

H.P. BLAVATSKY The Babel of modern thought

(Blavatsky Collected Writings Vol. 13, pp 85-)

Nine-tenths of the people will reject the most overwhelming evidence, even if it be brought to them without any trouble to themselves, only because it happens to clash with their personal interests or prejudices; especially if it comes from unpopular quarters.

Ragon was right in saying in his *Maçonnerie Occulte*, that
 “Humanity only *seems* to progress in achieving one discovery after the other, whereas in truth it only finds that which it had lost. Most of our modern inventions for which we claim such glory, are, after all, things people were acquainted with three and four thousand years back.* Lost to us through wars, floods and fire, their very existence became obliterated from the memory of man. And now modern thinkers begin to *rediscover* them once more.”

* The learned Belgian Mason would be nearer the mark by adding a few more ciphersto his four thousand years.

Allow us to recapitulate a few such things and thus refresh your memory.

(...)

Are not physics and natural sciences but an amplified reproduction of the works of Anaxagoras, of Empedocles, Democritus and others? All that is taught *now*, was taught by these philosophers *then*. For they maintained—even in the fragments of their works still extant—that the Universe is composed of eternal atoms which, moved by a subtle internal Fire, combine in millions of various ways. With them, this “Fire” was the divine Breath of the Universal Mind, but now, it has become with the modern philosophers no better than a blind and senseless Force. Furthermore they taught that there was neither Life nor Death, but only a constant *destruction of form*, produced by perpetual *physical* transformations. This has now become by *intellectual* transformation, that which is known as the physical correlation of forces, conservation of energy, law of continuity, and what not, in the vocabulary of modern Science. But “what’s in a name,” or in new-fangled words and compound terms, once that the identity of the essential ideas is established?

Was not Descartes indebted for his *original* theories to the old Masters, to Leucippus and Democritus, Lucretius Anaxagoras and Epicurus? These taught that the celestial bodies were formed of a multitude of atoms, whose vortical motion existed from eternity; which met, and, rotating together, the heaviest were drawn to the centres, the lightest to the circumferences; each of these concretions was carried away in a fluidic matter, which, receiving from this rotation an impulse, the stronger communicated it to the weaker concretions. This seems a tolerably close description of the Cartesian theory of Elemental Vortices taken from Anaxagoras and some others; and it does look most suspiciously like the “vortical atoms” of Sir W. Thomson!

Even Sir Isaac Newton, the greatest among the great, is found constantly mirroring a dozen or so of old philosophers. In reading his works one sees floating in the air the pale images of the same Anaxagoras and Democritus, of Pythagoras, Aristotle, Timæus of Locri, Lucretius, Macrobius, and even our old friend Plutarch. All these have maintained one or the other of these propositions, (1) that the smallest of the particles of matter would be sufficient—owing to its infinite divisibility—to fill infinite space; (2) that there exist two Forces emanated from the Universal Soul, combined in numerical proportions (the centripetal and centrifugal “forces,” of the latter day scientific saints); (3) that there was a mutual attraction of bodies, which *attraction* causes the latter to, what we now call, *gravitate* and keeps them within their respective spheres; (4) they hinted most unmistakably at the relation existing between the weight and the density, or the quantity of matter contained in a unit of mass; and (5) taught that

the attraction (gravitation) of the planets toward the Sun is in reciprocal proportion to their distance from that luminary.

Finally, is it not a historical fact that the rotation of the Earth and the heliocentric system were taught by Pythagoras—not to speak of Hiketas, Heraclitus, Ekphantos, etc.—over 2,000 years before the despairing and now famous cry of Galileo, “*Eppur si muove*”? Did not the priests of Euria and the Indian *Rishis* still earlier, know how to attract lightning, ages upon ages before even the *astral* Sir B. Franklin was formed in space? Euclid is honoured to this day—perhaps, because one cannot juggle as easily with mathematics and figures, as with symbols and words bearing on unprovable hypotheses. Archimedes has probably forgotten more in his day, than our modern mathematicians, astronomers, geometricians, mechanicians, hydrostaticians and opticians ever knew. Without Archytas, the disciple of Pythagoras, the application of the theory of mathematics to practical purposes would, perchance, remain still unknown to our grand era of inventions and machinery. Needless to remind the reader of that which the Aryans knew, as it is already recorded in *The Theosophist* and other works obtainable in India.

Wise was Solomon in saying that “there is *no new* thing under the Sun”; and that everything that *is* “hath been already of old time, which was before us” [*Eccl.* i, 9-10]—

(...)

That which modern science would make us believe, is this: the atoms possess *innate* and immutable properties. That which Esoteric, and also exoteric, Eastern philosophy calls *divine* Spirit-Substance (*Purusha-Prakriti*) or eternal Spirit-matter, one inseparable from the other, modern Science calls Force and Matter, adding as we do (for it is a Vedantic conception), that, the two being inseparable, matter is but an abstraction (an illusion rather). The properties of matter are, by the Eastern Occultists, summed up in, or brought down to, attraction and repulsion; by the Scientists, to gravitation and affinities.

(...)

Organisms cannot have been developed from dead or *inanimate* matter, as, firstly, such matter does not exist, and secondly, philosophy proving it conclusively, the Universe is not “subjected to fatality.” As Occult Science teaches that the universal process of differentiation begins anew after every period of *Maha-pralaya*, there is no reason to think that it would slavishly and blindly repeat itself. *Immutable* laws last only from the incipient to the last stage of the universal life, being simply the effects of primordial, intelligent and entirely free action. For Theosophists, as also for Dr. Pirogoff, Delboeuf and many a great independent modern thinker, it is the Universal (and to us *impersonal* because *infinite*) Mind, which is the true and primordial Demiurge.

What better illustrates the theory of cycles, than the following fact? Nearly 700 years B.C., in the schools of Thales and Pythagoras, was taught the doctrine of the true motion of the earth, its form and the whole heliocentric system. And in 317 A.D. Lactantius, the preceptor of Crispus Cæsar, the son of the Emperor Constantine, is found teaching his pupil that the earth was a plane surrounded by the sky, itself composed of fire and water! Moreover, the venerable Church Father warned his pupil against the *heretical doctrine of the earth's globular form*, as the Cambridge and Oxford “Father Dons” warn their students now, against the pernicious and superstitious doctrines of Theosophy—such as Universal Mind, Re-incarnation and so on. There is a resolution tacitly accepted by the members of the T.S. for the adoption of a proverb of King Solomon, paraphrased for our daily use: “A scientist is wiser in his own conceit than seven Theosophists that can render a reason.” No time, therefore, should be lost in arguing with them; but no endeavour, on the other hand, should be neglected to show up their mistakes and blunders.

H.P. BLAVATSKY THE NEGATORS OF SCIENCE

[*Lucifer*, Vol. VIII, No. 44, April, 1891, pp. 89-98; BCW Vol. 13, pp 138

(...)

By “Science” we here mean ANCIENT WISDOM, while its “Negators” represent *modern materialistic Scientists*.

(...)

A number of persons, extremely enlightened on some special point of science, take upon themselves the right of pronouncing arbitrarily their judgment on all things; are ready to reject everything new which shocks *their* ideas, often for the sole reason that *if it were true they could not remain ignorant of it!*

(...)

The ideal scientist:

Independent of man or party, fearless whether he gets at logger-heads with biblical chronology, theological claims, or the preconceived and in-rooted theories of materialistic science; acting in his researches in an entirely unprejudiced frame of mind, free from personal vanity and pride, he will investigate truth for her own fair sake, not to please this or that faction; nor will he dislocate facts to make them fit in with his own hypothesis, or the professed beliefs of either state religion or official science. Such is the ideal of a true man of science; and such a one, whenever mistaken—for even a Newton and a Humboldt have made occasional mistakes—will hasten to publish his error and correct it, and not act as the German naturalist, Haeckel, has done.

(...)

Theosophists must remain true to their colours, HOW?

Nevertheless, since truth and fact are on our side, we need not despair, but will simply bide our time. Time is a mighty conjuror; an irresistible leveller of artificially grown weeds and parasites, a universal solvent for truth. *Magna est veritas et prevalebit*. Meanwhile, however, the Theosophists cannot allow themselves to be denounced as visionaries, when not “frauds,” and it is their duty to remain true to their colours, and to defend their most sacred beliefs.

This they can do only by opposing to the prejudiced hypotheses of their opponents, (a) the diametrically opposite conclusions of their colleagues—other scientists as eminent *specialists* in the same branches of study as themselves; and (b) the true meaning of sundry passages disfigured by these partizans, in the old scriptures and classics. But to do this, we can pay no more regard to these illustrious personages in modern science, than they do to the gods of the “inferior races.” Theosophy, the Divine Wisdom or TRUTH is, no more than was a certain tribal deity—“a respecter of persons.” We are on the defensive, and have to vindicate that which we know to be implicit truth: hence, for a few editorials to come, we contemplate a series of articles refuting our opponents—however learned.

And now it becomes evident why it is impossible for us to “leave our highly respectable, firmly-rooted official *science* severely alone.”

Meanwhile we may close with a few parting words to our readers *Power belongs to him who knows*; this is a very old axiom: knowledge, or the first step to power, especially that of comprehending the truth, of discerning the real from the false—belongs only to those who place truth above their own petty personalities. Those only who having freed themselves from every prejudice, and conquered their human conceit and selfishness, are ready to accept every and *any* truth

(...)

And yet they persist in their work, although perfectly aware that, do what they may, neither materialism nor doctrinal pietism will give theosophical philosophy a fair hearing in this age. To the very end, our doctrine will be systematically rejected, our theories denied a place, even in the ranks of those ever-shifting, scientific ephemera—called the “working hypotheses” of our day.

H.P. BLAVATSKY WHAT IS IN A NAME?

BCW Vol. 8, p. 13

Definition of science

We work for true Religion and Science, in the interest of fact as against fiction and prejudice. It is our duty, as it is that of physical Science—professedly its mission—to throw light on facts in Nature hitherto surrounded by the darkness of ignorance. And since ignorance is justly regarded as the chief promoter of superstition, that work is, therefore, a noble and beneficent work. But natural Sciences are only one aspect of SCIENCE and TRUTH. Psychological and moral Sciences, or theosophy, the knowledge of divine truth, wheresoever found, are still more important in human affairs, and real Science should not be limited simply to the physical aspect of life and nature. **Science is an abstract of every fact, a comprehension of every truth within the scope of human research and intelligence.**

H.P. BLAVATSKY HUMAN LIFE AT HIGH ALTITUDES

[*The Theosophist*, Vol. II, No. 8, May, 1881, p. 180, BCW Vol.3 p 141]

Discoveries of Western scientists anticipated by the Ancients

(...)

These facts are not cited because they were needed to fortify the belief of students of Indian *Yoga* science, but to show the Asiatic public in general that modern physical discovery is daily bringing to light fresh proofs that the assertions of Aryan philosophers respecting the reserved powers of man were not loosely and ignorantly made. Let us only wait patiently and **we will all see these bold infidels of the West confessing that their grandest discoveries were anticipated many ages ago by these ancients whom they now dare to stigmatise as ignorant theorists.**

H.P. BLAVATSKY OCCULT OR EXACT SCIENCE?

(BCW Vol. 7, p. 55-90)

One of Blavatsky's most important articles on Science. Very interesting to read the whole article. Here follows an excerpt:

(...) About ten years ago, when *Isis Unveiled* was being written, the most important point the work **aimed at was the demonstration of the following,**

(a) the reality of the *Occult* in nature;

(b) the thorough knowledge of, and familiarity with, all such occult domains amongst "certain men," and their mastery therein;

(c) hardly an art or science known in our age, that the *Vedas* have not mentioned; and

(d) that hundreds of things, especially mysteries of nature,--in *abscondito* as the alchemists called it,--were known to the Aryas of the *premahabharata* period, which are unknown to us, the modern sages of the XIXth century.

(...)

For it is an easy matter to show, that the Vedic Aryans were quite familiar with all such mysteries of sound and color. *Mental* correlation of the two senses of "sight" and "hearing" were as common a fact in their days, as that of a man in our own seeing objective things before him with eyes wide open at noon.

(...)

... That which is now considered as an abnormal phenomenon, was in every probability the normal state of the antediluvian Humanity. These are no vain words, for here are two of the many proofs.

In consequence of the abundant data gleaned by linguistic research, philologists are beginning to raise their voices and are pointing to some very suggestive, though as yet unexplained facts.

(1) All the words indicative of human representations and conceptions of *light* and *sound* are *found to have their derivation from the same roots*. Mythology shows, in her turn, the evident law--the uniformity of which precludes the possibility of chance--that led the ancient symbologists to represent all their sun-gods and *radiant* deities--such as the Dawn, the Sun, or Aurora, Pheebus, Apollo, etc.--connected in one way or the other with music and singing,--with *sound* in short,--associated with radiancy and color.

(...)

It becomes evident, therefore, that the Theosophist, or rather the Occultist, must find his position far more difficult than even the spiritualist ever can, with regard to modern science. For it is not to phenomena *per se* that most of the men of science are averse, but to the nature of the agency said to be at work. If, in the case of "Spiritual" phenomena these have only the materialists against them, not so in our case. The theory of "Spirits" has only to contend against those who do not believe in the survival of man's soul. Occultism raises against itself the whole legion of the Academies; because, while putting every kind of "Spirits," good, bad and indifferent, in the second place, if not entirely in the back-ground, it dares to deny several of the most vital scientific dogmas; and in this case, the Idealists and the Materialists of Science, feel equally indignant; for both, however much they may disagree in personal | views, serve under the same banner. There is but one science, even though there are two distinct schools--the *idealistic* and the *materialistic*; and both of these are equally considered authoritative and *orthodox* in questions on science.

(...)

Science, unless remodeled entirely, can have no hand in occult teachings. Whenever investigated on the plan of the modern scientific methods, occult phenomena will prove ten times more difficult to explain than those of the spiritualists pure and simple.

(...)

Those Theosophists who are not Occultists cannot help the investigators, let alone the men of science. Those who are Occultists work on certain lines that *they dare not trespass*. Their mouth is closed; their explanations and demonstrations are limited. What can they do? Science will never be satisfied with a half-explanation.

To know, to dare, to will and to remain silent--is so well known as the motto of the Kabbalists, that to repeat it here may perhaps seem superfluous. Still it may act as a reminder. As it is, we have either said *too much* or *too little*. *I am* very much afraid it is the former. If so, then we have atoned for it, for we were the first to suffer for saying *too much*. Even that little might have placed us in worse difficulties hardly a quarter of a century ago.

Science I mean Western Science--has to proceed on strictly defined lines. She glories in her powers of observation, induction, analysis and inference. Whenever a phenomenon of an abnormal nature comes before her for investigation, she has to sift it to its very bottom, or let

it go. And this she has to do, and she cannot, as we have shown, proceed on any other than the inductive methods based entirely on the evidence of physical senses.

(...)

This brings us back to an old axiom of esoteric philosophy; *"nothing of that which does not exist somewhere, whether in the visible or invisible kosmos, can be reproduced artificially, or even in human thought."*