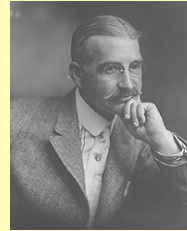


The Wizard of Oz



Wizard of Oz



Lyman Frank Baum (1856 –1919)

- Newspaper editor
- In 1980 wrote articles about Theosophy

Wizard of Oz



"Amongst various sects so numerous in America today who find their fundamental basis in occultism, the Theosophist stands pre-eminent both in intelligence and point of numbers. Theosophy is not a religion. Its followers are simply "searchers after Truth". The Theosophists, in fact, are the dissatisfied with the world, dissenters from all creeds. They owe their origin to the wise men of India, and are numerous, not only in the far famed mystic East, but in England, France, Germany and Russia. They admit the existence of a God – not necessarily of a personal God. To them God is Nature and Nature is God...But despite this, if Christianity is Truth, as our education has taught us to believe, there can be no menace to it in Theosophy."

(L. Frank Baum, Aberdeen Saturday Pioneer, January 25th 1890.)

Wizard of Oz



"There is a strong tendency in modern novelists towards introducing some vein of mysticism or occultism into their writings. Books of this character are eagerly bought and read by the people, both in Europe and America. It shows the innate longing in our natures to unravel the mysterious: to seek some explanation, however fictitious, of the unexplainable in nature and in our daily existence. For, as we advance in education, our desire for knowledge increases, and we are less satisfied to remain in ignorance of that mysterious fountain-head from which emanates all that is sublime and grand and incomprehensible in nature."

Wizard of Oz



"The appetite of our age for occultism demands to be satisfied, and while with the mediocrity of people will result in mere sensationalism, it will lead in many to higher and nobler and bolder thought; and who can tell what mysteries these braver and abler intellects may unravel in future ages?"

(L. Frank Baum, Aberdeen Saturday Pioneer, February 22nd 1890.)

Wizard of Oz



"It was pure inspiration...It came to me right out of the blue. I think that sometimes the Great Author has a message to get across and He has to use the instrument at hand. I happened to be that medium, and I believe the magic key was given me to open the doors to sympathy and understanding, joy, peace and happiness."

(L. Frank Baum, cited by Hearn, p. 73.)

Wizard of Oz



“Although readers have not looked at his fairy tales for their Theosophical content, it is significant that Baum became a famous writer of children’s books after he came into contact with Theosophy. Theosophical ideas permeate his work and provided inspiration for it. Indeed, The Wizard can be regarded as Theosophical allegory, pervaded by Theosophical ideas from beginning to end. The story came to Baum as an inspiration, and he accepted it with a certain awe as a gift from outside, or perhaps from deep within, himself.”

(American Theosophist no. 74, 1986.)

Wizard of Oz



- Dorothy Gale is unsatisfied with life in Kansas, which symbolizes the material realm.
- She dreams of a better place “over the rainbow.”



Wizard of Oz



- The rainbow—with its seven colors—has long had the occult significance of being a great spiritual, hypnotic device.
- It is through the rainbow that one transcends this material existence and passes into the higher spiritual realm. That is what lies “over the rainbow.”



Wizard of Oz



- The tornado is a spiral that takes Dorothy to Oz.
- By coiling/spiraling the serpent around the chakras one obtains enlightenment.
- It is the cycle of reincarnation of cycling through many lives.



Wizard of Oz



“The serpent, and the figures 8, and denoting the ogdoad and infinity, stand for spiral cyclic motion. The course of fohat in space is spiral, and spirit descends into matter in spiral courses. Repeating the process by which a helix is derived from a circle produces a vortex. The complicated spirals of cosmic evolution bring the motion back to the point from which it started at the birth of a great cosmic age.”

(The Encyclopedic Theosophical Glossary.)

Wizard of Oz



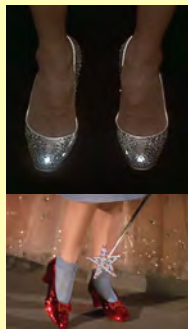
- The yellow brick road that Dorothy must follow begins as a spiral.
- Notice that the road is yellow, the color of Gold.
- In Buddhism (a key part of Theosophical teachings) the same concept is referred to as the “Golden Path”.
- This path leads one to enlightenment.

Wizard of Oz



- Dorothy kills the witch of the east and will be told she must kill the witch of the west.
- The witch of the north sets her on her golden path and the witch of the south helps her return home in the end.
- In the occult east and west represent the material realm.
- North and south represent the spiritual realm.

Wizard of Oz



- Before undertaking her journey, Dorothy is given the "silver shoes", which represent the "silver cord" of Mystery Schools.
- The director of the movie changed them to red.
- In occult schools, the silver cord is considered to be the link between our material and spiritual selves.

Wizard of Oz



"In Theosophy, one's physical body and one's Astral body are connected through a "silver cord", a mythical link inspired by a passage in the Bible that speaks of a return from a spiritual quest. 'Or ever the silver cord be loosed, says the book of Ecclesiastes, 'then shall the dust return to the earth as it was and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it'. In Frank Baum's own writing, the silver cord of Astral travel would inspire the silver shoes that bestow special powers upon the one who wears them"

(Evan I. Schwartz, Finding OZ: How L. Frank Baum Discovered the Great American Story.)

Wizard of Oz



- Dorothy encounters the Scarecrow, Tin-man, and Cowardly Lion.
- They are searching for a brain, a heart and, courage.
- These characters embody the qualities needed by the initiates in order to complete their quest for illumination.

Wizard of Oz



*"There is no danger that dauntless **courage** cannot conquer, there is not trial that a spotless **purity [heart]** cannot pass through; there is no difficulty a strong **intellect** cannot surmount"*

(H.P. Blavatsky)

Wizard of Oz



- Toto, the dog, represents the animal, instinctual part of Dorothy.
- The animal is a symbol of ones consciences and inner knowledge that guides one through life.
- Example is in the Golden Compass. The souls of the humans are represented by animals.

Wizard of Oz



"Toto represents the inner, intuitive, instinctual, most animal-like part of us. Throughout the movie, Dorothy has conversations with Toto, or her inner intuitive self. The lesson here is to listen to the Toto within. In this movie, Toto was never wrong. When he barks at the scarecrow, Dorothy tries to ignore him: "Don't be silly, Toto. Scarecrows don't talk." But scarecrows do talk in Oz. Toto also barks at the little man behind the curtain. It is he who realizes the Wizard is a fraud. At the Gale Farm and again at the castle, the Witch tries to put Toto into a basket. What is shadow will try to block or contain the intuitive. In both cases, Toto jumps out of the basket and escapes. Our intuitive voice can be ignored, but not contained."

Wizard of Oz



In the last scene, Toto chases after a cat, causing Dorothy to chase after him and hence miss her balloon ride. This is what leads to Dorothy's ultimate transformation, to the discovery of her inner powers. The balloon ride is representative of traditional religion, with a skinny-legged wizard promising a trip to the Divine. Toto was right to force Dorothy out of the balloon, otherwise she might never have found her magic. This is a call for us to listen to our intuition, our gut feelings, those momentary bits of imagination that appear seemingly out of nowhere."

Wizard of Oz



- The Wizard is portrayed as cruel, unwise and a fake.
- He represents the God of the Jews and Christians.
- He is the symbol of that which oppresses the masses and keeps them in Spiritual darkness.
- It is revealed that he is the same charlatan of the material realm back in Kansas.

Wizard of Oz



- He cannot help them because he is a fraud.
- They discover that they had what they sought within them the entire time.
- The God within you. Christ-consciousness.
- This is seen in that Toto had been guiding Dorothy all along.

Wizard of Oz



- The Wizard invites her into his balloon to return home.
- She follows Toto (intuition) out of the balloon and it leaves without her.
- The balloon symbolizes the empty promise of religion that goes "God only knows where."

Wizard of Oz



- With the help of the witch of the north (her spirit guide) she comes to the ultimate revelation.
- She had to destroy the bad witches of the material realm.
- Everything she ever wanted could be found "in her own backyard" (within herself).
- By using the shoes she "taps" into her own divine power to go wherever she wants.

Wizard of Oz



- Dorothy wakes up in Kansas: she has transcended her physical life. She is now comfortable being herself. And despite her family not believing her (the ignorant), she can finally say "There is no place like home."

