



# THE THEOSOPHIST

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# THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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**The Theosophical Society** is composed of students, belonging to any religion in the world or to none, who are united by their approval of the Society's Objects, by their wish to remove religious antagonisms and to draw together men of goodwill, whatsoever their religious opinions, and by their desire to study religious truths and to share the results of their studies with others. Their bond of union is not the profession of a common belief, but a common search and aspiration for Truth. They hold that Truth should be sought by study, by reflection, by purity of life, by devotion to high ideals, and they regard Truth as a prize to be striven for, not as a dogma to be imposed by authority. They consider that belief should be the result of individual study or intuition, and not its antecedent, and should rest on knowledge, not on assertion. They extend tolerance to all, even to the intolerant, not as a privilege they bestow but as a duty they perform, and they seek to remove ignorance, not punish it. They see every religion as an expression of the Divine Wisdom and prefer its study to its condemnation, and its practice to proselytism. Peace is their watchword, as Truth is their aim.

**Theosophy** is the body of truths which forms the basis of all religions, and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any. It offers a philosophy which renders life intelligible, and which demonstrates the justice and the love which guide its evolution. It puts death in its rightful place, as a recurring incident in an endless life, opening the gateway to a fuller and more radiant existence. It restores to the world the Science of the Spirit, teaching man to know the Spirit as himself and the mind and body as his servants. It illuminates the scriptures and doctrines of religions by unveiling their hidden meanings, and thus justifying them at the bar of intelligence, as they are ever justified in the eyes of intuition.

Members of the Theosophical Society study these truths, and theosophists endeavour to live them. Everyone willing to study, to be tolerant, to aim high, and to work perseveringly, is welcomed as a member, and it rests with the member to become a true theosophist.

# On the Watch-Tower

RADHA BURNIER

## **Many Paths — One Truth**

Life in fact, is not divisible, although we act as if it is. As long as we decide that life is divided and that each one of us can decide for himself where and how it is divided, we will be at loggerheads with each other. Therefore, it is important for all of us to learn more about life until its real nature becomes clear. But unfortunately each human being behaves as if there is one idea about life: how to make oneself more important without considering what life is meant for.

Life is immensely rich and creative. It is also profound, subtle, dynamic; and therefore it is not easy to learn what it is, and how far everything and everyone is involved intrinsically. Truth is awareness of life, and it is as difficult to obtain knowledge of truth as of life. At every stage we are likely to believe that life is here and now as we know it. This becomes an expression and path of delusion which becomes each person's way of living. In fact, until we know Truth which is awareness of life as a whole, we are committed to the path of delusion.

Water flowing through any tap or source, whether it exists in a pot, pool, lake or ocean is just water. It may be dirty or clean, small in quantity, or large like the

ocean, not seen at all times but only at some time. When it is in the cloud or about to turn into rain it is still water. It is not your thought or mine, but a part of the whole process which is at work physically. This is of course not too difficult to understand.

Life also exists in innumerable forms — in insects or human, deva or Buddha, whatever the form. Life is without division but appears as if it is divided and divisible. In any, or perhaps in infinite aspects, it pervades dimensions of which the average human has no knowledge.

Truth also has infinite aspects and is found in depths we have never entered. So we may say that it is folly to declare 'I know truth'. As has been said by enlightened persons, he who knows that he does not know is a wise person. 'Truth' and 'life' are words which are difficult to use in their true sense. They manifest what is intrinsic, not anything else. Their duty, meaning and goodness is beyond all measure and is not known by man as he is not manifesting what we think the word means. All of life is in some way pointing in that direction, but it is still very far from the knowledge and understanding of man. When men use the word 'life' or the word 'truth', they only think that these words

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have a meaning which is known and knowable.

To be Buddha means to know — and everything is knowable to a Buddha. His mind is infallible because he has become the infinite mind. All boundaries are broken and his mind knows the boundless. In fact, the mind of Buddha is infinite mind. This is a subject which is difficult to understand and be aware of, but we shall all know life or truth some day. That is what we are travelling towards.

Those who are advanced are aware of where we are going and therefore of richness without limit, profound, subtle, dynamic; that is life and truth.

### The Art of Living

There are aspects of true art which are worth noting, because of our misunderstanding of the word 'art'. Those who are aware know that all art makes us aware of harmony. If harmony does not ensue from the creation of anything, it cannot be reconciled with art. Art is what makes one aware of beautiful proportion, a fine symmetry (even of asymmetry) of sounds, colours and forms. Without these no art is evident, and therefore the art of living must have the Order that comes from the beautiful harmony of sounds, colours and forms.

Therefore, it seems that a higher level of significance is realized when something is like a flower, growing from a little seed into a greater and greater source of experience. As one does when watching a flower coming into existence, 'Seeing the world in a grain of sand' is an

experience which is transforming. There are many such expressions in great literature; for example, when Wordsworth wrote of 'splendour in the grass and glory in the flower'. This indicates that harmony is the nature of the universe.

The discovery of harmony is the aim of yoga and all great works; these also reveal something — fragmented though it be — of this fundamental truth. One of the Mahatmas wrote: 'We recognize but one Law in the universe, the Law of Harmony, of perfect equilibrium.' This is the existence of the subtler *sattvaguna* or quality, which implies the discovery of what yoga really means.

Paul Davies writes in *Superforce*: 'There is a unity to the universe and one which goes far deeper than a mere expression of uniformity. It is a unity which says that without everything you can have nothing.' This is a remarkable statement which offers a glimpse of the Nature which J. Krishnamurti also touched upon. He wrote: 'Beauty is not in the museum, in the painting, in statues, or listening to a concert: beauty is not in a poem or in the lovely sky of an evening; or in the light on the water, or in the face of a beautiful person, or in a building. There is beauty only when the mind and the heart are completely in harmony and that beauty cannot be got by a shallow mind that is caught in the disorder of the world.'

Works of real art can convey only in a small measure this internal principle in Nature. Real artists create what they see, hear and so forth, but soon they return to

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chaos and become part of the disharmony of the world. Their vision of harmony is fragmentary, because their material for expression is transitory. Even their technique lacks the essential quality of conversion of life into form, and is therefore defective.

Therefore, the art of living is harmony unfolding into deeper levels of significance. *Light on the Path* says: 'Before the eyes can see, the harmony within must be attained.' It is in the way we understand. In one of the *Letters to the Schools*, Krishnaji says: 'All existence is relationship. Without it you cannot live.' Real relationship exists only when there is harmony, for when it is perfect, it produces an ambience which is irreplaceable. When it does not, relationship is broken, scattered, imperfect.

We must examine the whole question of life, the relationship between harmony and the fulfilment of life, before we arrive somewhere near the understanding of life. When we look at the question only from the outer point of view we do not really understand. Even a great artist like Beethoven caught the truth only at times.

### **Peace that Passeth Understanding**

All the defence and offence, whatever one thinks, that which is good or offensive, engender brutality, carelessness and other problems of the kind. The word 'global' has, unfortunately, changed its meaning and refers to superficial facts related to trade, fast communication, imitation, and so on. It does not necessarily refer to something that is related to what happens

to all of life. So, global culture includes fashion, enjoyment, exploitation and similar things, but not necessarily a feeling of everybody having a share in that universal experience.

We know, of course, that we cannot have peace when in human consciousness there is the restlessness of not knowing where one is going, and basically a fear that it may end in nothing. Greed can exist for almost anything — for material goods, psychological satisfaction, moral superiority or spiritual power. It may remain unnoticed and intact, growing hidden behind the false idea that one is pure and not a subject for this sort of difficulty.

Universality and universal responsibility may also remain superficial ideas in many cases. If there is no self-examination, no desire to discover what is really self-understanding, and the deep and full meaning of Peace, the problem will go on beneath the surface. The peace that passeth understanding has unimaginable depth, but it is possible to be quite unaware of this fact and therefore there is fighting and bickering with anything which comes in the way of one's desire. Most people want to extend their area of safety and, therefore, are the recipients of insecure imagination. It is this which is basically behind the nationalistic and other feelings, which seem to be very laudable.

Modern man is defending not only his physical person and appropriating a name for himself, but he also tries to make for himself as big as possible whatever he can command. His insecurity extends to his self-identity and even the identity of his

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nation and of the people to whom he thinks he belongs. In fact, the feeling of insecurity is more intense now and has extended far more than before because his mental world has grown, and may include all or some things with which he is not connected.

How can there be peace in these circumstances, an environment which each human being can create, and within the subliminal consciousness? War and violence must necessarily increase in multiple directions. The present day human being can never know who has guns, and how much lies in the power of the person he meets. How can one know exactly how powerful are a people, the nation, the mentality of others!

The stronger the feeling of insecurity, the more aggressive and selfish a person can be — inwardly even, when he seems peaceful at the outer level. Talk of peace

somewhere does not necessarily indicate faith in it. Obviously, the idea that there is an absence of war, or readiness to comply with the need to end conflicts, really indicates compliance with the ideal of peace. There is truth in the idea that Satya Yuga or the era of peace is most likely to end in Kali Yuga. Therefore, it is worthwhile for us to find out how we can maintain peace in times which are difficult, when conflict can break out anywhere.

In this situation, we may think of Lord Gautama, the Buddha, meeting the terrible criminal Angulimala in the forest. The criminal thought he would assault the Buddha and was prepared for it. The Buddha seemed to be aware of it but was untouched by fear and ready to deal with the situation. He was so calm and talked so naturally with the criminal that the criminal was completely changed. This can happen with any other who acts deeply.

**Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste,  
and no city or house divided against itself will stand.**

Matthew, 12:25

# Universal Brotherhood: Inner and Outer Aspects

S. SUNDARAM

Brotherhood is seen, not as an ideal to be achieved, but as a reality in nature, an expression of the unity which pervades all life at every level. We can veil this unity with separateness and egoism, but this does not erase its roots deep in nature and in ourselves.<sup>1</sup>

The talks organized during the Theosophical conferences, the themes of the School of the Wisdom and the books selected for study by the various Sections and Federations from time to time, help us to have a deep and right perception of the subject. The very theme of this Conference suggests the existing condition of the country as well as the world. We are concerned about it. As Krishnaji once said, when one is concerned about something one does something to set it right or to bring it in order. So, if we are really concerned about the present condition of the country or society in general, then we must try to understand it and then collectively do something to proceed in the right direction. On such a journey the distance covered is not very important. The important thing is the direction in which we are moving, the

direction in which we are utilizing our inherent mental and physical capabilities.

It is only the disturbance within, which can bring about understanding of the oneness of life without and within, the unity and harmony which vibrate and resonate in the whole universe including the individual. However, we should be very clear about the difference between uniformity and unity.

The word 'uniformity' is derived from 'uniform' which means not varying, 'the same in all cases at all times', 'sameness'; whereas unity means 'in agreement', 'oneness', 'being formed of parts that constitute a whole'. In nature, we find varieties of trees and flowers. Had all the plants, trees or flowers been of the same type they would not have given us great joy, which they give in their diversity and multitude of shades and colours. The

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**Mr S. Sundaram** is General Secretary of the Indian Section of the TS. Talk delivered at the South India Conference, Adyar, April 2012.

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variety adds to the beauty of the universe. Besides, a huge tamarind tree or a big mango tree does not challenge the identity or autonomy of a small plant of the rose or jasmine. They all live their independent lives and yet live in harmony without disturbing each other's existence, and also enhance the beauty of the landscape. They are independent and yet interdependent. The beauty lies in their independent identity as well as their interdependency. Similarly, it is not a single note that creates music. The combination of notes and their togetherness create melody and music, just as the varieties of plants and trees create a symphony in nature. Diversity is a necessary prerequisite for unity.

Can we learn this art of leading an independent life and at the same time respect each other's role, function and *dharma*? The very realization of this approach and attitude towards the life of every living being will bring about a transformation in human relationship.

Col. H. S. Olcott and Dr Annie Besant were deeply religious and pure in heart, with enormous love for all people and all living beings. The study of their lives provides opportunities for reflection and the rededication of one's life towards the real purpose of living. Their lives teach us not only to have self-respect but also to have mutual respect.

The realization of the unity of life and to understand the interdependency of all that lives, is very essential. Narrow personal considerations cannot bring about unity and cannot strengthen brotherhood. For this, one should have a broad outlook.

Generally, any kind of close association with someone who comes from a different background is often frowned upon, if not actively discouraged. Consequently, many of us go through life without forming a single meaningful relationship with someone who speaks a different native language or belongs to another religion, caste or social class; we view the other, more often than not through glasses coloured with prejudice — mostly negative.

The word 'brotherhood' has been used in different senses by different people, the easily understood and most important of these being 'harmonious relations'. But, it is much more — values of cooperation, the common good, sharing, and to function as responsible members of society — all these come within the fold of brotherhood. In order to reach that stage, we must concentrate on the supreme values with which we agree and not on the matters which create tension and bring about disharmony. The causes of disorder, disharmony, tension, conflicts, and so forth, have to be studied and understood in order to remove them. The effort has to be to spread the ideas that can positively strengthen the bonds of brotherhood, which can help in bringing people closer for the betterment and upliftment of society. Such an outlook and approach will not only deepen the intensity of our involvement in constructive activities but will also help in enhancing our level of performance in the responsibilities which we take up.<sup>2</sup> Thus we can say that Brotherhood means proper utilization of emotional strength and unifying energy.

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Brotherhood must mean dynamism and progress towards greater human unity in which knowledge and action are closely related. What counts is conduct, not belief.

‘Service’ and ‘Sacrifice’ are also equally important components which strengthen the feeling of brotherhood. Service means the ability to act with the strength of one’s whole being in order to fulfil one’s responsibility with dispassionate attachment. Service is not mere action or relief work. It is not an ameliorative programme or routine work. One does service because it is one’s spontaneous expression of love, care and concern. It includes within its fold, feeling, goodwill and a great sense of responsibility. Then only can one have compassion that will inspire one ‘to feel for others’ and to do something to relieve them from their misery. The civic, moral and spiritual character of society can be strengthened only through service, cooperation and love.<sup>3</sup>

Sacrifice means the proper utilization of thought-power, capability, and wealth in the right direction — to utilize all the three for the welfare of society, for the moral and spiritual upliftment of society.

Out of the three books recommended for study (in preparation for this Conference), two were titled *Human Regeneration*. The dictionary meanings of the word ‘regenerate’ are to make a radical change for the better, to reform completely, to generate anew. Similarly, ‘regeneration’ has been explained as spiritual renewal; ‘a radical spiritual transformation in which the centre of one’s life is shifted under the action of a divine

agency (as the Holy Spirit), from a self-centred ultimate concern to a God-centred ultimate concern’.<sup>4</sup> So, we can say that the emphasis is on thoughts, values and actions which go beyond one’s self for the betterment of society. It is self-surrender with mind, action and speech. One cannot practise brotherhood effectively in isolation from social ethics and responsibilities. It has to be lived in our daily life.

We are here to consider the transformation and revolution of the individual at the individual level; the transformation in one’s psyche, in one’s whole being — which actually is the source, the fountainhead of the outer revolution. It is only the change within that can bring change in the outer world; change within can bring about change in the very outlook towards life. It is only the agitation within, the questions and doubts surging within, that will help us in perceiving the beauty of the Inner Life, the life that is not opposite to the worldly life but which is a fuller life, a richer life. In other words, the very questions, the keenness to know, will lead us to the understanding of the Oneness of life, the Unity and Harmony in life without and within.

Man has the ability to distinguish and decide what is right and what is wrong; what is just and what is unjust; what is proper and what is improper. He has the freedom to decide the necessities of life. This freedom is the basis of man’s progress in the field of morality, sense of duty, and so forth. Though it is subjective and individualistic in nature it is also a social characteristic — because the determining

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of what is right, just and proper and the ascertaining of what is wrong, unjust and improper, can be judged in the context of social life only. This freedom is a special and distinctive quality based on social relationship and it is reflected in the context of man's social interaction.

The cry for affluence has made economic development the key concern of modern man. Growing consumerism has made man's lifestyle more dependent on materialistic things, resulting in greater problems and complications. People's needs are being determined by advertisements through mass media. Unless we overcome our tendencies to acquire more and more for our narrow personal gain and aggrandizement, unless one gets rid of the thoughts and actions which strengthen one's ego, the consequences are bound to be what we are witnessing. Indian culture and tradition have taught us that *education is that which liberates*, which intensifies one's awareness and awakens one's conscience. Besides, education that does not help in the flowering of one's whole being is self-defeating. In the present situation, it is essential to discover the possibility of change in which the individual and society may be interdependent in the profound and genuine sense of the term. The factors and causes which promote inequality, fundamentalism, desire, and the competition to possess more and more wealth, have created a great crisis. It is necessary to free the individual and also society from this crisis, and to work out a model of a social system in which freedom in the right sense

prevails — an order in which morality, good conduct, coexistence, cooperation, love and compassion, may be effective and powerful forces to reckon with. For this, it is pertinent for each individual to become genuinely strong within, because only then will his noble and good qualities be able to create a positive impact on people.

The key to development is transformation, complete change. Development is a process of revealing the creative potentials of people. Certain experiences and incidents bring about a great change in an individual's life. We all know the story of how Gandhi was thrown out of a railway compartment in South Africa. Before this incident, and even after, several dark-skinned passengers must have been prevented from entering railway compartments or other places, because of racial discrimination, but there has been only one Gandhi in history. History is replete with such instances, which show that a questioning mind, an observing mind, and the spirit of enquiry, are necessary to understand one's own real self, the mysteries of this marvellous earth, the cosmic truth, and above all, the *oneness* of the whole phenomena — of realizing that the one consciousness that is the supreme energy is pervading every particle in every being of this cosmos. This change is not without pain and discomfort. The more the intensity of change, the greater will be the pain. However, the being that emerges after undergoing the intense pain and suffering is an illumined one, who has clarity of perception and the

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radiance of wisdom. Lord Buddha's life reveals that after seeing an old man, a diseased person, a crying woman, and so forth, he underwent pain and sorrow and had to struggle hard to discover the Truth.

We, the common people, are afraid of change. To put it in J. Krishnamurti's words, 'the fear of the unknown' haunts us. We are not certain whether the change will lead us to a better condition or bring about more trouble, suffering and sorrow. We are unable to see beyond a distance. In this regard Sanjeeva Rao very rightly observes:

Sorrow, when you do not try to run away from it, contains a healing Power that transforms it into wisdom. We do not seem to understand this secret liberating Power implicit in human suffering and we are perpetually trying to evade, escape from, our troubles instead of trying to understand the meaning of suffering.<sup>5</sup>

In Dr Annie Besant's case, we find that personal suffering at the crucial stages of her life made her understand human suffering at large. The suffering of her child, her suffering for the child, resulted in the awakening of suffering for humanity. The burning questions and doubts about the very existence of God, with the depth of Wisdom, turned into an immense, unfathomable faith in Divine Power and in mankind. Thus the pain, the suffering, sorrow, conflicts, doubts and questions eventually resulted in her personality becoming the fountainhead of limitless love, compassion and deep concern for the entire world.<sup>6</sup>

The aforesaid examples clearly indicate that the unenlightened life I am living is without real meaning and truth. I must try to concentrate on thoughts and actions which may help me to move from personal considerations 'to a moral and spiritual self'. In order to elicit, inspire and channelize the good qualities hidden in myself, I have got to touch something which is more profound than the intellect. We have to till and cultivate the soil within us so that it becomes fertile, receptive and vulnerable to receive and nurture the seeds of transformation within — which will bloom, flower and transcend into a being which has *Oneness* of vision, and action.

That I will not do any harm to anyone, is a very good idea. But a more positive step would be to know in what manner I can do good to others. What unites fellow beings is as important as what makes a nation. People in India, and in other parts of the world as well, did unite on several occasions in the past. This shows that the tendency to help and the feeling of compassion and cooperation are inherent in mankind and they arise during a crisis such as an earthquake, flood, famine, communal tension, or war. On such occasions, people forget their petty differences and join together to cope with the situation.

What is it that hinders, and comes in the way of our journey upwards? Why do we have to wait for some untoward happenings in order to become united? Why do we wait for critical situations in order to help those in misery? What prevents the spirit of collective consciousness from

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operating at normal times, since its maintenance is a very significant function of development and transformation.

For transformation in one's psyche, for a change in one's whole being, preparation within us is an essential prerequisite. This will come with constant pondering, and for this, one has to have a questioning, an enquiring mind. It happens only when one feels a sense of urgency and the will to explore, to discover and find out by thinking over these lines, when there is space within, spontaneous receptivity; the space comes when one's whole being is unprejudiced and unconditioned. This space is a state which is completely free of conditioning, prejudice and preconceived notions. So one should keep pondering over the preparation. Archimedes had been working to find a solution to a problem for several days and with that state of mind, one day, when he entered the tub full of water, he solved the problem in a flash, and expressing joy at the discovery started shouting '*eureka, eureka*', i.e. 'I have found it, I have found it'. The awareness to discover and realize something at a particular moment is necessary, and realization can dawn upon one only when one is seriously concerned about it, prepared for it. Every moment in life provides an opportunity to proceed on this path. By proceeding in that direction, we might be able to see and realize the beauty of performing proper collective action. Working together, thinking together silently, develops the feeling of togetherness, and the perpetuation of this togetherness leads to a state of emotional integration.<sup>7</sup>

The work, strength and impact of an organization or a society depend on the quality, potentiality and the dedication of its members. If we are determined to make brotherhood a 'living force' in our life there is no reason why it should not have a vast effect; in order to make a positive contribution, we must be strong in ourselves. Its strength lies in the inner strength of the members.

We will have to question ourselves: What humanistic frame of mind can create such an ethical environment? How can we generate, promote and strengthen the spirit of selfless service? How can one rise above narrow considerations and live a dedicated and unselfish life? How can the bonds of brotherhood be strengthened? How can we live in harmony, with a sense of oneness with *all beings*? These, and several such questions, may help us to understand where we actually stand and what more requires to be done.

The Theosophical Society has been helping and encouraging its members to deepen and expand their understanding of the higher values of life. It generates a process which is in complete harmony with nature and is concerned about every living being's presence, which naturally shapes the future, and in that process, an individual's whole life. The Motto of the TS, the Three Declared Objects and the Basic Principles of Theosophy — all motivate the members to discover truth, to study and understand Truth, to lead a life in complete harmony with Truth. All these provide an immensely wide scope to the members to expand their mental horizon

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and elevate their intellectual, moral and spiritual level.

How the Theosophical objectives, tenets, perception and approach can help in dealing with some of the prevailing problems should be placed before the general public from time to time. The members of the TS are neither cut off from the main current of society nor indifferent to the prevailing problems. People have to be convinced that we are not passive observers but are seriously concerned about certain issues. The task before us, the members, is not so much to impose an opinion as to kindle an aspiration. We must think and work to develop respect for man and for all living creatures, and to channelize our energy in that direction with unbending devotion to truth.

I would like to conclude with a conversation between Prof. B. Sanjeeva Rao and Dr Annie Besant. Sanjeeva Rao mentions:

One day I found her worried and she exclaimed: ‘Tell me, why do people only want money from me, they are welcome to the money but have I nothing better to offer?’ I became a little cynical and asked her one day: ‘Mother, why do you trust people who deceive you again and again?’ She replied: ‘I know I am deceived, but my dear, you must never distrust anyone. You may be deceived a hundred times. But how do you know that your trust may not be the one factor that may change him on the 101st occasion? Not to believe in the God in another is the only atheism that deserves to be condemned.’<sup>8</sup>

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**Thou believest thyself to be nothing, and  
yet it is in thee that the world resides.**

Avicenna

# Awareness

MARY ANDERSON

**B**EING aware might refer on the one hand to acquaintance with or concentration on something in particular or it might refer to a state of awareness in general, being attentive to whatever we meet, see or hear, being open to whatever comes along.

Let us consider what is meant by various terms used in the dictionary to describe awareness. 'Being conscious' of something means that we notice it. 'Being observant' implies that, in general, we do not overlook anything. 'Being familiar' means that something is already well known to us. 'Being attentive' to something means that our attention is fixed on it. 'Being acquainted' with something means that we are familiar with it. 'Being informed' means that we know about something intellectually. 'Being knowledgeable' means that we are to some extent experts in that of which we are aware. 'Being sensitive' means that we feel deeply about what we are aware of. 'Being heedful' implies that we do not overlook anything. 'Being mindful' means that we shall not forget something. 'Being alive' to something suggests that it means something to us; that we care about it.

'Being responsive' suggests that we respond, we react in some way.

These definitions of 'being aware' may refer not only to some particular object or occasion but to our attitude in general. Are we aware of some particular object or person or situation at some particular time? Or is our attitude (in general or at times) one of awareness? If we are aware of something or someone or some situation, can we learn from that particular awareness to realize that we may have an attitude of awareness in general at all times?

Perhaps it is the artist who, thanks to his or her nature and training, is most likely to be aware of his or her surroundings, both of the environment, above all Nature, and of the kingdoms of Nature, including humanity?

People are also aware when they are interested in some particular subject or object, e.g. plants, animals, children, beautiful buildings, etc. So awareness (in a limited field) comes naturally in these cases to gardeners, nature lovers, animal lovers, teachers and parents, architects, etc.

One who is looking for something or

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someone is also in a high state of awareness, for example, a detective looking for a criminal or a criminal looking for an opportunity to commit a crime! We may all reach a height of awareness when we are on the lookout for someone or something or a specific article we wish to buy! Can we become aware of our awareness, which could be a lesson in awareness in itself?

What is a still more intent awareness? What might it imply? We might suggest that it implies intense feeling, when one is no longer conscious of oneself as a separate being, or spontaneous awakening as from a dream or deep sleep, or inspiration which comes unbidden, conviction replacing tentative doubt, or perhaps a sudden insight into the solution of a problem, or what is known as intuition or inspiration.

And what is awareness not? It is not forced through concentration or drugs. (Drugs can take those who consume them, their victims, seemingly to the mountain top, but they will fall from that mountain top and perhaps find themselves injured.)

True awareness is not in time, but somehow out of time. We may think of the 'eternal now'.

How does awareness come about? What leads up to it? It may be suffering or a sudden crisis. Or it may be sudden joy. It may be an insight. Thus it happens spontaneously. We cannot invite it.

On the other hand, this intense awareness cannot happen except if certain conditions are fulfilled — conditions of which we may not even be conscious.

There must be a certain innocence and purity, harmlessness, and at the same time a certain steadfastness.

An example may be the ox-herding pictures in Zen Buddhism. The ox-herd has lost his ox. This is a state of crisis. He looks in vain for the animal. But he continues his search in full awareness. And gradually he finds traces; for example, a hoofprint. Then at last he finds the animal and mounts, then calms and controls the ox until he is again its master. He then goes off, riding on its back, playing his flute. He is triumphant and carefree.

Of course, the awareness that we know and that we may rejoice in is not yet enlightenment or the Zen *satori*. But perhaps the final enlightenment — if there is a final enlightenment — is preceded by a series of what we might call 'little enlightenments', moments of awareness when we have a slight foretaste of the bliss which is our true being.

There may be other examples of heightened awareness, for example, falling in love, meeting someone one has known and loved perhaps in past lives. (There used to be a song: 'Some enchanted evening, you will see a stranger in a crowded room. . . .') Then what occurs can be expressed in the words: 'When spirit leaps to spirit across the veil of flesh.'

The genius, whether an artist, a poet, a composer, a dancer, an architect or a genial inventor, a great scientist, etc., knows moments of such awareness when the solution of a problem long meditated on presents itself. We may be aware —

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we may even be an expert — in some subject. (An expert is, of course, someone who knows a great deal about very little! He is aware in a limited area and might develop ‘professional deformation’!)

But great geniuses are often at home in many fields. Michelangelo was such a universal genius. Perhaps in our age Einstein and Karl Gustav Jung approached the status of a universal genius.

But some are genial in their own field. A genial scholar or scientist or a detective may follow the same procedure and may have insights similar to those of the Zen Buddhist monk in attempting to solve a koan. A koan is an apparently absurd statement or an apparently insoluble puzzle given to the Zen monk to meditate on and to solve. The following is an example: A young goose was put into a bottle. The bird, as it grew, could no longer get out of the bottle. How could one free the bird from the bottle without injuring it and without breaking the bottle? Because such a koan is insoluble, the monk goes deeper and deeper into it, grappling with it, struggling to find a solution. He must give it his full attention. It will not let him go. (Perhaps the goose never was in the bottle.)

So it is with the scientist or the scholar doing research into some problem. He must give it his full attention. He may do so for a long time. Then he may fall asleep or simply relax or feel the need for some physical activity. So he may take the dog for a walk or help his wife in the kitchen. And suddenly the solution appears. It is there before him, and it is undoubtedly

the right solution. In a way, it was there all the time. He may feel like crying, ‘*Eureka!* I have found it’. He sees the whole problem at a glance.

Such a scientist, genius or Zen monk finds the solution when he no longer looks for it and puzzles over it. Perhaps he hands it over to the subconscious or what we might call the ‘superconscious’. It is as if he had climbed a mountain in the mist, with great effort, and suddenly, when he reaches the summit, the sun breaks through. All is clear, bathed in sunlight. In the case of our genius or our Zen monk, the solution is crystal clear. He is aware of unlimited possibilities, unlimited implications. Such is a state of awareness.

Such awareness was experienced and described by Krishnamurti. Is awareness not ideally oneness with that of which one is aware? To quote him:

I had the first most extraordinary experience. There was a man mending the road; that man was myself, the pickaxe he held was myself; the very stone which he was breaking up was a part of me; the tender blade of grass was my very being and the tree beside the man was myself.<sup>1</sup>

Krishnamurti spoke a great deal about awareness and about what awareness is *not* and about what prevents awareness.

To understand, mind must delve deeply and yet it must know when to be *alertly passive*.<sup>2</sup>

Awareness is from moment to moment . . . Awareness is not determination nor is it the action of the will. Awareness is the

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complete and unconditional surrender to what is, without rationalization, without the division of the observer and the observed . . . Awareness is ever in the present.<sup>3</sup>

To be aware from moment to moment is enough.<sup>4</sup>

It may last one second; you are *completely* aware for one second and the next second you may be inattentive. But you know also that you *are* inattentive.<sup>5</sup>

What relationship may there be between awareness and time? What is time? There is objective time: time by the clock, the calendar, the history book, mostly measurable and sometimes predictable. And there is subjective time: the passage of time as experienced by us, perhaps as created by us! Such time is elusive and cannot be measured. But understanding time perhaps holds the key to an approach to understanding awareness and understanding ourselves. But can we understand time? Can we understand awareness and ourselves?

There are interesting insights on time by Dr Taimni, whose knowledge as a scientist mingled with his spiritual insights.

Time shrinks progressively as we approach the centre of our consciousness, and succession becomes faster from the physical point of view until it becomes simultaneity in the Eternal Now.<sup>6</sup>

Time is, to quote Mme Blavatsky:  
an illusion produced by the succession of

our states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration and it does not exist where no consciousness exists . . . The present is only a mathematical line which divides that part of eternal duration which we call the future from that part which we call the past . . . Nothing on earth has real duration, for nothing remains without change — or the same — for the billionth part of a second.<sup>7</sup>

The question is: Do we live in the present *in our consciousness*? Unfortunately, mostly not. The poet, Shelley, expressed this in his *Lament*:

O World! O Life! O Time!  
On whose last steps I climb,  
Trembling at that where I had stood before,  
When will return the glory of your prime?  
No more — Oh, never more!

We grieve, as did the poet, because, although physically in the present, we very often live in the past, remembering, reminiscing, regretting. Or we live in the future, hoping and fearing. We are not often really aware — we do not live — in the very present moment.

There may be moments, however, when we do live in the present, when we are aware to some extent at least, when the present takes us by surprise. To quote Krishnamurti:

Have you not experienced in moments of great ecstasy the cessation of time; there is no past, no future, but an intense awareness, a timeless present?<sup>8</sup>

Such joyful awareness was expressed by Wordsworth:

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My heart leaps up when I behold  
A rainbow in the sky:  
So was it when my life began;  
So is it now I am a man;  
So be it when I shall grow old,  
Or let me die!

But it is Shelley again who puts his finger on the cause of this misery, this regret for the past:

We look before and after,  
And pine for what is not:  
Our sincerest laughter  
With some pain is fraught;  
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of  
saddest thought.

We seek, but 'through time the Timeless cannot be realized'. So 'let us live in time timelessly . . . The now has greater significance than the tomorrow. In the now is all time, and to understand the now is to be free of time'.<sup>9</sup>

Another aspect of awareness has to do with being and becoming, which again involves time. 'Being' relates to the present. What we are we are in the present. 'Becoming' relates to a movement from the past to the present or from the present to the future. When we think of the present in terms of the past and the future we cannot be really aware in the present, but 'being' in the sense of what one *is* is always in the present.

'To be' is a verb, and suggests an actual state or activity, so the verb 'to be' suggests something that is alive, that is in the here and now, in the present time. 'To become' suggests, on the other hand, movement. As Krishnamurti says, our life is a process

of becoming. Taken from the physical point of view, this is something natural and familiar. For example, a baby becomes a child, a child becomes an adolescent, an adolescent becomes a grown-up; a caterpillar becomes a butterfly; a bud becomes a flower.

But when becoming is the object of our desires; for example, when we are ugly, stupid or poor and wish to become beautiful, intelligent or rich, then the desire to become leads to dissatisfaction, effort, strife and pain. And when we wish or strive to become something, we do not live in the present but in the future, that is, in our dream of the future, as we would like it to be. Similarly, we may live in the past and not be aware in the present, but day-dream, feeling nostalgia for the 'good old days' and regret for past mistakes.

So what can we do about it? There is nothing wrong with dreaming of what we desire, provided we are aware that we are dreaming and that we are not living in the present; and when in the present we are conscious of our present state, is that not awareness? But if we cling to dreams of the future, of what we want to become, and to fond memories of the past or regrets, then we are not aware in the present.

What of spiritual awareness?

The words 'Arise! Awake!', meaning 'Become active! Pay attention!', are addressed in the *Kathopanishad* to an aspirant, Nachiketas, by his teacher, Yama, when Nachiketas has passed certain trials. (We shall revert to this.)

What is meant by 'Awake' and 'Arise' in general? Do we not do this every

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morning? We awake from dreamless sleep or mostly illusory dreams and we become aware once more of the physical world, of our physical being, of our duties on the physical plane. Then we rise and engage in action. This is physical awakening.

But we may sometimes — after sleep or otherwise — awaken and arise emotionally and mentally. Having struggled unsuccessfully with some problem, we may relax, going to sleep or engaging in some other activity, such as going for a walk or doing housework or gardening or studying. Then suddenly, we may see the solution to a problem or awake from some illusion, have an inspiration or an insight. Then we arise and apply the idea we have had. A research worker or an inventor may discover a solution to a problem and apply it, an artist may paint or draw, a poet may write a poem, a composer may compose a symphony. Or we may simply be happy. We can all be creative in daily life, even in cleaning, dishwashing, cooking, doing manual labour, if we are really aware of what we are doing.

Spiritually also, we may awaken and arise, but more rarely. The ultimate Great Awakening comes but once in our human evolution, but there may be many little awakenings. Gradually, we awaken from illusory concepts of life and of ourselves. We may become increasingly aware of what things are, what living beings are, what we are. The latter awakening is self-knowledge. Then we arise and apply that awareness. We act in the light of it. We cannot help being true to ourselves.

If we do not act in the light of our self-discovery, then we have not really awakened, though we may think we have. We may know in theory that we are a divine spark of the one flame, but we are still afraid of loss; we still feel separate from others and we act accordingly in a crisis.

In the *Kathopanishad*, the words ‘Arise! Awake!’ were spoken to Nachiketas, a young aspirant, by Yama, his teacher, the God of Death.

The father of Nachiketas had made an offering of many cows to the gods, because he was desirous of heavenly reward. But he sacrificed only old cows who could no longer eat, drink, calve or give milk. So his motive — to gain reward — was selfish and his gift was useless. Nachiketas was distressed when he saw the poor gift his father was offering the gods. So he asked him, rather impudently: ‘To whom will you give me?’ His father said in his anger that he would give Nachiketas to Yama, the God of Death.

So Nachiketas, the obedient son, set off for the house of Yama. But Yama was not at home and Nachiketas had to wait three days before he returned. Yama was distressed that his visitor had had to wait so long, so he offered him three boons.

Nachiketas chose as the first boon that his father should not worry or be angry and should welcome him back home, and Yama granted that boon. So we see that Nachiketas wished his father to be reconciled. His heart was in the right place. He wished for good family relations to be restored.

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As his second boon Nachiketas desired to know the sacrifice that leads to Heaven after death and Yama not only taught him that sacrifice but gave it the name of Nachiketas.

As a third boon Nachiketas asked: 'When a man dies . . . some say he is; others say he is not . . . I would know the truth.' Nachiketas did not want to know about our fate after losing the physical body. He was well aware that, in his own words: 'Like corn, a man ripens and falls to the ground; like corn, he springs up again in his season.' What he wanted to know was probably the state beyond enlightenment.

Yama hesitated to answer the boy. Perhaps to try him he offered him sons and grandsons, cattle, elephants and horses, gold, a mighty kingdom and pleasures of all kinds. We may be reminded of Māra's temptation of Buddha on the verge of His enlightenment or the temptation of Christ by Satan in the wilderness.

But Nachiketas refused to yield (as did Buddha and Christ) and Yama, who was secretly pleased, began to teach him. He did not teach him the ultimate secret, for that cannot be taught but must be realized oneself. But, to encourage the boy he spoke the words:

Arise, awake! Approach the feet of the Master and know THAT. Like the sharp edge of a razor, the sages say, is the path.

Narrow is it, and difficult to tread. Soundless, formless, intangible, undying, tasteless, odourless, without beginning,

without end, eternal, immutable, beyond nature, is the Self. Knowing him as such, one is freed from death.

Thus he encouraged the boy to become aware in the deepest sense of his own inmost being.

The importance of awareness in everyday life is stressed in many religious traditions.

In Christianity, Brother Lawrence stressed what he called 'the practice of the presence of God'.

A new monk said to the Zen Buddhist master Joshu: 'I have just entered the brotherhood and am anxious to learn the first principle of Zen. Will you teach it to me?' Joshu said: 'Have you eaten your supper?' The novice replied: 'I have eaten', and Joshu said: 'Now, wash your bowl.'

Christmas Humphreys, the founder of the Buddhist Society in England, used to say that what is important and should have our full attention is simply 'the next step'.

There are wise sayings from the joyful and humorous Chassidist tradition: Soon after the death of Rabbi Mokshe, Rabbi Mendel asked one of his disciples: 'What did your teacher give the greatest importance to?' and the answer was: 'To whatever he happened to be doing at the moment.'

An explorer returned from the Amazon and he tried to describe his experiences to his fellow-citizens, but how could he put them into words. He said: 'Go and see for yourselves', and, to guide them, he drew a map of the river. They pounced on the map and had it framed in their town

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hall and made copies for themselves. Those who studied the map considered themselves experts on the river. Are we looking for maps or books of instruction to be followed?

When we think of ‘being aware’, we may be tempted that, to reach awareness, we must practise concentration. We may think of the last three steps of the Hindu Rāja-Yoga and of the Buddhist Noble Eightfold Path, sometimes translated as ‘concentration, meditation and contemplation’. But, according to Krishnamurti, who laid great emphasis on awareness, this is not the case:

In trying to concentrate, the conflicting thoughts-feelings are suppressed or pushed aside or overcome and through this process there can be no understanding. Concentration is gained at the expense of deep awareness. If the mind is petty and limited, concentration will not make it any the less small and trivial; on the contrary, it will strengthen its own nature.<sup>10</sup>

Any child is capable of concentration — give him a new toy and he is concentrated. Every businessman is concentrated when

he wants to make money. Concentration, which we think we should have in order to meditate, is really narrowness, a process of limitation, exclusion.<sup>11</sup>

The idea that we are distracted when we want to concentrate only implies that you resist what you call distraction; but actually there is no distraction. When your thought wanders off, give your whole attention to that thought, don’t call it distraction.<sup>12</sup>

Another warning is perhaps appropriate. We should be aware of our motives in seeking awareness. Let us remember the warning in *Light on the Path*:

Kill out ambition

It is easy to say: ‘I will not be ambitious’; it is not so easy to say: ‘When the Master reads my heart, He will find it clean utterly.’ The pure artist who works for the love of his work is sometimes more firmly planted on the right road than the occultist who fancies he has removed his interest from self, but who has in reality only enlarged the limits of experience and desire, and transferred his interest to things which concern his larger span of life.

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4. *idem*, p. 21.
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8. *Sayings of J. Krishnamurti* by Susunaga Weeraperuma, p. 195.
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10. *idem*, p. 37.
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# Living in the Eternal

SHIRLEY J. NICHOLSON

*There is a peace that passeth understanding.  
It abides in the hearts of those who live in the eternal.*

WE live in an illusory world. Mountains, buildings, trees and flowers, even our own bodies, seem substantial and real. Yet the Ancient Wisdom teaches that they are not. They are *māyā*, illusion created by the quality of our minds that turns changing phantasmagoria into seemingly solid and lasting objects. Physics discovered that what seems solid rests on a reality of unimaginably small, constantly moving particles of electricity. But the illusion goes deeper than just physical objects. The familiar self that we know so well is also an illusion. We are surprised when we hear that our own minds have this seemingly magical power of creating a self. Yet sages throughout history have reported that our sense of being a separate, self-contained self is not ultimately valid. Our minds manufacture a self with individual likes and dislikes, particular views, a fund of information, all that makes us the apparent individual we think we are.

The truth is that at bottom we are a field of pure consciousness. Our varied experience and ordinary perception colours this basically colourless consciousness. Our

conditioned minds lead us to believe that our sense experience and the experience of our thoughts and emotions happen to a consistent and steady self. But introspection does not capture that constant, independent self. We can experience only the flux of changing thoughts, feelings and perceptions. Our so-called personality is part of the phantasmagoria in which we live. We cannot nail down an abiding self in the flow.

Yet sages throughout history have attested to something permanent, unchanging, and Real, though subtle and hard to perceive. It might be glimpsed in stillness within when the mind and emotions are very quiet. Or it might be perceived in looking at something deeply. A rose is real to our senses — its glowing colours, its fragrance, even the pain the thorns can cause us. Yet we know that it is a passing phenomenon. The petals will wither and fall. Its fragrance will turn to the odour of decay. Yet there is something eternal in the rose. Its harmony of shape and contours and colours embody a beauty that resonates deeply within us. Even a

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magnificent work of art, like Michelangelo's oversized statue of David, startles us as we perceive an eternal archetype captured in stone.

Such experiences are momentary and subtle. However, there is a way of life that leads to living in a state where the eternal is the constant background of our consciousness. This experience will eventually come to us all. It begins with developing two qualities noted in *The Voice of the Silence* and recognized by many traditions as essential for enlightenment — *viveka*, discriminating wisdom, and *vairāgya*, non-attachment to the unreal.

*Viveka* is the ability to discriminate between the Real and the unreal, to sense the essence of things within the outer form. At *The Feet of the Master*, the little book of instructions from a Master to Krishnamurti as a young boy, says to learn to discriminate the God in everyone and everything. Annie Besant, in her famous invocation, calls on the 'hidden life vibrant in every atom'. The Master's reference to 'God' and Besant's 'hidden life' in atoms are but expression of the Real, the eternal.

If we honestly examine the things that we want, we will find that most of them feed our ego, our sense of being a separate individual, our false self. Such things have little value in the larger view of life. As we see more and more deeply, desire for the fleeting and impermanent drops away, and we are drawn to eternal values such as pure love that does not enhance our sense of self.

*Viveka*, true discernment, is the basis for freedom from the unreal and establishment in the Real. *Vairāgya*, non-attachment to worldly things, sustains and encourages *viveka*. Non-attachment is not indifference, not being cold and uncaring. Rather it reveals the true value of each event in the larger scheme of things. It does not imply withdrawal from an active life but actively living in the world without attachment to it.

*Viveka* and *vairāgya* together can bring us to that place of peace that passeth understanding where we are not shaken by passing events. We become established in pure consciousness, always anchored in the background Reality behind life's whirl. We learn to live in the eternal, in the Real.

**'If thou wouldst know contentment, let thy deeds be few', said the sage. Better still, limit them strictly to such as are essential, and to such as in a social being reason demands, and as it demands. This brings the contentment that comes of doing a few things and doing them well. Most of what we say and do is not necessary, and its omission would save both time and trouble. At every step, therefore, a man should ask himself, 'Is this one of the things that are superfluous?' Moreover, not idle actions only but even idle impressions ought to be suppressed; for then unnecessary action will not ensue.**

Marcus Aurelius  
*Meditations*

# Beauty in Life

MARY GRAY

THE dawn of a new age is upon us — an age which must be shaped by Beauty. Already a new race is coming to birth which must have beauty in its environment, in its education, if its beauty of soul is to flower in fulfilment of the plan.

## Safeguard Beauty

At this time when we are in transition between two eras, when the power of government is passing into the hands of the working man, it is especially important to safeguard beauty lest it be lost. For it is the tendency of revolutionaries in their first intensity to lay all emphasis on the importance of the so-called necessities of life — food and lodging. That is, after all, only natural. But not only do they not value beauty, they actually consider refinement and the cultural arts as being at war with their creed. This was demonstrated in the French Revolution and in the Russian.

The creed of materialism decries beauty, since it is the expression of the radiance of the spirit and cannot be understood by an attitude towards life based on materialism. At present there is a cult of ugliness in music, in art, in

architecture. This reflects the destructive forces at work preparing for the new age. But these preparatory forces must not be allowed to destroy that beauty upon which the fulfilment of the new age depends.

In every civilization there are two types of beauty — that in the environment, and that in man himself. In each case the expression is threefold, covering the three phases of mind, evolution and form. Yet we must never forget that although the expression is threefold, the essence is one, like the three Persons of the Trinity, different in attributes but none the less one in essence. However much we may analyse the different vehicles, power comes only through a sense of unity within ourselves and with all life.

## Cultivate the Deva-s

If we would develop beauty in the environment, we must draw ourselves close to the Deva Kingdom, which is ready to cooperate with man at this time in helping him to find his heritage.

In America today most of our national parks are brooded over by great Deva-s, so that all people coming there are cleansed and purified unknown to

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themselves. Because of the ugliness, noise, dirt and confusion of our cities the Shining Host cannot reach us there, but wherever man offers conditions of beauty and peace, there they come to bless the race. Not only in the places of natural beauty, but in gardens and in great cathedrals, there the influence of the Deva-s is found.

It is a hopeful sign of the new order in America today that beauty is becoming available to the poor man as well as to the rich. All the common utensils and fabrics of daily life are being found in lovely colours and in charming patterns and shapes available to the poorest people.

### **Blossoms of the Spirit**

In keeping with the creed of materialism we find the cult of ugliness fashionable in many lines, in architecture, in the arts, in music, in dancing, in literature and in psychology. It is customary to point out the imperfections in all things and in all leaders rather than their beauties and their achievements. It lies with us to emphasize the idea that as the race moves forward into the new age it must dwell on constructive thoughts of beauty and of harmony. We should turn our attention to those blossoms of the spirit which appear on every side in the very midst of evil, as from roots buried deep in the mire the lotus brings forth its shining blossom. If we are attuned to it, we shall see beauty springing up on every side, and if we would have it grow it is on beauty we must dwell in thought.

In considering the development of

individual beauty of body, mind and heart we should turn for a moment to the Greek conception that beauty of body reflects beauty of soul. Surely this holds some truth. For although a beautiful form unlighted by the radiance of the soul within is but an empty shell, yet a beautiful body can certainly give better expression to beauty of soul. If we would have really beautiful children they must be the product of true mating. They must come into the world by the road of love.

We are bringing to the birth a very lovely race of children in California. Perhaps it is due in part to the sun and to the freedom and to the joy of life there, but perhaps it is due also in part to the fact that many people consider it wrong to bring forth children unless they are happy in their mating and in harmony in mind and body. I do not defend the many divorces, but I know there is great harm done to a child who is brought to birth unwillingly by its mother because of her marriage obligations. Not only should mothers be happy in their marriages to bring forth fine children, but while they are carrying the child they should be encompassed by peace and joy and beauty.

### **Steps to Beauty**

To express beauty in the individual the first step lies in the purification of the vehicles. This must be accomplished not by repression, nor by starvation, but by letting the stream of life pour through in such overwhelming measure that all the faults of the personality — jealousy, fear, hatred, anger — are swept aside in a full

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tide of love and joy and friendliness. We should not wrestle with our faults, we should sweep them aside by the uprush of indwelling power of the spiritual self. We should feel not less but more, we should love not less but more, we should enjoy not less but more. The purification of the vehicles is like the building of strong embankments along the borders of a river in order that even at flood its waters may flow onward to the sea without the danger of harm or of destruction. So the increasing life must pour through the vehicles without destruction or harm, and the purification is the eliminating of blocks or of obstacles in the channel. The flood of waters must not be dammed up lest disaster come; nor diverted lest the stream become thin and weak. Nor must we repress our powers in seeking purification, for these powers are the source of life and progress when wisely directed.

### **Beauty which is Joy**

There is another point to be emphasized: the vehicles themselves should not be starved. They have each certain needs which must be fulfilled if they are to be harmonious and healthy. The physical, the mental, and the emotional body must each have joy. Let us, however, distinguish carefully between our desires and

those of the vehicles, and give them the joy they require only in the way which is beneficial to us as well. If we become ascetic, we warp the vehicles so that they cannot function properly. Back of all manifestation there is joy, an impersonal and spiritual joy which seeks to express itself in all life. It is this which the Devas know, and which we must contact if we are to know health. This joy wells up within each one of us from the centre of spiritual Being. As we pour more and more of love and radiance and power through the vehicles to the world, so shall more of that spiritual beauty which is the Christ spirit within us manifest. Only as we pour it out can it rise within us, for if we are inward-turned and concerned about our own progress and our own development, we close the channels, and the stream of life can flow neither in nor out. Then we starve to death for lack of spiritual food, so that our vehicles shrivel. The secret of the attainment of beauty manifest in us lies in the opening of ourselves to the full force of the Cosmic Christ light, that it may sweep into us and through us to the world. As we become channels for this great power, the light of eternal beauty glorifies us and pours out in ever increasing measure to the service of the world. ✧

**If we could see the miracle of a single flower clearly,  
our whole life would change.**

The Buddha

# The Inner Script

INDRAJIT BANDYOPADHYAY

THE more our civilization advances, the more we realize that notwithstanding technological progress, we are just repeating the past in an endless cyclic process. Otherwise, we cannot explain the primitive mindset working in all spheres of human activity. Evolution has given us a new brain — the cerebral cortex with a developed frontal lobe, which distinguishes us from other living beings and also from our primitive ancestors. But, have we really mustered the ability to harness the full potential of the new brain? What is keeping us powerless?

As Paul MacLean, the brain researcher at the U.S. National Institute of Health who gave the 'limbic system' its name, would have us believe, evolution left us with not one brain in our skulls, but three. They are the cortex, the limbic system (mammal brain) and the reptile brain. The most ancient part of the human brain is known as the 'reptilian brain'. It is the most obvious remnant of our reptilian genetic history. If the reptilian brain is dominating, with other brains largely off line, we start acting a lot like reptiles: rigid, territorial, hierarchical, with very little willingness or ability to adapt to truly new situations. We

insist on sticking with the way we have always done things, whether those ways work or not. We are 'on automatic'. From a religious perspective, being entirely 'on automatic' is slavery to nature and therefore bondage.

To quote from an Internet article, at least five human forms of behaviour originate in the reptilian brain. Without defining them, I shall simply say that in human activities they find expression in:

- 1) Obsessive-compulsive behaviour
- 2) Personal day-to-day rituals and superstitious acts
- 3) Slavish conformity to old ways of doing things
- 4) Ceremonial re-enactments
- 5) Obeisance to precedent, as in legal, religious, cultural, and other matters
- 6) Responding to partial representations, whether alive or inanimate
- 7) and all manner of deception

The new scientific myth about the reptilian brain echoes the Purānic vision of Lord Śiva as the ultimate Purusha whose greatness lies in his potential to tame serpents round his neck and absorb serpent venom. The Christian myth of Satan as tempter of Adam and Eve in the

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## The Theosophist

shape of a serpent is another case in point where ancient wisdom regards the 'reptile' as a spoiler of innocence and the cause of evil. It is the reptile brain working beneath that is keeping us enslaved to repetitive actions and rituals and games and pastimes. It is the great threat to creativity, to a new free life, to the realization of our own true beings.

So, the script writer and the director of the drama on the stage of the mind, is within us. It is a part of our nature, having a twofold manifestation. One, our dark unconscious mind, whether individual or the 'collective unconscious', whether our natural impulses or instincts about which nothing much can be consciously known. And second, the conscious intelligence, which nevertheless serves the unconscious.

Nature has spun a web like the spider. This is allegorically represented in the Upanishad-s. In *Mundaka Upanishad*, the seers say, 'As the spider sends forth and draws in its thread, as plants grow on the earth, as from every man hairs spring forth on the head and the body, thus does everything arise here from the Indestructible.'

Next come human agents as products of nature with the singular motive to survive. The interesting thing, here too, is that, both the 'ruler' and 'ruled' want to survive, but in different dimensions of existence, in accordance to their perception of reality. The human agents of the traditional ruler class, be it in the domain of politics, culture or business, create a network. They too are spiders, but ironically caught in their own web, though

they are deluded enough to consider themselves free as long as they have 'gold and woman', as Ramakrishna said. These can be translated as 'possession, pleasure and power'. The human agents in the form of 'ruled' are willingly or unwillingly caught in the net, so that they can live 'happily'. Basically there is no difference between the 'ruler' and 'ruled', the 'parent' and the 'child'. Both want 'possession, pleasure and power' for their own perceptive survival.

There is a striking resemblance between a psychological script and a theatrical script. Each has a prescribed cast of characters, dialogue, acts and scenes, themes and plots, which move towards a climax and end with a final curtain. A psychological script is a drama an individual compulsively acts out, though his awareness of it may be vague. Like dramas, a person's script may resemble a soap opera, a wild adventure, a tragedy, a saga, a farce, a romance, a joyful comedy, or a dull play. Whatever it might be, it is often archetypal.

As Shakespeare said, 'all the world is a stage'; the drama of life starts at birth. The original script begins from I-awareness or the birth of ego, with an awareness of 'I/ other', a polar-distinction. This has been allegorically described in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad* in the episode of Brahmā's birth. Next comes the societal one. Script instructions are programmed into the child ego state through transactions between parent figures and their children. As children grow they learn to play archetypal parts — heroes,

## The Inner Script

heroines, villains, victims, and rescuers — and unknowingly seek others to play complementary roles. This ‘central emotional position’ is the director of the script.

So, when is the director born? L. S. Kubie in his ‘the neurotic process as the focus of physiological and psychoanalytic research’ says, ‘early in life, sometimes within the earliest months and sometimes later, a central emotional position is frequently established . . . it becomes the effective position to which that individual will tend to return automatically for the rest of his days. This in turn may constitute either the major safeguard or the major vulnerability of his life’.

Regarding the neurological source of scripts or narratives, Kay Young (UCSB, English) and J. Jeffrey L. Saver, MD (UCLA, Neurology), say in their ‘The Neurology of Narrative’, recent advances in cognitive neuroscience suggest that the creation of narrative in the human central nervous system is mediated by a regionally distributed neural network.

We are both ruler and ruled in turns, and both as ruler and ruled, we follow ‘scripts’, made by us, or, ‘bio-culturally’ inculcated by us.

But despite all cerebral ‘incredulity’, can we really free ourselves from the hold of the individual scripts or meta-narratives? Can we shift the paradigm with our own effort? The answer of the majority is generally obvious, and so is the question, ‘why can’t we?’ or ‘why can only a few?’ Ironically, our frustration only strengthens the script, which has its origin in powerlessness and greater desire for

possession, pleasure and power. Possession, pleasure and power is the ‘Golden Deer’ that can never be caught, but is strong enough to make even Ramachandra run after it. This final ‘catastrophe’ is already written in the script, though the ‘ruler’ or ‘parents’ would like to believe otherwise.

Inculcating in the ‘ruled’ a lifelong adherence to ‘script’ or more precisely to the script that ‘I am not OK’, is the secret to the ‘rulers’ success, and living in delusion that they can really perpetually enjoy the possession, pleasure and power, perpetuating their desire to rule. Both the ruler and the ruled are thus, part of a ‘paradigm’. Both are ‘children’ at heart living in ‘ignorant bliss’.

T. A. Harris, famous for transactional analysis, who calls for a transcendence from the common central emotional position of ‘I’m not OK – You are OK’ to ‘I am OK – You are OK’, says in his well-known book *I am OK – You are OK*: ‘The fourth position I am OK – you are OK can incorporate not-yet-experienced possibilities which exist in the abstractions of philosophy and religion . . . (this) position is based on thought, faith and the wager of action.’

Neuroscience confirms that the centrality of any script whatsoever does not hold, because its neural basis has no centrality. Stephen S. Hall, in his Internet article, ‘Journey to the Centre of My Mind’, says, ‘there is no centre of activity, only way stations in a circuit, winking at each other in milliseconds, churning in some mysterious neural communion’.

## The Theosophist

So, whatever script there is at work in the mind, be it of the 'ruler' or 'ruled', can certainly be changed. The 'rulers' definitely will not change it. Can the 'ruled' change it then? The hope given by the Western thinkers is welcome. Their thoughts may be the precursor of a paradigm shift, silently taking place in Western life and living. They may sound new to Western ears, but, are their thoughts anything new to us?

Sage Ashtāvakra, in response to King Janaka's queries, pronounced: 'If one thinks of oneself as free, one is free, and if one thinks of oneself as bound, one is bound.' Here this saying, 'Thinking makes it so' is true. Or, we may say, 'As you "script", so you reap'.

We find the echo of the same words in Śrī Ramakrishna: 'One, who says, I cannot be free, verily cannot be free. One with ego of freeness becomes free, one with ego of bondage remains so. One, who exerts will to say, I am free, verily achieves freedom. One who utters, day in and day out, I am bound, becomes so.'

Śrī Ramakrishna warns us that 'it is a useless effort to try to change one's essential script forcefully'. He actually warns against any possible self-deception and delusion. That one can fall a prey to another set of narrative or script in forceful effort to escape from one set, does not

escape his vigilance. He tells it plainly, 'thousands of self-analysis will not the ego kill!' The final climax of completely vanquishing the I-ness is beyond any script or non-script of conscious will. One who lives a societal life is bound to earn 'dirt' because one cannot remain entirely free from the lure of 'possession, pleasure and power'. Freedom or bondage, both are in the mind. Despite the challenge of 'possession, pleasure and power', he calls for freedom of the mind.

Ages before, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: 'Do not become a coward, O Arjuna, because it does not befit you. Shake off this trivial weakness of your heart and get up for the battle' (II.3).

Our responsibility in the present times is thus twofold. We have to free ourselves from two sets of control-paradigms. One is man-made, and the other is nature-made. The first battle against reptilian control is basically a psycho-intellectual battle, which is to be won by cultivating the practice of positive thought. It is a journey to a balanced development towards evolution of the frontal lobe, and for this, the will to change is very necessary to aid nature's evolutionary script, rather than passive waiting. The second and climactic battle is to be fought in the battlefield of the self's 'kuruksheṭra', against the desire for 'possession, pleasure and power'. ✧

**Let no wise man unsettle the mind of ignorant people attached to action; but acting in harmony with Me let him render all action attractive.**

*Bhagavadgītā*, III.26

## *Fragments of the Ageless Wisdom*

WHY hast thou said, 'I have sinned so much,  
And God in His mercy has not punished my sins?'  
How many times do I smite thee, and thou knowest not!  
Thou art bound in my chains from head to foot.  
On thy heart is rust on rust collected  
So that thou art blind to divine mysteries.  
When a man is stubborn and follows evil practices,  
He casts dust in the eyes of his discernment.  
Old shame for sin and calling on God quit him;  
Dust five layers deep settles on his mirror,  
Rust spots begin to gnaw his iron,  
The colour of his jewel grows less and less.

Jalaluddin Rumi

# Books of Interest

THE MATHEMATICAL CONNECTION BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE, by Stephen Phillips, Antony Rowe Publishing, UK, 2009, pp. 494.

The book is worth reading by the serious student of a scientific and philosophical bent of mind. The author, in his brilliant and laborious analysis and argument, highlights the meeting of science, mysticism and the paranormal. He also predicts that future research in science, particularly in Physics, will scientifically confirm the mystical geometries, names, numbers, etc., to be holistic.

The book starts with a quotation from F. Schiller's *Theosophie des Julius, The World of Thinking Beings*:

The Universe is a thought of the Deity. Since this ideal thought-form has overflowed into actuality, and the world born thereof has realized the plan of its creator, it is the calling of all thinking beings to rediscover in this existent whole the original design.

The book confirms basic concepts of theosophical teaching, such as, every particle of matter is pervaded by life and consciousness, there is order and design in the universe, and all knowledge emanates from the universal mind. It quotes extensively from *The Secret Doctrine* by H. P. Blavatsky. It also mentions that space-time is twenty-six-dimensional and the perfect number is 496. Mention is

made about the group-mind of sub-atomic particles and the non-local nature according to quantum theory. This study reveals the unity behind various mystical traditions and their connection to theoretical physics.

Mystical teachings are necessarily expressed in the language of the culture in which they originated. Lines and symbols are used to convey the cosmic creation. One such — the Śrī Yantra of the 2000-year-old Tantric tradition, is scientifically studied by the author. He takes both the three-dimensional and two-dimensional aspects of the forty-three triangles in the Yantra, and connects these with the description of the superstring constituents of matter by Besant and Leadbeater; and with the Pythagorean musical scales lends credence to the proposition that the Śrī Yantra can be mathematically analysed and interpreted.

1. Numbers and geometric forms are the basis of creation.
2. Certain properties of numbers and certain geometric forms, when in association, turn sacred.
3. Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Music display properties of numbers and shapes and order, which again is in an isomorphic zone.
4. The known through Science, and the unknown as faith and religion, always stay connected in this mathematical, magic order of numbers as a mysterious phenomenon.
5. Through the human body, the skeleton, nerves, etc., the geometric formation with magic numbers

## Books of Interest

display the order of creation. 6. Music, too, displays perfect mathematical harmony. Mathematics, geometry, have displayed the connecting basis in their studies, leading us to a picture of the WHOLE. 7. All mystical traditions of the world — I Ching, Śri Yantra, the Tree of Life — have these magic numbers and sacred geometric shapes as symbols within their fold, and have been revealed to the human mind.

The author says: Since Pythagorean times, numbers have had metaphysical meanings or characters: One (the Monad) represented the principle of Unity — the undifferentiated source of all created things. Pythagoreans did not regard it as

a number at all, for it was the principle underlying numbers. It was known amongst them by the name of Apollo. The Triad represents the balance achieved by a transcending quality in a higher order, the threefold relation of the One (Monad) to the Many (Dyad). The numbers 1, 2 and 3 thus symbolize respectively, Unity, Diversity, and Unity in Diversity ( $1+2=3$ ).

The author has a research background in theoretical physics, and is the author of *Extra-Sensory Perception of Quarks* and *Anima: Remote Viewing of Subatomic Particles*. The book is most interesting as it has many coloured illustrations with an appendix, a bibliography and two indexes.

C. A. SHINDE

## THE ATOM

Throbbing spiral, heart-shaped force,  
Baffling science still;  
Must a poet yet discover  
Universal Will!

As above so here below —  
(It is written surely.)  
Here's the microcosmic world  
Held by WILL securely!

Helen Gustine Fuller

# Theosophical Work around the World

## **French-Speaking Summer School**

From 22 to 26 July, the Belgian Section organized the French-Speaking Summer School (École d'Été des Pays-Latins) at the beautiful International Theosophical Centre in Naarden, Holland, on the theme 'Theosophy in our Daily Life' ('La théosophie au quotidien'). A perfect blue summer sky lasted for all four days with temperatures approaching 30° C. There were thirty-one inscriptions and the participants came from Belgium, Congo-Brazaville, France, Gabon, Italy and The Netherlands. Lectures were given by Mrs Henriette van der Hecht, the former Belgian General Secretary and by Mr Jan Jelle Keppler, Ms Trân-Thi-Kim-Diêu and Mr Antonio Girardi, the present General Secretaries of Belgium, France and Italy respectively, as well as by Mrs Patrizia Moschin Calvi, the National Secretary from Italy. Six shorter lectures were organized in symposia; the participants could exchange ideas in working groups and a Questions and Answers session completed the programme.

## **Theosophy and Antoinism**

Earlier, on 16 May, the Belgian General Secretary, Mr Jan Jelle Keppler, organized a Lunch Seminar on 'Theosophy and Antoinism' at the Information Centre of the European Union in Brussels. There were about thirty participants. He gave lectures on Theosophy and on Father

Antoine, a Belgian Prophet and healer, who founded the so-called 'theosophical religion' of Antoinism, more than a century ago. This Antoinist cult still has about thirty temples in Belgium and thirty in the north of France. The Information Centre is situated in the heart of the European Centre in Brussels and one of its meeting rooms was made available free of charge by the European Union. Prof. Dr Régis Dericquebourg from the University of Lille, France, gave a lecture on healing religions on which subject he is an authority. Prof. Dr Chris Vonck, Rector of the Faculty for Comparative Study of Religions in Antwerp, Belgium, gave a lecture on the activities of his Faculty.

## **Slovenia**

Mrs Breda Zagar, the Organizing Secretary, informs us that from 15 to 17 June 2012, the Summer School in Slovenia took place in Kranjska Gora, in a beautiful surrounding of unspoiled nature.

The theme of the School this year was 'No Other Path To Go'. The guest speaker was Mrs Mercedes Vila Robuste, who delivered two talks: 'Universal Brotherhood' and 'HPB: Some Words on Daily Life'. Other speakers on the theme were Damjana Gec, Majda Sulc, Dusan Zagar, Blanka Blaj Borstnar, who translated and read the Presidential Address of the 136th Annual Convention, and Breda Zagar, who continued (from the previous year)



Participants of Summer School in Slovenia



Caring for a wild animal



Crows enjoying a meal

## Theosophical Work around the World

with the translation of some pages from Annie Besant and CWL's book, *Talks on the Path of Occultism: Light on the Path*. In the dialogue, 'Jewels of Theosophy', all the members actively participated in a meditative way.

A very nice music concert of a young musician, Prof. Miss Karmen Zidar Kos, and a short trip to the beautiful lakes in Italy, which are near Kranjska Gora, connected all the participants with the world of music and the joyous spirit of nature. The three days held a very harmonious and happy atmosphere: brotherliness was felt in every heart.

All the participants heartily thank Mrs Mercedes Vila Robuste and her daughter, Diana — who at the closing of the school sang a beautiful Spanish song on Love — for coming to the TS in Slovenia for the occasion and giving strong brotherly support. There were approximately thirty-two participants.

### India

The Karnataka Theosophical Federation held its 103rd Annual Conference in Hiriyyur. The theme of the programme was 'Spiritual Regeneration of Humanity'. Prof. C. A. Shinde, National Lecturer of the Indian Section, was the Chief Guest. His talk was entitled 'The Path of the Spiritual Aspirant'.

The inauguration of the Golden Jubilee of the Sarvodaya Theosophical Lodge in Hiriyyur took place simultaneously. Bro. P. K. Jayaswal, National Lecturer and a former General Secretary of the Indian Section, gave the inaugural address.

The events took place from 23 to 25 June, and included a panel discussion, symposium, valedictory programme and talks, among other things. Nearly four hundred people, comprising members and the public, participated.

### Altruistic Activity in Adyar

Adyar being a sanctuary for animals and birds, street dogs find a safe home inside the estate. The Bhojanasala prepares over twenty kilos of nutritious food for them daily — and other animals also, such as squirrels, mongooses, crows, pigs, cats, and even monkeys, feed together with the dogs, sharing the food one after another from a common plate. It is hoped that care for our younger brethren may help raise the human consciousness in general.

### Forthcoming International TOS Conference — 2013

The Theosophical Order of Service will hold an international conference for active workers at the National Centre of the Theosophical Society in America in Wheaton, Illinois, from 23 to 26 July 2013.

An important goal of the gathering will be to identify ways of giving greater support to Theosophists in their service endeavours. There will be a choice of workshops such as 'Deep Listening' and 'Social Action as Spiritual Practice'. The keynote addresses are entitled 'Creative Meditation: Balancing Inner and Outer Action' and 'The TOS — 100 Years from Now'. For information, write to the TOS International Secretary at [tosinternational@wanadoo.fr](mailto:tosinternational@wanadoo.fr). ✧

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*Date refers to the date of formation*

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