

# Krishnamurti and the World Teacher Project: Some Theosophical Perceptions

Govert Schüller

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Foreword (pages i - xiii)

James Santucci

*Clueless we go; but I have heard thy voice  
Divine Unreason! harping in the leaves,  
And grieve no more; for wisdom never grieves,  
And thou hast taught me wisdom; I rejoice.*  
(Aldous Huxley, The Cicadas)

On February 17, 1986, the life of one of the great teachers of the twentieth century, Jiddu Krishnamurti, came to an end. No teacher who claimed to give the Truth has done so in so unconventional a manner: so totally contrary to the expectations of his followers, so utterly confusing to his detractors. His was a life that approximated the mystique befitting the archetypal religious teacher. The story of his early life is now familiar to his followers: a portentous birth impressed by his psychic mother's premonition that he, her eighth child, was someone who was not to be like other children (1); the discovery of the adolescent by the clairvoyantly gifted Charles W. Leadbeater (1854-1934) who asserted that K.(2) was to be overshadowed by a great Spiritual force in the person of Lord Maitreya, the World Teacher(3); and the first hint of this Force manifesting itself, in Benares on the 28th of December (1911). Leadbeater described this occurrence in *The Herald of the Star*(4) as

a tremendous power, which was so evidently flowing through Alcyone [K.] that the next member [in line] fell at his feet, overwhelmed by this marvellous rush of force. I have never seen or felt anything in the least like it; it reminded one irresistibly of the rushing, mighty wind, and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost.

About ten years later, two significant events began to take place that eventually led to a totally unforeseen climactic event in 1929. First, a series of psycho-physical occurrences known as the "process," beginning in August 1922 and continuing sporadically for a number of years. During the "process," K. experienced painful sometimes accompanied by transformations of consciousness and out-of-body experiences.(5) Rosalind Williams, who was becoming an important part of Krishna's life that was to take on unexpected significance years later, witnessed a Great Presence during one of his early episodes. In the words of Nitya, K.'s brother:

(ii) The place seemed to be filled with a Great Presence and a great longing came upon me to go on my knees and adore, for I knew that the Great Lord of all our hearts had come Himself; and though we saw Him not, yet all felt the splendour of His presence. Then the eyes of Rosalind were opened and she saw. Her face changed as I have seen no face change, for she was blessed enough to see with physical eyes the glories of that night. Her face was

transfigured, as she said to us, 'Do you see Him, do you see Him?' for she saw the divine Bodhisattva [the Lord Maitreya], and millions wait for incarnations to catch such a glimpse of our Lord, but she had eyes of innocence and had served our Lord faithfully.(6)

The second incident, which might be interpreted as evolving from the "process," took place on the 28th of December 1925. At the Congress of the Order of the Star in the East in Adyar, an extraordinary event occurred. As K. was speaking, he abruptly changed personal pronouns from "he" to "I" in reference to the World Teacher:

"He comes only to those who want, who desire, who long--" and then suddenly, "I come for those who want sympathy, who want happiness, who are longing to find happiness in all things. I come to reform and not to tear down, I come not to destroy, but to build."(7)

For those who placed their faith in the judgement and pronouncements of the leaders of the Theosophical Society and their expectations in the Vehicle of the World Teacher, these events could only but confirm the spiritual and occult status of Mr. Krishnamurti as a repository of extra-worldly power. The response from his followers and disciples, as would be expected, was somewhat akin to the phenomenon of cult-like devotion(8)--cult in this sense referring to spontaneous devotional reactions to what is perceived as miraculous.

As far as Krishnamurti's followers were concerned, the coming of the Lord was at hand; indeed the ever-faithful Mrs. Besant, the President of the Theosophical Society, unequivocally declared as early as 1927 that "The World Teacher is here."(9) But to his followers' total surprise two years later, despite the many intimations to the contrary, Krishnamurti declared before thousands that the Order of the Star was to be dissolved for reasons given in his remarkable speech of on August 3, 1929. This speech set K. apart from all other religious teachers, for reasons which Rom Landau perhaps puts most fittingly:

There have been many masters and teachers whom their followers worshipped. But none of them had been torn out of an ordinary existence to be anointed as the coming World Teacher. None of them had been accepted by the East and the West, by the oldest and the youngest continent, by Christians, Hindus, Jews and Muslims, by believers and agnostics. Neither Ramakrishna nor Vivekananda had been brought up and educated for their future messiahship; neither Gandhi nor Mrs Baker Eddy, neither Steiner nor Mme Blavatsky had known such a strange destiny. Neither in the records of Western mystics nor in the books of Eastern yogis and saints do we find the story of a 'saint' who after twenty-five years of preparation for a divine (iii) destiny decides to become an ordinary human being, who renounces not only his worldly goods but also all his religious claims....

Indeed, was not Krishnamurti's a supreme story? The teacher who renounces his throne at the moment of his awakening, at the moment when the god in him has to make way for the man, at the moment when the man can begin to find God within himself? (10)

Although the August 3rd speech dissolving the Order of the Star has been quoted many times, it is worth reproducing a portion of it here because of its significance. Here are some excerpts.

We are going to discuss this morning the dissolution of the Order of the Star....

I maintain that Truth is a pathless land, and you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion, by any sect.... Truth, being limitless, unconditioned, unapproachable by any path whatsoever, cannot be organized; nor should any organization be formed to lead to or coerce people along any particular path....

As I have said, I have only one purpose: to make man free, to urge him towards freedom, to help him to break away from all limitations, for that alone will give him eternal happiness, will give him the unconditioned realization of the self.

Because I am free, unconditioned, whole--not the part, not the relative, but the whole Truth that is eternal--I desire those, who seek to understand me, to be free; not to follow me, not to make out of me a cage which will become a religion, a sect....

For eighteen years you have been preparing for this event, for the Coming of the World-Teacher....I do not care if you believe that I am the World-Teacher or not. That is of very little importance....

Your prejudices, your fears, your authorities, your churches new and old--all these, I maintain, are a barrier to understanding....

So you will see how absurd is the whole structure that you have built, looking for external help, depending on others for your comfort, for your happiness, for your strength. These can only be found within yourselves....

You can form other organizations and expect someone else. With that I am not concerned, nor with creating new cages new decorations for those cages. My only concern is to set men absolutely, unconditionally free.(11)

How could any Theosophist subscribe to these statements? Indeed, they could be interpreted as contempt for and defiance of the Theosophical world-view.(12) All dogmas, beliefs, philosophical (iv) systems, religions, and sects were useless in K.'s opinion. If Truth were a pathless land, the Theosophical perspective was quite the opposite. For the latter, there was indeed a path, though fraught with peril, that could be traversed with guides that would ease the journey.(13)

Who was right? Who wrong? Was there a path or not? Whatever the views of the Theosophical leaders or of Krishnamurti, their messages were primarily designed to uplift humanity, not themselves. It is therefore their audience, those who would make the effort to evaluate their disparate messages, who will ultimately pass judgement regarding their ultimate value. Not surprisingly, the reception and interpretation of the messages is diverse.

Because of this diversity of interpretation, Mr. Schüller performs a great service by organizing and making sense of those reactions surrounding Krishnamurti's persona and philosophy. The individual reactions cited by Mr. Schüller are certainly not exhaustive, however, nor were they intended to be. One opinion of K.'s persona not mentioned below, but which seems to have been expressed or experienced by a number of individuals who heard him in person, was that his very presence projected a spiritual force that so enraptured the spectators that it made little difference what he said, or whether it was understood or not. Recognizing that his teaching was not easily understood, an opinion is sometimes held that Mr. Krishnamurti was a Pratyeka Buddha, a Private or Solitary Buddha, and that Pratyeka Buddhas do not disclose the teaching.(14) These two views affirm that he is no ordinary mortal to his devotees, although it is difficult to conclude that he is identified as a World Teacher, a title that may not be completely understood in this day and age.

Conversely, there is a dissenting opinion of Krishnamurti that must be mentioned. Should the teacher live a life consistent with the message he conveys? If so, then K.'s behavior described in Radha Rajagopal Sloss's *Lives in the Shadow with J. Krishnamurti* should come as a shock to those who have the preconceived notion of how a perfect, unconditioned, free individual should conduct himself. How could he allow Rosalind Rajagopal (née Williams), the young woman who was present with K. at the beginning of the "process" mentioned above, to conduct an adulterous relationship with him, to allow her to go through one abortion and persuade her against her wishes to undergo another? And this from a being claiming to be greater even than the Buddha or the Christ?(15) Yet, despite these accusations, there is a body of opinion that arises in the Indian teaching traditions that emphasizes the preeminence of the teaching and the impact it has on the disciple or seeker over any obscene behavior of the one who presents the teaching. It is therefore unlikely that such revelations will drive the final nail into K.'s coffin.

In addition to Mrs. Sloss' revelations, two negative reactions arose fairly early in Krishnamurti's career that were entirely beyond his control: guilt by association and fraudulent teaching. The first maintained that because Krishnamurti was discovered by Charles Webster Leadbeater and because Krishnamurti was completely under the thumb of Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant, nothing good would come out of this undertaking. This was the view of a small but significant number (v) of Theosophists who looked upon Leadbeater(16) with utter contempt: because of charges of sexual improprieties with young boys brought against him; because of the prominence he and Mrs. Besant gave to the Liberal Catholic Church within the Theosophical Society; because of their corruption of the Theosophical teachings of H.P. Blavatsky and her Masters; because of the suppression of Blavatsky's books, most notably the *Secret Doctrine*, in favor of their "neo-theosophical" publications. By the end of 1917, a "Back to Blavatsky" Movement was articulated most effectively and caustically by the Washington, D.C. editor of the *O.E. Library Critic*, Henry N. Stokes, in order to alert the members within the T.S. (Adyar) that the original teachings of Theosophy were all but totally ignored and superseded. Any activity or teaching by the T.S. leadership perceived as not in agreement with the Theosophy of Blavatsky was unmercifully attacked.

Stokes was not alone in this role, although he was the most razor-edged in his criticisms and the most influential. Thus, in 1921, the Theosophical Society Loyalty League was established in Sydney, Australia, with one of its objects being "Loyalty to the established Objects of the Theosophical Society." Its organ, *Dawn*, published from November 1, 1921 to November 1, 1924, devoted many articles to the troubling issues brewing within the T.S., especially what it saw as the most serious: the infiltration of the Liberal Catholic Church within the T.S. In the July 1, 1924 issue of *Dawn*, suspicion was placed squarely on Krishnamurti and his status because of his being chosen by Leadbeater to be World Teacher. The speculation that *Dawn* offered was as follows: because of Leadbeater's "gross sexual irregularity," which led to his forced resignation from the T.S. in 1906, Leadbeater, following his readmission into the T.S. (1909), used K. as a ruse to deflect attention from his past misdeeds *and* to give him an excuse to surround himself with small boys. So the doctrine of the World Teacher and the unique status of Krishnamurti was nothing but a cruel hoax committed by the most despicable of reasons by this *bête noire* of the T.S.

Stokes wrote in much the same vein. Although very supportive of the T.S. a few years earlier, his attitude by 1917 took a 180 degree turn. After Mrs. Besant's announcement in 1925 that Krishnamurti would shortly have twelve Apostles, Stokes commented that two of the Apostles-- Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater--"will probably manage the debut of the new Christ, who is a nice, well-groomed youth of about twenty-eight, of very mediocre intelligence, and just the sort to obey the orders of his chief apostles--he can't help it, as they supply his oats."[\(16\)](#) This is relatively tame compared to his other statements. His main interest, however, was within the context of what he considered the most pernicious movement within the T.S.: the inclusion of Liberal Catholic ritual and doctrine. On an almost paranoid note, Stokes commented that after Krishnamurti dissolved the Order of the Star,

There seems little more for Krishnaji to do but declare Universal Nudity; he has stripped off everything but his clothes.... The immediate result will be the elimination of Krishnamurti's (vi) influence [within the T.S.] and an open path for the machinations of the Liberal Catholic Church without opposition. In fact one might almost suspect that Krishnaji has been manouevered into committing the foolish act of suicide by influences favoring the catholicizing of the T.S.(18)

The second denunciation of Krishnamurti's status was argued from the viewpoint that the doctrine of the World Teacher was fraudulent. The doctrine, as explained by Mrs. Besant(19) is as follows:

that the World Teacher appears in various embodiments to various peoples teaching a Truth identical in essence but different in language and exposition. In the context of the Hindu teaching of reincarnation, the World Teacher appears again and again in the world to initiate successive religions. Two signs indicate his imminent arrival: the emergence of a new type of humanity--in the Theosophical context and in relation to the imminent coming, a sub-race of the Root Race--and, secondly, a time of dislocation and cataclysm such as earthquakes and wars. From this transition period comes the World Teacher. Precursors to the current Teacher who would usher in the new religion and civilization of the American(20) or sixth sub-race, were, for instance, the Teacher of the Aryan or fifth Root Race and first sub-race, Vyâsa; the Teacher of the Egyptian or second sub-race, Thoth or Hermes; and the Teacher of the Persian or third sub-race, Zoroaster. (21) All taught the same doctrine but expressed in different ways--Vyâsa teaching that the Sun was the Lord of the Universe and the life in every human, Thoth teaching that the Light dwelt in all humans and in the whole world, and Zoroaster teaching that Fire was the sign of purity. Mrs. Besant then focuses on India, the home of the Root or "Mother" Race. Following the appearances of the World Teacher to the sub-races, he returns to the homeland and manifests as the Lord Buddha to become the founder of Buddhism. His successor, the Christ, gave to the world and to the fifth sub-race (the Teutonic) Christianity.(22)

The sources of this teaching are many, only some of which can be traced with any degree of certainty. Some have also undergone considerable modification or reinterpretation. They are as follows:

- 1) the Buddhist teaching of the Bodhisattva reinterpreted in a Theosophical context(23);
- 2) H.P. Blavatsky's teachings of the Root Races and sub-races(24);
- 3) the beginnings of the sixth sub-race in America cited in *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 444;
- 4) a "new torch bearer of Truth" will appear with "men's minds and hearts...improved and purified by the spread of its [the T.S.'s] teachings(25);
- 5) the prediction that a Master of Wisdom would appear in 1975(26); (vii)
- 6) the World Teacher would be Maitreya(27);
- 7) the identification of Maitreya with the Christ(28);
- 8) the identification of Sri Krishna with the Christ(29);
- 9) the substitution of the Lord Maitreya-the Christ-Sri Krishna in the body of J. Krishnamurti, the vehicle of the World Teacher.

For those who were opposed to any deviation of Madame Blavatsky's teachings, her statements regarding the timing and circumstances mentioned under (4) and (5) would certainly invalidate Leadbeater's and Mrs. Besant's interpretation.

Furthermore, (9) is especially intriguing. In the July 1926 issue of *The O.E. Library Critic*, Stokes commented on the origins of this teaching, revealed in "An Exposure of Theosophical Errors" by William Loftus Hare,(30) the Ex-Director of Studies in Comparative Religion and Philosophy to the Theosophical Society in England who previously created a stir by charging Mr. Leadbeater's clairvoyant visions of Peru circa 13,000 BCE as nothing more than a copy "given by Spanish narrators of the 16th century."(31) Hare's finding was that Leadbeater exploited G.R.S. Mead's gnostic researches published(32) in the latter's *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*. Of all the gnostic sects investigated by Mead, only one sect taught the doctrine of the "Christ as the World Teacher uniting himself with Jesus at the baptism": Cerinthus. In order to give the sense of disfavor for both the "neo-theosophical" teaching of the World Teacher and its vehicle, I quote Hare:

Upon him [Cerinthus] rests the monstrous cult revived in our day in favor of Mr. J. Krishnamurti.

*Esoteric Christianity* (page 132, London edition) gives the official stamp to this theory and transforms it into the Theosophy which the present generation is expected to believe.... The sole source of this doctrine can be found in the teaching of Cerinthus, the so-called Gnostic, whose system is lucidly explained by the excellent Mosheim. I extract the following passage:

"He taught that the Creator of this world, whom he considered also as the sovereign and law-giver of the Jewish people, was a being endowed with the greatest virtues, and derived his birth from the Supreme God; that this being fell, by degrees, from his native virtue and his primitive dignity; that the Supreme God, in consequence of this, determined to destroy his empire, and sent upon earth, for this purpose, one of the ever happy and glorious aeons, whose name was Christ; that this Christ chose for his habitation the person of Jesus, a man of the most illustrious sanctity and justice, the son of Joseph and Mary, and, descending in the form of a dove, entered into him while he was receiving the baptism of John in the waters of Jordan; that Jesus, after his union with Christ, opposed himself with vigour to the God of the Jews; and was, by his instigation, seized and crucified by the Hebrew chiefs; that when Jesus was taken captive, (viii) Christ ascended up on high, so that the man Jesus alone was subjected to the pain of an ignominious death." *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. I, page 72.

We conclude therefore that the Theosophical Society has been deceived for well nigh twenty-five years into the belief that there was a well established Gnostic "faith forgotten" and that this was the true form of Christianity. Upon this delusion, now briefly exposed, rests the Krishna-Christ fraud of December 28, 1925.(33)

Although this "discovery" was interpreted at the time as damning evidence against the notion of the World Teacher, one can make a strong argument that point (9) was more in agreement with Theosophical teaching than Hare realized. Blavatsky herself knew of the Cerinthian position, correcting Irenæus' description of Cerinthus' doctrines. In *Isis Unveiled*, she writes:

It is only after his [Jesus'] *baptism*, that *Christos*, the anointed, descended from the Princeliness of above, in the figure of a dove, and then announced the UNKNOWN Father through Jesus. (II, 176)

This passage, and the quote given in note 29, gives more credibility, in my opinion, to the doctrine of the World Teacher since it was accepted as a genuine Gnostic teaching by Blavatsky.

In conclusion, it is my hope that the World Teacher doctrine will be reevaluated in the new light of recent research especially in Gnosticism. It is also my wish that the body of teachings presented by Mr. Krishnamurti after the dissolution of the Order of the Star be reviewed with the understanding that K.'s formative years were molded by Theosophists and Theosophical teaching. There is no doubt that K. owes a debt of gratitude for the contribution to the Theosophical leaders for making his career possible. Particularly appropriate in this regard is Mr. Schüller's desire for comparative studies of the teachings of Blavatsky and Krishnamurti.

The author, Govert Schüller, was born and raised in the Netherlands. He first came in contact with Theosophical teaching while still in high school through a Theosophical friend. Mr. Schüller studied philosophy for three years at the Universities of Leyden and Amsterdam. He emigrated to the United States with his wife in 1990 and is currently doing research on Krishnamurti. He and his wife now live in Carol Stream, Illinois, which is near the headquarters of the Theosophical Society in America.

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(ix) Notes

1. According to Pupul Jayakar (*Krishnamurti: A Biography* [San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1986], 19-20), Krishnamurti recounts that his mother, Jiddu Sivamma, who had a psychic bent, perceived that her eighth child was a very special being and so insisted that she give birth in the room of worship--the *pūjā* room--and not the bedroom (Peter Michel, *Krishnamurti: Love and Freedom* [Woodside, CA: Bluestar Communications, 1995], 17. This is a translation from the German (by Petra Michel) of *Krishnamurti--Freiheit und Liebe* [Grafing, Germany: Aquamarin Verlag, 1992]).

There is a significance attached to the number eight. Jiddu Sivamma was most likely a devotee of the god Krishna, so she certainly knew the account in the *Vishnu Purāna* (Chapter 5), that the god Krishna, the eighth incarnation or descent (*avatāra*) of Vishnu, was born as the eighth child of Devakī, conceived from Vishnu's own black strand of hair (thus explaining the dark color of Krishna). The name Krishnamurti may be translated as "one who has assumed the form of Krishna," a name aptly applied to one to whom there was a special affinity.

2. Krishnamurti is also known as Krishnaji, J.K. or simply K.

3. Mary Lutyens, *Krishnamurti: The Years of Awakening* (London: John Murray, 1975), 10, 11, 21.

4. Vol. I, no 2 (April 1912): 33. Reproduced in Michel, op. cit., 34 and Lutyens, op. cit., 54-56.

5. For a description, see Jayakar, 46-57; Lutyens, 152-188; Radha Rajagopal Sloss, *Lives in the Shadow with J. Krishnamurti* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1991), 56-67.

6. Lutyens, 156. According to Mrs. Sloss, Rosalind did not accept Nitya's account. She writes on page 60: "Not sharing the preconceptions of the others, she allowed them their interpretations without accepting them as her own. She believes that whatever Nitya read on her face stemmed from her own dreams. She remembered nothing and did not feel anything remarkable had happened."

7. Jayakar, 70.

8. By cult, I do not mean the New Religious Movements that are usually described in the popular mind and media as dangerous, illegitimate religious movements, but rather deeply devotional groupings that arise in a spontaneous manner around what is perceived as a spiritual phenomenon, an example of which being the appearance of the Virgin Mary.

9. Lutyens, 241.

10. *God is my Adventure* (London: Unwin Books, 1964), 222-23. [First published by Ivor Nicholson and Watson, 1935].

(x) 11. *Bulletin No. 53* (Spring/Summer 1986), 4-10 (Krishnamurti Foundation of America).

12. I use the term "Theosophical" in a somewhat restrictive sense, to refer to all those individuals who belonged to the Theosophical Society (Adyar), the Order of the Star in the East--the majority of which were Theosophists--and those who subscribed to the doctrine of the World Teacher as developed by Mrs. Besant and Charles Leadbeater, though not members of the T.S.

Those Theosophists who did not subscribe to the World Teacher doctrine--a large number either belonged to other Theosophical societies (such as the United Lodge of Theosophists and the

Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society), some remained members of the Theosophical Society (Adyar)--attached the pejoratives "neo-theosophy" or (less often) "pseudo-theosophy" to this version of Theosophical teaching.

13. The relevant passage originated in *Lucifer* IX (September 1891): 49:

There is a road, steep and thorny, beset with perils of every kind, but yet a road, and it leads to the very heart of the Universe: I can tell you how to find those who will show you the secret gateway that opens inward only, and closes fast behind the neophyte for evermore. There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer; there is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through; there is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount. For those who win onwards there is reward past all telling--the power to bless and save humanity; for those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come.

14. In the Theosophical sense, Pratyeka Buddhas do not teach or establish world religions (Jinarâjadâsa, *First Principles of Theosophy*, eighth edition (Adyar: TPH, 1948), 322). The above description in the main body of the text might not be very accurate since it was no doubt used, perhaps tongue in cheek, to describe the difficulty in understanding Krishnamurti's teachings. The Theravâda Buddhist tradition understands the Pratyeka Buddha as an individual who is self-awakened but does not enlighten others. Based on etymological evidence and a comparison with Jain texts, the compound might well mean one who is awakened by an external cause (*pratyaya*).

15. Sloss, 307. It was Beatrice Wood who reported the rumor that K. claimed as such.

16. Mrs. Besant was viewed to be under his influence, so she too was held in similar regard.

17. *O.E. Library Critic* XV/9 (December 2, 1925): 6.

18. *O.E. Library Critic* XIX/2 (September 1929): 13.

19. Annie Besant, "Why we Believe in the Coming of a World-Teacher," a lecture delivered at the Kingsway Hall, London, on June 30th, 1924 and published in *The Herald of the Star*, XIII/8 (August 1, 1924):322-331.

20. The sub-race is also manifested in Australia and elsewhere.

(xi) 21. Orpheus is the World Teacher for the fourth sub-race that includes the Greek, Roman, Latin, and Celts; the Christ is viewed as the Teacher of the fifth or Teutonic sub-race.

22. A summary of the teaching of the coming World Teacher, was given by the editor of the *O.E. Library Critic*, Henry N. Stokes, at a time when he was very sympathetic to the Theosophical cause. In I/20 (May 22, 1912):1-2 he writes:

In the course of human evolution certain souls have so far outstripped the others as to have passed the necessity for reincarnation. Some of these have passed on to states more or less beyond our knowledge. Others, on the contrary, have voluntarily foregone the right to the bliss of Nirvana and remain in touch with humanity. Some of the latter habitually reincarnate and are commonly known as Masters; others appear only at wide intervals. Chief among the latter are two, who in earlier periods of man's history were closely associated. The one is he who successively appeared as Hermes, as Zoroaster, as Orpheus and for the last time as the Lord Buddha. He is not expected to reincarnate again. The other is the Lord Maitreya, who is especially the expounder of the Law of Love, and who appeared in India as Krishna, in Palestine as Christ and who will reappear in human form during the present century. The theosophical teaching distinguishes sharply between Jesus and Christ. The man Jesus up to thirty years of age was the incarnation of a certain disciple or adept, who at this time



voluntarily gave up his body to be occupied by the Lord Maitreya, this surrender occurring when Jesus was baptised and the spirit descended like a dove (Matt. iii., 16). He whose teachings we have in the Gospels was not the soul Jesus at all, but the Lord Maitreya in the body of Jesus.

23. In Buddhism, bodhisattva simply refers to a 'being intent on gaining enlightenment' or a 'Buddha-to-be'. In Theravâda Buddhism, Maitreya is the future Buddha. In Mahâyâna Buddhism, the Path of the Bodhisattva is open to all and emphasizes a compassionate attitude and purpose. Because a bodhisattva is an advanced being on the path, in possession of the "Enlightenment mind" (*bodhicitta*), the compound bodhisattva may be translated as "Enlightenment being." In C. Jinarâjadâsa's *First Principles of Theosophy*, the bodhisattva is a member of the Occult Hierarchy--the Great White Brotherhood--which rules the world. The bodhisattva resides on the seventh level of initiation together with two other officers, the Manu and Mahâ-Chohan. He is viewed as the "World Teacher." Jinarâjadâsa, 320, 323; Gregory Tillett, "Charles Webster Leadbeater 1854-1934: A Biographical Study" (Ph.D. diss., University of Sydney, 1986), 410.

24. The Races are mentioned in II, 423ff. in *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. II (L.A.: The Theosophy Company, 1974). This is a facsimile of the original edition of 1888.

25. H.P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy* (L.A.: The Theosophy Company, 1973), 307. This is a photographic reproduction of the original edition of 1889. Blavatsky adds: "He [the torch bearer] will find the minds of men prepared for his message, a language ready for him in which to clothe the new truths he brings, an organization [the T.S.] awaiting his arrival, which will remove the merely mechanical, material obstacles and difficulties from his path."

(xii) 26. H.P. Blavatsky, *The Original Programme of the Theosophical Society* (Adyar: TPH, 1974), 71. This is a reprint of the 1931 first edition. This statement appears in "The Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society" [Preliminary Memorandum] and dated 1888. She writes: "No Master of Wisdom from the East will himself appear or send any one to Europe or America after that period [the last quarter of a century], and the sluggards will have to renounce every chance of advancement in their present incarnation--until the year 1975." Herein and in *The Key to Theosophy* (306), she remarks that the final quarter of every century, there is an "upheaval of spirituality" initiated by the "Masters" that will help in "the spiritual progress of Humanity." (306)

27. Maitreya's role is quite different in *The Secret Doctrine* I, 384 and 470. On page 470, "Maitreya Buddha" will be the last of a series of Buddhas and in the seventh Race. Leadbeater's identification of Krishnamurti as the vehicle for the Lord Maitreya is, therefore, an innovation on his part.

28. According to Tillett, op. cit., 416 the origin of this identification may be found in the magical fraternity, the Royal Order of the Sat B'hai, which employed Indian mythology and symbolism. It was headed for a time by John Yarker (1833-1913), who, in Tillett's words, "offered its rituals to HPB when she was contemplating developing the TS along semi-Masonic lines." (416) Leadbeater may have been aware of the Order and the ritual performed in the Second Grade, in which Christ and Maitreya were identified, through his associate James Wedgwood, a member of the Order.

29. An example of this identification appears in H.C. Kumar's "The Great World-Teacher and the Order of the Star in the East," *The Herald of the Star* XIII/11 (November 1, 1924): 470-73. On page 473 he states: "He who was called Sri Krishna in India, He who was called the Christ when

He appeared in Palestine, is again to walk the earth very soon."

The association of Krishna with the Christ is nothing new. In H.P.B.'s *Isis Unveiled* (Los Angeles: The Theosophy Company, 1982: original edition published in 1877), II, 159, she states:

Thus Christos, as a unity, is but an abstraction: a general idea representing the collective aggregation of the numberless spirit-entities, which are the direct emanations of the infinite, invisible, incomprehensible FIRST CAUSE--the individual spirits of men, erroneously called the souls. They are the divine sons of God, of which some only overshadow mortal men--but this the majority--some remain forever planetary spirits, and some--the smaller and rare minority--unite themselves during life with some men. Such God-like beings as Gautama Buddha, Jesus, Tissoo, Christna [Krishna], and a few others had united themselves with their spirits permanently-- hence, they became gods on earth.

In a note on page 158 of volume two, Blavatsky discusses the spelling of the name and agrees with Jacolliot ("Christna et le Christ") that it should be spelled Christna and not Krishna: the latter meaning "black," the former meaning "sacred." This is based on the notion that all languages, Greek included, derive from Sanskrit. Therefore, *Christos* derives from Sanskrit *Kris* "sacred." Although not repeated in *The Secret Doctrine*, Blavatsky does identify Krishna with the Christ-state (II, 604, note).

(xiii) Other writers prior to Blavatsky have also noted parallels between Jesus, Christ, and Krishna. Joscelyn Godwin cites *The Theosophical Enlightenment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994) such early writers as Francis Wilford ("An Essay on the Sacred Isles of the West, with Other Essays connected with that Work," in *Asiatic Researches* X, 1808), the Rev. Robert Taylor (*The Diegesis*, 1833), and Samson Arnold Mackey (*Man's Best Friend, or the Evils of Pious Frauds*, 1826). Godfrey Higgins, the author of *Anacalypsis: An Attempt to Draw Aside the Veil of the Saitic Isis; or an Inquiry into the Origin of Languages, Nations and Religions*, two volumes (New Hyde Park, NY: University Books, 1965 (originally published in 1833 and 1836), notes similarities between "Cristna" and Jesus: both were Saviors of Humanity, both were Supreme Beings incarnated (I, 129) and both were born at the end of a Neros or cycle of 600 years (I, 183). In II, 368, he writes that "Jesus Christ was nothing but the *ninth Avatar* coming in his proper order--Salivahana in the East, Jesus in the West. And, as the Brahmins make their Cristna, not the *ninth Avatar*, but *God himself*, so the Christians do the same with their teacher of Samaria." Higgins then paraphrases Taylor's *Diegesis* by noting "the striking similarity between the histories of Buddha, Cristna, and Jesus" (II, 43-44). Compare also *Isis Unveiled*, II, 536-541.

30. Under the title in the *Critic*, "The Gnostic Doctrine of Jesus and Christ," XV/22 (July 1926): 6-9.

31. "Leadbeater and the Incas. More Exposures. The 'Akashic Records' in Cold Print. A.D. 1688 to 1883," *Dawn* 3/14 (January 1, 1924): 3-7.

In 1936, Hare was to co-author the controversial *Who Wrote the Mahatma Letters?* (London: Williams and Norgate).

32. It also was a source for Mrs. Besant's *Esoteric Christianity*.

33. Mme. Blavatsky's discussion of mediumship in the context of the Neo-platonists displays some similarities with this teaching. See *Isis Unveiled*, I, 487-490