

THE ECLECTIC THEOSOPHIST

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*A Quarterly Journal
of the Wisdom Religion
Following the
Blavatsky/Point Loma
Tradition*

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The Need For Constant Regeneration

JOHN COKER

The following two articles are from two talks given at the Inter-Theosophical Conference at the Krotona School of Theosophy in Ojai, California, March 1994.

In Roman Catholic tradition candidates for sainthood are assigned a 'devil's advocate' to argue against canonization, to prevent the organization's being carried away with itself—a 'reality check'. Please allow me the liberty to function as a 'devil's advocate' about our own theosophic organizations and their functions in the larger context of the human spiritual evolution—what we like to call the 'theosophic movement'. Just to make sure our feet are firmly on the ground.

We've spent the morning looking at the history out of which our present grew. Now we look to the future, which will grow out of its own past—our present. Our theosophic present is, as our past was, filled with wonderful people, events, and accomplishments as well as mistakes, misjudgments, petty bickering and all other ailments humans are heir to. Theosophists, past and present, were and are intelligent, sincere, and devoted. Yet, they had problems, as do we. Intelligence, sincerity, and devotion alone aren't enough. We might do well to add, at least, concern for others and critical self examination. Some of the 'problems' of the past are only now correcting themselves. What problems are inherent

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EDITORIAL

"...LIVE AND BREATHE IN ALL..."

Blavatsky translates in "The Voice of the Silence" a profound statement that provides us with the basis and some keys of how to approach the eternal. She says that we must learn to live "...in the eternal. For this, thou hast to live and breathe in all, as all that thou perceivest breathes in thee; to feel thyself abiding in all things, all things in SELF." ("The Voice of the Silence" p.45) Now what does it mean "to live and breathe in all"? This is not an easy concept, but one that has the effect of shaking up the purely rational mind and implanting a kind of doubt that tends to move one toward the Unknown. This idea is linked with the unity of life: "as all that thou perceivest breathes in thee". Contemplating and experiencing this flowing back and forth of consciousness begins to modify and soften the hardness and separateness of our supposed fixed sense of self-identity. "To feel thyself abiding in all things". The carefully chosen word is feel, meaning clearly the experiential feeling-element of our being carries us to the sense of "abiding in". Compassion comes from this experience of "knowing" through the power of feeling as if abiding inside of what we are perceiving. The Medicine Man, Sun Bear, when asked the question: "What is the element most missing and most needed in today's modern world?" answered: "People have forgotten how to feel the elements and the life around them. How to breathe *in* the earth, water, wind and fire and feel the sun, stars, trees and flowers."

He felt that this was a most critical loss of soul at the basis of our modern world. The remedy requires the time and space and intention to extend our sphere of life into what we are perceiving. In our modern world, image has been "videoized" into a flat passive non-living experience through excessive television and video. The tree



in a picture is beautiful, yet is not the feeling of its essence a different experience than that which a real tree in its environment leads us to? In the heart of this true depth of experience of treeness in nature an essentialness of being is touched. This happens as brief sympathies and then occasional or rare unions of mystical depths. As Rilke expressed of the pure contemplative condition (dhyana):

We've never, not for a single day
pure space before us,
Such as that which flowers endlessly
open into:
always world, and never nowhere
without no:
that pure unsupervised element
one breathes
endlessly knows, and never craves.*

Allowing and finding moments of "pure space", "Such as that which flowers endlessly open into" may indeed be the spirit's calling for healing the modern time. Be open, breathe with the moment....

—Ken Small

*from Duino Elegies

continued from front page

in the present that can be examined, to avoid passing them on to the future?

In the last 10 years the major rifts between theosophic groups have begun to heal. Let's hope those Kama-rupic 'spooks' are finally dissipated and don't hang around to pollute the future.

Because of that healing, the recent World's Parliament of Religions was a unique event for theosophists. For the first time since the various rifts occurred the major theosophic organizations officially came together, cooperating to present theosophy to the public. All the laudatory things said about that are true. There is, however, another perspective.

Most of my time at the Parliament was spent behind a video camera, taping theosophic proceedings. The assignment was not to the primary camera. My camera's function was to record the speaker and also audience reaction and response. I was able to do something unusual - to stare at the audience without concern that they would find it rude. They saw the camera - not me. I stared at an audience nodding in agreement and fellow feeling when a speaker voiced a point of theosophic doctrine they agreed with. A flashback feeling was of being in any one of a number of Protestant churches as a child, seeing congregations so secure in their cherished beliefs that a smothering aura of exclusion enveloped the room. As a child I found it difficult to breathe in that space. Some of that aura was present in our Parliament presentations. The rooms were filled with Theosophists. There was seldom anyone else there. In fact, a non-theosophist, non-European man trying to come into one of our presentations was turned away because the room was filled to capacity with believers. There was no room at the inn. Did something go wrong?

At the first World's Parliament, theosophy drew overflow crowds. Now the Western world is more open to theosophic ideas and we, as part of the world's spiritual community,

Intelligence, sincerity, and devotion alone aren't enough. We might do well to add, at least, concern for others and critical self examination.

have less impact - at least outwardly - than we had 100 short years ago. Are theosophic organizations and presentations generally perceived as spark-plugs, catalysts, or living centers of spiritual endeavor? Do their communities consider them *a part of or apart from the community?*

Every faith tradition springs from a founder with vision. That vision is passed on, more or less whole, to those who follow and succeed the founder. Time passes and the group becomes concerned with the culturally bound forms they have devised - confusing those forms with the vision. It loses its vitality, and settles into whatever niche it has made for itself. This process seems inevitable in all human endeavors. How long will it take us to settle into the comfortable forms of our own beliefs? Have we already begun to do so? What can we do to at least forestall the inevitable?

Our problem is the same as all spiritual and religious groups. We are not originators of the spiritual legacy we hold in trust for the world. We are conservers of it, each in our own way, according to our own understanding. How can we be conservators without becoming conservative, and eventually reactionary, perhaps eventually smothering the original vision with a non-creative, form-centered approach that so firmly encrusts the spark of vision that it can't be seen from outside - perhaps even forcing that spark to seek a new body to enliven?

Our representation - our re-representation—of the Ancient Wisdom is in constant danger of becoming irrelevant. Not the Wisdom itself. That, by definition, cannot become so. But our re-representation of it can go stale quickly. How might we 'catch' ourselves in this act of 'crystallizing', and

then act to correct ourselves? We need to be free, open, honest with, critical and yet accepting of, ourselves and one another—including our differences—and then be the same with those we meet.

When someone comes to us who follows a path that differs from ours, do we try to convince them that we're right and they're wrong? Or do we thoughtfully explore their path with them, discovering, for both of us, its inherent spiritual depths which Theosophy can illumine? If the Ancient Wisdom is the Universal Solvent we need to let it dissolve our own prejudices and misunderstandings before it can help dissolve those of others.

Ours is a spiritual movement. The primary work is on inner lines, which then define the outer lines of the work. As above, so below. What's within is reflected in what's without. But what's reflected without *symbolizes* what's within. What do we reflect to those who contact us? Do they see us as open, accepting, caring and inclusive or closely guarded and exclusive? We can tell when we "chop wood and carry water"—attending to the necessary functions of our daily routine, if we're in ruts that merely recycle what we already know and do. The conduct of the mundane events of our 'outer' life will give us a pretty good reading of our inner state—as individuals and as organizations. A simple rule of thumb: the more spiritual—the more spontaneously creative and inclusive. The less spiritual—the less spontaneous, creative and inclusive.

The legacy we've received is, like life itself, too valuable for superficial, doctrinaire, ordinary, or routine responses. HPB's grand synthesis is remarkable but—*it isn't ours* until we make it so. That cannot be done just by learning what she wrote. It *has to be experienced in our lives* to be truly learned. What and how she synthesized may be of less importance than her teaching us *how to synthesize* for ourselves. Though 'gospels' are useful for helping us hold to our path, no gospel is more impor-

tant than the spiritual process that generates it. The outline of a doctrine, a single approach to living as spiritual beings, or a cultural context are, by definition, relative. The only absolute is the inclusiveness of compassion.

It's not being suggested that Societies try to recruit members. That's best left to Karma and the Dharma of each group. Our concern is to be visible and make welcome those who seek Theosophy itself *or* the light Theosophy can shed on other paths.

It is our inner self and sense that attracts or repels. If we are not 'attracting' we need to look within ourselves, individually and communally, to discover the blockages. If our *inner* representation of Theosophy is spontaneously alive, vital, and creative then the *forms* we enfill with Theosophy—television, computers, multimedia, discussion groups, classes, satellites, one to one—will be vitally creative and speak clearly to those who

*We are not the
Ancient Wisdom but we
are Theosophy as it is
represented in the
world today.*

will be responsive, each in their own time and way, to Theosophy. Forms are a matter of trial and error with what is possible at any time. Our attachment to specific forms is where we need to pay attention. When we are able to dissolve those inner attachments and blockages that, if we look, we can see reflected in the forms we employ, we will be able to work secure. *Knowing* the creativity of the spirit which pervades and is All will manifest itself easily and naturally through our work. If our commitment is to working on inner lines *first* there is nothing that can block the spiritual influence of the Ancient Wisdom from shining in and

through our theosophic endeavors. We are the only thing that can block it. We are *not* the Ancient Wisdom but *we are Theosophy* as it is represented in the world today. The legacy entrusted to us is for all. Will we allow the inevitable to happen so soon? Will we solidify into mono-culturally bound doctrines, beliefs, habits, and interpretations, or will we stay open, growing, alive, exploring, and creative? If "the unexamined life is not worth living" what does that say about our need to examine the life of our Theosophical Societies? The future constantly springs from the present. Will we bequeath it our life—or our limitations? What shall we do, and how shall we be, not *then* but *NOW*?



THEOSOPHY IN THE 21ST CENTURY — WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Nancy Coker

Most people would agree with Ashleigh Brilliant who said he found "it easier to be a RESULT OF THE PAST, than to be a CAUSE OF THE FUTURE." Of course we are both — but we can choose which we want to emphasize.

We are rooted in the past, but we have a certain amount of choice how we will grow in the future.

Thank our hosts for providing this opportunity to consider these choices.

There is a lot to learn from our history, but we don't want to be dominated



by the past.

One of the dangers in looking backwards too much is that we think we can only do what's been done before — so the past which is our foundation and roots can become our coffin.

And yet another point of view suggests there is no future for the TS, and there is no place to go to from here — there is only right now, and there is only right here.....the present moment.

What qualities are we bringing right now, right here to this present moment?

Are we good caretakers of it? If we are, we have little to fear for the future.

There is a metaphor which suggests we can learn to be skillful gardeners of the present moment. Each of us has within us many seeds—seeds of fear, hate, selfishness, as well as seeds of creativity, joy and compassion.

Besides the seeds we have within us, each event has seeds, each moment has seeds . . .

Skillful gardeners are attentive to the cycles and choose which to nour-

ish, and which to allow to wither.

Mistakes, past and present, are just so much compost for these seeds. Let us nurture the seeds of understanding and transformation within each of us . . . and within each other.

Water the seeds, the essence, trusting that the plant will grow and bloom in its own time.

Some I hope we will water together are:

ETHICAL seeds: Our understanding of ethics is that it flows from the fundamental laws of the universe and the habits of nature. We equate it with an instinct for truth and justice in our study.

A recent Louis Harris poll for the Girl Scouts asked 5000 American students where they would look to find the greatest authority in matters of truth. Where would they turn for that sense of authority? The answers that came back are very interesting:

At the bottom are the media and the sciences. A few percentage points higher come parents and religion.

The majority of those students say

the greatest authority in matters of truth is "ME", the student himself or herself. These students tell us that there is no source of authority beyond their own experience.

[In other words they are saying] "I've got to go by my gut instinct. I've got to do whatever feels right, whatever turns me on, whatever is situational, relative, negotiable." (from the Futurist March 1992 p 12)

We have a perspective that would give young people something else to measure up against — let's offer it to them.

So let us water **SEEDS OF Education**. But let us learn to present our ideas creatively trusting that the seeds will sprout in their own time.

If we repeat theosophic principles in a rote fashion, it just kills them. Speaking the language of the day we connect with our audience 24/7. (street talk for 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week)

We are not just for the philosophic or religious searcher, we are not just for New Age seekers.

People face life changing decisions each day. How can we be available to them? We have a living philosophy which helps in every aspect of life — from raising our children to making life and death medical decisions.

Shall we contribute articles and letters-to-the editor to popular magazines/newspapers?

Shall we take our vision to PTA meetings, to Senior Citizens homes, to town halls and Juvenile Halls, to the Prisons? Let's take Theosophy out of the closet and on to the streets.

Whose faces will we see on the streets? In L.A. County, there are some



200 languages spoken on the streets. As the last hundred years saw the cultural exchange between West and East, perhaps we are already beginning to see the cultural swap between North and South. Let's welcome and encourage this cross fertilization—shall we water the seeds of self-education and become bi-lingual or tri-lingual?

More than 15 Million Americans are in recovery programs, exploring the inner side of their own natures. Let us help deepen their search, let us nourish the seeds of self-understanding. We have much to offer, and these programs have techniques that we can learn from.

It is not unusual for Theosophists to look askance at psychologists because we say their vision is not wide enough. Yet we can learn a lot from them and we have much to share with them. Can we water the seeds of humility and sharing?

As the new century unfolds how we distribute the written theosophical message may look very different. As books are digitized and made available in electronic form traditional notions of publishing and book-selling will broaden. Are we ready to make that adjustment? Can we nurture the seeds of change? Are you ready to discuss some of these ideas with us on Internet?

Psychism is rampant among us, just as HPB said it would be. How can we help those suffering from psychic addictions? We have a wonderful philosophy, but "JUST SAY NO"

doesn't work for alcohol and drug addictions. How can it work for psychic addictions? Can we water the seeds of courage and creativity to help design a program grounded in theosophic principles that can meet their need?

The closer we approach the year 2000, the more fear there will be that the world is going to end soon. Fundamentalist preachers will get a lot of media attention — who will be out there to give an alternative supposition? We have a powerful perspective to offer the world. Will we be heard? Do we want to be heard? Do we want to be that visible?

Let us **water the seeds of clarity** about what is Theosophy and what is not.

Let us **nourish the seeds of dedication and commitment**. We must study our principles and pledge our hearts and minds to their expression in our lives.

If there is ever to be understanding, peace, kindness it begins here — right now.

Let us finally water and nourish the **seeds of Joy and Amazement**. Let us be really wise gardeners and plant extra of these seeds.

We tend to see life and spirituality as serious business — perhaps because we have suffered much and are sensitive to the suffering we see around us. Let us have faith in our own principles, in our own garden—the universe works.

And: Let us invite the possibilities to call to us, to pull us, rather than permit the past to anchor us too much.

Because, you know what they say — change is inevitable, growth is optional.

THE PERENNIAL DILEMMA

By Fred Sonnabend

From a talk delivered to the Theosophical Society (Pasadena) in San Diego

When in the 18th Century [1792] the Franco-Swiss descriptive and political writer Jean Rousseau produced his analysis of human society in a treatise

entitled "LE CONTRAT SOCIAL"—"THE SOCIAL CONTRACT", he began the opening paragraph with a sentence that has since become classical. This sentence reads "L'homme est né libre, mais partout il est en chaines"—"Man is born free, but everywhere he is in chains".

This statement is as true today as it was in the 18th Century for, like

Rousseau's contemporaries, we are just as fettered nowadays by the chains of the social structure of the global society of which we are a part—and the result is chaos.

NOW, WHAT ARE THESE CHAINS OF SOCIETY ?

On the international scene they are manifested by the skirmishes and minor wars which threaten to become global

at all points of the compass, by terrorism and indiscriminate murder, by vandalism and violence, disrespect for the rule of law, by economic upheavals and political persecutions; in short, they are manifested by man's physical and mental misery, caused mainly by man's wrong thinking and greed, and ignorance of the higher laws of life.

On our local scene, society's chains are mainly the chains of fear: fear of what tomorrow may bring, fear engendered by racial tensions, bureaucracy, political problems, economic insecurity, and psychological fears, such as the fear of loneliness, the fear of standing alone in a hostile world.

All these factors are conducive to restlessness, to general physical and mental instability, and to the disintegration of man as a personality, the family as a basic unit of the group, that is the whole of society.

This disintegration can be measured by what are commonly known as the symptoms of social disintegration. These symptoms are the rising rates of crimes against the person and property, the rising rates of suicide, divorce, juvenile delinquency, prostitution, alcoholism, drug addiction, mental diseases, and so on.

So, on the one hand we have the chains of society just discussed, and on the other hand we find that these chains lead to disintegration, which may seem paradoxical, because the word "chain" evokes strength and not weakness, or the breaking up of something.

On our local scene, society's chains are mainly the chains of fear: fear of what tomorrow may bring, fear engendered by racial tensions, bureaucracy, political problems, economic insecurity, and psychological fears, such as the fear of loneliness, the fear of standing alone in a hostile world.

But, in the context of social studies, where there are chains, there is disintegration. It has ever been so. For example:

The chains of a priesthood seeking to dominate the minds of a group of people, bring about the spiritual disintegration of the religion it wishes to enforce.

The chains of the Spanish *inquisition* brought about the disintegration of Spanish society.

The chains of French Bourbon absolute monarchy led to its disintegration through the mechanism of the French revolution.

The chains forged by the French revolution led to its own disintegration, and to the emergence of the Napoleonic regime. and so on.

It is an interesting phenomenon that as soon as chains are forged to maintain an idea, an institution, or a social system, or a political concept, disintegration sets in.

What usually happens is that at the basis there is an idea, then an organization is created in order to perpetuate the idea, and the organization strangles the idea.

Take as an example Communism. Basically it is a sound idea, based on the dictum: "To each according to his needs, from each according to his ability".

This idea engendered in Russia an organization whose aim was the perpetuation of the idea. The organization grew into a colossus, the Communist State, which sought to perpetuate the idea by means of an incredible bureaucracy, an all pervading propaganda machine and a secret state police, and the colossus strangled the idea.

The end of the Communist Super-State confirmed Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Social Contract dictum to the effect that "We must not attempt the impossible, or flatter ourselves that we can give to a structure built by men a permanence that nothing human ever has".

Another interesting example is trade unionism.

At this stage I must stress that my approach to the subject of Trade

Unionism is purely sociological, and not political.

Furthermore, while my remarks may well apply to various European and other countries, I am confining myself to Trade Unionism as it existed in England some years ago.

If one analyzes trade unions as found in Western countries, one discovers that at the basis of these trade union organizations there is the commendable idea of a fair deal for the worker, coupled with the aim of ensuring the worker's freedom from want, and freedom to sell his labor in the open market at a fair price.

There is not sufficient time to discuss, at this juncture, the impact various economic and political factors have had on the trade union movement, in particular, the decisive part the Western democratic system of universal adult suffrage—or One Man, One Vote—has played in the movement's development, but suffice it to note that since the first world war, the interplay of economic and political factors has been such that the trade union movement has gone from strength to strength.

And, as these trade unions' bargaining power grew, so the power of the shop stewards and district secretaries over their individual members grew to the extent where the organizations have killed the idea of a fair deal and especially freedom inasmuch as today, the worker who does not comply with strike orders, is blackballed and ostracized.

In England the trade unions' growth of bargaining power has also led to their demanding, and getting, more and more wages for the same or less work, with the result that increasing remuneration is not matched by a corresponding increase in productivity. This, in turn, has had the twofold effect of, on the one hand, rampant inflation, because more and more wages for the same or less work has led to the cost of goods and services mounting all the time. And on the other hand it has led to hardship for the workers, because their wages do not keep pace

with the inflation for which their trade unions are directly responsible.

In extreme cases, these is unemployment, caused by unreasonable wage demands leaning to unprofitability, and thus, to the curtailing of production, or the closing down, of industrial and commercial enterprises. There are, of course, other social and economic factors that come into play in the scenario just unfolded, but basically, we see that trade union organizations which were created to perpetuate the idea of a fair deal and freedom for the worker, have strangled the idea, and this is one of the big problems facing some parts of the world today.

One can find at random numerous patterns similar to the one just discussed.

In India, for example, the basic idea of Mahatma Gandhi's teaching was non-violence and passive resistance. An organization was created to perpetuate the idea, the organization led to the formation of the state of India, and the State strangled the idea, as the way it deals with dissenters, and the war with Pakistan, have demonstrated.

In other Eastern countries, Buddhism is the dominant religion, or philosophy. Its central idea may be described as non-attachment and reverence for life. The idea became organized in the form of sects which introduced an element of rigidity in the interpretation of Buddhism and, when one reads of monks pouring petrol over themselves, and setting themselves alight to burn as human torches, one wonders whether the organization has not smothered the idea.

As regards the Occident, the Judaeo-Christian heritage is perhaps summarized best by the Nazarene's injunction which formulated the central idea underlying the Old and the New Testaments spiritual message as follows: "Thou shalt love the lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets".

[Matthew, chapter 22, verses 37—40].

And what has happened to this idea?

Organizations were created to perpetuate the idea from an *Old Testament* point of view, but to day, if one were to ask a young Jew in Israel what it is that he should love with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, the chances are his, not unexpected reply, would be "my automatic rifle".

Christian organizations which were created to perpetuate the idea from a *New Testament* point of view have strangled the idea so effectively that, in the past, some religious wars in Europe lasted for decades and, in our time, in certain parts of the world, different sects and protestants and Roman Catholics are at loggerheads with one another in the name of the Prince of Peace.

The world Council of Churches was created to perpetuate the idea of inter-Church co-operation, of peace on earth and good-will to all men, and it has strangled it so effectively that some years ago it financed terrorists.

The idea of Unity and Peace led to the creation of U.N.O., the United Nations Organization, in order to perpetuate the idea, and the organization has deviated from the idea by becoming politisized, and is in danger of strangling the idea.

One could go on ad infinitum.

And, just in passing, perhaps The Theosophical Movement and its various Theosophical Societies have a lesson to learn from all this.

At the Movement's basis, there is the magnificent idea of Universal Brotherhood coupled with the teaching of the Way, the Truth and the Life as revealed in the Ancient Wisdom, and it is to be hoped that its members will never smother the idea by forging institutional chains which lead to Theosophy becoming inflexible and presented as a rigid philosophical system.

Having said all this, and seen from all the examples discussed that dominant ideas generate organizations for their perpetuation, and that the organizations engulf these ideas, we now

When We Die... A Unique, Authentic Account

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Foreword by Dr. Vernon Harrison
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For thousands of years man, especially Western man, has cherished the illusion that happiness lay without rather than within, that progress in science, technology, and control of the forces of nature, would lead to the millennium.

come to the next stage in our analysis, where we must ask ourselves a pertinent question.

The question that arises can be formulated as follows:

Since you cannot have an organized society or institution without a basic idea, yet organization kills the idea, what is one to do?

And this is the perennial DILEMMA with which we are faced.

The term *dilemma* is derived from the Greek roots "di" meaning "two" and "lemma" meaning "anything taken". The meaning of the word Dilemma is, therefore, *any of two is the same*, or in better words, *the equally undesirable alternatives between which a choice must be made*. This is a very apt definition because, to solve our Dilemma, we cannot give up either *ideas* or *organization*, for life or society must be organized somehow, and how can we organize without having basic ideas. It is obvious that we require both in order to exist above the animal level, so let us examine briefly the connotation of the words organization and idea in to hope that these may help us to solve the dilemma.

For the purpose of our discussion, I suggest that the term *organization* be linked with the concept of *Civilization*, and the term *idea* with the concept of *Culture* because, when one civilizes one organizes, and when one cultivates one ideates, one thinks.

Civilization, one can submit, pertains to that which is utilitarian, to that which often represents milestones of human progress, as for example, the invention of the wheel, the printing press, the radio, television, the aeroplane, the combustion

engine, the jet engine, nuclear fission the computer—in other words, everything that is utilitarian, that is useful and practical and helps one to organize what is commonly understood to be a civilized mode of living.

Culture, one can submit, pertains to individual self-expression in such fields as poetry, painting, the arts, music, abstract thinking.

Culture, in other words, encompasses everything that revolves round an idea expressed either as a poem by Kahlil Gibran, or a painting by Giotto, or music by Wagner or a Philosophical concept by Huxley.

And let us note, in passing, that the pinnacle in all these art forms has invariably a spiritual content.

Well, now that we have linked the concept of *organization* with the process of *civilization*, and the concept of *idea* with *culture*, it flows from our previous deductions about *idea* and *organization* that, just as the idea generates an organization, and the organization strangles the idea, so does culture generate civilization and civilization strangles culture, and this enables us to formulate our Dilemma anew as follows;

Since we cannot have civilization without culture, yet civilization strangles culture, what is one to do?

In order to solve this dilemma let us pause for a moment and examine the present state of civilization and culture.

For thousands of years man, especially Western man, has cherished the illusion that happiness lay without rather than within, that progress in science, technology, and control of the forces of nature, would lead to the millennium.

Man looked outside of himself and explored the macrocosm, the Universe and its physical forces, rather than himself, the microcosm.

As a result, there have been fantastic strides in the field of civilization at the expense of culture.

Culture, of course, has not remained stagnant, but, as man's efforts have been concentrated on creating better

and bigger products of civilization, culture has been outstripped, and today there is a cultural lag, there is, what in a recent interview the well-known writer John le Carré has described as a lack of moral development, resulting in our remaining in many ways extraordinarily primitive in our minds; so there is a cultural lag.

There is a lack of balance between civilization and culture, and where there is lack of symmetry, lack of harmony, there is, in other words, the absence of the ancient Greek ideal of the Golden Mean, so essential for a balanced personality.

Whereas civilization has reached the stage of mass production where the man in the street, the average man, can benefit by its devices, there cannot be mass production of culture, there can only be individual efforts at self-expression, and self-expression takes time, it is a matter of individual evolution. Of course, we have reached the stage of mass dissemination of academic knowledge and scientific techniques in schools and Universities, but not of culture in the sense of self-expression, the highest form of which is a spiritual manifestation.

Only individuals reach pinnacles of spiritual development by their own individual, painstaking efforts, but the benefits of civilization can be inculcated, organized, distributed to masses of people efficiently and rapidly. And this is why Society is lopsided. You can walk into a showroom and buy the latest de Luxe motor-car, a product of civilization, without the slightest

...in the long run, individual effort is conducive to self-discipline, to individual independence of thought, and to an expansion of consciousness, and thus to the loosening, and ultimately the breaking, of the bonds with which organizations shackle the individual.

mental effort, providing you have the money, but you cannot walk into a shop and buy a product of culture such as the state of intellectual and spiritual development of a Goethe, a Spinoza, Einstein or Albert Schweitzer. You can buy Schweitzer's book about his concept of "Reverence for life" but you have to make an individual cultural and spiritual effort if you want to grasp the real, the inner meaning of such a concept, and weave it into the fabric of yourself as an individual.

We see thus that it is individual effort that is necessary to close the lag between culture and civilization. This is the solution of our dilemma, this is the way out. It is *individual effort* that is required to establish a balance between civilization and culture, to close the gap between the two. And, if we are agreed on the fact that individual effort will solve the dilemma of civilization or culture, it will follow from our analysis that individual effort will also solve the dilemma of idea or organization.

It will solve the dilemma of idea or organization because, in the long run, individual effort is conducive to self-discipline, to individual independence of thought, and to an expansion of consciousness, and thus to the loosening, and ultimately the breaking, of the bonds with which organizations shackle the individual.

An outstanding example of one who has broken such bonds by individual effort is the Soviet writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn. He was trained as a Physicist, Mathematician, Soldier; he was a Commander of a Red Army reconnaissance artillery battery, and effloresced as an author of international stature of such books as *The Gulag Archipelago*, "For the Good of the Cause" "Candle in the Wind" and others. Solzhenitsyn became enmeshed in the Communist political machine. He was imprisoned, tortured, exiled to Siberia, and suffered unbelievable privation and persecution, yet, by sheer intellectual and spiritual will power he broke the chains with which the Communist organization sought to crucify him. Perhaps as much for his

courage as for his literary brilliance, Solzhenitsyn was given the Noble Prize of Literature, and he was eventually allowed to leave Russia and to settle in Western Europe. It is a measure of this man's spiritual strength that, after all his suffering and all the persecution, he was able to write the following lines;

"How easy for me to live, O Lord,
How easy for me to believe in You
When my mind parts in bewilderment
and falters.
When the most intelligent people see
no further than this day's end,
And do not know what must be done
to-morrow,
YOU grant ME the serene certitude
That you exist, and that you will take
Care that not all the paths of good be
closed."

So much for an example of what individual effort can do for an individual. But what about the aggregate of individuals, the collective, the group? And this brings us to the pertinent question that arises at this stage, namely: *How can individual effort lead Society out of chaos?*

The answer, it can be submitted, is that Society is made up of individuals, its units, and as the units are, so is society. There is an interplay of two factors here, namely the group, the social structure of which the individual is a part, and the individual who is a unit of the structure which he helps to erect, to maintain or to destroy.

In the last resort, a social group is as strong as its component parts, its units the individuals, make it.

The greater the spiritual effort of an individual, and the more there are such individuals, the better will be the social structure man will evolve.

For one thing is certain; no ideology, no political system, no grandiose social philosophy will lead man out of the Dilemma.

The solution does not revolve round economics, or politics, round communism or socialism or anarchism or any "ism", but is solely dependent on the cultural effort of each individual, leading to the spiritual development

of the individual, and thereby of the group. This is the solution of our present day dilemma. This is the solution to which a study of Theosophy, the Ancient Wisdom, will lead us.

The teachings of Theosophy make it quite clear that it is the individual who matters in the last resort, that man is not a means to an end but an end in himself, and that the solution to all our problems, including our dilemma, revolves round the individual evolutionary, cultural, and spiritual effort of each one of us.

This is what the Buddha meant when he said to his disciples:

"...Seek ye, therefore, diligently your own salvation, and cultivate love without measure." [Adams Beck, *The Life of the Buddha*, p. 199].

And this is what the Christ meant when he said to his disciples:

"... And I say unto you, ask and it shall be given, seek and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you." [Luke 11:9].

And this is also what a Master of the Wisdom, the Master K.H., meant when he said to one of his disciples:

"...You have the making of your own future in your own hands, and every day you may be weaving its woof.... [K.H. *Letters to CWL* p. 13]

"... The process of self-purification is not the work of a moment, nor of a few months, but of years, nay extending over a series of lives. The later a man begins living the higher life, the longer must be his period of probation.

For he has to undo the effects of a long number of years spent in objects diametrically opposed to the goal." [Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom, first series, page 37].

This process of self-purification, which is one way of describing what in this discussion we have called the path of individual evolutionary effort, has been portrayed as a lonely path.

But we must not let this thought depress us, for two great Teachers have expressed themselves as follows about this path.

The one Teacher said: "...It is wiser to cultivate the quality of spiritual

solitude than to have it forced upon you, as so often happens to so many.

In this solitude there is no morbidness, there is no harsh withdrawing, and there is no aspect of separateness. "There is only the place where the disciple stands, detached and unafraid, and in that place of utter quiet, the Master comes and solitude is not. The soul that cannot stand alone, has naught to give. Be not afraid. Seek the pinnacle of spiritual solitude which is the sole place where TRUTH can be known."

The other Teacher I want to quote, said the following to an enquirer: "And how, you ask, are we to walk the spiritual path? We answer: Say little; love much; give all; judge no man; aspire to all that is pure and good; and, keep on keeping on." [White Eagle "The Quiet Mind"].

So speaks the Master, and so speak all the great Teachers of Mankind who have always claimed that they can only point the way and that each one of us must tread the path of individual effort alone.

For, in the words of the poet Kahlil Gibran:

"No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge. For the vision of one man lends not its wings to another man. And even as each one of you stands alone in God's knowledge, so must each one of you be alone in his knowledge of God and in his understanding of the earth"

A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO MEDITATION AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

Try to have a designated time and place for meditation.

Sit comfortably with the spine erect.

Close your eyes and exhale. Hold briefly, then allow the breath to proceed on its own.

The first few breaths will be naturally deep but then the breathing will take its own pace.

Withdraw from the sense. Relax. (Relax to meditate, not the other way around.)

A good start is a 15 minute meditation. On the first 5 minutes dwell on an ideal and its meaning.

Try to find out its deeper significance and how it relates to you. Keep the mind open to clear it of thoughts.

Thoughts may keep on coming in but then the thoughtless moments between thoughts will expand, and soon you will experience freedom from thought.

And this brings you to the next 5 minutes, the phase of No-Thought, or meditation proper. The mind is in full alert.

There is mindfulness, a state beyond thought.

If a particular thought comes in, just look at it without accepting or rejecting, without analyzing or evaluating.

This no-thought, but all-thought, state is powerfully charged. One may experience unusual creativity and a feeling of timelessness.

This is the phase where you may prolong your meditation later on.

The last 5 minutes is for a Good Wish. This is wishing the ideal you have chosen for others, or for the world at large.

Wishing this ideal for those you have problems with makes it doubly beneficial.

Through constant practice of meditation you may find yourself carrying the ideal into your daily life and understand more and more as you go along because you will find it in most everything you do.

Progress from one ideal to another varies from person to person. A good sense of humor, or even a light-hearted irreverence, is a sign of progress.

Equanimity, or truly being cool, will be noticed in you by your friends, or even your family.

There is more, but only you may know.

—Quoted in *Antahkarana* (the Bridge) published septenarily by the Theosophical Society in Maryland, 523 North Charles St., Baltimore, Md. 21201.

A WISE INSTANCE OF PRISON REFORM

An experiment in prison reform being tried out in Bangalore Central Jail is creating new feeling among the prison inmates. The single-time offenders among the over 1000 inmates were encouraged by prison officials to take up any of the three-year degree courses offered by the Indira Gandhi National Open University [IGNOU].

Some among the 32 inmates who came forward to do the course were

serving life sentences. Only 25 qualified after an entrance examination and all for them opted for a degree in the social sciences.

They were in the 25-40 age group and none of them had completed their school education. The project is sponsored by the State Government, though the initial encouragement came from the jail authorities. [*Indian Express Sunday Magazine*, May 16]

Requiring no attendance at classes, the courses offered by the open university provide exhaustive preparatory

notes and a package of audio-visual aids, and allow for continuing education.

The prison library provides additional study material. Those who have completed the course are allowed to appear for the examinations from centers of their choice.

Enthused by the experiment in Bangalore, IGNOU is planning to offer a course on food and nutrition to woman prisoners.

According to S. Venkatesh, a lecturer in political science in IGNOU

and liaison officer of the course, the signs are good.

The attitude of the prisoners is different from that of outside candidates, he says. "Through my interaction with the candidates in the prison I found that they were eager to make full use of the lost time in regretting their decision.

There is a change in the attitude of the inmates in general. This experiment has added a new page to the

THE EXTRAORDINARY NATURE OF THE ORDINARY MIND:

"NIRVANIZING" THE WORLD

by Joy Mills

(Joy Mills is general secretary of the Australian Section of the Theosophical Society, former president of the Theosophical Society in America, and former international vice-president. "The Extraordinary Nature of the Ordinary Mind" was presented at the 1993 Summer Conference at Olcott.)

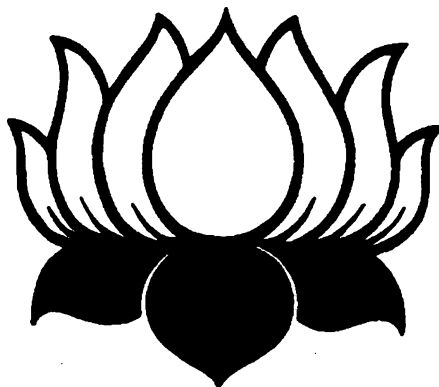
Eleven centuries ago, the Chinese sage, Huang Po, was asked about the nature of the Buddha. He replied, "Buddha is the ordinary mind." In the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*, Arjuna questions Sri Krishna: "What is the mark of he who is stable of mind?" Arjuna, as the ordinary individual faced with a serious problem, is eager to learn how such a one, the yogi, the sage, talks and sits, walks and eats, and carries on all the normal activities of everyday life. Sri Krishna's response is a little more detailed than was Huang-Po's: "When a man abandoneth all the desires of the heart, and is satisfied in the SELF by the SELF, then he is called stable of mind. He whose mind is free from anxiety amid pains, indifferent amid pleasures, loosed from passion, fear, and anger, is called a sage of stable mind." Surely such a one, the "sage of stable mind," may be said to have the nature of a Buddha.

While many students have denigrated the mind, quoting the well-

reformation theory of convicts.

Additional Director General of Police [Prisons] T. Srinivasalu believes it will be a lesson to other prison administrations in the country.

It has certainly provided an impetus to them. Even though some of the prisoners are undergoing life imprisonment, it helps them to get through the remainder of their lives in a much



known passage in *The Voice of the Silence*, "The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real," few have taken note of the many aspects of the mind referred to in that beautiful theosophic classic. True, early on in HPB's text, we are advised to "seek out the *raja* of the senses, the Thought-Producer, he who awakes illusion." Later, however, in the Third Fragment of the *Voice*, we read: "Thou hast to reach that fixity of mind in which no breeze, however strong, can waft an earthly thought within." And of the one who walks the Bodhisattva Path, as it is defined in *The Voice of the Silence*, we are told: "He standeth now like a white pillar to the west, upon whose face the rising Sun of thought eternal poureth forth its first most glorious waves. His mind, like a becalmed and boundless ocean, spreadeth out in shoreless space. He holdeth life and death in his strong hand."

The Buddha ... the ordinary mind ... the sage of the stable mind ... the

"Thou hast to reach that fixity of mind in which no breeze, however strong, can waft an earthly thought within."

more productive manner.

This new wave in prison management should be welcomed by society which for long condemned the sinner, not the sin.

It is gratifying to note that education and reformation as ideals have replaced senseless barbarity, for only in proportion as imprisonment aids the convict is the prison's existence justified.

The Theosophical Movement,
August 1993. (U.L.T. in Bombay, India)

"Thought-Producer" ... "Slayer of the Real" ... a "fixity of mind" ... What, indeed, is the mind? Where in all these descriptions is the mind itself? And what is its essential nature? Can we live without the mind? Are mind and heart such opposites that one must choose either to be mindless or to be heartless? Shall we cease thinking because thought itself can entrap us in illusion? Such are only some of the questions that must be raised as we seek to understand the nature of the "wise mind," the illumined mind, the mind that is Buddha, the mind of the true yogi, the sage, the Master of Wisdom.

The ordinary mind must be the mind in its original condition. Perhaps it is the original mind itself. Surely it is the mind that is established in order, that arises out of that essential order which is basic to all universal processes, for the theosophical view proposes that consciousness is primary. It is the mind, then, whose very nature is beauty and harmony. It is the mind, cleared of all impediments, all obstructions, all that would obscure clear vision, what HPB called "a direct beholding" of the noumenon underlying all phenomena. If "Buddha is the ordinary mind," as the Chinese sage informed his questioner, then the ordinary mind must be the mind that is awake, that is wise, that is established in true knowing.

Because for so long, particularly in the Western world, we have identified the ordinary mind with the analytical,

"Obviously the mind is an energy which at every point of its action exhibits consciousness with all its implied capacities in some degree or other. In the process of thinking, this energy moves so quickly, changing direction very readily, is so sensitive and influenced by every circumstance and factor, that it develops an extraordinary complexity in the way it operates ..."

the scientific, and the logical aspect of thinking, we have failed to recognize the full potential of the mind and its extraordinary nature. Dividing the mind into two parts, we have scorned what has been termed the "lower," according value only to that aspect we have called the "higher." Yet lower and higher are not spatial locations. Rather they describe functions of a single principle, *manas*, the mind, the cognitive principle, and neither term—lower or higher—should be used in any pejorative sense.

In his book *Life's Deeper Aspects*, N. Sri Ram made some very helpful comments that are directly relevant to our present inquiry. Asking the question, "Is man then his mind, and if so, of what nature is that mind?" Sri Ram suggests:

"Obviously the mind is an energy which at every point of its action exhibits consciousness with all its implied capacities in some degree or other. In the process of thinking, this energy moves so quickly, changing direction very readily, is so sensitive and influenced by every circumstance and factor, that it develops an extraordinary complexity in the way it operates ..."

Then, proposing that "consciousness, in its essential nature, is sensitivity itself," he adds that "The

modified consciousness as we find it in ourselves can have varying degrees of sensitivity." Further, "there is no distinction to be made" between being sensitive to one thing or another. In other words, when we are sensitive to the objective world, to that world which lies outside us and all about us, the world which we can examine and measure according to some external standard, we may be said to be using that aspect of the mind which has been called "lower." It is the mind outward-turned to the world of matter, of things and objects which appear to be distinct from us, the world in which we live our everyday lives.



SENSITIVITY TO BEAUTY

There is truly an extraordinary quality to the mind when it is turned outward to seek knowledge of the world of existent things. For such a mind can become extraordinarily sensitive to beauty, whether that beauty be perceived in the face of another, in the form of a great work of art, or in the exquisite harmony of a mathematical equation. The sensitivity of the mind of a great scientist exploring the wonders of the cosmos finds its counterpart in the sensitivity of the great artist perceiving in the world about him the wonder of form and color. True, such a mind, absorbed in the world of things, can become obscured by what Patanjali, the great expounder of yoga, called the *kleshas*, the psychological afflictions which cast shadows on the mind, distorting vision and thereby reducing sensitivity. Most dangerous of these afflictions, producing the greatest distortions of true vision, are egoism and desire for the

personal self, leading to attachment and all its attendant problems. Hence, the aim of yoga: to bring the mind to its original nature by the cessation of the modifications of the thinking principle. For this, one must, as *The Voice of the Silence* advises, "seek out the *raja* of the senses, the Thought-Producer, he who awakes illusion." To quote the *Voice* further: "Thou shalt not let thy senses make a playground of thy mind."

So when the outward turned aspect of the mind is cleared of all personal attachments and repulsions, free of desire for the personal self, when it can see the world about us without distortion, perceive its exquisite beauty and wonder, the mind displays an extraordinary quality. Equally extraordinary is the quality of the mind which may be called subjective, the mind turned inward toward the realm of the noumenal which underlies the phenomenal, the realm of the archetypes, of spiritual reality. In such a movement within, there is, as Sri Ram has said, "the possibility of knowing all that exists, responding to it and experiencing it." And he added, "Although we do not know this possibility as a fact, yet it is an illuminative idea, logical and satisfying to one's sense of fitness and completeness." In even approaching that possibility, via the inward turned mind, we begin to

... the clue lies in the double consciousness of our mind and also in the dual nature of the mental "principle." There is a spiritual consciousness, the Manasic mind illumined by the light of Buddhi, that which subjectively perceives abstractions; and the sentient consciousness (the lower Manasic light), inseparable from our physical brain and senses.

... the two higher principles can have no individuality on Earth, cannot be man, unless there is ... the Mind, the Manas-Ego, to cognize itself ...

recognize the great creative powers of the mind, the image-making faculty we call imagination and the faculties of inspiration and discriminative wisdom. Here too we touch on the awesome quality of love and compassion, which is a direct reflection of the One Supreme Spirit, the one Creative Energy in the universe. And that primal energy is not only love; it is thought, ideation, the outpouring of the Universal Mind.

HPB referred to the two aspects of the mind's function in many of her writings. Discussing the "Nature of the Thinking Principle" in *The Key to Theosophy*, she wrote:

... "the clue lies in the double consciousness of our mind and also in the dual nature of the mental "principle." There is a spiritual consciousness, the Manasic mind illumined by the light of Buddhi, that which subjectively perceives abstractions; and the sentient consciousness (the lower *Manasic* light), inseparable from our physical brain and senses."

That the mind is essential to our human state is made very clear in *The Secret Doctrine* (II: 241):

... "the two higher principles can have no individuality on Earth, cannot be man, unless there is ... the Mind, the *Manas-Ego*, to cognize itself..."

In addition, there must be what HPB called "the body of egotistical desires and personal Will," even though it is from that "body" that arise the psychological afflictions which obscure or contaminate the mind. To complete the picture, HPB indicated that it is these two principles, the Fifth (*Manas*) and the Fourth (*Kama*) which "cement the whole, as round as a pivot ... to the physical form of man."

Considering further the fifth principle, *Manas*, we must give attention

to its uniqueness, for it is the very uniqueness of its origin that gives to the mind its truly extraordinary nature. Two quotations from HPB will help us understand this subject. First, from *The Key to Theosophy*, again from the section on the "Nature of the Thinking Principle":

"*Manas* is a principle, and yet it is an Entity and individuality or Ego."

Elaborating on this point, she indicated that this "entity" incarnated in nascent humanity at a certain stage of development to awaken *Manas* into full activity. This "entity" is "called in its plurality *Manasa-putras*, the Sons of the (Universal) Mind ..." Then follows a most significant statement:

... "once imprisoned, or incarnate, their essence becomes dual: that is to say, the rays of the eternal divine Mind, considered as individual entities, assume a twofold attribute which is (a) their essential characteristic, heaven-aspiring mind ... and (b) the human quality of thinking, or animal cogitation ... the *Kama-tending* or lower *Manas*."

When HPB wrote *The Key*, this description of *Manas* as an "entity" had already been explained in some detail in *The Secret Doctrine*. The entire subject of the descent of the *Manasa-putras* deserves close study if one would understand fully the implications of the teaching given to us in regard to the fifth principle or *Manas*. Suffice it for our present purposes to quote just one passage from *The Secret Doctrine* (II: 81):

"Between man and the animal—whose Monads (or Jivas) are fundamentally identical—there is the impassable abyss of Mentality and Self-consciousness. What is human mind in its higher aspect, whence comes it, if it is not a portion of the essence—and, in some rare cases of incarnation, the *very essence*—of a higher Being; one from a higher and divine plane? ... man

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is an animal plus a living god within his physical shell..."

The relationship between those whom HPB termed the "*manasa-putras*," those great intelligences who awakened the spark of *Manas* within the gradually developing human forms at an earlier stage of evolution, and ourselves is a fascinating study, however difficult and abstruse. Even the few references cited above should indicate to us the extraordinary nature of the mind, the mind in its ordinary or original condition. *Manas* is truly "embodied spirit," to use one of HPB's designations for it; it is a god within the outer form of our existence, and it provides us with access to the Supreme Reality which is Universal Consciousness. For we are rooted in consciousness, Mahat, the Universal Mind, as indeed is all existence. In us, in the human, that consciousness is flowering into full Self-consciousness. In us, therefore, are all the powers, all the beauty, wisdom and splendor of self-reflective consciousness.

In that profound and beautiful text of Kashmir Shaivism, the *Siva Sutras*, which Dr. Jaideva Singh called the "Yoga of Supreme Identity," there is a simple but highly significant aphorism, "*Cittam mantra*." Dr. Singh has translated this as "The mind is mantra," commenting that "By intensive awareness of one's identity with the Highest Reality enshrined in a *mantra*

and then become identical with that Reality the mind itself becomes mantra." This mind that is or becomes mantra must be the inward-turned, the heaven-aspiring aspect of the mind, or the mind that is, as one commentary has it, "a throb or pulsation of pure Consciousness" (see *Looking In, Seeing Out* by Minas Kafatos and Thalia Kafatou). According to Dr. Singh, the term "mantra" in the context of the aphorism in the *Siva Sutras* is more than a particular combination of letters or a sacred formula. It is, he suggests, "the heart-seed of *Siva*" or the Supreme, adding "He who can enter into the spirit of this *mantra* will be identified with the Supreme I-consciousness and will be liberated." At the same time, as Dr. I. K. Taimni points out in his commentary on the same aphorism (see *The Ultimate Reality and Realization*), the word "mantra" basically means "sound," but in its widest sense "any vibration or motion ..." Elaborating on the idea that the "differentiated states of mind are nothing but *mantras*" because they are composed of different "vibrations," Dr. Taimni proposes that since thoughts and ideas are essentially motions in consciousness, we can consider "the manifested universe from a deeper point of view ... as an ocean of thoughts and ideas on the subjective side and a flux of motions and vibrations on the objective side."

THE POWER TO CREATE

Now bringing these concepts together—that *Manas* or mind is truly a "living god," an "embodied spirit," and is also mantra or vibration—we can begin to explore further something of the extraordinary nature of the mind. Even the ordinary mind, which as we have suggested is the original mind, the mind or consciousness in its original state, possesses extraordinary capacities. Pre-eminent among those capacities must be the power to create, to produce images which embody the great archetypal patterns in Universal Mind. (Note HPB's response to a question, as recorded in *Transactions*

Between man and the animal—whose Monads (or Jivas) are fundamentally identical—there is the impassable abyss of Mentality and Self-consciousness. What is human mind in its higher aspect, whence comes it, if it is not a portion of the essence—and, in some rare cases of incarnation, the very essence—of a higher Being; one from a higher and divine plane? ... man is an animal plus a living god within his physical shell ...

of the Blavatsky Lodge: "The one ... Great Architect of the Universe is MAHAT, the Universal Mind." As we are rooted in the Universal Mind or Mahat, we must possess or at least reflect those faculties inherent in that Source which HPB called the "Great Architect." We in our turn can become creators of forms from patterns in Universal Mind. This inherent, yet extraordinary power we may call the spiritual imagination. It is the power that makes us co-creators with the universal, for truly we live in a participatory universe, as many prominent scientists today are suggesting.

While science has to a large extent made the logical, analytical, and mathematical functions of the ordinary mind the basis for all knowledge, we may now recognize the necessity to couple those functions with the deeper, more all-embracing, creative aspects of consciousness which arise in and flow from the mind inwardly illumined by the energy of *buddhi*, intuitive perception, discriminative wisdom, compassionate understanding. Only through an awakening of a genuine spiritual imagination can we discover that the liberation of the human spirit may be achieved. This is not antiscience,

for the function of science, in terms of its essential methodology, is to test the imagination, as every genuine scientist knows. And the liberation of the human spirit is possible as much through that science which is open to intuitive perception or imagination as through the leap from the analytical and logical mode of thought into the creative and symbolic mode. The flow of energy may be and must be as much from below upwards as from above downwards.

What may be proposed, then, is that there needs to be, first, the recognition that *Manas*, the cognitive mind or consciousness, is a god within us, and second, that it therefore has god-like capacities of imagination and creativity. These are the capacities which not only give meaning and purpose to existence, but also draw us into the future. Over a century ago, the American philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson, said: "What lies before us and what lies behind us is a small matter compared to what lies within us." To which his colleague, Henry David Thoreau, added: "And when we bring what lies within us out into the world, miracles happen." When we tap the extraordinary powers of the ordinary mind, that mind which is a "living god" and which is mantra, we do indeed perform miracles, for we remake both ourselves and the world. This is the genuine reformation which is necessary today.

We may well ask: what is the nature of the act of thought when, in one brilliant moment, there is a sudden veering of attention, a consequent grasp of new understandings, and a new idea is born? What is the nature of that act by which we suddenly see a new aspect of life, perceive a meaning which is so much more complete than any perception we have had before? The sudden, accurate leap of mind across all barriers and into new fields of knowledge and understanding is perhaps best described as a "flash of insight." It is the moment of coming fully awake, the moment so beautifully described by Arjuna when he said,

"Destroyed is my delusion, I have gained knowledge.... I am firm, my doubts have fled away." At such a time, insight must be translated into "outsight," to coin a word, which means into action in the world.

When the Third Object of our Society directs our attention to an investigation of still unexplained laws of nature and their corresponding powers latent in every individual, I would suggest that one aspect of that exploration must be into those capacities of Manas, of mind and consciousness, which lead to an awakening of a new mode of perception and consequently a new mode of action in the world. What we are talking about is not psychic perception as it is usually understood, although from a psychological point of view it may be the total perception of the psyche when it is illumined by the light of Buddhi, moved by that energy which is compassionate wisdom. It is the perception of the spiritually illumined consciousness to which HPB gave the designation "manas-tajasa," the radiant or resplendent mind.

ILLUMINATION FROM WITHIN

Writing of Theosophy itself, HPB once wrote that it awakened in us a "direct beholding." But as the Mahatma K.H. wrote to A.P. Sinnett, "The illumination must come from within." And in another of the Mahatma Letters, the Mahatma M. wrote: "It is with jealous care that we have to guard our mind-plane from all the adverse influences which daily arise in our passage through life.... It is upon the serene and placid surface of the unruffled mind that the visions gathered from the invisible find a representation in the visible world..." Surely the "unruffled

"The renewal of society will come when we can imagine it differently and when we are ready, like artists, to take on the actual work of creating new forms."

mind" is the ordinary mind in the sense that it is the original mind, the mind in its normal and orderly state without any confusion or obscurity to veil its natural condition. In such a mind there is present, as the Mahatma K.H. expressed it, "an instantaneous, implicit insight into every first truth."

The question now arises as to how to awaken that imaginative mode of thought, a mode all too often neglected and even excluded from any consideration of the mind. Yet it is only as we nurture the imaginative mode, the intuitive, the symbolic, the mode of conceptual synthesis, that we come to realize the full potential of the mind and its extraordinary nature. For it is the imaginative mode of thought which helps to awaken true insight and understanding. While it is the outward turned aspect of the mind that may all too easily become ensnared by the energies of desire and passion and may even create devices for destruction as well as forms of great beauty, it is the deeper aspect of the mind, the mind illumined from within and responsive to the light of Buddhi that gives rise to ethical action. For the ethos that will characterize our total behavior will arise naturally and spontaneously from the vision we embrace. When that vision is one of wholeness, of oneness, of unity, we will act accordingly for the benefit of all humanity.

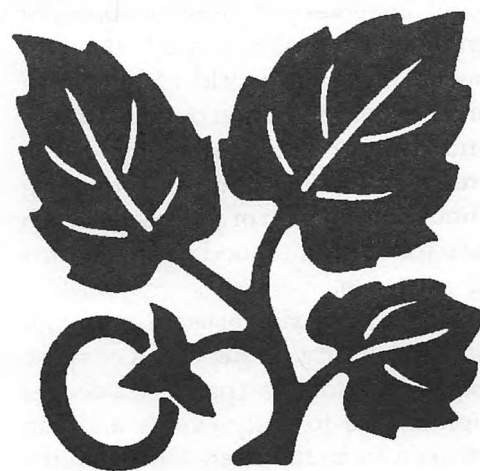
There seems to be general agreement in the spiritual traditions regarding the two essentials required for awakening the intuitive or imaginative mode of consciousness: conscious effort and intense concentration or one-pointedness. When the mind is held steady, focused, then the sudden and unexpected flash of illumination marked by a feeling of certitude may occur. This is the leap into a new state of consciousness, in which the personal self and its attachments disappear, but the mind needs to be equipped with materials with which to make the leap, for imagination cannot flower in a vacuum. The flash of inner illumination is favored by a disciplined grasp

"Know that the stream of superhuman knowledge and the Deva-Wisdom thou hast won, must, from thyself, the channel of Alaya, be poured forth into another bed....if thou would'st follow upon thy predecessor's steps, remain unselfish till the endless end."

of, and an intense concern for, the fundamental principles that provide the stimulus needed to precipitate the new vision.

Actually, imagination—the spiritual imagination—is the universal and indispensable instrument of all levels of living in our world. Our daily lives are dependent on it, for all day long we imagine our way from one activity to the next, from one location to another, visualizing alternate courses of action as well as alternative consequences. It may be suggested, in fact, that the principal function of the imagination is to enable the human being constantly to build thought models of the real world. By thought, we create the virtual reality in which we live, and when thought is uncluttered, free, unfettered by desire and egoism, the virtual reality we create is closer to the one true reality out of which all existence emerged.

M.C. Richards in *Toward Wholeness* has expressed the implications of a truly spiritual and creative imagination. She has written:



"The renewal of society will come when we can imagine it differently and when we are ready, like artists, to take on the actual work of creating new forms.

But we are called not simply to creativity, but to a creativity in the service of compassion, for compassion is the goal of the spiritual journey as is clearly pointed out in *The Voice of the Silence*:

Know that the stream of superhuman knowledge and the Deva-Wisdom thou hast won, must, from thyself, the channel of Alaya, be poured forth into another bed....if thou would'st follow upon thy predecessor's steps, remain unselfish till the endless end."

CLEANSING THE DOORS OF PERCEPTION

When we promote imagination to the rank of the primary creative agency of the human mind in its highest functioning, we can, to coin a word, "nirvanize" the world. This is to say that we recognize that beneath the outer turmoil and the numerous problems that afflict our world there is a deeper reality with which we can align ourselves and which we can help bring into manifestation. As William Blake, the great English poet and mystic, once wrote: "If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear as it is, infinite." It is for us to "cleanse the doors of perception," through mediation, concentration, and one-pointed attention to the highest we know. This is the supremely human task, to see things as they really are, to rid ourselves of the illusions brought on by selfish motives, to lift ourselves out of the sham world of hypocrisy and cant, to straighten out our values, and through the awakening of the creative potential within us, to bring about a new vision of a world in which peace and brotherhood are the norms of existence.

It has been suggested that imagination can tidy up the chaos of sense experience, for it can perceive a deeper significance to daily events and can awaken us to the need for a genuine

*It is the mind, therefore,
that is one with the heart
in seeking to
serve all beings.*

morality, an ecological morality, which is the ethic of the spirit. A life within the spectrum of the spiritual imagination avoids the extremes of spending itself either in unrestrained sensuality or in the useless heroics of a muddle-headed spiritualism. The mind is no longer pulled outwards by desire for personal ends, nor is it only pulled inwards toward mystical experiences. It is the stable mind, the mind crystal clear reflecting the light of wisdom, the mind that through the exercise of its extraordinary nature can visualize and therefore bring into existence the noble society of which we dream.

When we recognize the role of the mind and its vast possibilities—the mind as Buddha, the mind as mantra, the mind as that principle in us which is a "living god," and which at the same time defines our human state—we begin to realize that the function of imagination is to make palpable the fact that matter in its subjective aspect is spirit, while spirit, regarded objec-



tively, is the material world. This is to say that the world of things (*samsara*) is *nirvana*, and nirvana is *samsara*. All depends on our point of view. The realization of this changes our total vision, and with a change of perception, our behavior, our modes of action in the world, completely change.

According to Dr. Carl Jung, images are the basic givens of all psychic life and the privileged mode of access to the knowledge of the Self within. Imagination, then, underlies all perceptual and cognitive processes. Indeed, from an epistemological point of view, images are the only reality we apprehend directly: everything we know is transmitted by images, for images are the fundamental facts of human existence. It is from the stuff of images that we create our world, just as we ourselves were "imaged forth" into time and space from the "stuff" of Universal Mind. Nurturing our spiritual imagination, calling on our own deific powers of creativity, we may image forth into manifest existence a nobler and more beautiful society.

So the ordinary mind reveals its extraordinary nature. It is the mind illumined from within, the mind awake to the direct perception of the One Reality abiding in all things. It is the mind alight with the refulgence of the Spiritual Self. It is the mind, therefore, that is one with the heart in seeking to serve all beings. Our task, it may be said, is to transform *kama-manas* into *buddhi-manas*, the mind driven by desire to the mind illumined by love. In that transformation we release all the potentials of the "living god" within us: compassion and caring, humility and gentleness, patience and an infinite concern for the welfare of all. And in that transformation, we will have obeyed the injunction of the Buddha, "to produce love in one's mind," a love that *knows* there is no other. For there is only the One ever remembering Itself as It reveals Itself in countless forms.

—*The American Theosophist*, Nov./Dec. 1993

AVOID THE STILTED, THE CUT-AND-DRIED APPROACH.

Extracts of some words of sound advice from G. de Purucker, in this instance given to the T.S. Lodge of Liverpool, England, on October 6, 1937, and reprinted here from stenographic notes taken by Iverson L. Harris and published in *The Theosophical Forum* [Point Loma] in its January 1938 issue. Also in *Messages to Conventions*, 141-2.

... I have found something ... which I have been extremely grateful for; and it is that our members are now beginning to realize that there are diverse ways of doing our Theosophical work.

I mean to drive this fact home everywhere I go. In some towns it is best to work in a certain way, which each lodge must find out for itself.

In other towns or cities conditions are such that a somewhat different approach to the public is required; and wherever these towns are the lodges in them must find out that way that is best for themselves.

They are on the respective spots; they labor in that particular field; and it is for them very diligently and intelligently to study, each lodge its own ground and to ascertain what the psychology of the people is among whom they live and work, and to approach that psychology intelligently.

I believe it is all wrong to send out instructions from Point Loma after a cut-and-dried fashion that our different Sections and Lodges should all work after a stilted and crystallized pattern.

Conditions in the different countries vary so enormously, and even in one country conditions vary enormously.

My first point is that I have seen a growing realization of this fact, and I am delighted.

Now, this does not mean that the lodges of the T.S. follow divergent paths.

It is all one pathway that all Theosophic work and propaganda follow, but for each lodge there is some special or specific way which is the best for it.

Try to find out what is that specific and particular way here. Furthermore, our Theosophical workers must clearly understand, if they are to be successful in their beautiful work which we all so love, that we must do it with the

*...with the heart
and with the head;
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instruments which every son or daughter of man has— with the heart and with the head; the intellect and the understanding heart must combine.

I believe it to be an entirely wrong psychology, introducing the dead letter into Theosophical work, merely for the members of a lodge to think that the only way to give Theosophy to others is by quoting extensively from books.

That is excellent as one of the means of Theosophical propaganda. But such quotations ordinarily must not be presented word for word but given with a freshness arising in the mind and in the heart of the speaker himself or herself.

This makes an immediate, a direct appeal to the hearers. Otherwise you have a stilted way, an artificial way, a very unsympathetic way of presenting Theosophy, and it is often repellent.

Or again, an equal folly in our beautiful work — fortunately there is very little of it in our T.S. — is to try to teach Theosophy by what some people call feeling, emotion, gush.

That is equally offensive. Try to combine heart and intellect together and give them both to your audience. It will always attract.

Try to add freshness to its teachings. This makes things very fresh and bright and interesting. It gives life....



THE MAKING OF A MYSTIC

by W. R. Laudahn

Are Mystics born—or “born again?”
Are they made—or self-made?

One with all, are they yet somehow apart from the Many?

“All of the above,” is a good answer. For better or worse, the occult is often joined with the mystical.

In their fullness, nevertheless, the two are distinct and have been said to represent different “rays” from what

H. P. Blavatsky's Isis called “the Central, Spiritual Sun” whose eternal Center is everywhere.

Invisible radiance bathes the just and the unjust and sprouts many mutations and other manifestations.

The aroma of “the Occult,” in its purity and falsity, lingers to Blavatsky's name. *Priestess of the Occult* and *A Modern Priestess of Isis* are two titles of her biographies.



“Cult of the Occult” was *Time* magazine's description of the Theosophical Society. The message was that Theosophy is the Mother of Witchcraft, Black Magic, Satanism, and “the Anti Christ.”

Blavatsky did not stoop to that level, saved by her intellect and by being a Mystic who wished for more of them in the world-wide Society she founded in New York in 1875. The first and foremost love of the true Mystic is the Ultimate, beyond which one cannot go.

Occultists find that rituals and the “full” explanation of Astral Planes are quite satisfying. “It takes all kinds to make a world.”

"Where, who, what is GOD? Who ever saw the immortal SPIRIT of man, so as to be able to be assured of immortality?" *Isis Unveiled*, her first great book of 1877 thus introduces its mystical theme.

Science assumes that Spirit, Mind, and Consciousness are mere neurological aspects. But, whatever the means and methods, all potential resides in and derives from the miracle and mystery of the Source of sources, the Cause of Causes.

As gold is highly valued, Blavatsky wrote that the ancients named the Unmoved, mover, "the Golden Womb."

Mystical vision and High Occultism are woven like gold and silver threads in the Blavatskian writings.

An Occult aim of her second great book of 1888, *The Secret Doctrine*, is "to show that Nature is not a fortuitous concurrence of atoms..." A non-Occult mystic might reply that Divine Plan or Chaos, Purpose or Play, it matters not in the End where there is no "End" in the Boundless, Absoluteness of the Eternal Essence.

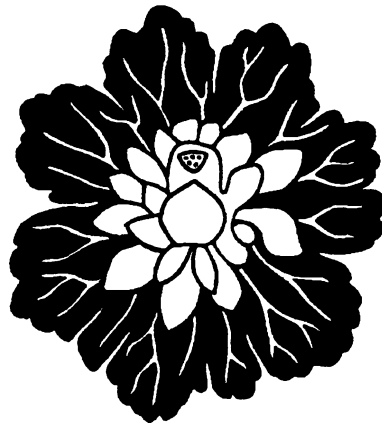
The Secret Doctrine's mystical soul, therefore, comes to the rescue of "the Archaic truths which underlie all religions; and uncovers...the fundamental unity from which they all spring..." In that mood, eyes and minds may open or close to the serenity of inner freedom.

Free spirits at heart though they may be, yet many Mystics have been at least loosely tied to all of the world-famous faiths.

Even so part of the faithful and the occasional zealous devotee tends to turn against Truth-seekers.

After all, believers are convinced they have "found it." Basking in Grace, are they not saved?

It is only natural that they should warn others. For the sake of phantasm, the pages of history record bloody events in what should have been eras of peace and plenty.



Not so serene in spirituality is the matter of "Purity," where the subject is sex. We are told that those on the High Road must avoid the spell of sex.

Just here is where troubles and hypocrisy multiply. Some who publicly celebrate celibacy are later found to be "great lovers" of one kind or another.

There is love of the opposite or of the same sex; "love of humanity," often coupled with contempt for individuals; and love of the lower or Higher Self.

Mystic Love is for All-in-All, an ideal of the Gnostics. Their story relates a range in passion from puritan, to moderate, to libertine.

An extremist who shocked even the Secret Police was the monk, Gregory Rasputin, friend and "healer" to the last Empress of Russia.

With numerous admirers of the opposite sex, and drinking companions, he practiced "Salvation through Sin" with gusto.

Considered separately, is anything good or evil? The mix is what matters.

Then too, as Hegel described, Positive becoming Negative and vice versa in the dynamics of Dialectics, so Good may cause Evil, and Purity change over.

Any synthesis is the Middle Way, often the best way. That which is fair and central is subject to being raised or lowered and tossed about in seas of Change.

Opinions of blame or praise and all else, end finally in the great depth of the Abyss, which is not bound by our images of direction, location, species, or gender.

The Boundless Center, "the Core of the Core", as G. de Purucker put it, is at once Blavatsky's sought-after "Heart of the Universe."

Exactly here is the concentrated, radical base of each unit, the individual Monad, the personal soul or spirit. Nothing less, is it, than the much-heralded "One, Eternal Reality."

That being so, what better purpose in life and subject for contemplation? The high light and prime point for each person is here and now—within.

Conventional piety tends to deny that God is within. Eyes and fingers pointing upward is where "He" is. But, does God agree?

There is no heaven or hell outside, above, or below.

Always within to "the deepest depths" is Divinity, as Blavatsky once phrased the matter, which is not matter, but Spirit—the mystical No-thing.

All else changes but That, unchanged because it is nothing we can otherwise describe.

The fundamental essence of each corresponds to that of the All-One.

As a mystic, therefore, Blavatsky held that "Man Spirit proves God Spirit."

"God-Intoxicated" is what the ancients, as quoted by Blavatsky, called Pythagoras, Plato, Ammonius Saccas, and Plotinus. In their own words, speaking for the Occident, they generally echoed Buddha and Shankara in the Orient.

"East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet," sang the poet Kipling. In a like vein, some "theosophists" contend that Theosophy bears no relation to Western religious philosophy.

It is, they say, entirely esoteric Buddhism. Blavatsky would agree that Theosophy contains much Esoteric Buddhism—plus the thought of Pythagoras, Plato and Plotinus.

It is all spelled out in her *Collected Writings*. Good fellows and great thoughts get together in the theology



and philosophy that we know as Theosophia.

Like the ancient variety, modern theosophy, in its several branches, should be a choice place for the development of Gnostics and Mystics, theosophers all.

If there are only a few, if any, it must be on account of the allure of the Occult Maya. Another strong reason is that

a whole lot of members and associates have not yet liberated themselves from inherited practices and creeds.

All true Mystics tend to downplay the recognized tenets of the various faiths, thus opening them to the dread charge of "Heresy".

As I tend to cleave to the Only One, without much reference to Masters, Karma-Reincarnation, Lemuria and

Atlantis, and other secondary subjects, I have been given that label by some in the Fundamentalist Theosophical camp.

We have a revival, then, of the ancient Wars in Heaven in the form of conflicts between rival Fundamentalists! Ether a tempest in a teapot, or much, much more, the big tent of Theosophy is large enough to contain it.

THE AMAZING & FASCINATING ANT

Edward O. Wilson discovered chemical communication in ants in 1959, and has since remained the world's leading myrmecologist. In "Empire of the Ants" in the March *Discover*, he reflects on a lifetime spent in studying ant behavior. Ants have a standing population of some 10 million billion, and the 8,800 known species cover most of the land surfaces of the world except for the polar regions. In sheer number ants far exceed all land vertebrates—that is, all Earth's mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians combined.

How has something so small as an ant become so astonishingly successful and important? The key lies in their social organization, says Wilson:

Ants are easy to overlook. Acting together, however, these insects are among the dominant forces of our terrestrial environment...We depend on this seething mass for our existence. Together with termites, ants turn most of the world's soil; they aerate it, drain it, and enrich it, channeling organic matter into their subterranean nests...Ants are among the most important disseminators of plant seeds. They are the principal predators of insects, spiders, and other small animals their own size. They are also the cemetery squad, scavenging and eating more than 90 percent of the corpses of small animals. So many kinds of plants and animals depend on them one way or another that if ants were somehow exterminated, hundreds of thousands of species would become extinct, and most of the world's ecosystems might be dangerously destabilized.

In one important sense ants are not little creatures at all. The operational unit is not the individual ant but the entire colony, whose hundreds or thousands of foragers, spreading and contracting like a giant amoeba, simultaneously patrol a wide stretch of terrain...

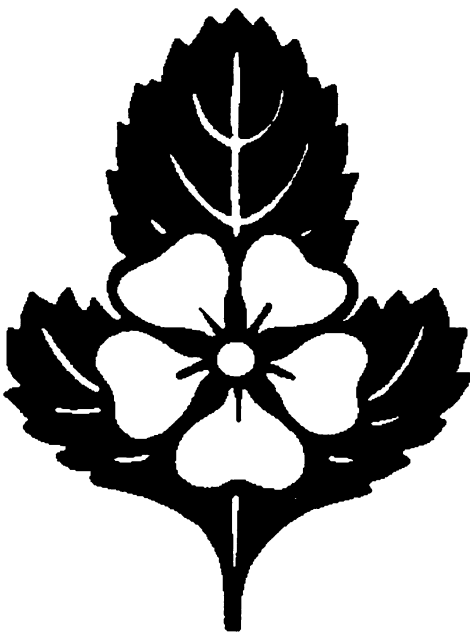
There are many ways in which ants and human beings are alike. Both are resounding success stories of evolution; after all, both have achieved their success through their ability to form social groups, to communicate, and to manipulate their environment with great dexterity...

The ways of the ants are myriad, and they are endlessly fascinating...The ants filled the Earth because they



stumbled upon a highly successful general strategy: the formulation of a colony of self-sacrificial nonreproducing workers, arrayed around a fertile queen, able to overwhelm solitary competitors and to invent novel forms of co-operative labor beyond the reach of ordinary animals. The ant colony is essentially a factory within a fortress, a splendid arrangement of soldiers, builders, nurses, and other specialists united in single-minded dedication.

Wilson's article brings out numerous interesting facts about these wonderful little creatures, which H.P.B. describes as "intermediary beings...a kind of transitional entity between two planes", having "conceptions of time and space which are its own, not ours; conceptions which are entirely on another plane." H.P.B. further refers to the ant "with its wonderful architectural, social and political abilities" as "inexpressibly higher in the scale than the subtle royal tiger watching its prey." "The ant ourselves possess different degrees of perception. We are on a higher scale of evolution; but "in relation to its own plane of conception and perception, the ant has as good an intellect as we have ourselves, and a better one".



A DAY OF INTER-THEOSOPHICAL DIALOGUE

Doreen Domb, May 1994

A precedent was established in January 1984 with the first Theosophical Networking Conference at the Krotona School of Theosophy in Ojai, CA. This idea came to fruition through a number of individuals from the various theosophical organizations, and the conference was organized by the (then) Southern California Federation of the Theosophical Society in America (TSA-Adyar). This has since become a model for the launching of similar events, both nationally and abroad. If the networking effort has accomplished one crucial end, it is apparent in the continual coming together of the different theosophical groups (Adyar, ULT, Pasadena, Halcyon, Pont Loma). As variations in our expressions of the Ancient Wisdom become less of an issue, what becomes most important are individuals and organizations working together to share ideas in a positive and accepting manner. The networking dynamic has catalyzed us to the realization that all theosophical bodies are expressions of what is known as the (modern-day) Theosophical Movement. We saw it happen last year, albeit on a larger scale, at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago, as representatives from our various organizations gathered together to present an impressive array of programs over several days.

Some ten years later, on March 26, 1994, we experienced an anniversary of sorts at the Krotona School, sharing in a day of inter-theosophical dialogue. The Theosophical Movement: Past and Future, delivered an inspiring and eclectic experience. The morning was devoted to: The Theosophical Movement in the 20th Century: What Have We Achieved? Nandini Iyer, Jerry Hejka-Ekins, Alan Donant, Carmen Small, and Eleanor Shumway were the featured speakers. Just a sample of the thoughts communicated: that the teachings have influenced and even altered world thought to a significant

extent because H.P. Blavatsky set out to present the Ancient Wisdom within the context of Western thought. Education, science, the arts, literature, spiritual practices, and more, continue to be profoundly affected by Theosophy. Certainly this inspiration played a role in the establishment of progressive educational programs through the likes of Tingley, Montessori, Steiner, etc. Publishing has had an important influence as the circulation of ideas and principles, through the vehicle of theosophical texts, have captivated and appealed to many. Think for a moment of the terms *karma* and *reincarnation*; these have come to experience everyday use in the West.

Within the last hundred years, broadly significant changes paradigm shifts—have greatly altered world-thought, particularly since the founding of the Theosophical Society in 1875. A paradigm shift represents a fundamental transformation in thinking usually brought about by some kind of major occurrence (such as the Industrial Revolution). By the time HPB was on the scene, we were already thinking of the universe in terms of a mechanistic operation. Our mindset more and more was becoming entrenched in materialism.

In the early days of presenting Theosophy to the Western mind, the Ancient Wisdom was basically understood through discovery and experience; it had not yet evolved to a formalized body of teachings. The early stages of the Movement attracted the most intelligent minds of the day. Even prior to this, other significant shifts in thought had been set into motion. For

example, Darwin's *Origin of the Species* (1859) represented a movement in emphasis from religion to science. Consequently, a struggle between these two points of view was firmly established.

Presently, however, numerous gaps between science (especially physics), philosophy and even religion—to a certain extent, (though it is interesting to realize that most of the mainstream "religious" cannot abide, much less acknowledge, their own mystic traditions) have continued to narrow.

Further examples sweeping world-thought (late nineteenth and early twentieth-century) included Sir Alfred Wallace's theory of natural selection, Einstein's theory of relativity, Gandhi's profound influence on thought in India, and the appearance of Krishnamurti, the latter promoted by the Theosophical Society (Adyar) as the new world teacher. All the while, new theosophical texts were being written and published en masse. This has continued right up to the present day. Around the mid-sixties, the benefits reaped from Kern Foundation funding into the TSA (as an example—Quest Books) certainly allowed for a significant surge in theosophical marketing and publishing of books.

The afternoon sessions dealt with: Theosophy in the Twenty-First Century: Where Do We Go From Here? Speakers were John Algeo, John & Nancy Coker, Rob McOwen, and April Hejka-Ekins. Communication focused upon the recognition that we are fashioning the future at this moment, the present being the result of past experience. Psychological independence—that is, what it means to feel free mentally and emotionally—is dependent upon freedom of thought. Regarding our own theosophical organizations and their functions within the larger context of human spiritual evolution, there is a dire need for constant revitalization. Intelligence and sincere devotion alone are insufficient to deal with our present problems without instilling true compassion





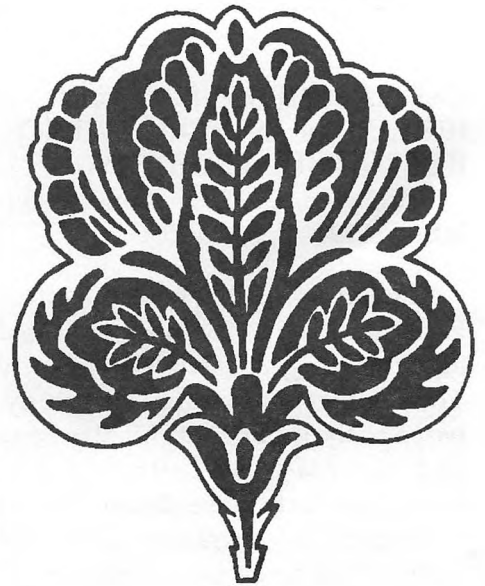
towards others AND employing critical self-examination. Current dilemmas warrant analysis and resolution now, so as not to pass them on as future problems. For the most part, we have remained attached to the forms that we have constructed around our thoughts and ideas. This creates the existence of a dangerous and limiting landscape because we have settled into the comfortable and familiar patterns of our own beliefs. This, in turn, makes truth impossible and disables us from assisting the rest of humanity. How we view and the ways in which we represent the teachings seem to linger as some kind of concern with us. Striving for one expression seems not only unrealistic, but virtually impossible at this point in our current evolutionary cycle. As long as there is more than one human being living in this world of ours, there always will be countless expressions exercised. Constructively utilizing the ancient teachings (which have been made accessible to us!) ought to help us in dissolving our biases towards others. When we truly can experience what we espouse—as we strive to disseminate theosophical ideas in the most compassionate and open-minded manner possible, only then will we truly understand what it means. Plans for the Olcott Institute at the TSA (Adyar Society) in Wheaton were discussed by a very excited John Algeo. The inauguration of the new Institute will happen this July following the Annual Convention at Olcott. My understanding is that the school will offer a credited program leading to certification in Theosophical Studies, and equivalent

to one year of college work as a major in Theosophy. While the program is not accredited for transfer to other educational institutions, it is a form of continuing education in Theosophy.

Finally, April Hejka-Ekins had the audience break up into several groups to address what steps the Theosophical Movement ought to take to be of service to the world. Afterwards, group facilitators presented brief reports highlighting each group's "solutions."

Some of the more memorable resolutions were: (1) a need to display more consideration towards the spiritual (experiential) aspect of Theosophy; frequently, the emphasis is placed upon the intellectual side; (2) a total restructuring of our educational system, including incorporation of appropriate Theosophical principles (e.g., teaching ethics); (3) making effective/productive use of media tools to disseminate information; (4) catering more to youth when teaching/studying Theosophy; (5) having written materials more readily available in languages other than English; and (6) personal involvement with helping others, not simply being charitable from a distance. These endeavors proved to be a productive exercise in urging us to think of ways in which Theosophy could be applied practically in everyday life, especially when it is obvious that mediocrity is something constantly rewarded in our society.

Following the conference, we were treated to a delicious Mexican veggie dinner, which featured some local theosophic entertainment. A very special thanks to Shirley Nicholson and Michael Meyer, both of the Krotona School, for helping to make this conference a glowing reality!



CONCENTRATION

CONCENTRATION does not mean a painful effort. When I am concentrated on anything, I am oblivious of everything else, including my personality. If I am conscious of effort, then I am not concentrated: I am thinking of myself, instead of my object. Patanjali's definition gives the same idea. Effort may be required to reach this state, but when reached there is perfect calm and oblivion of self. The Occidental character, as contrasted with the Oriental, leans towards effort rather than repose; when we rest, we rest like fury. It would seem that concentration is to be sought rather by a process of elimination than of acquisition. What we have to do is to remove distractions. The book of instructions drawn up by Patanjali at some remote epoch for the use of students of a very different kind from ourselves, is not suitable for modern Occidental requirements. We may learn much of great value from it, but the literal carrying out of the rules is not what we require. Our school should not be a 'seat neither too high nor too low,' etc., but the school of daily life, wherein we can find plenty of practice in eliminating mental and emotional distractions, thus approaching the serene state when the mind, unruffled by storms, can reflect the light from above. —H.T.E.

BOOK REVIEWS

DEITY, COSMOS, AND MAN: AN OUTLINE OF ESOTERIC SCIENCE, BY GEOFFREY A. FARTHING.

San Diego, CA: Point Loma Publications, 1993. Pp. xxv+253.

The author of this book, Geoffrey Farthing, is one of the most dedicated and knowledgeable students of early Theosophical literature. His study, based on the writings of H.P. Blavatsky and the *Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, sets forth those ideas of the first Theosophical generation which the author finds to be most central to an understanding of the full worldview they express. This book does not attempt to be a *Summa Theosophiae*, but is rather an introduction to the Theosophy of H.P. Blavatsky as read by a student some hundred years after it was written.

An unusual organization feature of the book is that it is divided into two parts, each of fourteen chapters on the same subjects.

The chapters of part I introduce their subjects; those of parts II give additional information and extensive quotations. Farthing says that the order in which subjects are treated is determined by three principles: unity, law, and evolution. These principles are clearly the essence of the Three Fundamental Propositions, on which Blavatsky said the whole of *The Secret Doctrine* rests.

The subjects of the fourteen chapters are as follows: [1] the nature of "esoteric science," i.e., Theosophy; [2] the scope of the study; [3] the seven-fold constitution of the cosmos and of humanity; [4] the hierarchical structure of life; [5] akasha and astral light; [6] elements and elementals; [7] karma as universal law; [8] death and rebirth; [9] the origin of the universe; [10] globes, rounds, and races; [11] the process of evolution; [12] spiritualism and psychism; [13] spiritual development; [14] religion. This choice of subjects does indeed reflect major concerns in

Blavatsky's writings, although choice and emphasis could have been different.

Blavatsky was concerned—almost obsessed—with drawing parallels between "esoteric science" and both the learning of the ancients and the science of the moderns.

Such extensive parallels would be difficult to accommodate in an outline of her ideas, but their lack changes the flavor of the presentation. Also Blavatsky's strong emphasis on altruism in conduct and the insistence in her writing and in the *Mahatma Letters* that the Theosophical Society above all a practical brotherhood of humanity does not come through in this volume with the power it has in the original.

No one book can do all things, cover all aspects of a subject, or address itself to all readers. That is why we have many books rather than one only. It is wise to keep in mind, however, that any presentation based on a body of literature involves decisions by the presenter about what to focus on and what to omit or treat lightly. Even an anthology of quotations requires selection, and selection is an act of interpretation, expressing the interest of the interpreter as well as the meaning of the original.

The interpretation of Blavatsky's teaching made in this book is conservative. It is clearly motivated by a desire to help students find their way through the often labyrinthine ways of Blavatsky's prose, and it succeeds very well in that aim. For a student who wants an entrée to Blavatsky's ideas, who needs help in approaching them, this is a first-rate work. It is not a substitute for reading the originals and interpreting them for oneself, nor was it intended to be that. It achieves its aim, of being an outline and an introduction to the marvelously rich, evocative, and exciting writing of H.P. Blavatsky.

—John Algeo, *The American Theosophist*, Nov-Dec, 1993



MYSTICAL VERSES OF A MAD DALAI LAMA. B. Glenn Mullin, Quest Books, 1994

Tenzin Gyatso, the present Dalai Lama considered Gedun Gyatso the greatest of the early Dalai Lamas. Our Dalai Lama's personal copy of the root text of these Buddhist verses was used by Glenn Mullin. Mullin is a highly qualified translator of Tibetan works, having researched the archives at Dharamsala for over 20 years. In translating the 2nd Dalai Lama's poems he was guided by three Lamas, two of them Tulkus.

A general background on Tibetan religion and Tulku incarnations forms Part I of the book, enshrining Tibet's verse traditions with their strong Indic-Mahayana fountain sources. Part II is a biographical account based on Gedun Gyatso's *Autobiography* and *The Wish-Fulfilling Tree*, a biography by his disciples. It presents 15th/16th century Tibet as a Renaissance world with widespread and multiform varieties of Buddhism. Part III consists of Dharma inspired verses of great beauty, wisdom and joy, with insightful preambles by the translator.

The Indian influence upon Tibetan verse is seen in the *Sutrayana* (teaching vehicle) type, such as the *Kangyur* sayings of the Buddha in the *Udamvarga* anthology and in the *Vajrayana*, of which the *Vajra Gita* (Diamond Songs) are examples. Nagarjuna's *Surrellika* and *Ratnavali* and other of the great Indian Master's verses became part of the *Tangyur* (commentaries). Other influences are a style of mystical song (the *Doha*) and the *Dandi*, a treatise on poetic composition.

The 2nd Dalai Lama was highly devoted to the *Lam Rim* (stages of the path) and *Lojong* (mind training) verse

traditions, which are rich in meditative and moral precepts, thus demanding great discipline. These works form the heart of the 11th C. rebirth of Dharma practice inspired by Jowo Atisha. The eclectic nature of Gedun Gyatso's teaching work, including his reverence for his own Gelugpa tradition, sometimes met resistance from the older Buddhist schools.

Why was Gedun Gyatso called the "Mad" Dalai Lama? Due to his worldly detachment he occasionally signed himself a "Mad Beggar" in the sense of being freed from worldly and sectarian concerns.

Even though named the 1st Dalai Lama's successor, he was still treated as a child yet, as a five-year old burst into a Dharma song when scolded by his parents. As a young man he was forced out of the monastery at Tashi Lumpho, becoming a cave-dweller and mendicant teacher himself. Nevertheless he became highly revered throughout Tibet and was asked to return to Tashi Lumpho years later, to complete his training after establishing numerous monasteries elsewhere. Thus these verses are based on his inner experience, not textual speculations, and foster profound realization of Shunyata, or emptiness, as the ultimate reality. In fact his spiritual poems are called "Songs of Experience." To his admirers he was "Mad with Joy"; but what will the term convey to Western readers? Certainly not the image presented by Panchen Choklha Odzer:

...He taught to hundreds of listeners, his body radiant like a full moon in the midst of a sky of stars. Although still very young, he was fearless in the presence of the many sages who had gathered to listen to him, like a lion in the midst of humbler animals. His presence exuded utter strength and poise, like Mount Meru at the center of the universe. His smile was soft and radiant, immediately disarming those who sat before him and clearing away any doubts they may have had.

And the voice! What music! It was strong, rich, and vibrant, an absolute delight to listen to and clearly audible

to all in the room, both near and far. He used it like a celestial instrument as he spoke...

Mullin keeps to the spirit of the message rather than literal translations, following a "rhythm of ideas" through free-form renditions. Poem topics include the 2,000 year-old castle in Yarlung Valley (considered the gift of the Gods), a holy-mountain pilgrimage, Lama Tsongkhapa's vision, "Song to the Three Jewels of Refuge," "Spiritual Advice to a Hermit", "In Search of the Middle View," and "Songs of a Turquoise Dragon."

The poet-lama addresses his disciple Sung-rab Gyatso thusly:

In a previous life you generated much good karma
And thus now have achieved a rare human rebirth
Endowed with every spiritual grace
You have entered the door of the Great Way...

It is taught that there is no stronger method
For purifying the mind and giving rise to wisdom
Than relying upon a guru seen as a Buddha:
Mentally holding him in the sphere of pure mind,
Physically attending to him and heeding his advice...

But there is a danger to this path;
For to accept support from a guru and thus live
From the things offered to him by the faithful
While lacking inner purity yourself
And being divisive with other trainees
Is like jumping over a terrible cliff
That falls to rebirth in worlds of sorrow...

The material things found in this world
Are hard to amass but easily lost;
And in the end, anyway, all is left behind.
Is it not wiser then to use what we get
In ways conducive to the benefit of the world?



Thus we see the literary quality is made more powerful by the insight and emphasis of the Buddhist teachings. On page 186 the translator warns: "The esoteric tantric path is a dangerous route to quick enlightenment, and thus a qualified guru is even more important than in the exoteric tradition." True bliss is born together with great wisdom and hence a "twilight language" evolved to protect the secret knowledge from abuse. This "twilight language" of the Vajrayana should warn Westerners about the superficial pursuit of Tantra we see today.

Having empowered the Lake of Visions the 2nd Dalai Lama could control negative forces there, revealing jealousies of sectarian persons opposed to his success and predicting the future "in these difficult times." Invading armies were forced to retreat, although their names were never mentioned in order **not** to immortalize the miscreants but instead condemn them to obscurity.

Learning from him that his life's work was near completion, Gedun Gyatso's many disciples gathered in his presence, even as the earth trembled around them, to request him to remain in incarnation.

At times Mullin will provide an English translation to a Tibetan equivalent of the Sanskrit term shown: such as "Diamond Warrior," as if it translates the Sanskrit directly. "Diamond Warrior" is really a translation from the Tibetan "Dorjesempa" rather than Vajrasattva (Sk.). In this review I have based my spellings, as well as the pagination in endnotes upon uncorrected paged proofs.

Glenn Mullin's lucid portrayal of Gedun Gyatso is augmented by lengthy endnotes and a glossary of Tibetan spellings. A map of the 2nd Dalai Lama's travels would have been helpful. However, these are minor points. His work is highly creditable and the translation quite beautiful.

—Dara Eklund



ITEMS OF INTEREST

DRAFT 4/22/94 for a public announcement
Comments welcome: send to J. Algeo, President, The Theosophical Society of America

THE OLCOTT INSTITUTE

THE OLCOTT INSTITUTE HAS THESE PURPOSES:

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- * to provide an opportunity for innovative research in Theosophical topics;

- * to investigate the connections between Theosophy and the best of current thought in all aspects of human culture; both the sciences and the humanities, including philosophy, religion, and art;

- * to increase popular awareness of those connections by presenting them and Theosophy itself in the language of our time;

- * to explore the application of Theosophical principles to right action in the lives of individuals;

- * to foster holistic and harmonious living through meditation and other spiritual practices as gateways to the Path of service; and

- * to inspire a dedication to the ideals of Theosophy, in both theory and practice.

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- *Theosophical classics or great books,
- *history of Theosophy,
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- *Theosophical living, including meditation and service
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- *individual directed research in a topic of interest to the student, which may include a research paper.

INSTRUCTION. The Institute's instruction is delivered through various channels:

THE INTER-THEOSOPHICAL DIALOGUE

For the second time in the history of the theosophical movement, members of various groups who grew from the original Theosophical Society gathered to dialogue with each other. "The Inter-Theosophical Dialogue: The Theosophical Movement Past and Future" was a day-long conference, sponsored by The Krotona School of Theosophy in Ojai, California, on March 26, 1994. The last time such a conference was held was in 1984.

The subject for the morning session was, "The Theosophical Movement in the 20th Century: What have we achieved?" Nandini Iyer, United Lodge of Theosophists, pointed out that theosophy's effect on people's minds is reflected in 20th century thought: wherever thought tends to be free, there the theosophical movement can be found. Carmen Small, Point Loma Publications, gave information on how a number of theosophical-oriented schools have influenced education. Jerry Hejka-Ekins, Theosophical Soci-



ety, Adyar, spoke of how theosophy has influenced and been influenced by paradigm shifts. Eleanor Shumway, Temple of the People, Halcyon, described the formation and structure of Halcyon's community. And Alan Donant, Theosophical Society, Pasadena, spoke of theosophists as cosmopolitan citizens of a greater group.

The afternoon session addressed the question: "Theosophy in the 21st Century: Where Do We Go From Here?" Rob McOwen, United Lodge of Theosophists, discussed the need to understand and disseminate the concepts of unity and diversity; Nancy and John Coker, Theosophical Society, Pasadena, talked of the danger of looking too much to the past, the need to keep the message fresh and current, and to reach youth by speaking in their language; and John Algeo, Theosophical Society, Adyar, reminded us of the original vision of Theosophy as the cornerstone of the future religions of humanity and proposed a new institute for theosophical education to help fulfill that vision.

The rest of the afternoon was devoted to dialogues among all attending theosophists who were divided into 14 groups of approximately 10-12 members each, mixing members of various organizations. Each group was asked to discuss two questions: 1) What does the theosophical movement need to do in the 21st century to be of service to the world; and 2) what steps could each of us take to contribute? After an hour and a half of dialogue, each group gave a summary report. Over a hundred separate items were presented from which several common themes emerged:

1. Clarify the teachings: Have a clear and sound knowledge of the wisdom presented in theosophy.

2. Practice theosophy as a way of self-transformation: Apply the theosophical teachings in our daily lives so that we can transform ourselves and set an example for others.

3. Balance mind and heart: Cultivate the heart aspect of the teachings in order to reach a middle point between intellect and feelings.

4. Participate in theosophical activities with creative energy: Utilize our own unique talents and put our energies to work through study groups, social service, and other activities.

5. Make theosophy inclusive of other spiritual traditions: Accept the wisdom shared by other movements as part of our own by embracing other literature, spiritual practices, and teachings. Be discriminately open.

6. Adapt theosophy to the contemporary world and language: Explore new methodologies. Restate and present the theosophical teachings in a modern, fresh, and current terminology.

7. Enhance Education: Develop new programs and methods to disseminate theosophy by exploring new cultural, artistic, and entertainment activities.

8. Involve Youth: Revitalize the theosophical movement with the energy of young people by working together with them to bring forth activities that will stimulate their participation.

9. Network: Increase interaction and association with sympathetic individuals and groups to promote cooperation among different organizations.

10. Reach Out: Encourage a broader outreach of theosophical activities on both community and worldly levels by stressing community involvement and taking advantage of new media technologies.

After the main events of the day, many participants gathered for dinner in the Krotona School where they had an opportunity to socialize in a more informal setting. Following this, conference organizers and group leaders gathered for a post-conference debriefing to process the day's events. They synthesized the discussions down to a list of four priority questions for the theosophical movement:

1. What are the essential teachings of theosophy that all theosophists can agree on?

2. How should theosophy evolve with the new paradigm shift and adapt it's old language and ideas to the twenty first century?

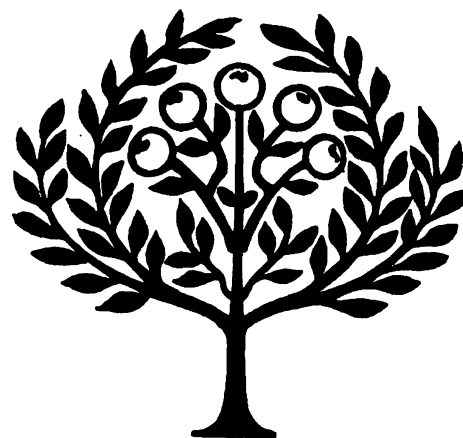
3. How should theosophy present itself to the world now?

4. Where's the party? In other words, does theosophy need to be so serious all the time? How do we attract new younger members?

Everyone was very energized and wished to see the enthusiasm and dialogue somehow carried on. It was decided that a longer weekend retreat was needed to continue and expand discussion; one was organized for the weekend of May 14th and 15th.

Audio recordings of the day's events are available by contacting Krotona School at (805) 646-1139.

—Reported by Tamara Gerard, John Shafer & Christina Zubelli



AND OF MAGAZINES...

ATMA VIDYA

This is the official publications (quarterly) of the Mexican Section of the Theosophical Society. It "presents a generous variety of themes relating to the Oriental Philosophy, Science, Art of Occultism, seen in the light of the Ancient Theosophy as brought by Madame H.P. Blavatsky, whose teachings are the basis of the Theosophical Movements today".

The Spring 1994 issue (No.3 of Vol.I) has an unusual picture of HPB in color on its cover, and opens with the translation from *The Secret Doctrine* of her "Symbolism and Ideographs", "The Chronology of the Brahmins", "The Evolution of the Third Eye", "The Gupta Vidya of the East and the Chaldean Kabala", and others, including an "Explanation of the Theosophical terms Used by H.P. Blavatsky".

A very valuable periodical. Director: Carlos Lopez Cerdan Ripoll; Editors, José Ramón Sordo and Maritza Forgach. For information write to: Ignacio Mariscal, 126 Mexico, D.F. C.P.06470, or: Apartado Postal 1026, Cuernavaca 62000. Morelos, Mexico.

ADDENDUM TO THE INTER- THEOSOPHICAL DIALOGUE

QUESTIONING AUTHORITY IN THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A POST-MODERN THEOSOPHICAL RETREAT

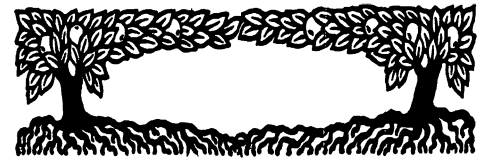
As a follow-up to the Inter-Theosophical Dialogue at Krotona, twenty-four individuals from different theosophical organizations met for a three day wilderness retreat May 13-15 at a ranch in Colterville, California, near Yosemite National Park. With an agenda focusing on the role of theosophy in contemporary times, the retreat allowed for several hours of structured and open dialogue.

The "post-modern" perspective was introduced by Jerry Hejka-Ekins who described it as a philosophical basis for social reform which advocates an organizational structure where individuals cooperate with each other on an equal basis, emphasizing autonomy and self-responsibility; it is opposed to a central, hierarchical organization structure which is representative of

the old paradigm. Discussions focused on questions of authority and problems with current hierarchy organization structures in theosophical organizations which may be preventing the organizations from adequately adapting to the new paradigm shift. This led to a second discussion concerning the role and authority of other worldly sources such as disincarnate entities, and the question of mystical experience as a basis for authority. It was generally agreed that more emphasis should be placed on encouraging individuals to undertake spiritual practices that could lead to direct experiential, mystical knowledge, as opposed to the current emphasis on the intellectual, though balance was advised. Questions of caution and guidance were raised and whether theosophical organizations should necessarily be the vehicles for such practices. Some mentioned the problem of esoteric elitism becoming a basis of authority in some theosophical organizations.

Discussions were complemented by delicious food, nature walks, a pagan ritual and drumming and singing around the camp fire. Another retreat is planned for September.

—John Shafer



MAKING OF MYSTICS

The firm Foundation of all flabby "fundamentals" remains the ultimate Reality of God of gods, known to philosophy as the Absolute.

Maya, Cosmic illusion, is the seeming separation of changing forms in vibrating radiation from the infinite Center. We Humans are in the thick of constant conflict and contrast. It is the "old, old story, a fight for love and glory". Another appropriate refrain is "Peace, peace when there is no peace." Against the trend is "the eye of the storm where all is quiet".

In Spirituality—if not in Religion—let us survey the passing parade with a quiet eye amidst the turbulence. "Quietism" is also listed as a heresy. Metaphysically correct Quietists, Mystics all, can be inwardly calm and outwardly involved for the greater Good.

They can so perform in simplicity and occasional solitude. A goodly number of our brothers and sisters have a long list of requirements arising from the shallows and depths of personality.

"Deep souls" ask for only peaceful, private lives allowing enough "space" for study and contemplation. From that base the Mystic is prepared to venture forth and face the world. He or she can come out fighting, if necessary.

Such is the call of the Bhagavad Gita, "the Lord's Song." That tune can be carried in a mind filled with creative imagination free to see that, in metaphysics, directions and locations—of "God and Heaven"—are not so much physical as symbolic of the very soul of Spirit.

Matter, nevertheless, is not to be despised as it makes up a temporary part of the Divine Universe. So equipped, we have excellent material for the Making of Mystics in the Universal Theosophical Movement.

THE BATTLEFIELD OF MIND

At present, man is the human battlefield of his own dual mind which is fighting for selfish, personal ambitions and desires on the one hand, and for spiritual thought and impersonal feeling on the other.... Our dual impulses both use the brain-mind to 'make out a case' for right and wrong in the inner struggles between conscience and desire. When we decide aright, our lower nature loses the strength that is gained by our better side. In recognising this power of creating a noble character, step by step, we find opportunities of winning point by point in meeting the routine affairs of daily life. These seemingly small victories unite

their force and make us equal to the larger issues which try our souls severely. Even the failure to win at times may count as success, for the man who keeps on trying builds up his moral strength, and diffuses something helpful into the very air around him.

Every day is a new beginning for all, no matter what the past has been. To unfold, to advance, to 'become' is the natural and vital impulse of every thing and every being. The most dreary and difficult life outwardly, may be a cycle of opportunity for the inner man to show his heroic courage and impersonal power.

—Lydia Ross: *The Doctrine of Cycles*, pp. 149-50

The Sermon on the Mount and other selections from The New Testament

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Translation and Commentary by James M. Pryse

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James Pryse's translation and commentary on some of the more essential parts of the *New Testament* is based on the inner significance of the meaning of the original Greek language. He clearly shows that many of the phrases and words were taken from the earlier Greek mysteries and that their meanings were meant to be used in the original spiritualized sense and context of those earlier pagan Mysteries. Pryse has cleansed these selections of what he called: "the wooden meanings invented for them by ignorant monks and ecclesiastics." in order to have "the technical meanings restored to the mystical terminology, pagan in origin, which is consistently employed in them..."

Pryse (1859-1942) was instrumental in the later nineteenth century Theosophical Movement, bridging East and West and inculcating a more inner and esoteric approach to understanding the religions and mystical traditions of the world. A student and co-worker of both Helena Blavatsky and William Judge he carried on extensive correspondence with both of them. A scholar of classical languages and Sanskrit, he, as well, in his professional life established both the Theosophical printing establishments in New York and London. Pryse maintained a close friendship, throughout his life, with George William Russell (AE) the Irish poet and mystic, in whose magazine, *The Irish Theosophist*, this translation was first published.

This work is to be recommended to all students of the *New Testament* teachings of Jesus. Guided by Pryse's commentary a deeper and more spiritually profound understanding is revealed that transcends the dichotomy of east and west. Through this process is revealed the essence of the spiritual insight of the genuine teachings of Jesus.

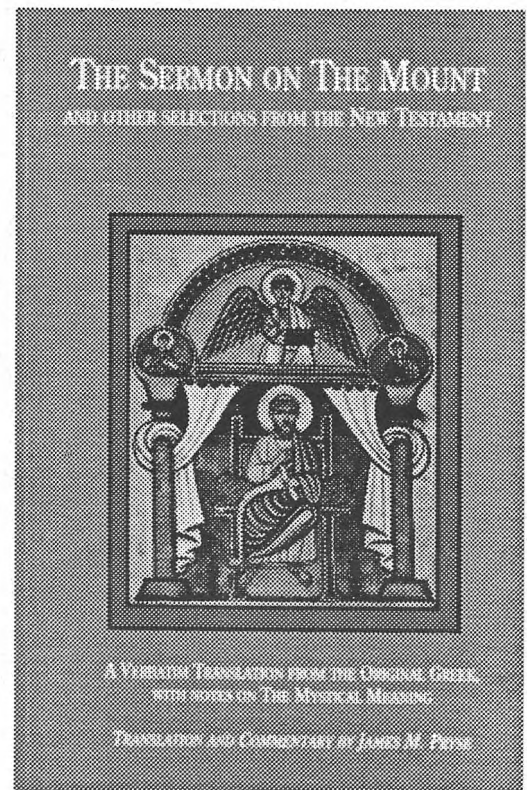
Our Father who art in the Skies,
Thy Name be intoned,
Thy Realm return, thy Will come into being

As in the Sky, so on the Earth.
That Bread of the coming day give us today;
And free us from our obligations, as
WE also have freed those under obligation to us;
And bring us not to the test, but
Deliver us from uselessness.

For thine is the Realm, the Force
And the Radiance,
Throughout the On-goings.
Amen!

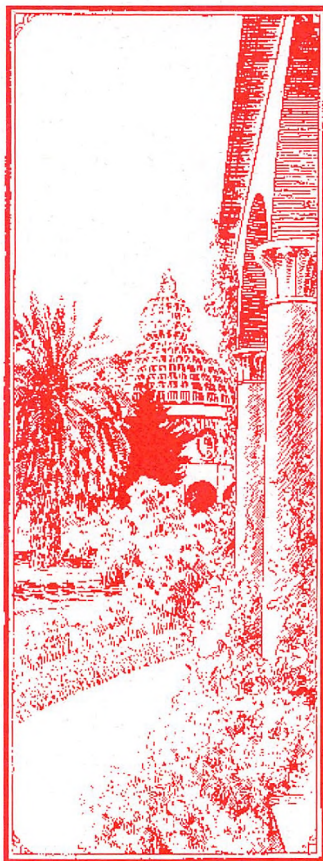
—*Sermon on the Mount*, page 22

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“Is there actually a wolf in our neighbor? We see that which we are, and our eyes project on every side an image of ourselves; if we look with fear, that which we behold is frightful; if we look with love then the colors of heaven are repeated to us from the ditch and from the dungeon. We invent eternally upon one another; we scatter our sins broadcast and call them our neighbors; let us scatter our virtues abroad and build us a city to live in!”

James Stephens. Demi-Gods



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