

# **Krishnamurti and the World Teacher Project:**

## **Some Theosophical Perceptions**

**Govert Schüller**

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### **Introduction**

With the centennial of Krishnamurti's birth concluded it might be a good idea to present an overview of the different ways he has been perceived in the Theosophical movement.(1) As there is such a wide variety of Theosophical ideas about the person Krishnamurti and his teachings, I propose to limit the scope of this paper to the perceptions of Krishnamurti, which primarily concern themselves with the metaphysical status of Krishnamurti as a spiritual teacher. Those views primarily concerned with the metaphysical importance of his teachings will be left out. It is inevitable, though, to include some quotes dealing with the content of his teachings to clarify the views about Krishnamurti. Having limited the field of inquiry, I propose the thesis that the vast majority of these views can be differentiated according to a matrix determined by the way Theosophists answered two basic questions concerning Krishnamurti.

The first question concerns the expectation of and preparation for the coming of a great spiritual teacher as was announced by Annie Besant, then President of the Theosophical Society. During a lecture at Madras on December 31, 1909, she made the statement that a great "Teacher and Guide....will deign once more to tread our mortal ways." (2) Together with her colleague and friend Charles W. Leadbeater, Besant propagated the idea that the young Jiddu Krishnamurti would be the vehicle through whom this teacher, the Christ or the Lord Maitreya, would manifest, as he had done two thousand years earlier when he had worked through Jesus of Nazareth during his ministry in Galilee. They then founded the Order of the Star in the East, with Krishnamurti as its head, in order to bring together those who believed in the coming of this teacher. The important question for many Theosophists at the time was, and for some still is: Was this project genuine or not? The term genuine does not necessarily refer to the correctness of how Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater perceived and propagated this project, but it refers to whether the project was perceived as having its origin in a transcendental source of supreme intelligence regardless of how it was interpreted by human agents.

The second question was and is perceived by Theosophists as even more important. It concerns the result of this project: Was the outcome of the project successful or not? Here again the term successful does not necessarily refer to the way in which the project was expected to be successful, but rather to the fact that the outcome of the project was perceived as having fulfilled the original intention of the transcendental source of intelligence. The point of this nuance about the meaning of the concepts "genuineness" and "success" is to be able to include viewpoints which do not exactly corroborate, but are close to Besant's and Leadbeater's statements about the project. (p. 2)

The possible answers to these two questions generate the four following positions:

- 1) The project was perceived as genuine and successful;
- 2) The project was perceived as genuine, but failed;
- 3) The project was perceived as not genuine and failed (of course); and
- 4) The project was perceived as not genuine, but succeeded!

The Theosophical commentators and ideas presented in this paper are classified accordingly. This treatment is not exhaustive; many views are excluded. The criteria of selection are: importance of the source, in the sense that the person propagating the view is regarded important as an independent teacher of Theosophical ideas; originality of the view, in the sense that the view helps to open up the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the whole issue; and accessibility of primary sources to avoid erroneous hearsay.(3) In some cases I included Krishnamurti's own reply to the views put forward.

As position two is taken by many persons it is inevitable to give that relatively more space, as is inversely the case with position four. The view of each person discussed will be presented as much as possible in his or her own words. In the cases where a "Master of Wisdom" or "Adept" is quoted, nothing definite is implied about his ontological status or the veracity of his statements. Krishnamurti's view of himself is included in this discussion. His view can be seen as belonging to position one.

The article will close with four additional views of Krishnamurti, which are all important from an epistemological perspective. The first two are not rooted in a Theosophical world view but are based on direct observations of Krishnamurti and as such not classifiable in the proposed matrix. They are important, however, because any future Theosophical theory about the metaphysical status of Krishnamurti will have to take these observations into account. They provide building-blocks, yet uncolored by Theosophical concepts, to be incorporated in a Theosophical or psychological theory. The third view is Theosophical and is important because it makes a beginning with putting the two non-Theosophical views in a Theosophical perspective, though not in such a way as to be classifiable according to the matrix. In fact it takes an interesting epistemological meta-position about the matrix in its entirety, as does the last view. These last two views belong to a classification, which encompasses at least three different epistemological attitudes towards metaphysical knowledge. 1) Theosophical: One has access to and knowledge about the metaphysical realm of noumena. Intuition, deep speculative reasoning, clairvoyance and revelation provide us with that access. 2) Agnostic: One acknowledges the possibility of access to and knowledge about the metaphysical realm, but does not have it (yet). 3) Kantian: One can not have access to and knowledge about the metaphysical realm. Knowledge can be attained only about phenomena, not about noumena. (p. 3)

## **VIEW ONE: THE PROJECT WAS GENUINE AND SUCCESSFUL**

### **Krishnamurti.**

Those who have read the second volume of Krishnamurti's biography by Mary Lutyens (4) will probably remember the extraordinary last two chapters, in which Krishnamurti is questioned by his friends Mary Lutyens and Mary Zimbalist about who he really was, what the "other" was behind him and what "it" was that protected him. Krishnamurti himself stated that he was unable to find that out, because "water can not know what water is." However he expressed his conviction that if someone else would find out, he could corroborate it. He also stated that "it" was "there, as if it were behind a curtain...I could lift it but I don't feel it is my business to."

Even so, Krishnamurti did lift the curtain a little. He admitted that the "Besant-Leadbeater theory of the Lord Maitreya taking over a body especially prepared for his occupation" was the most simple and likely explanation. Krishnamurti did not think this theory was correct, and anything simple was suspect in Krishnamurti's view. Although he said that Maitreya as explanation "is too concrete, is not subtle enough," he did consider it the most plausible one.(5) It must be remembered that Krishnamurti never denied being the World-Teacher. In 1931 he told Lady Emily, the mother of Mary Lutyens to whom he was very close, "You know, mum, I have never denied it, I have only said it does not matter who or what I am but that they should examine what I say which does not mean that I have denied being the W.T." (6)

Krishnamurti revealed to Mary Zimbalist another intriguing indication of his self-perception when he

discussed with her in May 1975 his forthcoming biography by Mary Lutyens. She had asked him why the Masters, if they existed, had spoken in the old days, but not recently. "There is no need for them now the Lord is here" was Krishnamurti's reply. Mary Lutyens did not think it was a serious remark, because of the tone of his voice. (7) The same idea appeared, this time apparently in a serious way, in a dialogue between Krishnamurti and some persons at Brockwood Park, England, in the autumn of 1975, when the subject of his biography came up: "there is the idea that when he [the Bodhisattva] manifests all the others [the Masters] keep quiet." Is Krishnamurti referring to himself? When reading the whole dialogue that specific question arises irresistibly. The just-quoted sentence was preceded by an elaboration of the idea of the Bodhisattva: "There is a very ancient tradition about the Bodhisattva that there is a state of consciousness, let me put it that way, which is the essence of compassion. And when the world is in chaos that essence of compassion manifests itself. That is the whole idea behind the Avatar and the Bodhisattva. And there are various gradations, initiations, various Masters and so on..." (8) I think Krishnamurti does refer to himself, but he is not doing so explicitly, because for him it was "irrelevant," though not irrelevant enough not to mention it. (p. 4)

Reinforcing this view is an interesting, and at first sight puzzling, remark Krishnamurti made about Annie Besant and the Theosophical Society during an equally interesting conversation in 1979 with his friends, Radha Burnier and Pupul Jayakar, while discussing Burnier's possible candidacy for the presidency of the Theosophical Society. "Mrs. Besant intended the land at Adyar [the T.S. international headquarters] to be meant for the teaching. The Theosophical Society has failed, the original purpose is destroyed." (9) This remark contains many assumptions and finds its proper context in Besant's understanding of the mission of the Theosophical Society and the role of Krishnamurti therein. Annie Besant thought she was fulfilling a mission of the Theosophical Society, which was not stated as one of its official objectives, but was given to it by Helena P. Blavatsky--one of the founders of the Theosophical Society and the society's main source of ideas--when she, at the close of her life, announced the coming of a "torch-bearer of Truth" for the later part of the twentieth century. The mission of the Theosophical Society, according to Blavatsky, was to prepare the way for this "new leader" and prepare "the minds of men...for his message." At his arrival the Theosophical Society would be available to him to remove the "merely mechanical, material obstacles and difficulties from his path." Indicating the possibility of a glorious long-term goal of this plan, she states that if "the Theosophical Society survives and lives true to its mission...earth will be a heaven in the twenty-first century." (10) When Besant was challenged about her involvement in the Order of the Star and her speaking of "the T.S. as being the Herald of the coming Teacher," (11) she defended herself by referring explicitly to Blavatsky's view about the future mission of the Theosophical Society: "My crime is that I share it, and do what my poor powers permit in preparing the minds of men for that coming." Besant wrote that the only difference between herself and Blavatsky regarding the coming of "the next great Teacher" was that "she put that event perhaps half a century later than I do. Which of us is right only time can show." (12)

I think it is reasonable to state that the particulars of Blavatsky's and Besant's views were picked up by Krishnamurti during his formative years. He might even have read Blavatsky's statement referred to above. If so, this might provide the ground to put Krishnamurti's remark in historical perspective, and to explain the underlying structural similarity between his remark and Blavatsky's vision. With this in mind a reconstructed reading of Krishnamurti's statement would result in the following: "Mrs. Besant [and Blavatsky] intended [subscribed to the view that] the land at Adyar [the Theosophical Society] to be meant [to be available] for the teaching [for the teacher]. The Theosophical Society has failed [did not cooperate], the original purpose [the mission of the Theosophical Society to herald and aid the teacher] is destroyed [has not been fulfilled]." The point of this digression is to show that implicit in this remark is the self-perception of Krishnamurti as the teacher, who was expected and did come, but found the Theosophical Society not cooperative. (p. 5)

## **Annie Besant**

Of all the leading theosophists Annie Besant was the most loyal to Krishnamurti during and after his repudiation of his mission in 1929. After hearing Krishnamurti speak at Krotona, California, in 1927 she told another Theosophist: "The Lord has spoken. I am now satisfied. This is the beginning of all that I have foreseen and worked for." (13) Besant was so convinced that she declared herself to be his "devoted disciple," (14) closed the Esoteric Section--the heart of the Theosophical Society and its link with the Masters--because only Krishnamurti should be allowed to teach, (15) and even considered giving up the presidency of the Theosophical Society to follow him. She adhered to the idea that a "fragment of the World-Teacher's consciousness is in him [Krishnamurti], and his own is merged in it." (16) Though she would reopen, allegedly on orders of her Master, the Esoteric Section and stayed on as president, she remained devoted to Krishnamurti, because he had, according to religious scholar and Theosophist Catherine Wessinger, "fulfilled her expectations concerning the World-Teacher in several basic respects." (17) To bridge the points where Krishnamurti's teachings and Theosophy differed Annie Besant applied her usual largesse of mind and logic: "Say, if you like, that we are two sides of one work. Dr. Besant is at the head of one side and Krishnaji of the other. One is the work of the Manu, the other of the Bodhisattva." (18) Until the very end of her life Annie Besant tried to rise above all factions and schisms and as such was the embodiment of the first object of the Theosophical Society--Brotherhood.

## **Charles E. Luntz**

Around 1929 a lively debate about Krishnamurti was held in the pages of *The Theosophical Messenger*, the official journal of the Theosophical Society in America, then edited by its national president, L.W. Rogers. An original contribution to this debate came from Charles E. Luntz with his "New Theory Regarding Krishnamurti and His Teaching," named "The Great Testing." According to this spiritual Darwinian theory, Krishnamurti's remarks about Theosophy and the Theosophical Society were "a strange and unlooked for testing," and "an onslaught designed to test its [the Theosophical Society's] very soul," with the purpose to make "the first great separation of the fit from the unfit (insofar as the Theosophical Society is concerned)." As the "weaklings drop out in their hundreds and even thousands, glad perhaps of the excuse this [Krishnamurti's] extraordinary condemnation of all organizations gives them to relinquish the burden," the "faithful few carry on," with "wills of tempered steel" to perform the work of the "building of the new Root Race... under the direct guidance of the Manu"--a work which "calls for workers of courage, of self-sacrifice, of utter obedience and above all of *Supreme Conviction* of its transcendent importance."

(p. 6) Illustration. Not reproduced.

(p. 7) Did Krishnamurti know that he was the great tester? Not according to Luntz. It was his "well-reasoned belief that....the World Teacher, whose consciousness informs Krishnaji, has deliberately shut off from the latter's physical brain the knowledge of the true reason for his attacks on the Theosophical Society." (19)

Interestingly, there is the record of Krishnamurti's reaction to this theory when he was asked in Adyar in 1933 "is the ruthless manner of the presentation of your views merely a test of our devotion to the Masters and our loyalty to the Theosophical Society...?" Part of Krishnamurti's answer was: "I have told you what I really think. If you wish to use that as a test to fortify yourselves, to entrench yourselves in your old beliefs, I cannot help it." (20) But this answer was anticipated by Luntz in his 1930 article: "If by any chance this hypothesis comes to the attention of Krishnaji he will undoubtedly deny it... Those who accept it need not be concerned, recognizing that if it be true it must be denied by him in all sincerity or the test would fail."

This theory puts Krishnamurti in the strange position that, if he effectively wanted to refute the theory,

he only had to contradict the expected behavior by saying that Luntz was right! Any attempt by Krishnamurti to refute this theory by saying it was not true would be futile. The adherents of the theory would see in that effort a confirmation of their idea.

### **Radha Burnier**

After Annie Besant died in 1933 relations between Krishnamurti and the Theosophical Society were severed although he would still have private contacts with individual members. Krishnamurti did not visit the Theosophical compound at Adyar for forty-six years. When his close friend Radha Burnier, who worked for the Krishnamurti Foundation while being head of the Esoteric School of the Theosophical Society at the same time, became president of the Theosophical Society in 1980, an event he wished for and apparently actively promoted, (21) Krishnamurti agreed to visit the grounds of the Theosophical headquarters again. For the rest of his life, whenever he was in Madras, he would go there for a walk along the beach, the very same place where he was discovered by Leadbeater.

Under the leadership of its present president, Radha Burnier, the Theosophical Society seems to come back from an ambivalent position towards Krishnamurti and a consensus seems to be emerging, at least at the international headquarters of the Theosophical Society, to accept Krishnamurti as the prophesied teacher. Two special issues of *The Theosophist*, one an obituary to Krishnamurti and the other dedicated to Krishnamurti's centennial, are both endorsements of Krishnamurti's teachings and both suggest that he should be regarded as the World-Teacher. (22) In the first one Burnier, who is the editor of *The Theosophist*, wrote that the "connection between J.Krishnamurti... and the Theosophical Society was broken, not because he left--as many members believe--but because (p. 8) people were not ready to listen to a profound message given in terms they were not accustomed to hearing. It is not the first time that this has happened. The Jews would not listen to Jesus when he came to teach. The majority of Hindus did not respond for long to what the Buddha had to say." (23) In short, Krishnamurti did his job as messiah and the Theosophists lacked the insight to recognize him as such.

### **Jean Overton Fuller and Krishnamurti again**

In an obituary for Krishnamurti published in *Theosophical History*, Jean Overton Fuller, a scholarly Theosophical author, passed on a view which she heard from some French Theosophists and later from an English professor. She stated that Besant and Leadbeater were not necessarily wrong "when they thought they recognized in him the World Teacher." They were even "right, in the first moment in which they recognized him as who he was," but were "wrong in practically everything they did in consequence." In the beginning Krishnamurti "seemed to go along with their way of thinking, but as he matured, he began to show skepticism concerning the build-up of which he was the centerpiece." (24) In other words, Krishnamurti was from the beginning the expected teacher, but was in no need of special training. Nor did he need any special organization to proclaim his coming. When he himself realized he was the teacher he gradually broke away from all the erroneous concepts and structures built around him.

Gregory Tillett conceived a similar possibility, though he seems not quite sure: "Was Krishnamurti a genius from birth who could have achieved international status as a philosopher regardless of who had taken him out of his environment of poverty, or did he become what he is as a result of Leadbeater's training?" (25)

In an indirect way, Krishnamurti himself also suggested the same idea. In the same conversations referred to above between Mary Lutyens, Mary Zimbalist, and himself, he delved, in a very subtle way, into the question of the "boy" Krishnamurti, his vacant mind, and the power that protected him. "The boy was affectionate, vacant, not intellectual, enjoyed athletic games. What is important in this is the vacant mind. How could that vacant mind come to this [the teaching]? Was vacancy necessary for this to manifest?... How was it that the vacant mind was not filled with Theosophy etc.?" According to

Krishnamurti this "vacancy was guarded," "the vacancy has never gone away," "the boy was found, conditioning took no hold--neither the Theosophy, nor the adulation, nor the World Teacher, the property, the enormous sums of money--none of it affected him." (26) He said that in spite of his upbringing in Theosophy, his mind was kept vacant and protected by a higher power to facilitate the transmission of a teaching. He seemed to imply that that would have happened regardless of "Theosophy etc." (p. 9)

## **VIEW TWO: THE PROJECT WAS GENUINE, BUT FAILED**

### **Charles Webster Leadbeater**

Many Theosophists believe that either because of Leadbeater's clairvoyance or a transcendent power acting upon him, he perceived the potential spiritual greatness in Krishnamurti when they met on the beach next to the international headquarters of the Theosophical Society in May 1909. At that time Krishnamurti was an underfed, scrawny and dirty teenager. As for his mental capacity, Krishnamurti was even considered dim-witted by Theosophist Ernest Wood, who tried to help him with his homework. Leadbeater also was the first one to communicate the idea that Krishnamurti was to be trained as the vehicle for the Lord Maitreya. (27) As the allegedly clairvoyant and prescient originator of the project of the coming of a great teacher, Leadbeater's views on the project's fulfillment carry a certain weight. There is a problem though in evaluating his articles and public statements, for Leadbeater would always support Annie Besant's position in public even when he thought that she was wrong. (28) As Besant was convinced that Krishnamurti was the World-Teacher, Leadbeater would not let her down. In his most important article on the subject, "Art Thou He That Should Come?," he stated, referring to Krishnamurti: "This is He who should come, and there is no need to look elsewhere; as I have said, I know that the World-Teacher often speaks through Krishnaji," and then comes the twist, "but I also know that there are occasions when He does not." (29)

What Leadbeater really thought was only expressed in private, for example in 1927 at Adyar to Adrian Vreede, a colleague-bishop in the Liberal Catholic Church, to whom he confided that "The Coming had gone wrong." (30) Because Leadbeater kept his views to himself it is hard to find out why he thought the coming had gone wrong. He was visibly perturbed by the 1925 occult revelations originating from the Theosophical estate in Huizen, Holland, where Theosophist George Arundale and others were transmitting messages from the Masters. (31) Allegedly on the Masters' orders Arundale appointed ten apostles, announced the passing of initiations, consecrated an Abbess, and gave many instructions. These messages were never accepted by Leadbeater as genuine and Krishnamurti himself reacted skeptically, even sarcastically. Krishnamurti said that "everything was spoiled." (32) Besant, though, did accept them and divulged much of their content in her public addresses, which put Krishnamurti in a extremely difficult situation. Leadbeater told Adrian Vreede that "this explosion [of questionable revelations] has done more to hinder the coming of the Lord than anything else." (33) To summarize, it is clear that Leadbeater believed that the project was genuine, that Krishnamurti was occasionally overshadowed by Maitreya, but that something had gone wrong. (p. 10) Leadbeater blamed not only Krishnamurti himself for the failure of the project, but also deluded influential Theosophists.

### **Geoffrey Hodson**

A clairvoyant description of an address by Krishnamurti at the Star-camp at Ommen in 1927 can be found in Geoffrey Hodson's article "Camp-Fire Gleams." (34) His visions of Krishnamurti being overshadowed by the Christ or Lord Maitreya might have convinced many people that the coming was a success. But was Hodson himself convinced? Initially he was, but not so later on, if one believes John Robertson, who wrote an unpublished biography on Hodson's life. Robertson was told by Hodson that the coming had not been "fulfilled strictly in the terms of the original pronouncement;" that "on certain rare occasions this overshadowing was experimentally begun," but these manifestations were "both

gentle and brief." As for the reasons for terminating the experiment, Hodson thought that "perhaps the strain proved too great for Krishnamurti." Hodson told Robertson that Krishnamurti's doctor had said that (quoting Hodson) the "strain upon Krishnamurti's nervous system and psychology was very great, even after only a few minutes use of his vehicles by a higher Being." Another factor were circumstances and actions which had "deeply hurt his susceptibilities" (probably referring to the Huizen-manifestations). Or the death in 1925 of his beloved brother Nityananda, whose life Krishnamurti thought to be crucial to his destiny, was a factor "in his decision to withdraw from the role that might have been his." According to Robertson, Hodson also said that "this does not in any way deny the fact that the original plan of a wholly `experimental' attempt to use Krishnamurti as a vehicle was formed and communicated by a Master to C.W. Leadbeater. In fact, Mr. Hodson stated that he has reason to be firmly convinced that this was indeed the case." (35)

Unfortunately, as has been pointed out by German author Peter Michel, many of Hodson's writings containing his views on Krishnamurti have not been published. (36) These include "The Unforgettable Years," a manuscript containing his remembrances and visions from approximately the period 1923-1930, the entries of his "occult diary" for the same years which were not included in the publication edited by his wife, (37) and his biography "Aquarian Occultist." He did publish a little booklet in 1935, Krishnamurti and the Search for Light, in which he defended Theosophy and the Theosophical Society against Krishnamurti's iconoclasm, because he felt that "the principles of justice, fair play and common courtesy have been so flagrantly outraged for some seven years that at last I am moved to a reply." As a member of the Theosophical Society he had "not always been able to achieve the philosophic calm of the leaders," so he had to express his view on Krishnamurti's teachings. According to Hodson the teachings of Krishnamurti were "an extraordinary blend of rare flashes of transcendental wisdom, penetrating intelligence, incomprehensibility, prejudice, intolerance and vituperation." (38) Later in life Hodson took a milder view. He stated that "the splendid (p. 12) teachings, verbal and written... demonstrate that he is indeed, in his own right, an advanced Soul with an aspiring message to deliver to mankind." (39) Based on his clairvoyance Hodson accepted the project as genuine, saw the Christ working through Krishnamurti, but later he had reasons to conclude that Krishnamurti had rejected his role. Despite this and the fact that Krishnamurti became prejudiced against Theosophy, Hodson thought he had something important to say.

### **Cyril Scott**

Between 1920 and 1932 the English composer and Theosophist, Cyril Scott, anonymously wrote three still popular occult books, which tell the story of a poet, Charles Broadbent, and his spiritual teacher, Justin Moreward Haig (who himself was a initiated disciple of a Master of Wisdom, named "Sir Thomas"). (40) Considered by many as fiction, the author himself stated about the last book of the series, that the "various situations in the book were correctly portrayed, but the characters for obvious reasons had perforce to be camouflaged." (41) In this third book, The Initiate in the Dark Cycle, two chapters were entirely dedicated to Krishnamurti, (42) and "its most valuable portions were contributed by the Initiate's Master." (43) Early in the recorded conversation in the second of the two chapters, Haig stated that "instead of giving forth the new Teaching so badly needed, he [Krishnamurti] escaped from the responsibilities of his office as prophet and teacher by reverting to a past incarnation, and an ancient philosophy." Haig then stated that Krishnamurti is teaching the Advaita (monist) version of Vedanta philosophy. "Sir Thomas" added that this is a "philosophy for chelas, and one of the most easily misunderstood paths to Liberation." He also warned those who climb Krishnamurti's "incomplete stairway to God" of two dangers. "Danger Number One: Krishnamurti's casting aside of time-honoured definitions and classifications leaves aspirant without true scale of values. Danger Number Two: climbing his particular staircase necessitates constant meditation, which in its turn necessitates constant protection from Guru--and Guru not allowed by Krishnamurti." As his final evaluation when asked if

Krishnamurti's "mission must be regarded as a total failure," he stated "True, true. A success while still overshadowed by the World-Teacher,... a failure afterwards." (44) In short, Krishnamurti rejected his role, dug up an old teaching and turned it into something dangerous.

During a talk in 1936 Krishnamurti was asked his reaction to the allegation in *The Initiate in the Dark Cycle* that what he is teaching is "Advaitism, which is a philosophy only for yogis and chelas, and dangerous for the average individual." Krishnamurti's answer was as follows. "Surely, if I considered that what I am saying is dangerous for the average person, I wouldn't talk. So, it is for you to consider if what I say is dangerous. People who write books of this kind are consciously or unconsciously exploiting others. They have axes to grind, and having committed themselves to a certain system, they bring in the authority of a Master, of tradition, of superstition, of churches, which (p. 13) generally controls the activities of an individual. What is there in what I am saying that is so difficult or dangerous for the average man?" (45) The question about the difficulty of Krishnamurti's teaching was answered in "Sir Thomas" last words about Krishnamurti in Scott's book: "Because he has reached a certain state of consciousness and evolution, in his modesty he fails to see that others have not reached it likewise. Therefore he prescribes for others what is only suitable for himself." (46)

### **David Anrias**

One of the characters in Scott's initiate-books is an astrologer named David Anrias. His real name was Brian Ross, an English Theosophist who had worked for Annie Besant in India. (47) He claimed to have been in contact with the Masters, some of whose messages and portraits he published in *Through the Eyes of the Masters*. In a later book Anrias let it be known that this book "was partly inspired with the object of counteracting the doubt cast by Krishnamurti upon the power of the Masters to further the evolution of mankind." (48) The most important message came from Lord Maitreya himself and dealt almost exclusively with Krishnamurti. Maitreya said that he was "limited by Karma in the choice of [his] Medium," that he had to use "a physical body selected by the Lords of Karma," which was "untrained in many respects for the difficult task of a Spiritual Teacher." Because Krishnamurti had taken initiations along the line of the Deva-evolutions, "it became all but impossible for him to be used any longer as my medium." His main criticism was that "although Krishnamurti was right to emphasize the necessity for independent thought, he was wrong in assuming that everyone else, regardless of past Karma and present limitations, could instantly reach that point which he himself had only reached through lives of effort, and by the aid of those Cosmic Forces apportioned to him solely for his office as Herald of the New Age." (49) Briefly stated: Krishnamurti was a deficient vehicle, took the wrong initiations, and promulgated a big error.

### **Alice Bailey**

Alice Bailey claimed to have been contacted by the Tibetan Master Djual Kul, who transmitted to her a voluminous body of teachings. In Djual Kul's teachings the Christ played a prominent role and was expected to return to earth. This return "will be expressed... by an upsurging of the Christ consciousness in the hearts of men everywhere" and many "will be 'overshadowed' by Him." In this way "He will duplicate Himself repeatedly." His work with Krishnamurti was one of the first experiments as a means of preparation, but it "was only partially successful. The power used by Him was distorted and misapplied by the devotee type of which the Theosophical Society is largely composed, and the experiment was brought to an end." (50) Bailey's position seems to be that the project was genuine but experimental, and was terminated because Theosophists were not of the right type. (p. 14)

### **Guy Ballard**

According to Guy Ballard, an American mining engineer with an interest in the occult, the Adept Saint Germain approached him with the request to become a messenger for the Adepts. This happened in the

summer of 1930 on the slopes of Mount Shasta, California, almost exactly a year after Krishnamurti had dissolved the Order of the Star. Ballard agreed, wrote *Unveiled Mysteries* under the name Godfré Ray King and founded with his wife Edna the "I AM" Movement. (51) Three ex-members of the "I AM" Movement I met, who remembered the 1920s and 1930s and had some knowledge about Theosophy and Krishnamurti, agreed that the reason for the founding of the "I AM" Movement was the failing of Krishnamurti--the Masters of Wisdom had to open a new channel to give a new teaching, because Krishnamurti would not do so. There is no direct reference to Krishnamurti in the literature of the "I AM" Movement to support that view, and its present day leaders, when asked about the possible connection of Krishnamurti's alleged failure and the founding of the "I AM" Movement, could only state that somehow Theosophy had failed and that was the reason why the Masters turned to Ballard. Nevertheless some passages found in the "I AM" literature have a direct bearing on our subject. They can be found in "Kuthumi's Discourse," a message by the Adept Kuthumi given through Ballard on December 19, 1937, in Los Angeles. Though Krishnamurti was not mentioned by name and the passage refers to possibly a multitude of individuals, the plausibility that it refers also to Krishnamurti has to be considered seriously.

In Our Endeavor to assist and bring forth through Theosophy the Glory and right Understanding of Life, up to the time when We could have brought forth this Truth, still again humanity would not give sufficient obedience. Why will not mankind, precious mankind, give obedience to the Law of Life--love each other, so that it makes it possible for the great Truth to come forth untouched, unadulterated by human opinions!... Beloved Ones, for more than six hundred years the Great Ascended Masters have tried to open the way for this greater Understanding to come to mankind; but no sooner did this Mighty Truth begin to expand Its Light, than individuals with human opinions seized upon It and tried to make It obey them, instead of obeying It... Do you realize, Beloved Ones, what it means to Us, to Morya and Myself--We two who were so earnest and sincere? Yet, Our beloved Saint Germain has accomplished more in three years than We did in the many years of Our humble Efforts. (52)

The last sentence sounds boastful, but is not without substance if one considers the observation about the "I AM" Movement by religious scholar and Theosophist Robert Ellwood that "at its apex in the late thirties, it must have represented the greatest popular diffusion Theosophical concepts ever attained." (53)

Did Krishnamurti try to subsume the revelations, which initially came through him, under his own opinions, and because of that could not give the full truth, which was then revealed through (p. 15) another vehicle? Krishnamurti's anticipation to a part of this criticism can be found in the very last sentences of his famous speech dissolving the Order of the Star. "For two years I have been thinking about this, slowly, carefully, patiently, and I have now decided to disband the Order, as I happen to be its Head. You can form other organizations and expect someone else. With that I am not concerned, nor with creating new cages, [and] new decorations for those cages." (54)

### **Elizabeth Clare Prophet**

As the leader of a new religious movement Elizabeth Clare Prophet claims to be the Messenger for the Great White Brotherhood and as such "takes dictations" from different Masters of Wisdom. The movement, known formerly as the Summit Lighthouse and more recently as Church Universal and Triumphant, has its roots in Theosophy and the "I AM" Movement. (55) With the latter the Summit Lighthouse has so much in common that a Dutch study of the organization stated that one could perhaps see the Summit Lighthouse as the "I AM" Movement "risen from its ashes." (56) The dictations have been published on a weekly basis for the last thirty-five years. In 1975 Kuthumi delivered a message with a couple of paragraphs dedicated to Krishnamurti. He stated forthrightly ("let the chips fall where they may") that Krishnamurti was "the instrument of a philosophy that is not and does not in any way represent the true teachings of the Great White Brotherhood" and that Krishnamurti presented

"calculated and cunning detours for souls searching for truth." Regarding the coming and its failure Kuthumi stated that though Krishnamurti was "selected to take the training for the calling of representing the World Teachers and the coming Buddha, Lord Maitreya," he "failed the test of the intellect and of the subtleties of spiritual pride," with the result that he is now "denounced by the Brotherhood," while he himself "denounces the true teachers and the path of initiation." (57)

Earlier in the same year El Morya allegedly privately dictated a series of letters to Prophet. In the last letter of the series he gives a chronological overview of the different projects the Masters had been involved with, starting with Blavatsky and Mary Baker Eddy. About these two spiritual pioneers he said that though they were "at times beset with their own preconceptions and the burden of the mass consciousness, these witnesses codified the truth and the law of East and West as the culmination of thousands of years of their souls' distillations of the Spirit." In the next paragraph he then makes what one can only take as a veiled reference to Krishnamurti. "Such messengers are not trained in a day or a year or a lifetime. Embodiment after embodiment, they sit at the feet of the masters and receive the emanations of their mantle in the power of their word and example. A number of others who were selected to perform a similar service for hierarchy failed in their initiations through the pride of their intellect and their unwillingness to submit identity totally unto the flame. They have become thereby totally self-deluded and they continue to draw innocent souls into the chaos of their delusion." (58) For two reasons this paragraph can be construed as referring to Krishnamurti. (p. 16) The strongest one is the key phrase "at the feet of the masters," which is also the title of Krishnamurti's first publication, and regarded a Theosophical classic. The second reason is the place the paragraph takes in the chronological overview. It is placed between the paragraph about Blavatsky and Eddy, and a paragraph about Guy and Edna Ballard, who are presented as "representatives tried and true of Saint Germain." (59) This suggests to look for these allegedly failed messengers in the period between Blavatsky's death in 1891 and the meeting between Guy Ballard and Saint Germain in 1930. This period covers exactly the time beginning with the leadership of the Theosophical Society by Besant and ending with the abrogation--or culmination, depending on one's view--of her world teacher project in the dissolution of the Order of the Star in 1929 by Krishnamurti himself. If these two reasons hold, and the paragraph is really a reference to Krishnamurti, then it is the most severe evaluation of him on record.

In short, according to Prophet's Masters, Krishnamurti was selected and trained by the Masters for an important role, subsequently tripped over his pride and deceived vulnerable souls with a subtle but erroneous philosophy.

### **Peter Michel**

Among the many studies about the life and teachings of Krishnamurti, perhaps one stands out because of its exploration of a very wide variety of subjects and issues connected with Krishnamurti. It also stands out because it is very sympathetic to Theosophical concepts and experiences, while at heart being in accord with Krishnamurti. This study by the German author Peter Michel is titled Krishnamurti--Love and Freedom.

Regarding the idea of the coming of a great spiritual teacher Michel states that it is likely that the origin of the idea of the World-Teacher in Besant's and Leadbeater's worldview "can be found in their inner experiences" of communication with the Masters. For him it even "seems to make no sense to consider an outer source to account for the idea of the World Teacher." As for his views on the success of the coming, he observes the paradox, that "Krishnamurti regarded himself more as a World Teacher later--in his own right--than the Theosophists, whose messianic ideal he had rejected inwardly and outwardly for several years, ever did." He quotes Krishnamurti, seemingly in agreement, from an interesting interview Krishnamurti gave to an American journalist. "The teachers of all ages have repeated the same essentials but we never seem to understand them, perhaps because of their very simplicity. And so, when it becomes necessary for humanity to receive in a new form the ancient wisdom someone

whose duty it is to repeat these truths is incarnated." (60) Answering his own question "if K was 'the teacher' like Christ or Buddha," Michel agrees "with Scott and Anrias that he was not," to which he added the observation that "K himself would reply: Is this of any importance?" (p. 17) According to Michel, Krishnamurti "might have been the 'teacher,'" if "he would have been able to combine his position (the non-esoteric K) with the best of the esoteric tradition, as it maybe was planned." (61) Peter Michel's position seems to be very close to the one described above for Hodson, i.e., Krishnamurti was not the expected teacher, but his teachings are important. The difference between Hodson and Michel is that Hodson's sympathy is more with Theosophy and Michel's sympathy is more with Krishnamurti.

### **VIEW THREE: THE PROJECT WAS NOT GENUINE AND FAILED**

#### **Rudolf Steiner**

The founding of the Anthroposophical Society in 1912 by Rudolf Steiner was a direct consequence of the views he held about the second coming of the Christ. When the Order of the Star was founded, the Council of the German Section of the Theosophical Society, of which Steiner was then general secretary, declared that no one could be simultaneously a member of the Star and the German TS. Besant reacted by revoking their charter, which officially took effect on March 7, 1913. Meanwhile, Steiner had founded the Anthroposophical Society on December 28, 1912, and the majority of German Theosophists followed him. (62)

His differences with Besant and Leadbeater regarding the nature of the Christ were fundamental. In a series of lectures given in 1911, when he was still with the Theosophical Society, he stated that the first coming of the Christ, "the Christ-Event," was a unique unrepeatable cosmic event. "An incarnation of the Christ-Being in a human body of flesh could take place only once in the course of the Earth-evolution." The essential event of the coming happened during the crucifixion, when the earth was redeemed by the influx of the spirit of Christ. The second coming meant for Steiner "the renewal of the [first] Christ-Event" and would happen "towards the end of the twentieth century," this time not in a physical way, but "in the world of the etheric." This "second Christ-Event" would consist of Christ becoming "Lord of Karma for human evolution" and would have the effect that more and more people would be able to perceive "the significance and the Being of Christ." (63)

Steiner also differed with Besant and Leadbeater on the question of who Christ was. Besant and Leadbeater identified him with the Bodhisattva Maitreya. Steiner said they were two different, but related, beings; Christ was not a highly evolved human soul as the Theosophist saw him, but an infinitely higher cosmic being. The Bodhisattva Maitreya, "who succeeded Gautama Buddha," was (p. 18) a human soul, who, as Jeshu ben Pandira in a former incarnation, prepared the way for Christ. This Maitreya has "one of his re-embodiments ...fixed for the twentieth century," about which it was "impossible to speak here more exactly." (64)

It will not be a surprise that Steiner thought that the coming as envisioned by Besant and Leadbeater "simply means that the Christ-Being [was] not understood" and that their idea was an "absurdity." (65) But the absurdity was not of their own making. According to Steiner the original Masters who had directed Blavatsky--"those supreme powers, which presided at the inauguration of the Theosophical Society"--had been surreptitiously replaced by "powers, wishing to follow their own special interests." These powers had taken on "the appearance of those who had originally inspired the impulse." Steiner identified these impostors as being of Indian origin and as having the motive of revenging themselves on the imperialistic and materialistic West by merging their "own nationalistic egoistic occultism," into an "occult movement from the West," i.e. the Theosophical Society. This was made possible "through the very way in which England and India are karmically connected with one another in world affairs." The result was that the "spiritual forces which sought to bestow upon mankind a new impulse without

distinction of race, creed, or any other merely human attributes were dammed back." (66) In other words, according to Steiner, impostor Masters had hijacked the Theosophical Society, and used Besant, Leadbeater and Krishnamurti as unwitting instruments in a occult power game directed against humanity in general and the West in particular. (67)

### **Albert E.S. Smythe**

After the dust had settled around Krishnamurti's radical pronouncements and actions in 1929, Albert E.S. Smythe, then General Secretary of the Canadian section of the Theosophical Society, expressed what certain Theosophists had thought all along about Besant, Leadbeater, and the project of the coming teacher: a "large part of the Theosophical movement never shared these views, the Canadian Section of the Society having repudiated them from the first." He called the project an "extraordinary delusion" and "absolutely contrary" to the literature of the Theosophical Society of Blavatsky's days. In Smythe's eyes Leadbeater was the main culprit. He had "seized" the young Krishnamurti, had "evangelized Mrs Annie Besant" and persuaded her with "the most fanatical and ridiculous arguments" that the boy was to be a World Teacher. Fortunately, Krishnamurti saw through it and freed himself from the "influence of his crazy patron, shook off the delusions with which he had been surrounded and now announces that he has cut loose from the whole of these fictitious traditions." (68) Innocent and abused, Krishnamurti woke up in time to claim his independence. (p. 19)

### **E.L. Gardner**

In 1963 an eminent English Theosophist, E.L. Gardner, wrote a booklet about Leadbeater's clairvoyance, which caused a furor in Theosophical circles. (69) Gardner's contention was that, although Leadbeater discovered the boy Krishnamurti by an act of genuine clairvoyance, Leadbeater later fell victim to "unconscious Kriyashakti." Gardner defined the term Kriyashakti as the power of creative thought. The concept of "unconscious Kriyashakti" is best explained by Leadbeater's biographer Gregory Tillett: "Leadbeater unconsciously created an entire artificial system, based upon his own strongly held views, and, again unconsciously, used his own occult power to vitalize this system into a state where it had the appearance of reality, and appeared as an objective reality to him when he viewed it clairvoyantly." (70) Or, as Gardner stated succinctly "the Lord Maitreya and the Masters with whom Leadbeater was on such familiar terms were his own thought-creations." (71) In this way Leadbeater created, and also sincerely believed in, the project of the second coming, messages from the Masters, and their guidance in reforming the Liberal Catholic Church and other projects.

## **VIEW FOUR: PROJECT WAS NOT GENUINE, BUT SUCCEEDED.**

### **Rom Landau and an "Impeccable Source"**

The matrix would not be complete without someone claiming that the project was simultaneously not genuine, and miraculously successful. Rom Landau, who interviewed many metaphysical teachers in the 1930s, presents such a version in his book *God Is My Adventure*. He "heard it for the first time from Ouspensky" and "since its source is impeccable," he quoted it. It should be stressed that it is not necessarily Ouspensky's own version, although that could be the case. To quote Landau again: "According to this version, Leadbeater's original 'vision' was pure invention. Together with Mrs. Besant he is supposed to have believed that a young human being brought up as a 'messiah'--educated in an appropriate manner and supported by a worldwide wave of love and the implicit faith of great masses of people--ought to develop certain Christlike qualities; and it appears that Leadbeater and Annie Besant believed to the very end that Krishnamurti was thus developing naturally into the personality of the 'World Teacher.'" (72) Great ends justify great lies? (p. 20)

## NON-THEOSOPHICAL OBSERVATIONS

### Arthur H. Nethercot

As the biographer of Annie Besant's multi-faceted life, Arthur Nethercot had to take into account Krishnamurti's life and the way it was related to Besant. One point specifically puzzled Nethercot about Krishnamurti and that was his loss of memory of everything that had happened before 1929. Apparently this loss did not happen in that year itself for Nethercot had interviewed people who stated that even in 1932 Krishnamurti was able to remember "these earlier events perfectly." As not to impugn Krishnamurti's integrity Nethercot proposed the following explanation:

Here then is an extraordinary case of a man who, after a long and bizarre struggle with life, has finally got himself and his mind under almost complete control--has perhaps hypnotized himself so that he can relegate to oblivion most of the things he does not want to remember, because they recall the unhappy days when he was becoming an individual and was escaping from the domination of others whom he had cause to love and admire...I should hate to think of him as a charlatan; I prefer to think of him as a sort of schizophrenic, or at least a man of a now permanently divided dual personality. (73)

Nethercot seems to suggest that Krishnamurti was mentally ill because he suppressed his past.

Krishnamurti's thoughts about his memory are contained in a letter from Mary Lutyens to Nethercot, when the latter had requested her to raise the question of Krishnamurti's memory again. She wrote that "there is no question of amnesia; he is just not interested in the past and cannot bring his mind to it and cannot see its importance....He wouldn't be able to tell you what happened a fortnight ago....He is very fully alive in the present and excited about what goes on inside himself from day to day. What that is it is impossible to say, for he lives in a world and state of consciousness so different from the normal that one can scarcely glimpse it..." (74)

### Radha Rajagopal Sloss

Radha Rajagopal Sloss dropped a little bomb in the Krishnamurti circles in 1991 by alleging that her mother, Rosalind Rajagopal, the wife of Krishnamurti's former friend, manager and publisher, Desikacharya Rajagopal, had a secret love affair with Krishnamurti from 1932 until approximately 1957. This revelation, now admitted to be true by the Krishnamurti Foundation of America, might have done irreparable damage to Krishnamurti's image as a celibate, but as physical love is not contradictory to his teachings, the disclosure will probably soon be considered irrelevant. (p.22)

More important and possibly damaging is Sloss' allegation about Krishnamurti's involvement in the termination of Rosalind's third pregnancy by Krishnamurti and the observations of Sloss and others about his behavior in the Krishnamurti-Rajagopal feud over funds, real estate, and archives. According to Sloss the real cause of the fight was Krishnamurti's fear about "what would happen to his public image if letters and statements in his own handwriting should ever come to light. He wished to acquire control over these archives by whatever means necessary." (75) This alleged obsession drove Krishnamurti to maligning Rajagopal, and to instigating a lawsuit accusing Rajagopal of mismanaging funds. (76) Some, who were close to both men, and had knowledge of the case, tried, in vain, to mend fences. Sloss reproduced their letters with their observations: "One day, history will reveal everything; but the division in Krishnamurti himself will cast a very dark shadow on all he has said or written. Because the first thing the readers will say, is: 'If he cannot live it, who can?'" This last statement was echoed in another letter: "It has been obvious to me Krishnaji is not living his own teaching, that he has been making war." An explanation for this was offered by Sloss, which is similar to Nethercot's view of Krishnamurti: "Krishna was more than one person." She does not elaborate the statement, but rather illustrates it. She wrote that within a short time-span Rosalind, who also tried to mediate between Krishnamurti and Rajagopal, experienced Krishnamurti first as "absolutely impervious to her words,

withdrawn and haughty" and ten days later as "loving and appeared willing to talk" and wanting to "try to straighten things out." She found talking to "two Krishnas," a "strange and unsettling experience." (77)

Krishnamurti's reaction to criticism of a perceived dichotomy between his words and his deeds can be found in conversations he had with trustees of the Krishnamurti Foundation of America in 1972. According to a booklet published by the same foundation, he made it clear in these conversations, that "the desire for consistency between the teacher and the teachings simply mirrors the conditioning of the questioner." Questioning the relationship between a teacher and his teachings from the point of view of a hypothetical "man in the street," Krishnamurti said: "I'm not interested in what the Buddha was when he was a young man, whether he had sex, no sex, drugs or no drugs. I'm not interested. What I am interested in is what he is saying?" "Just... share into his teaching so that I can lead a different kind of life... I am only interested in the teaching. Nothing else--who you are, who you're not. Whether you're real or honest. It is my life that I am concerned with, not with your life..." Coming back to addressing the person to whom he was talking directly, he said: "How do you know he is honest or dishonest?" "How do you know whether what he is saying is out of his own life or he is inventing? Inventing in the big sense? Or he's leading a double life?" "I would say 'Please, leave the personality alone.'" (78)

The question might arise whether Krishnamurti was sincere in this conversation or was applying preventive damage-control. As we have seen, Krishnamurti's reaction to such a question would probably be challenging the questioner about his own conditioning, and dismissing the issue (p. 22) as irrelevant. To this answer the same skepticism about Krishnamurti's sincerity might be rejoined. This locks the discussion in a solid stalemate, which is anyway the logical conclusion of a reciprocated *ad hominem* argument.

## THE AGNOSTIC META-POSITION

### John Algeo

The views of the current president of the Theosophical Society in America, John Algeo, are of importance because he gives a Theosophical framework for understanding the observations of Nethercot and Sloss; because he is an exception from the earlier referred to emerging consensus in the Theosophical Society to accept Krishnamurti as the prophesied teacher, and because he has an alternative view of Krishnamurti.

John Algeo also observes that Krishnamurti "appears to have been not one, but several persons": a) "the young Krishnamurti, nurtured and conditioned by his Theosophical mentors"; b) "the rebellious and publicly austere Krishnamurti, overthrowing his Theosophical traces and...teaching ends without means"; c) "the esoteric Krishnamurti," with powers of healing and clairvoyancy; d) "the charismatic Krishnamurti," who seemed to have "realized his unity with the source of all life" and e) the "manipulative, dishonest, self-centered Krishnamurti," revealed by Sloss. To answer the question "who is the real Krishnamurti?" Algeo applies Theosophical psychology: "Each of us is a transcendent individuality that expresses itself in a series of reincarnated personalities....The various Krishnamurtis are mixtures in varying proportions of aspects of the flawed personality and the inspiring individuality." (79)

If the Theosophical concept of personality can be equated with Krishnamurti's concept of the ego, then Krishnamurti would reject this view out of hand. When Krishnamurti discussed with Radha Sloss the conflict between himself and Rajagopal and was challenged by Sloss' remark--which she characterized as "going too far"--that for her the whole affair seemed to be "a conflict of ego and pride and surely you of all people should be able to deal with that," Krishnamurti's voice, according to Sloss, "changed completely from a formal indifference to heated anger," and became "almost shrill," and he said "I have no ego! Who do you think you are, to talk to me like this?" (80) Is Krishnamurti's way of delivering

this statement contradicting its content? The question it raises, and this one has profound and interesting implications, is whether to view Krishnamurti's reaction as rooted in righteous indignation of an enlightened, inspiring individuality or as an outburst of anger of an egoic, flawed personality. In the first case Krishnamurti's self-perception as an enlightened being stands untouched, in the second it would fall apart. (p. 23)

The other point of interest in Algeo's review is his warning that Krishnamurti's "influence on the organizational and intellectual history" of the Theosophical Society "could lead to a different sort of dogma and sectarianism....There is a tendency to idealize Krishnamurti, to find in him a de facto World Teacher, and to repress his shadow side." (81) Does this last statement imply that Algeo thinks Krishnamurti is not the World Teacher? When asked the question about the genuineness and success of the project with Krishnamurti, he answered that he "could not know that and would not speculate about it." (82) This answer suggests a legitimate epistemological view of the matrix, which could be termed an agnostic one: one does not know the truth about Krishnamurti's metaphysical status and there is a risk involved in making a leap of faith into believing one position or another.

## **THE KANTIAN META-POSITION**

### **Krishnamurti again.**

A variation to the last-mentioned position would be the Kantian statement that one could not, in principle, know the truth about the metaphysical side of Krishnamurti, because that is the realm, as Krishnamurti himself stated, "where our brains, our instruments of investigation, have no meaning." Here we are back to where we started with Krishnamurti's observation about himself that "water can never find out what water is." But we proceeded with presenting a number of metaphysical views, partly encouraged by his challenge that "if you are open to enquire, put your brain in condition, someone could find out." (83)

## **CONCLUSION**

The matrix I proposed in this paper to classify the great amount of different Theosophical viewpoints about the person Krishnamurti seems to be helpful, because the two issues of genuineness and success regarding the project of the coming of a great spiritual teacher, are, implicitly or explicitly, almost always dealt with by Theosophical writers when they discuss Krishnamurti. For that reason the matrix seems to provide a clear structure to the field of enquiry.

There are certain interesting features to this structure which are worth mentioning. (p. 24)

1. Different strategies are devised to reconcile Krishnamurti's teachings with Theosophy by those who believe the project was genuine and successful. Because of Krishnamurti's rejection of Theosophy this task will be hard to execute. To begin with Krishnamurti himself; though dismissing Theosophy, he seems to keep the door open by acknowledging the existence of the Masters and the idea of the Boddhisattva. Besant solves the dilemma by regarding the two teachings as two sides of the same coin, each with its own specific function for humanity. Luntz qualifies Krishnamurti's statements as deliberate falsehoods to test Theosophists, without impugning Krishnamurti's integrity. Burnier depicts Krishnamurti as a profound, but misunderstood Theosophical teacher, who got expelled by the Theosophical Society. And finally Overton Fuller blames Besant's and Leadbeater's brand of Theosophy for Krishnamurti's estrangement.

2. There is a significant majority of persons believing the project was genuine. Of the 20 persons whose views have been presented, 13 viewed the project as genuine as against 4 who saw it as not genuine. It could of course be argued that these figures are a result of an arbitrary selection and that the numbers would be different if, for example, Edouard Schuré, Eugène Lévy, Katherine Tingley, Bhagavan Das and others would be included on the side of those holding to position 3. But then one could also swell

the ranks of those believing the project to be genuine with George Arundale, James Wedgwood, E.A.Wodehouse, Emily Lutyens etc.

3. All views stating that the project was not genuine (Steiner, Smythe, Gardner and Landau) incorporate different occult and non-occult conceptions of deception with a central role for Leadbeater. This is no surprise, because if the project is perceived as not genuine, Leadbeater, as a key player from its inception, must have either actively deceived others (Smythe and Landau) or was deceived himself, either by his own doing (Gardner) or by others (Steiner).

4. All persons believing the project had failed are critical of Krishnamurti's teachings, except for Michel and Bailey (who is not giving an opinion at all), and all persons who regard the project successful, agree with Krishnamurti, except for Luntz. This suggests, contrary to what one might expect, that the positions in themselves do not imply a specific evaluation of Krishnamurti's teachings: regarding the project as failed does not imply rejection of Krishnamurti's teachings and regarding the project as successful does not imply agreement.

5. There is a tendency with the only two female presidents of the Theosophical Society, Besant and Burnier, to keep the Theosophical family together by acknowledging Krishnamurti as the messiah and reconciling his teachings with Theosophy. (p. 25)

6. All claimants of contact with the Adepts (Leadbeater, Hodson, Bailey, Ballard and Prophet) could be classified as belonging to position two, i.e. the project was genuine, but failed. Krishnamurti's denouncement of the Masters, who allegedly backed him in the beginning, must have been reciprocated.

7. There is no consensus between the three alleged clairvoyants: Leadbeater and Hodson adhering to position two and Steiner to position three. Looking for evaluations of each others' clairvoyancy I found that Steiner challenged Leadbeater's clairvoyancy and Hodson, in a different context, defended it. (84) Two clairvoyants do see the same things regarding Krishnamurti, another does not.

8. In the cases of direct or indirect reactions by Krishnamurti to some of the views presented (Luntz, Scott and Sloss) Krishnamurti did not react to the specifics of the charges made, but rather reacted with ad hominem arguments, questioning the conscious or subconscious motivations of the person or persons holding those views. Whether fallacious or not, this technique is not uncharacteristic of Krishnamurti and is applied in harmony with his philosophy.

Some remarks about Krishnamurti's influence might be appropriate here. For many Theosophists Krishnamurti's metaphysical status was not only an interesting subject for discussion, but one with implications regarding one's individual perception of and, consequently, membership in the Theosophical Society. The question arises how important the different perceptions of Krishnamurti are to the way the Theosophical Movement, and to a certain extent the New Age Movement also, has developed and is organizationally structured. Steiner's career alone illustrates sufficiently the importance of this question.

About the future one can safely state that, because the subject of Krishnamurti's metaphysical status has not yet been exhaustively researched, articles discussing the pros and cons of the different positions will keep the ink flowing and web-sites busy. Probably polite polemical exchanges will flare up periodically, as they did around 1911, when the Order of the Star was founded, or 1929, when it was dissolved, or 1963, when Gardner's article was published. Also some interesting views were published in 1975. Most prominent was the publication of Mary Lutyens' biography about Krishnamurti's formative years. This prompted Krishnamurti to make some extraordinary statements about himself as reproduced in this paper. In the same year, after a long silence about Krishnamurti, the Masters Morya and Kuthumi gave another evaluation of their erstwhile pupil through their alleged messenger Elizabeth

Clare Prophet. What was missing that year and might have been reasonably expected, was a Theosophical discussion about Blavatsky's prophesied "torch-bearer of Truth," expected in the last quarter of this century. So far Theosophists have been rather silent about this prophecy. (p. 26)

The current controversy over Radha Sloss' book is of a different order. The subject is mainly about Krishnamurti's human side, but it provides facts and observations relevant for a more nuanced evaluation of his metaphysical status. For that reason it might well be that this controversy about Krishnamurti's human side might have as a side-effect a discussion about his metaphysical status.

This paper takes a historical perspective and does not imply a normative judgement about the truth or falsity of the content of the presented views. That question, which is ultimately a matter of personal belief, belongs to the realm of Theosophical theology and not to the realm of academic study of the history of Theosophy. Still I end this paper with two proposals relative to the realm of Theosophical theology.

During the research for this paper I expected to find a comparative study, from a Theosophical point of view, of the teachings of Blavatsky and Krishnamurti. Besides some speculative statements, generalizations, and interesting tidbits in Theosophical literature, I found only one substantial article based on original research. (85) More comparative studies would probably satisfy a still silent demand.

Based on a historical, comparative study of the different Theosophical views on Krishnamurti as a preliminary and necessary work, it would be appropriate to develop a comprehensive Theosophical hypothesis about Krishnamurti. This hypothesis might correspond with or transcend one or more of the above presented views, maybe even combine some of them, explain others, refute critics and incorporate, besides recently discovered facts, the conclusions of comparative studies referred to in the previous paragraph. A tall order, perhaps, but not impossible.

## Notes

1. For an overview of the many activities organized during the centenary of Krishnamurti's birth see *The Krishnamurti Foundation of America Newsletter* 10\1 (Spring 1996), 3.
2. Arthur H.Nethercot, *The Last four Lives of Annie Besant* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 128.
3. In the cases of Jean Overton Fuller and Rom Landau an exception was made. Though the point of view they contribute is not their own, I trust that they had correctly reported the views of their sources.
4. Mary Lutyens, *Krishnamurti: The Years of Fulfillment* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1983), 186,225-228 and 234.
5. Ibid., 186, 225-28 and 234.
6. Mary Lutyens, *Krishnamurti: His Life and Death* (New York: St.Martin's Press, 1991), 83-84. Wherever words and sentences are printed in italics, they were found as such in the original text.
7. Ibid., 151.
8. J.Krishnamurti, *Truth and Actuality* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1977), 88.
9. Pupul Jayakar, *Krishnamurti: A Biography* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 379.
10. H.P.Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy* (Pasadena, Cal.: Theosophical University Press, 1946), 307.
11. M.H.Charles, "The T.S. as a Herald," letter to *The Vâhan* 21\7 (February 1912), 144.
12. Annie Besant, "Freedom of Opinion in the T.S.," letter to *The Vâhan* 21\8 (March 1912): 153. See also her defense against the charges that she was teaching "Neo-Theosophy" and not Theosophy as taught by Blavatsky: Annie Besant, "The Growth of the T.S.," *The Theosophist* 33\10 (July 1912): 506-

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13. A.P.Warrington, "On the Watchtower," *The Theosophist* 55\8 (May 1934), 122.
14. Mary Lutyens, *Krishnamurti: The Years of Awakening*. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975), 255.
15. Nethercot, 409.
16. Annie Besant, "To Members of the Theosophical Society," *The Theosophist* 51\6 (March 1930): 533.
17. Catherine Lowman Wessinger, *Annie Besant and Progressive Messianism* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1988), 318. Dr.Wessinger gave me valuable editorial help in writing this article, for which I am very grateful.
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20. J.Krishnamurti, *The Art of Listening*, vol.1 (1933-1934), *The Collected Works of J.Krishnamurti* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt, 1991), 173.
21. Pupul Jayakar, 379-380, and Radha Rajagopal Sloss, *Lives in the Shadow with J.Krishnamurti* (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1991), 306.
22. *The Theosophist* 107\6 (March 1986) and 116\8 (May 1995).
23. Radha Burnier, "J.Krishnamurti," *The Theosophist* 107\6 (March 1986): 203.
24. Jean Overton Fuller, "Krishnamurti," *Theosophical History* 1\6 (April 1986): 140-141.
25. Gregory Tillett, *The Elder Brother: A Biography of Charles Webster Leadbeater* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), 273.
26. Lutyens, *Krishnamurti: The Years of Fulfillment*, 226 and 230.
27. Ernest Wood, "'No Religion Higher Than Truth,'" *The American Theosophist* 52\12 (December 1964): 288.
28. Ibid., 289.
29. C.W.Leadbeater, "Art Thou He That Should Come?," *The Theosophist* 51\9 (June 1930): 472.
30. Adrian G.Vreede, "An Attack on Bishop Leadbeater," *The Liberal Catholic* 34\7 (February 1964): 150.
31. Tillett, 218.
32. Nethercot, 368. See pp.362-369 for more details on this episode.
33. Vreede: 150.
34. Geoffrey Hodson, *Thus Have I Heard: A Book of Spiritual and Occult Gleanings from the Teachings of the Great* (Adyar, India: Theosophical Publishing House, 1929), 101-111.
35. John K. Robertson, "Aquarian Occultist: The Life and Teachings of Geoffrey Hodson" (unpublished MS, 1971), 190-198. Copy of relevant chapter provided by German author Peter Michel.
36. Peter Michel, *Krishnamurti: Love and Freedom--Approaching a Mystery* (Woodside, CA: Bluestar Communications, 1995), 33.

37. Sandra Hodson, ed., *Light of the Sanctuary: The Occult Diary of Geoffrey Hodson* (Manila: Theosophical Publishing House, 1988).
38. Geoffrey Hodson, *Krishnamurti and the Search for Light* (Sydney: St.Alban Press, n.d.), 9. According to the *Supplement to a Bibliography of the Life and Teachings of J.Krishnamurti* (Bombay: Chetana, 1982) by Susunaga Weeraperuma there exists a reply to Hodson's booklet by E.F.D. Bertram, titled "Krishnamurti and the Search for Light--A Reply to Mr.Hodson's Attack."
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40. His Pupil [Cyril Scott], *The Initiate* (London: Routledge, 1920); *The Initiate in the New World* (London: Routledge, 1927); *The Initiate in the Dark Cycle* (London: Routledge,1932).
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42. Chapter 5, "Krishnamurti: a Problem," 65-77; chapter 11, "The Truth about Krishnamurti," 133-43.
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57. Kuthumi, "An Exposé of False Teachings," *Pearls of Wisdom* 19\5 (1 February 1976): 28.
58. El Morya, *The Chela and the Path--Meeting the Challenge of Life in the Twentieth Century* (Malibu CA: Summit University Press, 1975), 121-122.
59. El Morya, 122.

60. Michel, 25 and 40.
61. Peter Michel, personal letter, 18 August 1995.
62. Thomas H. Meyer, *The Bodhisattva Question: Krishnamurti, Rudolf Steiner, Annie Besant, Valentin Tomberg, and the Mystery of the Twentieth-Century Master* (London: Temple Lodge, 1993), 54-56. This study, pro-anthroposophical and well-referenced, contains valuable contributions towards understanding Steiner's thoughts and actions in connection with the Theosophical Society, the Order of the Star in the East and the founding of his own Anthroposophical Society.
63. Rudolf Steiner, "Bodhisattvas, Buddhas and Christ," in *From Jesus to Christ* (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1973), 44-47, 170 and 176. Lecture given in Milan, Italy, 21 September 1911.
64. *Ibid.*, 179-180.
65. Rudolf Steiner, *The Story of my Life* (London: Anthroposophical Publishing Co., 1928), 300.
66. Rudolf Steiner, "Das Russische Volkstum," in *Der Zusammenhang des Menschen mit der elementarischen Welt* (Dornach, Switzerland: Rudolf Steiner-Nachlassverwaltung, 1986), 197 and 201. Address given in Helsingfors, Finland, April 11, 1912. Translations of quotes taken from Meyer, 43-44.
67. For more on Steiner's perception of Theosophy see the articles by H.J. Spierenburg: "Dr. Steiner on H.P.B.," *Theosophical History* 1\7 (July 1986): 159-174. "Dr. Rudolf Steiner on the Mahatmas," part 1, *Theosophical History* 1\8 (October 1986): 211-223, and part 2, *Theosophical History* 2\1 (January 1987): 23-31.
68. Albert E.S. Smythe, "The Messianic Craze," *Hamilton Herald*, 11 November 1931. Transcribed for the author from a clipping in the archives of the Hamilton Theosophical Society in Ontario, Canada, by Mr. Ted Davy.
69. E.L. Gardner, *There Is No Religion Higher Than Truth: Developments in the Theosophical Society* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1963), 9-17. Gregory Tillett provided an overview of the discussion. See Tillett, 274-278. {A collection of responses to Gardner's theory can be found in: Hodson, Sandra; van Thiel, Mathias (eds.) *C.W. Leadbeater: A Great Occultist*, (n.p.: the editors, n.d. [ca. 1965])}
70. Tillett, 276.
71. Gardner, 8-9.
72. Rom Landau, *God is my Adventure* (London: Nicholson & Watson, 1935), 100.
73. Nethercot, 450.
74. Letter from Mary Lutyens to Arthur Nethercot, 31 May 1961, in Nethercot, 450, n.9.
75. Sloss, 314 and 315.
76. To counter the allegations made in Sloss' book the KFA mounted a defense to present their side of the conflict. See: Krishnamurti Foundation of America, *Statement by the Krishnamurti Foundation of America about the Radha Sloss book "Lives in the shadow with J. Krishnamurti"* (Ojai, CA: KFA, n.d.); Erna Lilliefelt, *KFA History--Report on the Formation of Krishnamurti Foundation of America and the Lawsuits Which Took Place between 1968 and 1986 to Recover Assets for Krishnamurti's Work* (Ojai, CA: KFA, 1995); and Mary Lutyens, *Krishnamurti and the Rajagopals* (Ojai, CA: KFA, 1996).
77. Sloss, 294, 295, 300 and 301.
78. Statement by the Krishnamurti Foundation... etc., 9-11.

79. John Algeo, review of *Krishnamurti--Love and Freedom* by Peter Michel in *Quest* 8\3 (Autumn 1995): 86-87.
80. Sloss, 303.
81. Algeo, 87.
82. Conversation with John Algeo, February 20, 1996.
83. Lutyens, *Krishnamurti: The Years of Fulfillment*, 228 and 229.
84. For Steiner on Leadbeater see: Meyer, 46. For Hodson on Leadbeater see: Sandra Hodson and Mathias van Thiel (eds.), *C.W.Leadbeater: A Great Occultist* (n.p.: the editors, n.d.), 1-2. Scott could have been included as a clairvoyant, but is not, because he does not explicitly claim that his writings are based on clairvoyance.
85. Aryel Sanat, "The Secret Doctrine, Krishnamurti & Transformation," *The American Theosophist* 76\5 (May 1988), 133-143. In a biographical sidebar in the article it is mentioned that the author was working on a book "exploring connections between Krishnamurti, the Mahatmas, and Buddhism," which has not yet been published. [A longer version of the article can be found on the internet and Quest Books published in 1999 his *The Inner Life of Krishnamurti: Private Passion and Perennial Wisdom*.].