proceed, union of the various parts of the man would be achieved. Eventually, union of personality and

soul would come about, thus constituting an intelligent being. Think of the word individual as something like indivisible.

It is interesting, in this light, that the word yoga is usually translated as ‘union.’ It directly comes from yuj, in Sanskrit, which means ‘yoke,’ as in the yoke that holds bullocks together when ploughing fields.

But until (and unless) such union happens, man is (as Bailey said) but a negative medium for external forces. Gurdjieff states it plainly: in order to do, first you have to be. In Ouspensky’s book, Gurdjieff’s followers asked him things like, ‘How do we stop war?’ Constantly, he returned to the point that we have to get rid of the illusion that we are able to do anything. “Things just happen,” he said. That is, they happen through us. “Nobody does anything.”

But he did allow for the possibility of evolution. “Everything in the world,” he said, “from solar systems to man, and from man to atom, either rises or descends, either evolves or degenerates, either develops or decays. But nothing evolves mechanically. Only degeneration and destruction proceeds mechanically. That which cannot evolve consciously—degenerates. Help from outside is possible only in so far as it is valued and accepted, even if it is only by feeling in the beginning.”

Consider all of this in the light of Climate Change and the constant presence of wars in our or any other time. Consider Jerusalem as a knot of misunderstood forces in which anyone who enters into its vicinity become unconscious tools of such forces. Consider, too, how many times revolutionaries have become the monsters they intended to overthrow. ‘We cannot do anything,’ insists Gurdjieff. The idea is not preposterous.

DEFINITIONS OF LIFE

Still, the idea that we are forms of artificial intelligence feels incomplete. It is difficult to shake the belief that we are genuinely alive. This could be true (I believe it!) and perhaps it is the general definition of life that is the problem.

Itzhak Bentov (died May 25, 1979) the Czech born inventor (known for his holographic model of the universe) speaks for a lesser-known definition of life, which includes even minerals. From *Stalking The Wild Pendulum*: —

“We may at first have trouble trying to visualise a rock or an atom as a living thing because we associate consciousness with life. But this notion is just a human limitation; a rock may also have difficulty in understanding human consciousness. At present we restrict the term ‘living beings’ to beings that can reproduce. This, I believe, is quite arbitrary. We seem to project our own behaviour onto other systems, by saying that

starting from the atom and going to larger aggregates there is no ‘life,’ and then suddenly, when the aggregates of atoms have reached a certain stage of organization, ‘life’ appears, because we can recognise our own behaviour in it. My basic premise is that consciousness resides in matter; put another way, all mass (matter) contains consciousness (or life) to a greater or lesser extent. It may be refined or primitive.”

His view is not unique. The Theosophist H.P. Blavatsky said as much many years earlier in her *The Secret Doctrine*: —

“Not only the chemical compounds are the same, but the same infinitesimal invisible Lives compose the atoms of the bodies of the mountain and the daisy, of man and the ant, of the elephant and of the tree which shelters it from the sun. Each particle—whether you call it organic or inorganic—is a Life.”

Alice A. Bailey devoted her book *The Consciousness of The Atom* to studying this theory. She wrote: “In looking over one scientific book last week it was discouraging to find the author pointing out that the atom of the chemist, of the physicist, of the mathematician, and of the metaphysician were four totally different things. That is another reason why it is not possible to be dogmatic in dealing with these questions.”

Proceeding, she gives us Thomas Edison’s view on the issue: —

“[...] I want to point out what Edison is reported by an interviewer as having said in *Harper’s Magazine* for February 1890, and which is enlarged upon in the *Scientific American* for October 1920. In the earlier instance he is quoted as follows: —

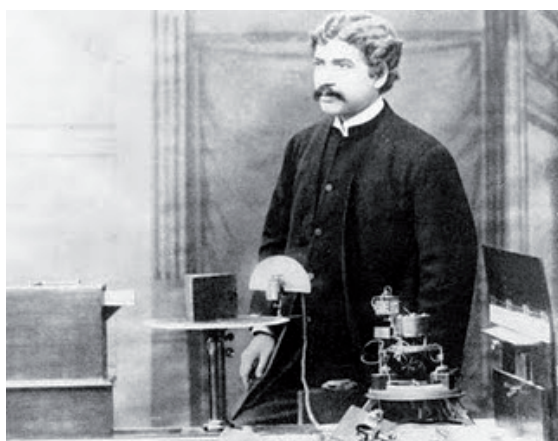
“I do not believe that matter is inert, acted upon by an outside force. To me it seems that every atom is possessed by a certain amount of primitive intelligence. Look at the thousands of ways in which atoms of hydrogen combine with those of other elements, forming the most diverse substances. Do you mean to say that they do this without intelligence? Atoms in harmonious and useful relation assume beautiful or interesting shapes and colours, or give forth a pleasant perfume, as if expressing their satisfaction, gathered together in certain forms, the atoms constitute animals of the lowest order. Finally they combine in man, who represents the total intelligence of all the atoms.”

Finally, I would like to include a section from Dr Annie Besant’s book *A Study In Consciousness*, where she shows us the experiments of Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose, pioneer of the investigation of radio and microwave optics and plant scientist.

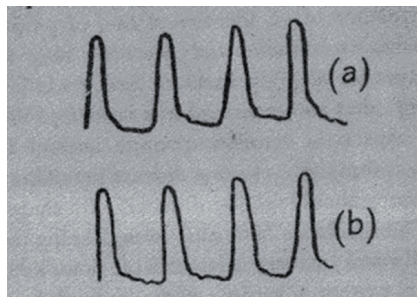
She begins:

‘Professor Jagadesh Chandra Bose, M.A., DSC., of Calcutta, has definitely proved that so-called “inorganic matter” is responsive to stimulus, and that the response is identical from metals, vegetables, animals and—so far as experiment can be made—man.

‘He arranged apparatus to measure the stimulus applied, and to show in



curves, traced on a revolving cylinder, the response from the body receiving the stimulus. He then compared the curves obtained in tin and in other metals with those obtained from muscle, and found that the curves from tin were identical with those from muscle, and that other metals gave curves of like nature but varied in the period of recovery.

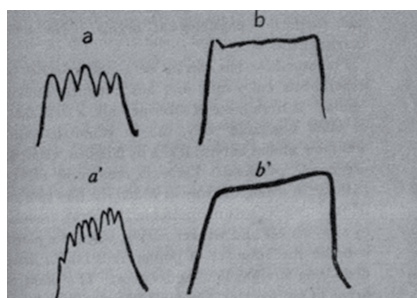


(a) Series of electric responses to successive mechanical stimuli at intervals of half a minute, in tin. (b) Mechanical responses in muscle.

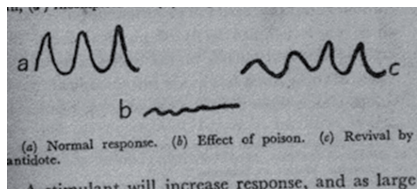
‘Tetanus, both complete and incomplete, due to repeated shocks, was caused and similar results accrued, in mineral as in muscle.

‘Fatigue was shown by metals least of all by tin. Chemical reagents, such as drugs, produced similar results on metals with those known to result with animals—exciting, depressing, and deadly. (By deadly is meant resulting in the destruction of the power of response.)

‘A poison will kill metal, inducing a condition of immobility, so that no response is obtainable. If the poisoned metal be taken in time, an antidote may save its life.



Effects analogous to (a) incomplete and (b) complete tetanus in tin, (a') incomplete and (b') complete tetanus in muscle.



(a) Normal response. (b) Effect of poison. (c) Revival by antidote.

‘A stimulant will increase response, and as large and small doses of a rig have been found to kill and stimulate respectively, so have they been found to act on metals. “Among such phenomena,” asks Professor Bose, “how can we draw a line of demarcation and say: ‘Here the physical process ends, and there the physiological begins?’ No such barrier exists.”

(These details are taken from a paper given by Professor Bose at the Royal Institute, May 10th, 1901, entitled “The response of Inorganic Matter to Stimulus”)

The proposal of this article is that humans (generally) are of a quality of intelligence – or awareness – that might as well be artificial. No matter how complex, there is little free will involved. We are possessed by involuntary daydreams and physical sloth, driven by emotional reactions, mindless gossip and fear.

However, there is real life there, as there is with any form of matter. This gives us the implied potential and hope.

It would be natural to think that education – or increased knowledge – is what is needed to bring about real consciousness and free will. But this is an illusion, remembering the analogy of the donkey. The task is to create a stable point of consciousness, a permanent ‘I,’ which does not get submerged in daydreams or emotional concerns every few seconds.

Ouspensky relates how Gurdjieff saw the issue: “‘There are,’ he said, ‘two lines along which man’s development proceeds, the line of knowledge and the line of being. In right evolution the line of knowledge and the line of being develop simultaneously, parallel to, and helping one another.’” And further: —

“‘People understand what ‘knowledge’ means. And they understand the possibility of different levels of knowledge. They understand that knowledge may be lesser or greater, that is to say, of one quality or of another quality. But they do not understand this in relation to ‘being.’ ‘Being’ for them, means simply ‘existence’ to which is opposed just ‘non-existence.’ They do not understand that being or existence may be of very different levels and categories.”

To illustrate the point he gives the following example:

“[...] In Western culture it is considered that a man may possess great knowledge, for example he may be an able scientist, make discoveries, advance science, and at the same time he may be, and has the right to be, a petty, egoistic, cavilling, mean, envious, vain, naïve, and absent-minded man. It seems to be considered here that a professor must always forget his umbrella everywhere.”

To return to the idea of most of us being donkeys, here is a quote from Wikipedia in relation to the word yoga: “Outside India, the term yoga is typically associated with Hatha Yoga and its asanas (postures) or as a form of exercise.”

So we see the degeneration of the word.

SYSTEMS OF DEVELOPMENT

There are many systems of union, or of ‘increasing one’s being’. Given old word associations, it is important to distinguish between the word yoga with its different usages, and what it originally signified. It is not merely stretching exercises,

and it includes more than the one type of yoga called Hatha, whose emphasis is the development of the physical body. Gurdjieff called striving toward union ‘the work’, or The Fourth Way. Bailey called it either yoga or practical occultism. The Golden Dawn called it magic. Religious mystics called it prayer or worship. We might here define it as taking the ‘artificial’ out of ‘artificial intelligence’.

If we cannot ‘do’ anything externally, maybe we can strive for the opposite. That is—stop letting external influences do things through us. Consider vows of silence and fasts. Consider ‘turning the other cheek’. Consider how Buddha stopped everything and sat under a tree.

BEING AND DOING

William Burroughs called humans ‘The Soft Machine.’ In his novel *Junky* he describes one of the many times he tried to kick his heroine addiction. The more he holds out against the junk craving, the more time he spends in bars, drinking; the less of a junky he is, the more of a drunk he becomes. Soon he is such a sloppy drunk, always getting into trouble, that his friend Ike says, “You’re drinking, Bill. You’re drinking and getting crazy. You look terrible. You look terrible in your face. Better you should go back to stuff [junk] than drink like this.”

It is as if in trying to evict one demon from the front door, another inches its way in the back door. Burroughs was an empty house, and nature hates a void. He – and all the rest of us — could do nothing significant so long as the void existed. (The void represents the absence of consciousness.)

Now reflect on the Russian Revolution. Think of William Burroughs as Russia. Heroin is the Tsar, and alcohol is the Bolsheviks. One external (and harmful) influence swapped for another. In an attempt to ‘do’ something, the same result occurred. Whether communism works or not is completely beside the point. If there is no free will psychologically, there could never be any politically. This would explain the occurrence of new governments eventually resembling the old ones.

Alice A. Bailey had the interesting idea that humans themselves are ‘atoms’ in the greater life we call planet Earth (humans constituting the brain). It should be noted that almost all occult traditions – including all those mentioned above – have advocated group work as preferred to solitary work. When considering this, coupled with Bailey’s idea of a macrocosmic being, we can imagine a group of people constituting the ‘point of consciousness’ or the permanent ‘I’ in the planet. This would imply that as ‘being’ increases, ‘doing’ becomes correspondingly more possible—and also less harmful.

It is interesting, then, that issues (and groups) relating to Climate Change call more for working on ourselves instead of others, and for the ‘stopping of doing’ (for example, resisting convenience in regard to the technologies that burn fossil fuels). The same applies to war.

The same again applies to the Economy: the argument there is whether to leave it alone as a rising and falling 'automation' that controls us without intelligence (the free market system)—or not.

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FATHER CHRISTMAS DOES EXIST

Santa Clause does exist. He exists in the Fourth Century, in the area that is now northern Turkey, under the name of Saint Nicholas. To say that he doesn't exist is a lie, as much of a lie as saying he has magic reindeers and a home in present day North Pole.

The obvious rebuttal is to say he existed—not exists—in the past tense. My argument is that this is not more truthful, just more 'our-own-time-centric'. Biased, in other words, like a metaphysical prejudice. Saint Nicholas does exist in that time and place. Being biased towards our own time and place is closed-minded, and leads to illusion and even violence. A case in point: somebody once said that the world is flat, based on the fact that no one in his own time could prove that it was round. Somebody could prove it, of course, in the future. But some notable people went to prison or were tortured, or killed, because they did not cater to the time-bias (shall I say 'timeism?'). Giordano Bruno, I hear, is being burned at the stake in 1590 for affirming the Earth's motion around the sun.

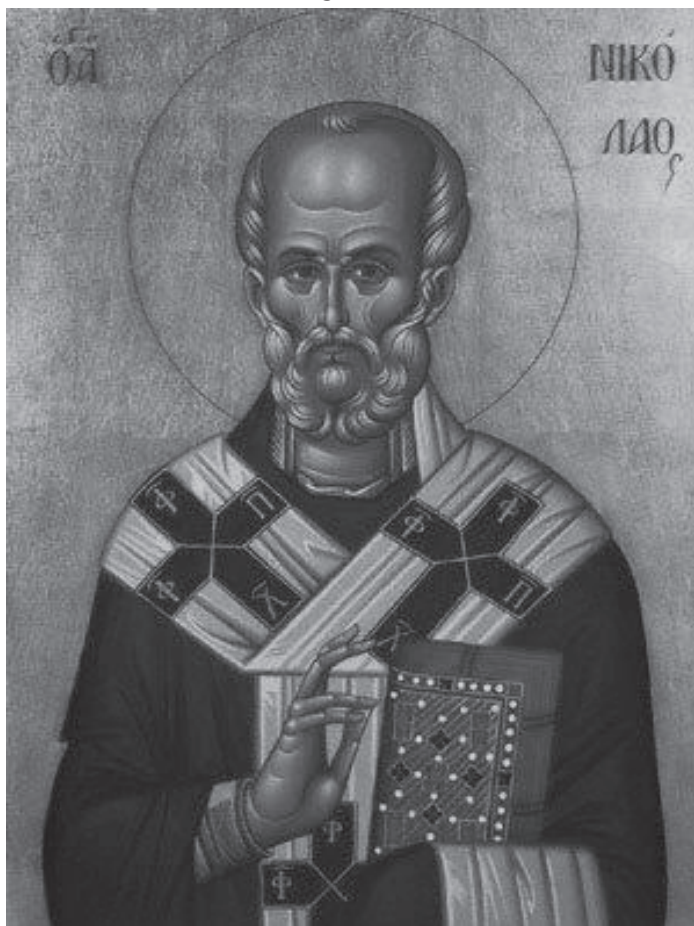
I once heard an atheist say: "The burden of proof is on the believer; I don't have to prove God does not exist, they need to prove he does." This is the same as saying:

"Nothing exists unless we can prove it exists." If this is true, then the universe needs to run everything by humans before doing anything. If it is true, then the world was indeed flat, and it transformed into a sphere only at the moment we could prove it a sphere. It is human-centeredness posing as reason.

Given a modern understanding of space-time, and the implied 'time-centeredness' we suffer from (not to mention human-centeredness), we must acknowledge a limit to human



“If this is true, then the universe needs to run everything by humans before doing anything.”



understanding. We cannot understand a theoretical being that either is an entire universe or created an entire universe (God) any more than an ant can understand algebra. The act of personifying him as an old man in a beard is dumbing him down to our level, so we can own him. Similarly, to say this theoretical being doesn't exist is reacting against something we can't own.

To disbelieve is as much an act of faith as is to believe. The agnostic, not the atheist, is being reasonable. Buddha said the beginning of wisdom to be able to say, "I don't know".

We don't necessarily need to grow out of believing in Santa, we need to deepen our understanding of who and when (and what) he really is.