

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

(1831-1891)

- A short introduction -

by (Mr) Søren Hauge



H.P. Blavatsky was born at Ekaterinoslav, a town in the present Ukraine. She was of aristocratic family (the parents' lineages were Rotternstern Hahn and Dolgorukov) and grew up during changeable conditions due to the various working tasks of her father. Even as a child Helena showed her vigorous and strong-willed character. One of her favourite occupations was riding half-broken horses without saddle. She was also gifted with a distinct thirst for knowledge, an unusual sensitivity and inherited psychic powers, which turned her into an exceptional personality.

After a short marriage in 1848 to General N.V. Blavatsky, Vice-Governor of the Province of Yerevan, she travelled abroad and in the following years she visited most of the world to study spiritual traditions, mystic phenomena and occult knowledge. Her extensive travels led her to countries as Egypt, Greece, Syria, Africa, India, Burma, Siam, China, Caucasia, Georgia, Canada, USA, Mexico and South America, just as she also visited several European countries. Everywhere she collected an almost encyclopedic knowledge

of cultures, countries, history and especially spiritual and psychical subjects of all kinds. This was particularly possible during the many stays H.P.B. made in spiritual societies, among minorities and sub-cultures in the various countries. An example is the Druses, who accepted her. She learned several languages, and combined with linguistic and artistic talents as illustrator and pianist she had many possibilities to gain access to knowledge.

However, it was repeated and long stays in Tibet that became important for the work and future mission of H.P.B. Here she was trained by several mahatmas (enlightened souls or Wise Men), as well as her own Master, with whom she had clairvoyant and clairaudient contact since her childhood.

After her arrival to New York, in July 1873, she was solely occupied by realising the vision of founding a theosophical society. Here she was the object of marked attention and she was a magnet to intellectuals. Therefore it was not difficult to arouse an interest in the theosophical cause. Not only was she a most extraordinary Russian woman, but she also possessed declared psychic powers, of which she never made a secret. After the meeting with Henry Steel Olcott and a number of interested people she was thus, after a few initial meetings, cofounding The Theosophical Society on November 17, 1875 in New York.

Articles

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H.P.B.'s monumental works are "Isis Unveiled" from 1877 and "The Secret Doctrine" published in 1888. The Secret Doctrine is a tremendously comprehensive work, which deals with macrocosm and microcosm under the headings "Cosmogogenesis" and "Anthropogenesis". The work gives the so far most extensive, occult perspective of the creating forces in cosmos, the evolution and long genesis of the human being. The work is full of topical comments to Blavatsky's contemporaries and the leading scientists within a number of different areas. The book also contains references to 1147 central works, of which several were almost inaccessible and spread all over the world's more or less closed libraries. The Secret Doctrine is still considered the undisputed principal work of modern occultism. The total literary production of H.P.B. was tremendous and the publishing of her collected works constitutes 18 thick books.

It is difficult to characterise H.P.B. in a few words, but to be brief she was able to, through almost superhuman efforts, sow the seeds and spread the impulses, which started the theosophical snowball effect, an effect that have continued with increasing power ever since. Blavatsky was an advanced disciple and a representative of the spiritual hierarchy, who did not retreat from even the most incredible opposition and hostility. In the middle of the gossip, pettiness and materialism of the Western civilization she stroke a silvery note, which in reality provoked a spiritual domino effect among thousands of people all over the world.

The most particular characteristic of her work is probably the fact that she during the spiritual training guided by the Master, learned to master psychic powers at a very advanced level. She considered the powers as insignificant by-products of the real spiritual process of change. Nevertheless these powers enabled her to virtually "step aside" and let several of the Mahatmas or Masters write through her. Large sections of The Secret Doctrine are not the product of H.P.B. herself, but direct communication from the Mahatmas, which emphasizes the epoch-making importance of the work, and it partly explains its tremendously complex and not very accessible character.

H.P.B. died in 1891 and entrusted The Theosophical Society to her successors. A specially recommended biography on H.P.B. is: Sylvia Cranston: »H.P.B. - The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement«, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1993. ISBN: 0-87477-688-0.