



Theosophical Society

Point Loma - Blavatskyhouse

Literature, supporting the study (on Sunday, April **07**, 2024)
of the lecture of Erwin Bomas (on Sunday, March **24**, 2024)

Series: **Evolution: one joined path of inner growth**

Lecture: **Technology and the future of humanity**

Plato, *Philebus*, 54a-54c

From: Cooper, J.M. and Hutchinson, D.S. (ed.) (1997). *Plato, Complete Works*. Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.

SOCRATES: Take on the one hand the *generation* of all things, on the other their *being*.

PROTARCHUS: I also accept this pair from you, being and generation.

SOCRATES: Excellent. Now, which of the two do you think exists for the other's sake? Shall we say that generation takes place for the sake of being, or does being exist for the sake of generation?"

PROTARCHUS: Whether what is called being is what it is for the sake of generation, is that what you want to know?

SOCRATES: Apparently.

PROTARCHUS: By heavens, what a question to ask me! You might as well ask: "Tell me, Protarchus, whether shipbuilding goes on for the sake of ships or whether ships are for the sake of shipbuilding," or some such thing.

SOCRATES: That is precisely what I am talking about, Protarchus.

PROTARCHUS: What keeps you from answering your questions yourself, Socrates?

SOCRATES: Nothing, provided you take your share in the argument.

PROTARCHUS: I am quite determined to.

SOCRATES: I hold that all ingredients, as well as all tools, and quite generally all materials, are always provided for the sake of some process of generation. I further hold that every process of generation in turn always takes place for the sake of some particular being, and that all generation taken together takes place for the sake of being as a whole.

PROTARCHUS: Nothing could be clearer.

Helena P. Blavatsky, 'Conversations on Occultism'

in *The Path*, New York, Vol. III, Nos. 1-6, April, May, June, July, August, September, 1888, pp. 17-21, 54-58, 94-96, 125-129, 160-163, and 187-192 respectively.

in H.P. Blavatsky, *Collected Writings*, Vol. 9, p. 99-104

THE KALI YUGA — THE PRESENT AGE

Student. I am very much puzzled about the present age. Some theosophists seem to abhor it as if wishing to be taken away from it altogether, inveighing against modern inventions such as the telegraph, railways, machinery, and the like, and bewailing the disappearance of former civilizations. Others take a different view, insisting that this is a better time than any other, and hailing modern methods as the best. Tell me, please, which of these is right, or, if both are wrong, what ought we to know about the age we live in.

Sage. The teachers of Truth know all about this age. But they do not mistake the present century for the whole cycle. The older times of European history, for example, when might was right and when darkness prevailed over Western nations, was as much a part of this age, from the standpoint of the Masters, as is the present hour, for the Yuga – to use a Sanskrit word – in which we are now had begun many thousands of years before. And during that period of European darkness, although this Yuga had already begun, there was much light, learning, and civilization in India and China. The meaning of the words “present age” must therefore be extended over a far greater period than is at present assigned. In fact, modern science has reached no definite conclusion yet as to what should properly be called “an age,” and the truth of the Eastern doctrine is denied. Hence we find writers speaking of the “Golden Age,” the “Iron Age,” and so on, whereas they are only parts of the real age that began so far back that modern archaeologists deny it altogether.

Student. What is the Sanskrit name for this age, and what is its meaning?

Sage. The Sanskrit is “Kali,” which added to Yuga gives us “Kali-Yuga.” The meaning of it is “Dark Age.” Its approach was known to the ancients, its characteristics are described in the Indian poem the *Mahabharata*. As I said that it takes in an immense period of the glorious part of Indian history, there is no chance for anyone to be jealous and to say that we are comparing the present hour with that wonderful division of Indian development.

Student. What are the characteristics to which you refer, by which *Kali-Yuga* may be known?

Sage. As its name implies, darkness is the chief. This of course is not deducible by comparing to-day with 800 A.D., for this would be no comparison at all. The present century is certainly ahead of the middle ages, but as compared with the preceding Yuga it is dark. To the Occultist, material advancement is not of the quality of light, and he finds no proof of progress in merely mechanical contrivances that give comfort to a few of the human family while the many are in misery. For the darkness he would have to point but to one nation, even the great American Republic. Here he sees a mere extension of the habits and life of the Europe from which it sprang; here a great experiment with entirely new conditions and material was tried; here for many years very little poverty was known; but here to-day there is as much grinding poverty as anywhere, and as large a criminal class with corresponding prisons as in Europe, and more than in India. Again, the great thirst for riches and material betterment, while spiritual life is to a great extent ignored, is regarded by us as darkness. The great conflict already begun between the wealthy classes and the poorer is a sign of darkness. Were spiritual light prevalent, the rich and the poor would still be with us, for Karma cannot be blotted out, but the poor would know how

to accept their lot and the rich how to improve the poor; now, on the contrary, the rich wonder why the poor do not go to the poorhouse, meanwhile seeking in the laws for cures for strikes and socialism, and the poor continually growl at fate and their supposed oppressors. All this is of the quality of spiritual darkness.

Student. Is it wise to inquire as to the periods when the cycle changes, and to speculate on the great astronomical or other changes that herald a turn?

Sage. It is not. There is an old saying that the gods are jealous about these things, not wishing mortals to know them. We may analyse the age, but it is better not to attempt to fix the hour of a change of cycle. Besides that, you will be unable to settle it, because a cycle does not begin on a day or year clear of any other cycle; they inter-blend, so that, although the wheel of one period is still turning, the initial point of another has already arrived.

Student. Are these some of the reasons why Mr. Sinnett was not given certain definite periods of years about which he asked?

Sage. Yes.

Student. Has the age in which one lives any effect on the student; and what is it?

Sage. It has effect on everyone, but the student after passing along in his development feels the effect more than the ordinary man. Were it otherwise, the sincere and aspiring students all over the world would advance at once to those heights towards which they strive. It takes a very strong soul to hold back the age's heavy hand, and it is all the more difficult because that influence, being a part of the student's larger life, is not so well understood by him. It operates in the same way as a structural defect in a vessel. All the inner as well as the outer fibre of the man is the result of the long centuries of earthly lives lived here by his ancestors. These sow seeds of thought and physical tendencies in a way that you cannot comprehend. All those tendencies affect him. Many powers once possessed are hidden so deep as to be unseen, and he struggles against obstacles constructed ages ago. Further yet are the peculiar alterations brought about in the astral world. It, being at once a photographic plate, so to say, and also a reflector, has become the keeper of the mistakes of ages past which it continually reflects upon us from a plane to which most of us are strangers. In that sense therefore, free as we suppose ourselves, we are walking about completely hypnotized by the past, acting blindly under the suggestions thus cast upon us.

Student. Was that why Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, *for they know not what they do*"?

Sage. That was one meaning. In one aspect they acted blindly, impelled by the age, thinking they were right.

Regarding these astral alterations, you will remember how in the time of Julian the seers reported that they could see the gods, but they were decaying, some headless, others flaccid, others minus limbs, and all appearing weak. The reverence for these ideals was departing, and their astral pictures had already begun to fade.

Student. What mitigation is there about this age? Is there nothing at all to relieve the picture?

Sage. There is one thing peculiar to the present *Kali-Yuga* that may be used by the Student. All causes now bring about their effects much more rapidly than in any other or better age. A sincere lover of the race can accomplish more in three incarnations under *Kali-Yuga's* reign than he could in a much greater number in any other age. Thus by bearing all the manifold troubles of this Age and steadily triumphing, the object of his efforts will be more quickly realized, for, while the obstacles seem great, the powers to be invoked can be reached more quickly.

Student. Even if this is, spiritually considered, a Dark Age, is it not in part redeemed by the increasing triumphs of mind over matter, and by the effects of science in mitigating human ills, such as the causes of disease, disease itself, cruelty, intolerance, bad laws, etc.?

Sage. Yes, these are mitigations of the darkness in just the same way that a lamp gives some light at night but does not restore daylight. In this age there are great triumphs of science, but they are nearly all directed to *effects* and do not take away the *causes* of the evils. Great strides have been made in the arts and in cure of diseases, but in the future, as the flower of our civilization unfolds, new diseases will arise and more strange disorders will be known, springing from causes that lie deep in the minds of men and which can only be eradicated by spiritual living.

Student. Admitting all you say, are not we, as Theosophists, to welcome every discovery of truth in any field, especially such truth as lessens suffering or enlarges the moral sense?

Sage. That is our duty. All truths discovered must be parts of the one Absolute Truth, and so much added to the sum of our outer knowledge. There will always be a large number of men who seek for these parts of truth, and others who try to alleviate present human misery. They each do a great and appointed work that no true Theosophist should ignore. And it is also the duty of the latter to make similar efforts when possible, for Theosophy is a dead thing if it is not turned into the life. At the same time, no one of us may be the judge of just how much or how little our brother is doing in that direction. If he does all that he can and knows how to do, he does his whole present duty.

Student. I fear that a hostile attitude by Occult teachers towards the learning and philanthropy of the time may arouse prejudice against Theosophy and Occultism, and needlessly impede the spread of Truth. May it not be so?

Sage. The real Occult Teachers have no hostile attitude towards these things. If some persons, who like theosophy and try to spread it, take such a position, they do not thereby alter the one assumed by the real Teachers who work with all classes of men and use every possible instrument for good. **But at the same time we have found that an excess of the technical and special knowledge of the day very often acts to prevent men from apprehending the truth.**

Student. Are there any causes, other than the spread of Theosophy, which may operate to reverse the present drift towards materialism?

Sage. The spread of the knowledge of the laws of Karma and Reincarnation and of a belief in the absolute spiritual unity of all beings will alone prevent this drift. The cycle must, however, run its course, and until that is ended all beneficial causes will of necessity act slowly and not to the extent they would in a brighter age. As each student *lives* a better life and by his example imprints upon the astral light the picture of a higher aspiration acted in the world, he *thus aids souls of advanced development to descend from other spheres* where the cycles are so dark that they can no longer stay there.

Student. Accept my thanks for your instruction.

Sage. May you reach the terrace of enlightenment.

Gottfried de Purucker, *The Dialogues of G. de Purucker*, Vol. 2, pp.14-15

Free download of the original edition of the book:

<https://blavatskyhouse.org/literature/gottfried-de-purucker/the-dialogues-of-g-de-purucker1-2-3/>

Student — *In The Mahatma Letters, the Master states that there are apparently many Fifth Rounders, talking of Adepts, and those men that stand out — the prominent politicians, and the great scientists, and so forth. Will you explain to us how one starts to become a Fifth Rounder, and also how the people are able to evolve on the globes that are now in pralaya?*

G. de P. — You have asked one question, which imbodyes many others. It would require a week with meetings every night for half a dozen hours each to explain them all.

How to become a Fifth Rounder? By following the Law, cultivating the six glorious virtues, cultivating your intellect, cultivating your heart. Become impersonal. Learn to forgive. Learn to love. These are manly virtues. A Fifth Rounder is one in whom the inner god manifests more fully than he does in Fourth Round men. Whatever is superior in human life, learn to love that. Try to make it apparent in your own life. Drop as far as you can the personal aspects of your existence. Learn to put value upon the things of permanence. Learn to understand the illusory nature of the things of impermanence, the things you cannot carry with you when you pass on. Build for yourself 'treasures in Heaven,' to adopt the language of the Christian New Testament, where no thieves break in or steal, and where there is no corruption by moth or rust; rather than build for yourselves temples on earth which you will leave. Palaces are all right in their way, but be not a slave of the palace; be the Genius within. That is the Way. Begin to cultivate the virtues which will put you on the path of becoming more quickly than in the ordinary way a Fifth Rounder.

A Fifth Rounder merely means one who is a whole Round ahead of the average run of men today, who are Fourth Rounders, and every outstanding spiritual human being is a Fifth Rounder. Not necessarily 'politicians.' But the great philosophers, the great humanitarians, the great artists, those who have brought genius to soothe human hearts, to comfort human souls, who have bettered mankind by living among us — these are the Fifth Rounders, the great men who have inspired their fellow-men to do nobler and better things.

The Theosophical Society
Point Loma - Blavatskyhouse

De Ruijterstraat 72-74
2518AV The Hague
The Netherlands

website: www.blavatskyhouse.org
email: info@blavatskyhouse.org
tel.: +31 70 3461545