



## CHAPTER 10

---

# The Theosophical Maitreya: On Benjamin Creme's Millenarianism

*Lukas Pokorny*

### INTRODUCTION

No other proponent of the New Age current (cf. Hanegraaff 2007) has been more indefatigably advocating the imminence of a messianic World Teacher than Benjamin Creme (1922–2016). Undeterred by the apparent perennality of his millenarian expectation, that is, the decade-long persistence of the World Teacher's (public) absence, Creme until his passing persevered in his claim of the *very* soon-to-unfold Age of the Group, the "Share International millennium." Etically, one may argue that "prophecy," in his case, evidently "failed," for Creme time and again indicated that he himself would indeed experience the Day of Declaration, or the World Teacher's salvific coming out, while still alive. However, emically, importance is assigned not to dates but solely to the apodictic certainty of a millenarian materialisation that draws to a close, for temporality is relative and so are time designations. Accordingly, the Share International movement unswervingly keeps cherishing Creme's millenarian vision and

---

L. Pokorny (✉)

Department of Religious Studies, University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria  
e-mail: [lukas.pokorny@univie.ac.at](mailto:lukas.pokorny@univie.ac.at)

© The Author(s) 2021

L. Pokorny, F. Winter (eds.), *The Occult Nineteenth Century*,  
Palgrave Studies in New Religions and Alternative Spiritualities,  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-55318-0\\_10](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-55318-0_10)

195

its chief protagonist, the World Teacher or the Christ of the Aquarian Age. It is he—whose true name Creme confirmed to be Maitreya—who is the omphalos in Creme’s millenarian programme.

Despite the notoriety of Creme’s millenarianism, surprisingly little research has been hitherto conducted on his teachings. The present chapter aside, only very recently scholars go beyond the usual *en passant* mentions. One is Jake Poller (2019), who explores the nature of Creme’s knowledge received telepathically and through “overshadowing”; the other one is myself in Pokorny 2021, where I delineate key aspects of Creme’s UFO religiosity. What both papers necessarily address, albeit merely in a nutshell, is the all-pervading millenarian mechanics of his thought. This chapter now seeks to give the fullest attention to Creme’s millenarianism and, specifically, the role of Maitreya therein. Following an overview of Creme’s hagiography and a brief archaeology of the Maitreya narrative in Buddhism and modern Theosophy, Creme’s appropriation thereof within his wider millenarian mindscape is examined. Before, however, two key terms need to be determined, namely “millenarianism” and “millennium.” Drawing on my definitions (see Pokorny 2020), I take the former as the belief in a salvational transformation of the current world order, through which at least (some of) the faithful will experience well-being. This transformation is held to (substantially) solidify imminently, patterned by a transcendent blueprint that is either devised by a superhuman agent or naturally impregnated into the fabrics of time and space through an impersonal absolute. Moreover, change may be facilitated or even enforced through the action pursued by human beings, rendering them into “vehicles of change.” “Millennium” is understood as the complete or crucially progressed state of millenarian perfection. In its consummated mode the millennium may exist indefinitely or until the dawn of a new cosmic era—for example, as spelled out in cyclical worldviews. Millennium-building can follow (possibly in subsequent terms or even “oscillatorily”) two chief trajectories—the “catastrophic” or the “progressive.” In the concluding remarks, Creme’s millenarianism is placed within this theoretical framework.

## BENJAMIN CREME AND SHARE INTERNATIONAL

*The Painter*

Key portions of Benjamin Creme's standard autohagiographical account of 1979 (cf. Creme 2007a: ix–xxii; for his official obituary, see *SI* 35.10 [2016 December]: 3–4) are variously repeated partially or in full across the Share International oeuvre. In scattered talks, he later added bits and pieces but the information we have regarding his life is overall sparse. Creme was born on December 5, 1922, as the second of three and only boy into a Jewish-Catholic family in Glasgow. In his teens, he decided that he would become a painter and, eventually, left home at 16 to pursue his early commitment. The following year, he organised a small exhibition alongside his friend, the later actor Douglas Campbell (1922–2009), and apparently piqued the interest of famed local artists Jankel Adler (1895–1949), John Duncan Fergusson (1874–1961), and Josef Herman (1911–2000). Adler, who had been working with Paul Klee (1879–1940) in Düsseldorf during the 1920s and was particularly influenced by Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) and Fernand Léger (1881–1955), was, allegedly, especially intrigued and became Creme's mentor over the next few years. Creme married his first wife (Peggy; d. 1965) and, in 1946, the couple moved to London, where—through Adler—he enjoyed vibrant contact with reputed contemporary painters such as Keith Vaughan (1912–1977), Robert MacBryde (1913–1966), Robert Colquhoun (1914–1962), John Minton (1917–1957), and Prunella Clough (1919–1999). Creme continued painting—and occasionally exhibiting—until his eyesight faded in the 2000s. The Benjamin Creme Museum in Los Angeles is dedicated to his (esoteric) art.

*Maitreya's Voice*

Running parallel to and becoming increasingly entangled with his mundane career as a largely self-taught painter (see Creme 2017), Creme pursued another inner calling—the study of Ageless Wisdom Teaching or Esotericism (Creme 2006: 7). Early formative readings mentioned by Creme include Alexandra David-Néel's (1868–1969) *With Mystics and Magicians in Tibet* (1931; translation of the 1929 *Parmi les mystiques et les magiciens du Thibet*), the writings of Wilhelm Reich (1897–1957), as well as Rolf Alexander's (1891–?) *The Power of the Mind* (1956). Ultimately, it

has been figures belonging to three partly overlapping and mutually influencing spiritual milieus that were shaping Creme's own religious identity. Exerting the most striking impact were various giants of Theosophical thinking, above all his "predecessor triad": Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891); Helena Ivanovna Roerich (1879–1955); and, especially, Alice Ann Bailey (1880–1949); but also Annie Besant (1847–1933) and Charles Webster Leadbeater (1847–1934). Additionally, he immersed himself in the writings of different neo-Hindu thinkers—Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902); Paramahansa Yogananda (1893–1952); Sivananda Saraswati (1887–1963); and later, but most significantly, Sathya Sai Baba (1926–2011). Finally, he was greatly susceptible to the nascent UFO religious current, specifically as articulated by the likes of George Adamski (1891–1965) and George King (1919–1997). Reading the former's *Flying Saucers Have Landed* (1953), co-authored with Desmond Leslie (1921–2001), as well as its sequel, *Inside the Space Ships* (1955), awakened in Creme such a glowing enthusiasm that he became an active member of King's Aetherius Society from 1957 to 1958. His engagement with King purportedly had two lasting effects. Firstly, as Creme recalls, he was capacitated "to transmit the cosmic spiritual energies from the Space People" (2007a: xii), harnessing these energies for healing purposes. Secondly, he could now telepathically establish contact with the Space Brothers, that is, spiritually highly evolved extraterrestrials from within our solar system who man the numerous unidentified flying objects (UFOs) and unidentified submerged objects (USOs) protecting the earth. Subsequent to his association with the Aetherius Society, he took service with the Space Brothers, regularly liaising in out-of-the-body gatherings with other contactees such as Adamski himself (Creme 2010: 63–64), who, as Creme disclosed, had indeed been an incarnated Venusian.

This seemingly prepared the stage for a watershed episode in Creme's life occurring in early 1959. Having always been under its watch, as Creme insinuated, now for the first time a high-ranked member of Earth's Spiritual Hierarchy of Masters (cf. Goodrick-Clarke 2010) established direct telepathic contact with him. This Master residing in the Himalayas was later to become Creme's own Master, whose name, while supposedly being well-known to the initiated all over the world, he would never disclose. In a series of messages, Creme was familiarised with the Plan of humankind's evolution, culminating in a momentous discourse by the Master on the imminent bodily emergence of his leader, the Head of our Planetary Hierarchy. It was further revealed to Creme that he was indeed

assigned a special role in all this and, specifically, that he would become the proclaimer of the World Teacher's Descent. Communication seemed to have subsequently substantially ceased until late 1972 when Creme was taken under the Master's wing engaging in most intense and profound spiritual training. His discipleship enabled the Master to imprint his consciousness upon Creme. In a next step, Creme embarked on community-building. That is to say, in March 1974, his Master advised him to contact 14 selected individuals and relate to them in a lecture an outline of the Plan. Twelve were to join the cause, forming the first Transmission Meditation group.<sup>1</sup> Shortly thereafter, the World Teacher himself commenced to occasionally engraft his consciousness upon Creme, a process called "overshadowing" in the Theosophical jargon. Creme thereby turned into the World Teacher's veritable mouthpiece. Starting in May 1975, Creme carried his message centring on the Reappearance of the Christ and the Externalisation of the Hierarchy in general (i.e., the Masters' public appearance) to other groups. Later, Creme confided that he was in fact one of five "disciples" originally tasked to do so; each one was then living in a spiritually charged city—Darjeeling, Geneva, New York, Tōkyō, and London (Creme). Only he was to accept (*SI* 20:8 [2001 October]: 30).

While Creme kept spreading the word qua Christ's herald indirectly for the most part of his "service," from September 1977, the World Teacher every now and then engaged in publicly overshadowing him, therefore opening up a direct channel of communication. Two years later, Creme published his first book encapsulating his millenarian programme in order to elevate his message to new heights. Already the title of his opus magnum—*The Reappearance of the Christ and the Masters of Wisdom*—deliberately evinces his indebtedness to Bailey's (messianic) thought (cf. Bailey 1978 [1948]). Sixteen books were to follow alongside numerous texts (ranging from brief responses in Q&A sections to substantial speeches) chiefly published in the movement's central organ, *Share International*. Starting as a monthly in 1982, the magazine is presently released in ten issues per year. Most of his books are comprised of a thematically arranged

<sup>1</sup>Borrowing notably from Bailey and her Triangles (Meditation) started in 1937, Transmission Meditation is a practice introduced by Creme with the aim to downscale cosmic energies given by the Space Brothers and released to Earth by the Hierarchy in order to facilitate humankind's spiritual evolution. Transmission Meditation groups represent the only platform for real-life member interaction.

and selected collection of (his) *Share International* texts. At the time, Creme also founded the Share International Foundation based in Amsterdam, which keeps serving as the nucleus of a larger network of like-minded organisations worldwide. Today, Transmission Meditation groups are active around the globe in more than 40 countries. Whereas the number of committed longer-term Transmission Meditation practitioners is likely merely in the hundreds, the overall impact of Creme's teachings—in particular his millenarian and ufological thought—on the wider esoteric milieu is considerable. Although Creme largely presented himself as merely the Hierarchy's spokesperson, a humble intermediary of the Plan of Evolution, and a disciple of much higher spiritual powers he could not yet fathom, he also, albeit unostentatiously, promoted the self-image of a spiritually well-advanced being in his own right. This was eventually made most explicit in his obituary where his spiritual evolution was given as that of a 3.46-degree initiate (as of December 2014), which would place Creme among Earth's spiritual elite,<sup>2</sup> putting him in the company of figures such as Muhammad (3.4), the Apostle Peter (3.5), Milarepa (3.5), Francis of Assisi (3.5), and William Shakespeare (3.5). Such spiritual score shall also corroborate his claim to have carried forward at the vanguard the Theosophical lineage of great Ageless Wisdom Teaching mediators. Indeed, he deems himself to rank only behind Blavatsky (4.0) and Roerich (4.0), but well in front of other big names of Theosophy, including Bailey (3.2), Leadbeater (2.4), Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907; 2.2), Alfred Percy Sinnett (1840–1921; 2.2), Besant (2.15), Nicholas Roerich (1874–1947; 2.1), and William Quan Judge (1851–1896; 2.0).<sup>3</sup> Benjamin

<sup>2</sup> Assigning initiatory levels and—drawing on Bailey's *A Treatise on the Seven Rays* (1936)—“ray structure” (i.e., energetic) compositions to historical (and mythical) personalities, has been a trademark of Creme. In Theosophical soteriology, initiation refers to “the process of undergoing an expansion of consciousness” (Bailey 1977 [1922]: 12) in a multi-stage scheme. The higher one's spiritual progress (or level of self-realisation of one's own divinity) geared towards reaching oneness with the Supreme Logos of the Cosmos, the higher one's initiatory score. According to Creme, the average level of present-day humankind is 0.3-degree of initiation, allowing ordinary people to employ some twelve per cent of his/her brain capacity. In contrast, a third-degree initiate could already utilise some sixty to seventy per cent (Creme 2010: 134). Mastership is attained with the fifth initiation. Accomplishing the first initiation may take several hundreds of thousands of reincarnations. It speeds up thereafter. Currently, around 2300–2400 people in incarnation are supposed to have taken the third initiation, and circa 450 the fourth one (Creme 2006: 32–33).

<sup>3</sup> Among the Theosophically minded figures other than Blavatsky and Roerich, Creme only considers Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895–1986; 4.0) to be ahead in spiritual terms. Yet, he rather

Creme died in London on October 24, 2016, at the age of 93. He is survived by his second wife, Phyllis (b. 1942), their children Tara (b. 1973) and Lucis, as well as a son from his first marriage, Julian. The latter in tandem with his wife, *Share International's* chief editor, Felicity Eliot, have become the public voices of the movement. Notably, they advocate the view that Creme's passing has not ended his association with Share International qua "Aquarian type of group" (cf. Bailey 2017 [1951]: 297) but by dint of his spiritual identity (qua "Aquarian type of founder") he would actually continue to nourish and sustain it. Moreover, in a number of recent interviews they re-emphasised millenarian contiguity—Maitreya's Day of Declaration keeps being nigh.

## MAITREYA

### *Buddhist Origins*

Maitreya's (Sanskrit; "Metteyya" in Pāli; "The Benevolent One") origins are obscure. Zoroastrian or Mithraic influences might have been at play (Appleton 2010: 90). Jaini (1988: 77–78) suggests that Maitreya was first introduced by the Mahāsāṃghikas and subsequently adopted by other mainstream schools. The earliest extant textual appearance—partly dating back to the second century BCE—is found in the Buddha's biography of the Lokottaravāda-Mahāsāṃghikas, the *Mahāvastu* (Great Story). There the historical Buddha relates of a contemporary bodhisattva by the name of Ajita who "will become a Buddha in the world immediately after me" (tr. in Jones 1949: 9), that is, at some indeterminate point in the future of the current aeon (*kalpa*) (Jones 1956: 233).<sup>4</sup> The *Mahāvastu* Maitreya myth rather prosaically displays dharma continuity than a messianic outlook. In the popular *Cakkavattisīhanādasutta* (Discourse on the Lion's Roar of the Wheel-Turning Monarch) of the Theravādins, the only (brief) reference to Maitreya in the entire Pāli Canon (Walshe 1995 [1987]: 395–405), the topos of plain dharma continuity unfolds against an embryonic progressive millenarian background. Maitreya is held to attain

views Krishnamurti as a "spiritual teacher" entrenched in the (neo-)Hindu context, which Creme took as a hotbed for spiritual grandeur as expressed through the extraordinary spiritual stats given to various of its exponents. The list of spiritually exceptional Hindu masters peaks in the person of Sathya Sai Baba, Earth's Spiritual Regent deputising for Sanat Kumara, the reflection of the Planetary Logos.

<sup>4</sup>In the later tradition, "Ajita" became an epithet of Maitreya.

enlightenment at the height of a new cycle during the reign of an ideal monarch (*cakravartin*) when morality has returned to its utmost. Yet, neither does Maitreya messianically usher in change nor is the coming golden age (which is deemed far superior to the times of the historical Buddha) even faintly envisaged to materialise soon but rather in up to 5.67 billion years according to a common traditional reckoning.

Whereas the classical Maitreya myth is relatively unembellished and the *Cakkavattisāhanādasutta* Maitreya, specifically, remains lacklustre being solely a future copy of the historical Buddha, this was to change dramatically later, especially in the Chinese Mahāyāna discourse; a development notably advanced by amplified eschatological thinking (cf. Nattier 1991) thriving in the Buddho-Daoist conceptual crucible. The silent guarantor of dharma resurgence in a nebulous distant future metamorphosed into a tangible (at times messianic) agent becoming salvifically responsive to devotion. The ensuing Maitreya belief came to play out in a continuum, ranging over four salvational modes as expounded by Nattier (1988): imminently and earthly; earthly but in one's next life (an option, which could well accommodate Maitreya's descent in whatever far-off future); imminently occurring in Maitreya's heavenly realm Tuṣita<sup>5</sup>; and in Tuṣita after one's rebirth. In particular, the earthly-imminent version of the myth, already from the fifth century (Zürcher 1982: 13–14), gave way to a millenarian dynamism fleshing out all across East Asia in a variety of movements until today. Since the nineteenth century, expectationalism accelerated. Undoubtedly, new Maitreyas either *in statu adventum* or fully descended will keep coming.

### *The Theosophical Appropriation*

Buddhism served as a major resource for devising Theosophical thought. So conspicuous were the borrowings that Sinnett could unhesitatingly title his seminal Theosophical primer *Esoteric Buddhism* (1883), an early byword of Theosophy, as lamented echoingly by Blavatsky (1888: xvii). However, Blavatsky's complaint was merely directed at the misleading implication of such title, which would invite to erroneously equate Theosophy with contemporaneous Buddhism. In fact, she initially used the designation herself in the sense of the "doctrine of wisdom," which esoterically crystallised in the "wisdom-religion" of Gautama's Buddhism

<sup>5</sup>Traditionally, the place where the designated next Buddha awaits his last transmigration.



and pre-Vedic Brahmanism (Blavatsky 1877: 142–143); a secret doctrine, she and the wider Theosophical movement sought to divulge. For the sake of clarification, Blavatsky later contrasted “Buddhism” with “Budhism,” the latter being synonymous with Theosophy or “Wisdomism” (Blavatsky 1889: 12–13). In his *Esoteric Buddhism*, Sinnett mentions Maitreya only once. He would be the fifth Buddha (of a total of seven) in the present Great Planetary Circle, emerging when the subsequent sixth “root race” will already be around for several hundreds of thousands of years (1883: 144–145).<sup>6</sup> In her *The Secret Doctrine* (1888) Blavatsky corrects, as on many other occasions, Sinnett, having Maitreya instead conclude a list of five Buddhas, being “the last MESSIAH [*sic*] who will come at the culmination of the Great Cycle” (1888: 384).<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, he is not supposed to descend during the heydays of the sixth root race, but only when the highly spiritualised seventh and last root race is around (*ibid.*: 470). In her posthumous *The Theosophical Glossary* (1892), however, Blavatsky notes that Maitreya would instead be slated to “appear during the seventh (sub) race of this Round” (1892: 202). Although much sooner, it would still take at least tens of thousands of years before he arrives—if “he” would arrive in the flesh after all, given Blavatsky’s earlier hint that “Maitree” will effectively incarnate “into the whole humanity collectively, not in a single individual” (Blavatsky 1881: 195).

Early Theosophists, if they referred to him at all, placed Maitreya’s emergence in a distant future. This salvational remoteness evidently dimmed his popularity, for once his imminence(-cum-messianism) was highlighted, Maitreya came to occupy centre stage. Rumours within the Theosophical community that Maitreya’s messianic second advent following his “incarnation” as Jesus was at hand already spread, albeit

<sup>6</sup>Blavatsky divided human evolution alongside seven “root races,” each of which consists of seven “sub-races.” Humankind has arrived at the fifth sub-race (the “European”) of the fifth root race (the “Aryan”), which has been around for one million years. The sixth sub-race will come forth in a few hundred years, branching from the Americans. The seventh sub-race will slowly start to develop in some 25,000 years from now (cf. Santucci 2008; Lubelsky 2013).

<sup>7</sup>In *Isis Unveiled* (1877), the Maitree’s [*sic*] emergence qua saviour (Blavatsky 1877: 286) involves a catastrophic millenarian scenario: “When Maitree-Buddha comes, then our present world will be destroyed; and a new and better one will replace it” (*ibid.*: 275). This original apocalyptic-messianic vision was upheld for several years among some Theosophists. For example, in 1885, Navroji Dorabji Khandalavala still stated that “the fifth Buddha (Maitree) will appear at his last advent to save mankind before the final destruction of the world” (Khandalavala 1885: 91).

reluctantly, at the turn of the century (see, e.g., Besant 1900: 389). Towards the end of the 1900s, Besant alongside Leadbeater was then to turn these rumours into the lynchpin of Theosophy: Maitreya qua World Teacher was about to come forth. Besant believed that the sixth sub-race, the “American” with its centre in Southern California, already started to appear, now that the fifth one, which she called the “Teutonic,” was at its zenith. Every new sub-race brings about a World Teacher; this time it would be Maitreya, who assumed the role of Bodhisattva when his predecessor, Gautama, incarnated as the historical Buddha. During his tenure, Maitreya already twice was to implement lasting change—first being incarnated as Kṛṣṇa reshaping Hinduisim; next by overshadowing Jesus in order to give to the Teutonic sub-race an adequate doctrine, that is, Christianity (cf. Wessinger 1988: 264–268). To Besant, Maitreya is one of the chief *dramatis personae* of the mighty Occult Hierarchy of spiritual masters responsible for Earth, for he presides over its Department of Teaching<sup>8</sup>: “[A]t the head of that department, two grades above the grade of a Master, stands the Supreme Teacher, the Teacher of angels and of men. [...] His the duty of watching over the spiritual destinies of mankind” (Besant 1912: 95). That is to say, “the World-Teacher [...] comes out to sub-race after sub-race, and gives each religion appropriate to its needs, carefully designed for its own special and peculiar devotion” (Besant 1914: 269).<sup>9</sup> A most significant task in Besant’s Theosophical-millennarian project, which she partly pursued allegedly under the direct order of the Manu of the sixth sub-race, was to prepare a bodily vessel for Maitreya to descend into, for his own physical body needed to be kept at his residence in the Himalayas. This shell was discovered in April 1909 by Besant’s right-hand

<sup>8</sup> Its sister department is that of Ruling, overseen by another greatly evolved being (hailing from Blavatskian teachings), the Manu. As Besant has it: “[T]he Ruling Department, which guides all natural evolution, changes the face of the surface of our globe, builds and destroys continents, raises fresh races which grow mightier and pass away, controls the destinies of nations, shapes the fate of civilisations, balances up from time to time the great accounts between the races and the nations, and rules the outer destinies of men” (Besant 1912: 94–95).

<sup>9</sup> Apart from his direct innovative interventions, a World Teacher would also commission his disciples to spread new contextualised articulations of the same one truth—chief examples being Confucius, “Lao-tse,” Plato, and Pythagoras. The latter is considered to be no one else than Master K. H. (Koot Hoomi; Kuthumi), deemed the real co-founder, alongside Master M. (Morya), of the Theosophical Society, whose creation is meant to pioneer the new great religion of future humanity. Besant claimed that M. (the designated Manu of the sixth root race) was also her Master (likewise, Blavatsky and Olcott were his disciples), whereas Leadbeater was the disciple of K. H., Maitreya’s deputy and successor-in-waiting.

man, Leadbeater (whom she had known since 1890 via Sinnett), in the person of the then 13-year-old Krishnamurti. Consequently, he was groomed by the Theosophical Society leadership with a view to eventually become the overshadowed vessel for the World-Teacher—a vision that was ultimately not carried into effect. Rather, Krishnamurti increasingly alienated from the messianism devised by Besant and Leadbeater, resigning from the Theosophical Society in 1930. Still, Besant kept on favourable terms with Krishnamurti until her passing, claiming that in lieu of the anticipated overshadowing, Maitreya implanted a fraction of his consciousness into him. In contrast, Leadbeater was dismissive and reportedly discerned in 1927 that due to Krishnamurti's denial to let Maitreya use his body, "The Coming has gone wrong" (Tillett 1986: 762, 796).

Overall, Leadbeater, a former Anglican clergyman, was the mind most systematically informing the World Teacher narrative (French 2000). He might have done so at least from 1901 (Jinarājādāsa 1940: 11–12). Maitreya or the Bodhisattva serves the Hierarchy or the Great White Brotherhood as its Minister of Education and Religion (or, alternatively, that of Religious Instruction, or just Religion), the high office entrusted by the Buddha to his then assistant. Maitreya will apparently become the sixth of the total seven Buddhas of our "world-period" (Leadbeater 1925: 313). However, for the time being, he remains a bodhisattva, dwelling in his house in the Himalayas before he dons the body of a prepared disciple and consummates the Christian Second Advent joined by the range of other Masters. At present, he would be wearing

a body of the Keltic race [...]. His is a face of wondrous beauty, strong and yet most tender, with rich hair flowing like red gold about His shoulders. His beard is pointed, as in some of the old pictures, and His eyes, of a wonderful violet, are like twin flowers, like stars, like deep and holy pools filled with the waters of everlasting peace. His smile is dazzling beyond words, and a blinding glory of Light surrounds Him, intermingled with that marvellous rose-coloured glow which ever shines from the Lord of Love. [...] His is the voice that speaks, as never man spake, the words of teaching that bring peace to angels and to men. Within a very few years that voice will be heard and that Love be felt by those who dwell in the dark ways of earth; may we prepare ourselves to receive Him when He comes and give Him fitting welcome and faithful service! (ibid.: 42–43).

With the Krishnamurti prophecy having failed, Leadbeater (and fellow Liberal Catholic Church bishops) turned from outward to inward messianism: The Christ would not manifest individually but gradually descend

into the human hearts (cf. Tillett 1986: 785)—a shift to the Blavatskian side note of 1881 in her *Lamas and Druses*. From its strident beginning to its sore end, the whole World Teacher episode sent seismic shocks through the Theosophical movement, leading to schisms, a surging drop-out rate, and, eventually, self-imposed messianic silence among the remaining Adyar community.

Yet, Theosophical messianism was kept very much alive in various dissenting groups, notably those led by the Roerichs and the Baileys. The Roerichian Maitreya (like his peers, Buddha and Christ) hails from Venus and is expected to live (perhaps only by way of his spiritual presence) amid the coming sixth and seventh root races. The Epoch of Fire, originally anticipated by the Roerichs to commence by 1931 and to fully erupt in the 1940s, would cataclysmically pave the way for Maitreya's emergence. Disaster as a result of the worldwide purification, however, may be averted on an individual basis, provided one holds fast to the teachings of the Mother of Agni Yoga (i.e., Helena Roerich) (Agni Yoga Society 1954: 226–227), who is accordingly assigned a key soteriological function in her own right. Out of Armageddon, which also involves the apocalyptic battle between the Forces of Darkness and the Forces of Light (i.e., the Hierarchy), the Epoch of Maitreya will ultimately arise. The concomitant spiritual revolution centres on the growing recognition of the pantheistic feminine divine; the power source sustaining all that is good and beautiful, giving purpose and meaning to creation, and ensouling humankind. Maitreya's role is to “transform life on Earth in the radiance of the Mother of the World” (Agni Yoga Society 1977 [1931]: 6), that is, to spiritually beacon humankind to the Feminine Origin, the Highest Reality, having everyone increasingly rejoice in the beautiful truth of cosmic existence. The Epoch of Maitreya shall thus be the Epoch of Woman.

The Baileyian Maitreya myth forgoes the catastrophic millenarian concern of the Roerichs. Although the Real Armageddon would indeed occur, it is but a side note in Bailey's oeuvre, placed at the closure of the sixth root race. Well before this distant event, Maitreya would already have descended in a progressive millenarian fashion. In fact, the World Teacher is only rarely addressed as “Maitreya” by Bailey (eleven times altogether across her copious writings). Rather, “Maitreya” is merely used as a sobriquet, deemed the Eastern synonym for the (Leadbeaterian) “Christ” known in the West. Although Bailey steadily evokes messianic imminence in order to alert to the need for Reconstruction Work, that is, properly setting the stage individually and communally to usher in the New Age

and receive the Christ through the establishment of a “world at peace” (Bailey 1978 [1948]: 58–59), this notion of imminence is effectively stretched significantly. More precisely, in an oft-cited passage, Bailey (1981 [1957]: 530) claims that the Hierarchy’s coming out, and accordingly the Christ’s gradual materialisation, would not occur before 2025. Prior to that, however, he would incrementally descend ethereally in response to the Reconstruction Work conducted by this New Group of World Servers. At any rate, in 1945, the Christ allegedly resolved to soon emerge physically due to humankind having then witnessed an apogee of distress in the form of World War II (Bailey 1978 [1948]: 30). In the New Age, the Christ, who is the Master of all the Masters and the actual Head of the Hierarchy, would help elevate humankind’s consciousness to new evolutionary heights. The spiritual transformation (or collectivisation) fostered by the Christ in line with the Divine Plan would exhale a New World Religion, whose foundations Bailey considered to be already visible in her Arcane School (cf. Rudbøg 2019). Bailey’s ample Christology proved enormously influential for the later New Age current with Creme becoming one of its figureheads.

## CREME’S MAITREYA AND THE MILLENNIUM

### *Maitreya*

A self-declared Ageless Wisdom Teaching intermediary, Creme takes the Theosophical-cum-ufological systems of his ideological precursors, starting with Blavatsky qua the first source in modern times, as granted. His role is twofold, namely to smooth seeming inconsistencies between these authorities through elucidation and to provide updated further insights (Creme 2007b: 3). Creme’s immediate chief reference is Bailey. Her Christ lends the functional outlines to Creme’s Maitreya, whose story and context is given below.

Maitreya is no epithet to the World Teacher but his actual name, which means “The Happy One” in the sense of “the one who brings happiness to the world” (Creme 2001a: 39)—a name he was given by his Master at his second initiation. His own evolution commenced some eight million years ago in the age of Atlantis where he soon became the first initiate ever. In mid-Atlantean times, he took the third initiation and soon found himself at the evolutionary vanguard. The Hierarchy of that period consisted entirely of Hierarchical members coming to Earth from other planets.

This relocation of early Space Brothers began in middle Lemurian times some 18.5 million years ago when humans, who originally stem from the Moon (*SI* 29:8 [2010 October]: 23) as well as partly from a precursor solar system (*SI* 25:9 [2006 November]: 31), had properly developed. The first to arrive was a Venusian named Sanat Kumara, a ninth-degree initiate and the reflection of the Planetary Logos. When descending to Earth this Leadbeaterian Lord of the World created Shamballa, his ruling abode and the planet's energy centre located in the Gobi desert spanning the two highest etheric planes. It was Sanat Kumara, the Abrahamic God, who formed the Hierarchy qua Humanity's Elder Brothers 1.5 million years later. Earth's Hierarchy is a lodge of the Great White Brotherhood on Sirius (Creme 1993: 67), their members acting as agents of the Divine Plan Sanat Kumara desires to impart to humankind. The Atlantean civilisation largely collapsed after around twelve million years, that is, circa 98,000 years ago, caused through self-destruction owing to the misuse of electromagnetic weaponry—a part of the incredibly advanced science the Atlanteans received as a gift from the Hierarchy (Creme: 2007a: 234). The last portion of Atlantean territory in the present-day area of the Azores sunk 15,000 years ago. With Atlantis submerged the Masters who had been living amid the people retired from the public and moved to remote mountainous or desert regions across the globe.<sup>10</sup> Maitreya, presently on the seventh stage of initiation, took up residence in the Himalayas 2000 years ago. His Master was Tara, the Mother of the World, or Creation's Shakti, the Female Principle, another extraterrestrial being travelling to earth in ancient times. Moreover, if advice is needed these days he commonly resorts to her male counterpart, Sanat Kumara. Because of that the pace of Maitreya's spiritual progress being a seventh-degree initiate is unprecedented among fellow humans. Only his brother and previous World Teacher, the Buddha, ranks above him as an eighth-degree initiate since recently when he assumed the office of intermediary between Shamballa and the Hierarchy. The latter is headed by Maitreya in tandem with his (hierarchically inferior) fellow Great Lords or Lords of Compassion, the Manu and the Mahachohan. Sanat Kumara, who himself embraces and accommodates the Plan given to the Planetary Logos from the Solar Logos (who in turn receives it from his spiritual superior and so forth), passes it on to the Buddha who carries the information forth to the

<sup>10</sup>Atlantis is thought to resurface in 800–900 years, at a time when large parts of America and Europe will sink beneath the oceans.

Hierarchical Leadership. They themselves seek to “approximate it to what is possible in a given cycle, 1000 or 2000 year cycle, which is then broken down into shorter cycles of perhaps 100 years, sometimes 75 or 25 years” (Creme 1993: 615), and spread it among the 60 other members of the Hierarchy, all Masters of the fifth and sixth initiation.<sup>11</sup> Maitreya holds the World Teacher office since the dawn of the Age of Pisces 2150 years ago and will continue to do so for another 2350–2500 years until the end of the Age of Aquarius when he will be succeeded by Master Koot Hoomi, the World Teacher of the Capricornian Cycle. Meanwhile, Maitreya will leave Earth to hasten his own spiritual evolution pursuing the so-called Path of Absolute Sonship, only to return as the Cosmic Christ or Cosmic Maitreya at the end of the seventh root race “to take humanity on a journey of perfectionment” (Creme 2001a: 146)—a position which has been claimed by Sathya Sai Baba. Both are embodying the Christ Principle or Christ Consciousness—Maitreya doing so at the planetary level. It is the energy of love and spiritual evolution bound to lead the soul to unity with the absolute godhead, the Universal Logos.<sup>12</sup>

Maitreya is the Fifth Buddha. His three predecessors in this role—Gautama, Mithra, and Memnon—were all overshadowed by the Buddha.<sup>13</sup> Maitreya, too, has been overshadowing as well as inspiring individuals throughout the ages. Most prominently, Kṛṣṇa some 5000 years ago and Jesus or Jeshu/Jeshu Ben Pandira/Panthera (*SI 11:9* [1992b November]: 23), who was born in 24 BCE.<sup>14</sup> Others include, inter alia, King Gesar of Ling, Caitanya (1486–1534), Krishnamurti, and, most recently, Creme himself. Maitreya was known to history by many names such as Metatron and Melchizedek. Where he lives in London today, he carries a “Muslim name.” Maitreya not only overshadows individuals but he is being persistently overshadowed, namely by the Spirit of Peace/Equilibrium (i.e., a great cosmic being emitting balance and so antagonising the chaos of the present-day world) and the Avatar of Synthesis (i.e., the embodiment of

<sup>11</sup>Hierarchical meetings normally take place every century. Adjustments, however, may also be made by Maitreya singlehandedly at any given time. Such occurred, for example, with respect to the Krishnamurti episode, who was indeed (alongside a few others) prepared as a vessel for Maitreya. Yet, ultimately, Maitreya decided to create his own body.

<sup>12</sup>Its complementary principle is the Energy of Wisdom, personified in its exclusivity through the Buddha.

<sup>13</sup>Creme does not mention who the first was.

<sup>14</sup>Since 1989, the Master Jesus resides in Rome influencing the Vatican. Notably, he also had a formative influence on Islam by overshadowing Muhammad over four years.

Will, Love, and Intelligence). Both are responsible to constantly mitigate the increasing magnitude of natural disasters, which are a sign of progressing moral decay. Moreover, they are joined in their overshadowing by the Buddha to form an energetic triangle focusing on Maitreya who transmits their fused energies to the world, thereby facilitating humankind's spiritual development. Maitreya is omniscient, is aware of everyone's thoughts, may be omnipresent by sending out reflections of himself; his body being impeccable and inviolable. He has overcome the need for food and water. Neither does he need to sleep. Like every Master, he has attained immortality. His "native language" is telepathy (*SI* 6:4 [1987b May]: 18) but he is basically omniglot.

Maitreya and the other Masters began preparing for their physical descent or externalisation as early as 1425, that is, already two centuries before the Pisces energy affecting Earth dropped in the year 1625, that is, 250 years before the Aquarian energy started its upswell. The next crucial stage in their externalisation scheme was the direct instruction of individuals—with Blavatsky, Roerich, and Bailey leading the way—who established a discursive platform to receive the World Teacher. Upon these rearticulations of the Ageless Wisdom Teaching, Maitreya assembled the New Group of World Servers in 1922, tasked to spearhead its dissemination. Following the two devastating World Wars, in 1945, Maitreya announced to appear in 1950; however, the incipient Cold War prevented him from doing so, for humankind thereby signalled that it was not yet ready for his coming. In fact, this was the time when the Forces of Evil (alternatively, Forces of Darkness, Forces of Materiality, or Market Forces) were close to their zenith of power striving to thwart the externalisation scheme and, accordingly, the "inauguration of the spiritual age of Aquarius" (Creme 2007a: 224). Their machinations eventually climaxed in the years between 1956 and 1959 but the Hierarchy with their Space Brother allies remained victorious. Since 1966 this alliance, or the Forces of Light, gained the upper hand.<sup>15</sup> The lasting weakening of the Hierarchy's enemies notwithstanding, the threat of global extinction was still acute. Indeed, the growing atomic arsenal of the—by Creme's count—altogether 28 nuclear powers was the very reason Maitreya resolved to leave his Himalayan retreat (located at a height of approximately 17,500 feet) at

<sup>15</sup> It is projected that the Forces of Evil will be completely obliterated in the Age of Capricorn (*SI* 6:3 [1987a April]: 19).



this exact point in time, that is, in July 1977.<sup>16</sup> Although he left his home “like a thief in the night,” as Creme kept pointing out, he did so with years of preparation during which he crafted a unique “body of manifestation” (or “mayavirupa”) that uniquely balances vibrational resilience to withstand the dense-physical yoke and energetic sensitiveness to the great cosmic powers he perpetually channels for the sake of humankind’s evolution (Creme 2007a: 46). While he still sends out reflections in a wide variety of appearances, his created core body is 6 feet 3 inches tall (i.e., 190.5 cm), lacks a navel, and overall resembles a middle-aged man of Indian-Pakistani descent with brown eyes.<sup>17</sup> He commonly wears “local Moslem costume” (Creme 1996: 33). Two years prior, five Masters built Maitreya’s vanguard descending to Earth’s spiritual nodes (Shamballa aside), that is, Darjeeling, Geneva, London, New York, and Tōkyō. Nine more would enter the world in later years up to the present. In the future, a total of 40 Masters would be present. On July 7, 1977, Maitreya finished crafting his mayavirupa, donning it the same day, while leaving to rest his original Body of Light in his Himalayan abode. The next day he went down to the plains of Pakistan where he stayed for several days to adapt to the harshness of the dense-physical realm. He then boarded a plane and arrived in London, his “point of focus,” on July 19, acclimatizing for another three days until the official inception of his mission on July 22. His coming set in motion the (final preparations for the) New Age (Creme 1992: 4). For the next years and until January 1986, following recurrent intrusions by the BBC, Maitreya lived in the Brick Lane area. After a number of relocations, he now dwells in a temple within the Pakistani community located in the northeast of London. After ten years of residence, he successfully applied for the British citizenship. Mentioned under “occupation” in his passport stands “Teacher.”

Throughout the ages, Maitreya has been involved manifoldly in human affairs, both directly and indirectly. Most wars, revolutions, and key societal developments of the past centuries were either inspired (like the French Revolution or the Women’s Movement) or extenuated in their cruelty (like the American Civil War or the Russian Revolution) by the

<sup>16</sup> Surprisingly, upon Maitreya’s request to end World War II, Sanat Kumara approved to give the Allied scientists access to the nuclear bomb technology.

<sup>17</sup> For the next few hundred years, all members of the Hierarchy deliberately take male form due to “energetic reasons.” That is to say, up until this time they need to entrench themselves within the positive aspect of the energy that makes up the Earth. Reflections, however, may be female.

Hierarchy under his direction. With his emergence, Maitreya multiplied his interventions significantly changing the course of events. He so turned directly to numerous “people in all walks of life, royalty, people of power and prestige, heads of government, the diplomatic corps all over the world, [...] religious leaders, household names in industry and heads of corporations” (Crete 2007b: 20–21). Notably, he inspired Nelson Mandela (1918–2013) and Mikhail Gorbachev (b. 1931), which led to the end of apartheid and the Cold War, respectively. Likewise, he incited just protests such as the 1989 Tiānmén Square Protests in the People’s Republic of China, while also moderating conflicts such as the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, where he spent weeks at Tahrir Square in Cairo. He personally went on various disaster relief missions, prominently during Japan’s 2011 Triple Disaster where he saved the lives of many. In addition to his social and individual life-saving activities, Maitreya may even engage in actions of cosmic proportions. For example, he moved the Earth closer to the Sun in order for frozen land to become fertile again. The downside being that Earth’s repositioning entailed an increase in global warming, which amounts to 20 per cent of the overall warming. However, such would not offset its benefits for food production (Crete 2008: 57). At any rate, Maitreya’s every action is in line with the Law of Karma, which he would—hypothetically—only infringe in order to avoid World War III from happening.

Generally, many Earth-protective measures are supported or even taken over entirely by the Space Brothers, who utilising their UFOs are the reason why humankind has not become extinct many times in recent decades in the first place (Pokorny 2021). By virtue of their brotherly compassion vis-à-vis humankind, the Space Brothers, among other things, decontaminate large portions of nuclear pollution, continually stabilise Earth’s axis through a “ring of light” to avert a destructive pole shift, deflect meteors, soften the effects of earthquakes, and channel powerful cosmic energies rendering them useable for the Hierarchy. Their action shall substantially contribute to the erecting of a spiritual platform for Maitreya’s open ministry. Their visible presence documented by a rising number of UFO sightings and crop circles—both like any other signs of these special times being prominently featured in *Share International*—is understood to symbolise a beacon for Maitreya’s coming and the New Age. To further raise awareness of this approaching watershed event, since 1997/1998, the Space Brothers alongside Maitreya created curative light signs all over the world. More recently, since late 2008, the so-called Maitreya Star, which is indeed

four gigantic shape-shifting spacecraft positioned in the four cardinal directions,<sup>18</sup> serves the symbolic purpose to re-enact the Star of Bethlehem heralding the advent of the Christ. Many more wondrous phenomena occur at this juncture, such as springs of healing water (eventually totalling 777 sources) charged with cosmic energy and created by Maitreya himself. Furthermore, Maitreya equipped humankind not only with theoretical knowledge and practical guidelines helping in one's pursuit of self-awareness, but, in 1988, with a simple tool, that is, *A Prayer for the New Age*, which when uttered unleashes salvific powers.<sup>19</sup>

Additionally, Maitreya appeared publicly before larger crowds as well as on TV, albeit incognito, many hundreds of times all across the world. His salvific mission has, as of 2006, spiritually recruited 1.8 billion people, who are ready to receive his call. Many more will follow prompted by the miraculous events happening on the Day of Declaration. Originally set for late spring/May 1982, a date publicly announced by Share International through advertisements, publications, and a big press conference in Los Angeles by Creme, Maitreya had eventually to postpone it owing to the scheming of the Forces of Evil. In June 1988, Maitreya determined a crucial criterion for his open emergence (the recognition by the media aside), namely a global stock market crash, which may happen any day. The collapse of those "gambling casinos of the world" (Creme 2001a: 24), the very manifestation of greed and inhumanity, will commence in Japan and subsequently spread worldwide.

### *The Age of the Group*

Triggered by the global meltdown of the stock exchange, Maitreya will finally turn to the public undisguisedly. This Day of Declaration or D-Day,

<sup>18</sup>Whereas the fourfold Maitreya Star is truly spacecraft from Mars, Venus, and Jupiter, Creme disclosed that Maitreya also operates his own UFO, the "Light-Ship." Occasionally, Maitreya takes people in there to show them a temporal panorama where past and future coalesce. This would be how Masters experience reality detached from a linear flow of time. Creme, too, was taken on board when he was requested to work on behalf of the Hierarchy (Creme 2010: 102–103).

<sup>19</sup>Similarly, regularly reciting *The Great Invocation*, a mantra given by Maitreya to Bailey in 1945 and uttered by practitioners at the beginning of Transmission Meditation gatherings, would speed up the materialisation of the Day of Declaration. Its other key function is to set up a telepathic link to the Hierarchy, notifying the Masters about the start of the meditation (Creme 2001b).

whose exact date will be made public to everyone beforehand by the news agencies of the world, will be the most pivotal and incisive event in humankind's spiritual evolution so far. Being simultaneously broadcast worldwide, Maitreya will mentally overshadow at once all of humanity above the age of 14. What follows is a telepathic rapport, in which Maitreya introduces himself, the Hierarchical system, the Plan, and the future effects of its pursuit. Spontaneous mass healings will ensue; and the Christ Principle will be awakened in everyone in response to an explosive outflow from its very embodiment, that is, Maitreya. Many will be so deeply touched by his embrace and his words that they "will enter churches, temples and mosques, and church bells will ring. It will be a day of rejoicing" (Crete 2005: 243). The practical message delivered by Maitreya will be verbalised in simple words, a repetition of what Crete and Share International emphatically circulated over the years. It will focus on the need to share, for "Sharing is divine. When you share, you recognize God in your brother" (Crete 1997: 9); "[...] sharing creates trust. When there is trust among the nations there will be peace among the nations" (Crete 2001a: 27).

Many will immediately feel relieved of fear and guilt, the two emotions instilled by existing religions and ideologies that most decisively impact our thought-formation. In the time following the Day of Declaration, Maitreya will cleanse away their remaining traces. He will rapidly embark on a world tour, visiting all the countries of the world, making himself available to everyone's question. In the same vein, he will regularly appear on TV and radio to clarify the Plan while dispelling any misunderstandings. After a while his disciples, especially Morya, Koot Hoomi, and Jesus, will largely take over Maitreya's public outreach agenda. Prior to his public teaching, upon the first and second initiations,<sup>20</sup> every aspirant is inwardly summoned in front of Maitreya who qua Hierophant solemnises the ritual. With the Day of Declaration having passed, these rituals will ultimately be conducted outwardly in temples across the world. These temple initiations will become the core ritual of the new world religion. While Japan qua epicentre of change will generally take the spiritual lead (*SI* 8:9 [1989 November]: 22) and Great Britain the societal (Crete 2012: 87),

<sup>20</sup> Crete adds an ontological dimension to the initiation process, which he deems a "gradual spiritualization of matter by the soul. Each initiation records and stabilizes a higher vibration and confers a growing proportion of light to the vehicles" (Crete 1996: 187). In fact, humans would consist of light only (Crete 2010: 44), so initiation may rather be seen as an unclouing of one's real ontic and epistemic nature.

this new world religion based on the realisation of the Plan (or the Art of Self-realisation) will spread from Russia. Personalised ashrams of the Masters will start to materialise over time serving as additional spiritual rallying points.

Plain English will become the new lingua franca in a world without borders. The United Nations, more profoundly than before D-Day, will grow in importance energised by the Avatar of Synthesis; political extremes will die out and centrism based on more active involvement of the people will become the standard. The world's nations will move close together. Manual labour will be completely delegated to machines, freeing up the time to advance the exploration into one's divine nature. Mystery Schools will be established everywhere with the aim to spiritually elevate everyone at least to the first level of initiation (*SI* 7:1 [1988 January/February]: 38). Besides Maitreya and the Masters, also the Space Brothers will start to openly collaborate with humankind. They will give full access to "their divine science" (Creme 2007a: 219) in two stages. At first, humans will learn how to operate cold fusion, which will grant unlimited energy. Next, in up to 20 years following the Day of Declaration, the Technology of Light giving us direct access to the full potential of the Sun's energy will be mastered. This technology is virtually limitless in its applicability—interstellar travel; the complete detoxication of the Earth; the healing of all kinds of disease and the reproduction of organs.

Sharing will become the centrepiece of human interaction laying the foundations for world peace. It is the natural expression of the sense of unity that will form the consciousness that true experience is lived by the group, not the individual. Because "Unity is strength, the essential nature of our Being, the purpose to which all men strive and to which all activities of men seek to give expression."<sup>21</sup> This "new age of Aquarius [...] is the age of the group" (Creme 2002: 182, 200), or the Age of Light. It provides the spiritual-cum-technological environment for humans to evolve; indeed, humankind's spiritual progress will greatly accelerate. Soon anything can be created solely through the power of the mind (*SI* 15:2 [1996 March]: 22). Notwithstanding, the final soteriological goal of spiritually unifying humankind with the Hierarchy and Shamballa (Creme 2001a: 173) still lies millions of years ahead (*SI* 11:2 [1992a March]: 23); yet, this will be a time of ever-growing bliss.

<sup>21</sup>The trajectory set towards unity will likewise bring together humankind and the Mineral and Animal Kingdoms, which, too, greatly progress. Ubiquitous vegetarianism will be one implication.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Creme's millenarian set-up functionally resembles the progressivism of Bailey with very scarce sprinkles of avertive millenarianism (e.g., Creme 2001a: 10–11).<sup>22</sup> Creme generally believes in a veritable salvational automatism bound to a progressive millenarian narrative, which he underscores through espousing ultra-imminency. Save for the time between October 1979 and May 1982 when a rough dating came into play (at first 1981–1982, later being concretised as late Spring/May 1982), “very soon indeed” is the standard formula to uphold this vibrant climate of expectancy—which to Creme has an explicit systemic significance for it leaves his notion of uninhibited salvational automatism intact (*SI* 8:9 [1989 November]: 22). That is to say, if the Day of Declaration, which is also a crucial topos of his progressive millenarian narrative, always keeps being close at hand, the risk of a catastrophic millenarian U-turn violently ingraining this salvationism would be nil.

The role of humans in the millennium-building process à la Creme is rather limited. Humans may individually well control the pace of their evolution on an otherwise predetermined trajectory towards Unity. However, concerning the current state of affairs, humankind is very well cared for spiritually by the various agents of the absolute godhead, especially, Maitreya, further prominent members of the Planetary Hierarchy, the Space Brothers, and lower-rank Adepts of the Ageless Wisdom Teaching such as Creme himself. This means that even if there are possibly some further delays ahead, due to the fine nurturing of collective free will and its corresponding self-realising execution, the millennium will always arrive “very soon indeed.” Hence, the assigned effective scope of millenarian action of practitioners merely includes fending off or reducing potential short-term delays of the a priori inevitable, that is, the materialisation of the Age of the Group.

<sup>22</sup>More often than not, avertive millenarianism (i.e., preventing the catastrophic scenario by adhering to the rule of sharing and the wider Share International doctrine for the sake of a progressive transformation) is an explicitly negated possibility. The argument is commonly as follows: Humankind stands at a millenarian crossroad facing a choice, which will indubitably be made it in the right way, that is, by “accepting” Maitreya and adopting his proposed course of action. Free will and Karmic Law might of course relativise this certainty but only to some extent because Sanat Kumara, the Hierarchy, and the Space Brothers would not tolerate humankind's nuclear self-extinction (being the greatest threat in Creme's view) or otherwise cosmically caused annihilation. Some sort of self-inflicted larger-scale decimation other than due to another World War, however, remains if only a vastly implicit possibility.

In line with modern Theosophical millenarianism, Creme's millennium is not fashioned as being "soteriologically unsurpassable, providing *ab ovo* the peak level of spiritual cultivation" but as "a continuum geared toward soteriological insuperability, deterministically leading the faithful to further and expedited salvational augmentation and, eventually, consummation" (Pokorny 2020: 314). Its soteriological constellation thus falls into the category of post hoc salvational perfection (or salvational gradualism).

The Day of Declaration functions as a millenarian threshold from which humankind enters the Age of the Group, the springboard for quickened spiritual transformation into an unwritten future of incremental unification with the Supreme Logos. The Age of the Group liberates humankind from ill thinking (i.e., all that goes against the Art of Self-realisation), and launches it into gradual perfection within the evermore spiritualising continuum. On this path towards final Unity, Maitreya (qua Planetary Christ and, following an evolutionary leap, qua Cosmic Christ) perseveres as humankind's compass directing to new spiritual horizons.

## REFERENCES

### PRIMARY SOURCES

- Agni Yoga Society. 1954. *The Letters of Helena Roerich 1929–1938*. Vol. 1. New York: Agni Yoga Society.
- . 1977 [1931]. *Hierarchy*. New York: Agni Yoga Society.
- Bailey, Alice Ann. 1977 [1922]. *Initiation, Human and Solar*. New York: Lucis Publishing Company.
- . 1978 [1948]. *The Reappearance of the Christ*. New York: Lucis Publishing Company.
- . 1981 [1957]. *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*. New York: Lucis Publishing Company.
- . 2017 [1951]. *The Unfinished Autobiography*. New York: Lucis Publishing Company.
- Besant, Annie. 1900. (January). On the Watch-tower. *The Theosophical Review* 25 (149): 385–392.
- . 1912. *Initiation: The Perfecting of Man*. London: The Theosophical Publishing Society.
- . 1914. (January). World-Teachers of the Aryan Race. *The American Theosophist: A Journal of Occultism* 15 (4): 267–271.

- Blavatsky, Helena Petrovna. 1877. *Isis Unveiled: A Master-key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology*. Vol. 2—*Theology*. New York: J. W. Bouton.
- . 1881. (June). Lamas and Druses. *The Theosophist* 2 (9): 193–196.
- . 1888. *The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy*. Vol. 1—*Cosmogogenesis*. London: The Theosophical Publishing Company.
- . 1889. *The Key to Theosophy: A Clear Exposition, in the Form of Question and Answer, of the Ethics, Science, and Philosophy for the Study of which the Theosophical Society has been Founded*. London: The Theosophical Publishing Company.
- . 1892. *The Theosophical Glossary*. London: The Theosophical Publishing Company.
- Crete, Benjamin. 1992. *Messages from Maitreya the Christ: One Hundred Forty Messages*. 2nd ed. London: Tara Press. (First edition, Vol. 1: 1981; Vol. 2: 1986).
- . 1993. *Maitreya's Mission, Volume Two*. London: Share International Foundation.
- . 1996 [1993]. *Maitreya's Mission, Volume One*. 3 ed. Amsterdam and London: Share International Foundation. (First edition: 1986).
- . 1997. *Maitreya's Mission, Volume Three*. Amsterdam and London: Share International Foundation.
- . 2001a. *The Great Approach: New Light and Life for Humanity*. Amsterdam and London: Share International Foundation.
- . 2001b [1998]. *Transmission: A Meditation for the New Age*. 4th ed. Amsterdam and London: Share International Foundation. (First edition: 1983).
- . 2002. *The Art of Co-Operation*. London: Share International Foundation.
- . 2005. *Maitreya's Teachings: The Laws of Life*. London: Share International Foundation.
- . 2006 [1996]. *The Ageless Wisdom Teaching: An Introduction to Humanity's Spiritual Legacy*. London: Share International Foundation.
- . 2007a. *The Reappearance of the Christ and the Masters of Wisdom*. 2nd ed. Amsterdam and London: Share International Foundation. (First edition: 1979/1980).
- . 2007b. *The World Teacher for All Humanity*. Amsterdam and London: Share International Foundation.
- . 2008. *The Awakening of Humanity*. Amsterdam and London: Share International Foundation.
- . 2010. *The Gathering of the Forces of Light: UFOs and Their Spiritual Mission*. Amsterdam and London: Share International Foundation.
- . 2012. *Unity in Diversity: The Way Ahead for Humanity*. Amsterdam and London: Share International Foundation.



- . 2017. *The Esoteric Art of Benjamin Creme*. Amsterdam and London: Share International Foundation.
- Jinarâjadâsa, Curuppumullage. 1940. *The War—And After: A Theosophist's Viewpoint, Presented to Fellow Theosophists, at the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras, December, 1939*. Wheaton: The Theosophical Press.
- Jones, John J. 1949. *The Mahāvastu*. Vol. 1. London: Luzac & Company.
- . 1956. *The Mahāvastu*. Vol. 3. London: Luzac & Company.
- Khandalavala, Navroji Dorabji. 1885. (January). The Iranian Oannes. *The Theosophist* 6 (4): 90–91.
- Leadbeater, Charles Webster. 1925. *The Masters and the Path*. Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House.
- Share International*. 1987a. (April). 6 (3).
- . 1987b. (May). 6 (4).
- . 1988. (January/February). 7 (1).
- . 1989. (November). 8 (9).
- . 1992a. (March). 11 (2).
- . 1992b. (November). 11 (9).
- . 1996. (March). 15 (2).
- . 2001. (October). 20 (8).
- . 2006. (November). 25 (9).
- . 2010 (October). 29 (8).
- . 2016. (December). 35 (10).
- Sinnett, Alfred Percy. 1883. *Esoteric Buddhism*. London: Trübner & Co.
- Walshe, Maurice. 1995 [1987]. *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.

## SECONDARY SOURCES

- Appleton, Naomi. 2010. *Jātaka Stories in Theravāda Buddhism: Narrating the Bodhisatta Path*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- French, Brendan James. 2000. *The Theosophical Masters: An Investigation Into the Conceptual Domains of H. P. Blavatsky and C. W. Leadbeater*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Sydney, Australia.
- Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. 2010. The Coming of the Masters: The Evolutionary Reformulation of Spiritual Intermediaries in Modern Theosophy. In *Constructing Tradition: Means and Myths of Transmission in Western Esotericism*, ed. Andreas B. Kilcher, 113–160. Leiden and Boston: Brill.
- Hanegraaff, Wouter J. 2007. The New Age Movement and Western Esotericism. In *Handbook of New Age*, ed. Daren Kemp and James R. Lewis, 25–50. Leiden and Boston: Brill.

- Jaini, Padmanabh S. 1988. Stages in the Bodhisattva Career of the Tathāgata Maitreya. In *Maitreya, the Future Buddha*, ed. Alan Sponberg and Helen Hardacre, 55–90. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lubelsky, Isaac. 2013. Mythological and Real Racial Issues in Theosophy. In *Handbook of the Theosophical Current*, ed. Olav Hammer and Mikael Rothstein, 335–355. Leiden and Boston: Brill.
- Nattier, Jan. 1988. The Meaning of the Maitreya Myth: A Typological Analysis. In *Maitreya, the Future Buddha*, ed. Alan Sponberg and Helen Hardacre, 23–47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1991. *Once Upon a Future Time: Studies in a Buddhist Prophecy of Decline*. Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press.
- Pokorny, Lukas. 2020. The Millenarian Myth Ethnocentrized: The Case of East Asian New Religious Movements. In *Explaining, Interpreting, and Theorizing Religion and Myth: Contributions in Honor of Robert A. Segal*, ed. Nickolas P. Roubekas and Thomas Ryba, 299–316. Leiden and Boston: Brill.
- . 2021. Maitreya, Crop Circles, and the Age of Light: Benjamin Creme’s UFO Thought. In *Handbook of UFO Religions*, ed. Benjamin E. Zeller, 295–311. Leiden and Boston: Brill.
- Poller, Jake. 2019. The Herald of the Christ: Benjamin Creme and the Theosophical Imagination. In *Altered Consciousness in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Jake Poller, 149–166. New York and London: Routledge.
- Rudbøg, Tim. 2019. Alice A. Bailey and the Consciousness of the New Age. In *Altered Consciousness in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Jake Poller, 133–148. New York and London: Routledge.
- Santucci, James A. 2008. The Notion of Race in Theosophy. *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 11 (3): 37–63.
- Tillett, Gregory John. 1986. *Charles Webster Leadbeater 1854–1934: A Biographical Study*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Sydney, Australia.
- Wessinger, Catherine Lowman. 1988. *Annie Besant and Progressive Messianism (1847–1933)*. Lewiston and Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- Zürcher, Erik. 1982. “Prince Moonlight”: Messianism and Eschatology in Early Medieval Chinese Buddhism. *T’oung Pao* 68 (1–3): 1–75.