

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

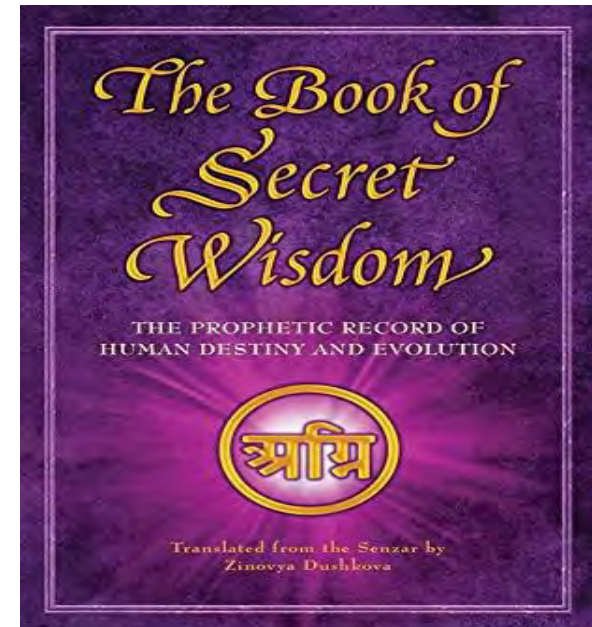
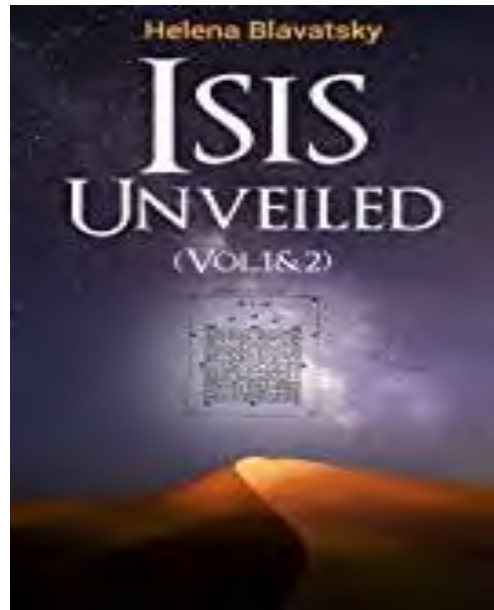
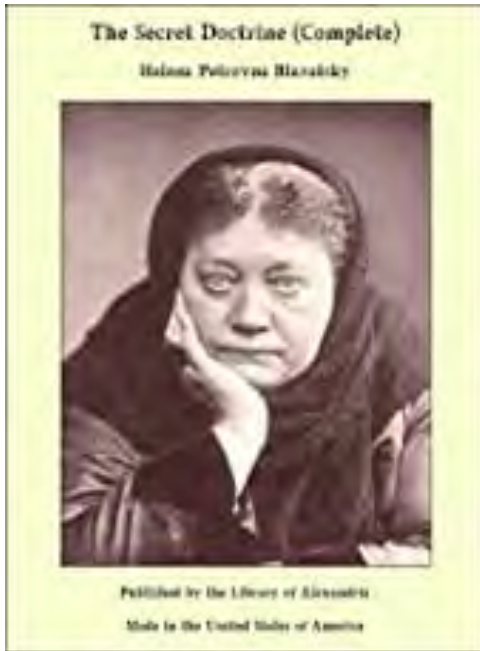
Is Mysticism Where Science, Art and Religion Meet?

Aleph Talks

20 October 2021

Information Sources

- Stephen M Phillips website (smphillips.mysite.com)
- Wikipedia



Helena Petrovna Blavatsky Biography

- **Helena Petrovna Blavatsky** ([Russian](#): Елена Петровна Блаватская, *Yelena Petrovna Blavatskaya*, often known as **Madame Blavatsky**; *née von Hahn*; [Ukrainian](#): Олена Петрівна Блаватська, *Olena Petrivna Blavatska*; 12 August [[O.S.](#) 31 July] 1831 – 8 May 1891) was a Russian author who co-founded the [Theosophical Society](#) in 1875. She gained an international following as the leading theoretician of [Theosophy](#).



Helena Petrovna Blavatsky Biography



- Born into an aristocratic family of mixed Russian-German descent in [Yekaterinoslav](#), then in the [Russian Empire](#) (now [Dnipro](#) in [Ukraine](#)), Blavatsky traveled widely around the empire as a child. Largely self-educated, she developed an interest in [Western esotericism](#) during her teenage years.
- According to her later claims, in 1849 she embarked on a series of world travels, visiting Europe, the Americas, and India. She also claimed that during this period she encountered a group of spiritual adepts, the "[Masters of the Ancient Wisdom](#)", who sent her to [Shigatse, Tibet](#), where they trained her to develop a deeper understanding of the synthesis of religion, philosophy, and science. Both contemporary critics and later biographers have argued that some or all of these foreign visits were fictitious, and that she spent this period in Europe.
- By the early 1870s, Blavatsky was involved in the [Spiritualist](#) movement; although defending the genuine existence of Spiritualist phenomena, she argued against the mainstream Spiritualist idea that the entities contacted were the spirits of the dead. Relocating to the United States in 1873, she befriended [Henry Steel Olcott](#) and rose to public attention as a spirit medium, attention that included public accusations of fraudulence.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky Biography



- In 1875 [New York City](#), Blavatsky co-founded the Theosophical Society with Olcott and [William Quan Judge](#). In 1877, she published [Isis Unveiled](#), a book outlining her Theosophical world-view. Associating it closely with the esoteric doctrines of [Hermeticism](#) and [Neoplatonism](#), Blavatsky described Theosophy as "the synthesis of science, religion and philosophy", proclaiming that it was reviving an "Ancient Wisdom" which underlay all the world's religions.
- In 1880, she and Olcott moved to India, where the Society was allied to the [Arya Samaj](#), a [Hindu reform movement](#). That same year, while in [Ceylon](#), she and Olcott became the first people from the United States to formally convert to Buddhism. Although opposed by the British colonial administration, Theosophy spread rapidly in India but experienced internal problems after [Blavatsky was accused](#) of producing fraudulent paranormal phenomena.
- Amid failing health, in 1885 she returned to Europe, there establishing the [Blavatsky Lodge](#) in [London](#). Here she published [The Secret Doctrine](#), a commentary on what she claimed were ancient Tibetan manuscripts, as well as two further books, [The Key to Theosophy](#) and [The Voice of the Silence](#). She died of [influenza](#).



Theosophical Society

The **Theosophical Society**, founded in 1875, is a worldwide body with the aim to advance the ideas of [Theosophy](#) in continuation of previous Theosophists, especially the Greek and [Alexandrian Neo-Platonic](#) philosophers dating back to 3rd century AD. It also encompasses wider religious philosophies like [Vedānta](#), [Mahāyāna Buddhism](#), [Qabbalah](#), and [Sufism](#).

The Theosophical Society functions as a bridge between East and West, emphasizing the commonality of human culture.^[1]

The term "theosophy" comes from the Greek *theosophia*, which is composed of two words: *theos* ("god," "gods," or "divine") and *sophia* ("wisdom"). Theosophia, therefore, may be translated as "wisdom of the gods", "wisdom in things divine", or "divine wisdom".

Theosophy

- According to Goodrick-Clarke, the Theosophical Society "disseminated an elaborate philosophical edifice involving a cosmogony, the macrocosm of the universe, spiritual hierarchies, and intermediary beings, the latter having correspondences with a hierarchical conception of the microcosm of man." Officially, the Society-based itself upon the following three objectives:

- To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour.
- To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy, and Science.
- To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

Blavatsky believed that the purpose of these three precepts was to lead to the "discovery of the powers latent in man through the occult study of science, philosophy and religion [which] shall be the preferred route to the social harmony and equality which will prefigure – and perhaps become – the divine harmony.

- While living in New York City, Blavatsky had referred to herself as a "Buddhist", although officially embraced Buddhism only while in Ceylon. However, Lachman stated that her Buddhism was "highly eccentric and had little to do with the Buddhism of scholars like [Max] Müller or that of your average Buddhist". Blavatsky argued that [The Buddha](#) had sought to return to the teachings of the [Vedas](#), and that Buddhism therefore represented a more accurate survival of ancient [Brahmanism](#) than modern Hinduism. Although critical of [Catholicism](#) and [Protestantism](#), and opposing their growth in Asia, throughout her life she remained highly sympathetic to the [Russian Orthodox Church](#), commenting that "with the faith of the Russian Church I will not even compare Buddhism".
- [G. R. S. Mead](#) proclaimed, "Two things in all the chaos of her [Blavatsky's] cosmos stood firm in every mood – that her Teachers existed and that she had not cheated."



Blavatsky and Theosophy



- Blavatsky was the leading theoretician of the Theosophical Society, responsible for establishing its "doctrinal basis". The ideas expounded in her published texts provide the basis from which the Society and wider Theosophical movement emerged. Blavatsky's Theosophical ideas were a form of [occultism](#). She subscribed to the anti-Christian current of thought within Western esotericism which emphasized the idea of an ancient and universal "occult science" that should be revived. Blavatsky stated that the Theosophical teachings were passed on to her by adepts, who lived in various parts of the world.
- Fundamentally, the underlying concept behind Blavatsky's Theosophy was that there was an "ancient wisdom religion" which had once been found across the world, and which was known to various ancient figures, such as the Greek philosopher [Plato](#) and the ancient Hindu sages. Blavatsky connected this ancient wisdom religion to Hermetic philosophy, a worldview in which everything in the universe is identified as an emanation from a Godhead. Blavatsky believed that all of the world's religions developed from this original global faith.
- Blavatsky understood her Theosophy to be the heir to the Neoplatonist philosophers of [Late Antiquity](#), who had also embraced Hermetic philosophy. Blavatsky claimed that due to [Christianization](#) in Europe, this magical tradition was lost there, but it persisted in modified form in India and Africa, promoting a self-consciously magical [disenchantment](#) narrative.^[274] In turn, Blavatsky believed that the Theosophical movement's revival of the "ancient wisdom religion" would lead to it spreading across the world, eclipsing the established world religions. Thus, in bringing these Theosophical ideas to humanity, Blavatsky viewed herself as a [messianic](#) figure.

Blavatsky YouTube Videos

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F7z2WrxgZVU>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DeRITdkN60>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeuAQkcL0os>

