



THE THEOSOPHIST

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Founded 17 November 1875

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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.

Presidential Address

To the 137th Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society
Adyar, 26 December 2012

Dear Brethren, I am happy to present this report, which gives a very brief idea of the extent to which the work of the Society has been carried on during the past year. But before I do so I would like to welcome all of you to this 137th Annual Convention which, like the others held up to now, has been a large gathering. To gather, not only to the same extent an outline of work done, but also more importantly the higher influences which come from above, is of great importance. A Convention held in the right spirit, can create an atmosphere which is blessed, and influences many people not only in the gatherings, but outside them. We can thus be a part of the teachings of the Great Ones, and become the channel of their powerful influence (Please rise)

May those who are the embodiment of Love Immortal bless with their help and guidance this Society, founded to be a channel for their work. May They inspire it with their Wisdom, strengthen it with their Power, and energize it with their Activity.

I am happy to open this 137th Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society.

The Convention is an occasion for all of us to give our thoughts to what the Society must do to carry out its work in the intended way. Up to now it has been working at making the world happier, perhaps a little better than it was before. If we look back we can see that the Society has accomplished much, particularly in the West. It has taken part in changing many peoples' views and thus taken a step forward in the necessary direction. It has had its own place in changing the attitudes of people in general — from blind obedience to religious leaders of

various communities to free examination of how we think and what we think. This process is not over by any means. Man, especially the modern, enquiring man, has understood life from a scientific point of view and must perhaps cast a necessary look to see whether he can accomplish what is intended for human beings in the evolutionary way.

The human being must look at the whole of life, and only then may he perceive the path that humanity has to tread. We have indeed looked at life from a sharper, more advanced view. But the

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various sciences which are contributing to the most up-to-date outlook do not even try to meet each other to arrive at a comprehensive view. The most striking part of the scientific advance is that at present the scientific outlook makes it possible to go to war with weapons so advanced that they may achieve much, but also destroy what they cannot replace.

Other kinds of life have existed and still exist in the world, but it has not made the human being wiser to know about them. Most people think they know, but what they know is all at the same level. They do not know the direction in which humans should move, the objectives they need to incorporate, and also, the purpose and beauty which are an intrinsic part of the marvel that is life. In fact, man does not realize that he is part of one great creation, an undivided whole.

The result of the present-day attitude, with all the advancements in knowledge both theoretical and practical, is to make man believe that he is the master at the top of all that exists. The many forms of Nature and the creatures in it, as well as the role they can play in taking nature forward, is lost or misinterpreted, or even put to an end. The number of creatures lost is very large and cannot be replaced. But man does not know what he really destroys, whether it is a form of life which will lead to advancement or not.

It is sane and important to find out what is really necessary to have a good future. Much depends on what we are and what we do now. The majority of people

do not see the need for thinking about the future for humanity, or the future of the planet. They behave more or less as if it has come to a stop in the direction of the future. But the fact is that what we do now makes a great deal of difference to what happens to us in the future.

The quality of life, what we have in mind about humanity's development and the development of all the creatures that exist now is going to have a great effect. But we go on as if what we care for should be present only and that too what we can see of the present. But that is not so.

Even if we think we can see, there is a great difference between man as he is now and as he will be in the future. The great teachers of the world were those who behaved wisely even when others did not; and not those who could see that it was not the right action, but at the same time, felt compelled to repeat these actions and, gave back only what they saw and not something higher, more spiritual and true.

The well-known story of Angulimala illustrates this. After he talked with the Buddha, he was no longer influenced by the attitude of a would-be killer. His attitude transformed from that of a killer to a good man, and grew into greater goodness. This is the response of those who have gone forward spiritually. And so the higher grows to become spiritual and in turn changes those who do not behave as he does, since he goes the way of the pure and intelligent.

Every one of us has a duty to see more widely and more accurately, to become aware of the difference between the best

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and the others. In fact, most of the spiritual men who have helped other human beings were those who always did the right action by watching and seeing the difference between the worldly and the spiritual.

We have to work in the direction of greater spirituality. Therefore the advice given to us is to not return anything but the good and the true. The person who does not know learns more than anyone in the world, by seeing. While making progress there can be differences. For instance, a person who does not return evil for good, is not doing as well as the person who does not ever do evil, but progresses by doing good in a better way, in every way. And so to others of what they can believe and do.

This is the way the world has slowly improved. But humanity has now entered a stage where what was known by acting again and again in the same way and learning slowly is necessary. The person who knows what is right acts accordingly whatever others may do. The life of Giordano Bruno, who is reputed to have been Annie Besant in a previous incarnation, was illustrative of this. It is said that truly religious people in the past sometimes put up with great hardship because they knew that they did not act wrongly. The good always shows what is correct and true, not what other people regard as impossible.

If we know in advance what we have to do, then the way becomes clear. Everybody finds this out sooner or later, but we do not wish to postpone our arrival at the entrance to the path, and so we try

to understand the whole process. In an ordinary situation we know what the end is, and that helps to differentiate between what is right or wrong. The same is true of every part of the way when we know where we are going. Even though we may make mistakes, we can correct them without delay; otherwise we just go round and round. That is the big difference between the people who go round the hill slowly, and not go straight up: that of knowing where the top is. So it is important to know what the path is really. Is it going round or going straight up?

In Theosophy we are sure the way is going straight up and not wandering around without knowing whether we are going directly or not. Each person is following the other, right or wrong. But a little wrong movement can be corrected either by oneself or by the Teacher who gives the direction in a gentle way. The Theosophical Society has been founded partly to help people who are willing to receive it and partly to indicate whether one is going right or wrong. Of course there will be people who, to make themselves prominent, show us the wrong method. This is still helpful if we know how to take help. The path is strange because everything can help or hinder according to how one interprets it. It may be varied, but the direction cannot because it does not come from the human mind.

The real Teacher is, like so many other things, a person who is pointing towards the way or away from it. It depends on our interpretation, which can be right or

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completely wrong. There was a man who trod the way for a long time but somehow the feeling that he knew better than the person he had to help began to grow without his realizing it, and one day he

had a fall. We must carefully avoid such a thing happening.

So we must watch carefully all the time that we do not take wrong guidance. Watchfulness is therefore fundamental.

* * *

The Internet presence of the TS in America is said to be growing. The General Secretary says: 'It is common knowledge today that the internet is a premier research tool for the global population.' This information is not exactly correct because there are countries in the poor regions which do not have the facilities of the American Section and therefore it is not correct to say that the internet presence is the most notable area of growth.

It has also been stated that the TSA has been working with other National Sections in North, Central and South America. The TS in America has developed some material in the Spanish language which is a good thing. Mr David Bruce is working with several provisional study centres. It is reported that *The Secret Doctrine* has enabled, through its symposium in the Section, to increase membership by 105%. The symposium is intended to continue for two years. The lady in charge of the 'Member Services Department' reports that the downward trend in membership seems to have levelled out. The total was 3357.

The Department of Information has been successful in recruiting volunteers from the local community. The Department of Education continues to help prisoners

for various courses, using Wallace Slater's *Hatha Yoga and Raja Yoga* manuals. They have 197 audio-visual programmes, twelve of which have been added this year. They have a video programme with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, which adds to their pleasant compilation. They continue to encourage branches and study centres. The Olcott Memorial Library has gone through a major transition in staffing. Its doors have been opened to children, and young students from some schools have been visiting. The Archives Department continues to answer requests. On Thursday evenings a lecture series is arranged by webcasting many of these. They hope to have the possibility of reaching national and international audiences. The activities of the Olcott Drama Troupe and the Order of the Round Table, also work to communicate involvement and study.

On the whole we can say that the American Section has taken on new life with the new General Secretary, Mr Tim Boyd. Quest Books has also exhibited at the American Library Associations Conference at Arnheim and also at some of the other book distribution centres. The Quest journal continues to be published on a quarterly basis and provides a lively

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forum for discussion. The Maintenance Department has undertaken many improvement projects. On the whole, members seem to be happy about changes that have been made.

The Italian Section is the largest of the Sections in Europe with more than a thousand members. In fact, this year we are bringing your attention to first the Sections which have really good membership, and later to the others. The Italian General Secretary quotes from the conclusion of *At the Feet of the Master*: 'The wisdom which enables you to help, the will which directs the wisdom, the love which inspires the will — these are your qualifications. Will, Wisdom and Love are the three aspects of Logos; and you who wish to enroll yourselves to serve Him, must show forth these aspects in the world'. They try to do that. They say that Universal Brotherhood without any distinction is and will always be the Pole Star on the path towards awareness. There are thirty-six groups and sixteen centres which have some members' meetings only and some other public talks. In big cities the Italian Section owns seats in libraries, and elsewhere meetings are held in rented places or private houses. An important role is played by the website, which is constantly updated and has at present about 3000 viewers. The Section publishes the monthly magazine *Rivista Italiana di Teosofia*, which is printed in 1300 copies. The monthly newsletter is sent via e-mail to about 2000 contacts, chosen for their interest in Theosophy even if they are not members. During the last year

the following books were published in translation: *Esoteric Christianity*, *The Seven Principles of Man*, *The Voice of the Silence* and Annie Besant's *Reincarnation*, all of which have been in high demand. A traditional Spring seminar took place in March 2012 at the Congress Centre of a hotel in Rome. The Mayor of the city sent a messenger with greetings. In April a seminar was organized in collaboration with the Swiss theosophical body in Ascona, Switzerland. Some representatives of the Swiss Section attended the Latin Countries Summer School organized at Naarden by the Belgian Section.

An important seminar was arranged on Art and Theosophy at Grado with several Italian academicians present. The Section has always tried to maintain a connection with Adyar.

A Cuban report says that they had their annual Convention on the theme 'The Mahatma Letters and the Theosophical Movement'. The Section lost the presence of Mr Gaspar Torres who is now in Krotona. Ms Barbara A. Fariñas Piña is the present General Secretary. The studies of the Lodges are as usual on theosophical subjects. They continue to celebrate Adyar Day and White Lotus Day. They are going to submit a national decision to the international Society to optionally change the word 'religion' in the motto to the word 'dharma', which they find is more meaningful.

The English Section has seen the first fall in membership in eight years. They are attempting to reverse this trend. This year's Summer School, it is said, was

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again a great success. The Blavatsky Lecture was given by Mrs Erica Georgiadis from the Greek Section, who spoke on the Olympian Ideal of Universal Brotherhood. The School was apparently very inspiring. Lodges across the country are working hard.

Another large Section is the Australian Section. A part of the Section's report is about the stewardship of the General Secretary's office by Ms Dara Tatray. Considering the major changes during the year, we are told that the Headquarters office is running very well. The General Secretary Mrs Linda Oliveira spoke at a number of places including the National Convention in Brisbane. The Section has a membership of 1060 including 135 national members who do not belong to any Lodge. In July a mid-year workshop was held on membership and about how to enhance the quality of members and attract new ones. The organization is not as important, they say, as it used to be. *Theosophy in Australia* was published four times in the year and the annual Convention was held early in the year as usual with the theme 'Current Thinking in Evidence of the Third Object'. Dr Pablo Sender has been invited to tour the Section in the year 2013 and all the theosophical centres have been functioning very well. The main source of publicity here as in other economically advanced countries was the national and local websites.

There are four lodges in Slovenia, all of which have regular meetings. One new member was added. It was decided to dedicate this year particularly to

brotherhood and harmony and all the lodges can become living fires shining to members in the world. The lodges continued in the path of occultism, and all TS memorial days were attended by members. All the members gathered on the 16th February despite it being the coldest winter of the year. The Summer School went off well with about thirty members attending. Two mini schools were held: 'Understanding' and 'Annie Besant — Great Servant of Humanity'. Krishnamurti's talk 'On Knowing Oneself' was also screened. The annual gathering was held in Celje and four public lectures were given by Mrs Damjana Gec. They continue to give financial support to the Social Welfare Centre in Adyar.

In Austria there are three lodges with fifty-six members and all the lodges conduct weekly lectures on one of the theosophical classics. Members regularly receive the Adyar magazine. In the Austrian annual meeting Mr Albert Schichl was elected as the Organizing Secretary.

The Icelandic section is conducting weekly talks on Fridays and Saturdays from October 2011 to May 2012. In total forty-six meetings were held this year. The talks were printed in the newspaper free of charge, and the usual attendance was forty to sixty persons. During refreshment people get the opportunity for personal contacts. The head of each lodge is responsible for organizing lectures from eminent scholars, professors, psychologists etc., on various subjects. Although the talks vary, they are still linked to the aims of the TS. *Gangleri* is published biannually

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in addition to the triannual newsletter *Mundilfari*. The Summer School was held in June and was reportedly enjoyable and useful. There are seven active lodges in Reykjavik and in two other places outside the capital. All European countries have had financial difficulties because of the general monetary situation. The Annual General Meeting was held in May and Halldor Haraldson was elected as the General Secretary.

In Netherlands there were eight meetings of the National Board. The National Headquarters in Amsterdam is open during the week and the membership is 371. We are told that there is a close and brotherly cooperation with the team at the Naarden European home of the TS. The quarterly magazine *Theosofia* is published regularly. There are ten lodges and nine study centres and all the lodges and centres are more or less active.

The French section has been in the same position as last year. There have been problems in 'Marseille' Lodge. A few of the lodges seem to be active and the magazine *Le Lotus Bleu* has been published regularly. The healing group meets once a week to serve humans in sorrow and pain, as it has been doing since several years.

The Annual Summer School in Germany was held in July in a small village with beautiful surroundings and with talks by Ms Mary Anderson and others. In North Germany two meetings were successfully held. As of end-September the Section had 114 members. One must not forget that most of the sections do not say what the difficulties

have been. They will be remembering Former General Secretary Eva Maas who died in July 2010. She was the head of the section from 1984 to 1996.

In Greece elections were held as usual and Mr Theodoros Katsifis was elected as the General Secretary. The traditional celebrations were held on Foundation Day, White Lotus Day and Adyar Day. The magazine *Ilisos* is being published once in three months and several books have been re-printed. The centre is attempting to spread theosophical ideas in new places.

The Spanish Section conducted a meditation retreat in December with 48 people attending, with the subject 'Light on the Path'. The Jornadas Ibericas in Madrid was also well attended with 75 people, and the subject was 'Fundamentals of Esoteric Philosophy'. It is reported that under the supervision of Isaac Jauli, the Annual Summer School was conducted and 105 participants attended.

In Sweden there were three study groups and one dialogue group. The main subjects studied were *The Secret Doctrine* and Dr I. K. Taimini's *Self-Culture*. Two workshops were also organized. Public lectures were held in Stockholm and the Summer School of Sweden was conducted by a Buddhist monk from the Stockholm Buddhist Vihara which is said to have been very successful.

The Theosophical work in Finland continues, with twenty-five lodges, two study groups and 433 members. Apart from the Spanish lecturers the section had some guest speakers to enthuse the

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members. In September Mr Jan Jelle Kepppler gave a public lecture at the Headquarters and also in eastern Finland. Oulu Lodge celebrated its Centenary and is doing very well. An exhibition was organized in the name of 'Theosophy 100 years' in Finland and in Kajaani, the Theosophical Society in the north-east of Finland.

The TS Headquarters' Library has more than fifty thousand books and videos are also available. They are trying to reach people through e-mail and with book sales. Every new Member receives two books *The Key to Theosophy* and *Damodar — A Disciple of a Master*. The magazine *Teosofi* appears six times a year and two books *Light on the Path* and *The Seven Principles of Man* have been published.

East and Central Africa is composed of four sections, located in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia. In Kenya 'Non-Violence' was marked by the presence of Sri Samdhong Rinpoche in September 2012. His talks were attended by seventy people and appreciated very much. Sri Samdhong Rinpoche planted two trees to mark fifty years of the Nairobi lodge's existence. The lodge has regular meetings and it is said that it is 'a model' for other lodges. Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam were apparently the most active of the lodges. Nairobi lodge has programmes both in Gujarati and English which are held alternatively each month. Their books studies, talks, videos and other programmes are keeping the lodge very active. There were series of talks on the various

international presidents, with a total of sixty-five meetings. The Dar-es-Salaam lodge in Tanzania conducts in-depth study of theosophical literature and has ladies meetings every week on two days as most of the ladies need to have meetings in their own language. Kampala in Uganda has been discussing articles published in *The Theosophist* and elsewhere, and in total twenty-four study classes were conducted.

In Dar-es-Salaam one person has taken the initiative of selling the entire property which belongs to the lodge and is doing things according to his own ideas. The Dar-es-Salaam Lodge has been active in helping the TOS as is the Nairobi lodge. The Section book stall is very rich and it is proposed to hand it over to Nairobi lodge.

In March in Russia and the Russian-influenced countries like Ukraine, an all Russian Conference was organized with more than one hundred people from fourteen cities present. In April a seminar on 'Theosophy as an Art of Living was Conducted' in Moscow. In May White Lotus Day was celebrated and about thirty people participated in Russia. Many activities have been going on in Russia. Guest lecturer was Ms Gavrilenko and about fifty people participated.

Ukraine presently has seventy-two members and four lodges. The Ukraine Convention was held with more than one hundred participants and the first study camp was held at Crimea with thirty-six participants. The TS in Ukraine presents its work in an electronic form and on the whole it is said that some

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activities has taken place in a number of different associations.

The Belgian Section has ninety-five members in seven lodges. Thirty members together make two lodges and conduct meeting at the Headquarters. In the provinces, there is a French speaking branch in Wallonia and a Dutch speaking branch in Leuven. On 16 May 2012 the General Secretary organized a seminar in Brussels which about thirty people attended. From 22 to 26 July the Belgian Section organized a summer school, where members from Belgium, Congo-Brazaville, France and Gabon, Italy and Netherlands all participated.

The English Section is conducting a diploma course, and so far 250 members have completed the course. The summer school was conducted with great success. The English Section has withdrawn from the European Federation.

In the Southern African Section lecture programmes are conducted at Johannesburg, Pretoria and Durban Lodges. The layouts and indexing of the lodge libraries have been made more user-friendly.

There are twenty five members in Croatia and lodge meetings take place regularly in Zagreb.

In Orlando, lodge discussions, study classes and meetings are held regularly.

In the Nippon lodge monthly study meetings take place at Tokyo, Japan, and there is greater emphasis on the study of H. P. Blavatsky's literature.

The West African Section has 247 members. Adyar Day celebration was

observed. A public lecture was organized at Accra by the Blavatsky Lodge in March. The School of the Wisdom was conducted in April and August and both under the Directorship of Mr Isaac K. Zaney.

The Indian Section, which is the biggest, was as usual very busy with the many activities in the lodges. The General Secretary says that if enough human beings could realize the ignorance which exists at present among human beings to distinguish between right and wrong, between truth and what is false, between the just and unjust, they will be able to see the reality, that is why in the Indian tradition stress has been laid on true knowledge as an instrument of inner freedom, to come out of the prison which is man's own creation. The TS must encourage and help members to deepen and expand their knowledge in this sense.

The 121st Indian Section Convention was held at Adyar on 27 December in which the President said the members of the Indian Section have a great responsibility to live according to ethical and other values of importance. To live according to principles has a far reaching effect as shown by the lives of the Buddha, Kabir etc. There were a number of meetings at Varanasi itself and a separate Convention was held to coincide with the Annual Convention of the TS. Before that there was a retreat organized with the help of the Trika Trust in which the General Secretary's wife Smt. Manju Sundaram played a prominent part. In addition to this there were both North India and South

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India Conferences and many others, which we can't list but we can read about them in the Annual Report of the Section. The General Secretary visited and spoke as a Chief Guest at several of these meetings and Mr M. P. Singhal helped in several of these and was the Chief Guest in the Centenary Celebrations of Kerala and Marathi Federations. The Section received several lakhs of rupees in compensation after a part of the premises was taken over for the purpose of widening the road. The Membership of the Section was 11,712 although in this Section it is impossible to give the exact figure.

The Section has renovated the property in Bhovali and hopes to make it a very useful asset of the Section. People may refer to the Annual Report for anything else they want to know about.

The International Headquarters at Adyar has been constrained by the lack of workers. The Indian Government at present is very strict about having foreigners work in India, and going with

their own ideas regarding what is good for India. But this has produced a vacuum at Adyar which we are slowly filling up otherwise. The property in Adyar has done well and we hope to have more information to give at the next Convention.

The whole world has to change from the present condition to a new one at a different level. The TS has to provide part of the leadership that is necessary for this to happen and so we have a great responsibility and whether we fulfill it or not depends on the amount of enthusiasm and careful management put into the work of the Society. This does not refer particularly to the Section or Lodge which we are concerned with, but with the Society as a whole. To have the courage to take the work in areas which will make it of importance in the life of the entire earth. From mineral to human beings, all have to travel to a state of perfection and we must aid this process by the quality of our whole life and the help we give to the elements of a lower order.

RADHA BURNIER

Three Great Truths

The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit.

The principle which gives life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard, or seen, or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

The Search for Truth

BHUPENDRA R. VORA

IN an ancient Upanishad is a prayer or perhaps an aspiration that is of deep significance. It is a prayer for the realization of truth and acquiring the light of wisdom that could lead to immortality. Many of the Upanishad-s commence with similar prayers that set the tone for the subsequent enquiry into the nature of things, and are very profound in their meanings. The mantra conveying this prayer is:

*Om, asato mā sad-gamaya
tamaso mā jyotir-gamaya
mrityor mā amṛtam-gamaya*

The meaning is: 'From the unreal lead me to the real. From darkness lead me to the light. From death lead me to immortality.' The human spirit has since time immemorial, been in quest of the truth of existence and the purpose of life. Hence in all ages and in all parts of the world there have been thinkers and sages who have endeavoured to understand the nature of the Universe and the purpose of life. The ancient sage who composed this beautiful prayer expresses the desire for knowing the sublime truths of life.

This quest is very poetically expressed in the *Nāsadiya Sutra* of the *Ṛg Veda*

where the sage who composed the verse enquires about the nature of reality. So profound is his enquiry that Madame Blavatsky has placed this at the commencement of the stanzas on Cosmogony in volume I of *The Secret Doctrine*. It has beautiful imagery and describes the night of Brahmā and the stirring of consciousness with the arrival of the dawn of creation. The sage describes the grandness of creation and poses the question about the creator of all this and whether the gods in heaven know the secret or whether perhaps even they know not.

The poet, William Blake, poses a similar question in the beautiful poem from his book, *Songs of Innocence*, to express wonderment at the source of creation. He writes:

Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright:
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?

Mr Bhupendra R. Vora is a former General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in East and Central Africa, now living in England. Public Lecture delivered at Bristol Lodge, August 2011.

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Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

The poet expresses wonderment at the creator for his wonderful creation and the divine thought that has considered all the necessities of the lamb with great intricacy and care. All around us we see the wonders of nature in the majesty of the trees, the beauty of the butterfly and the tenacity of the little ant carrying food to its nest. From the giant whales in the oceans of the world to the bears living in the Arctic, all life has been provided with a body mechanism that is special to it and caters to its needs. With discerning eyes one can see life unfolding and vibrating everywhere in nature. What intelligence is responsible for this creation and what are its secrets is a question man has sought an answer to in all times. About this wonder of creation and of the divine intelligence, *The Light of Asia* states:

Shall any gazer see with mortal eyes,
Or any searcher know by mortal mind;
Veil after veil will lift — but there
must be
Veil upon veil behind.

(Book the Eighth)

The mystery of the Universe is reflected in this verse that suggests that the mind at its level of consciousness cannot comprehend the depth and vastness of creation. The mind that is caught up in the world of multiplicity and conflict falls short in the comprehension of the grandness of creation or the working of the intelligence behind it. In the prayer of the Upanishad recited above is an

aspiration to know the real nature of things at all levels of existence. What is real and what is unreal is an enquiry of all true seekers. How does one ascertain the truth of the experiences that one has and test the authenticity of the real? Radha Burnier, in her book, *No Other Path to Go*, states:

Every realization of truth, a partial realization though it may be, has to be tested by observation and experience, as otherwise it may prove to be illusory, or empty thought based on false premises. It is only if we proceed thus in a practical manner in our daily lives, day after day, with a vision which penetrates through the unreality of phenomena that true detachment comes into existence.

Therefore, all experiences have to be tested at the anvil of Truth. In worldly experiences our perceptions are usually coloured by our preconditioning and therefore are partially real or not real at all; for example, the early belief that the sun went around the earth until the Heliocentric Theory was proved and accepted. Therefore what appears to be real is often not so as pointed out by the example that is often given of a piece of rope seen as a snake in the dark. The limited outer consciousness often provides a myopic view of what it observes. Even at an entirely physical level, human awareness falls short and is not able to take in what there is for the senses to perceive. Krishnamurti advised that all experiences should be free of any preconditioning. When a tree is seen in all its majesty, as it is, without any comparison

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or colouring from a previous experience, then it becomes a deep communion with the life within.

At the objective level all that the material world presents is real to the consciousness in its outer manifestation. The Veda-s have called this the world of name (*nāma*) and form (*rupa*) where the illusion of separateness is felt by the consciousness trapped in forms. Under the influence of *māyā* or illusion it sees itself different from that in others. The 'I and mine' sense comes into being thus separating it from others. Thus this divided consciousness experiences a world of multiplicity which though real at the outer level, expresses only a partial truth and does not reveal the totality. Man lives at this outer level of consciousness and sees his world as that of totality, without comprehension of the underlying reality of the spirit. He therefore lives a materialistic life aimed to satisfy his desires and ambitions, without any reflection on its deeper aspects.

In the *Katha Upanishad*, such existence has been described as leading the human being from death to death, or in other words, leading the person through the cycles of birth and death. In the profound dialogue between the Lord of Death and the bright young aspirant Nachiketa is a discussion on the attractions of the material world that are ephemeral, and the constancy and eternal nature of the spirit that is its source. The aspirant is asked to distinguish between that which is pleasurable to the senses but is impermanent and the cause of suffering

that leads him from death to death; or that which leads to an understanding of the manifested world and the bliss and harmony of the Divine Life which is the source of all life.

The illusions of the material world are many and therefore humans live primarily at the outer level, hardly ever recognizing that there is an underlying field of Universal Consciousness pervading this world of multiplicity. Therefore there is no understanding of the reasons for death and birth or the cause of suffering in the world or the purpose of life. This one existence is seen as the only reality and no serious enquiry is made into life's deeper questions. All opportunities for the enjoyment of sensual pleasures or fulfilment of ambitions are therefore seized upon in this fleeting life upon earth. In one of his letters (no. 8), the Mahatma KH describes this pursuit of material happiness:

Ah! that whirling, showy, glittering world, full of insatiable ambition, where family and the State parcel out between them a man's nobler nature, as two tigers a carcass, and leave him without hope or light!

This is as truly reflective of the state of the world in the present as it was more than a century ago when the Mahatma Letters were written. Human effort goes into working for the satisfaction of desires for the self and family or for the State to which a person is obligated. Man runs after the glittery, showy world of wealth and material comforts or power, fame, and so forth, to satisfy his ambitions. He has therefore

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little time to think about the more profound aspects of life and gets caught in a world of illusion. It is illusionary in the sense that it is fleeting and not likely to give him peace and happiness. In the *Isa Upanishad*, the sage prays:

The face of the Truth (Brahman in the solar orb) is concealed by a golden vessel. Do thou, O Sun, open it so as to be seen by me who am the performer of rightful duties. (v. 15)

The face of Truth is covered with a brilliant golden lid (world of *māyā* or materialism with all its glitter) that prevents the human consciousness from perceiving the underlying Universal Life that is at the root of its existence. Human beings operate primarily at the level of the mind and therefore perceive only the partial truth that is the world of forms but not the spirit behind that. The sage of the Upanishad therefore prays for the removal of the glitter of the material world so that he may have a vision of the Reality. Even though man in general pursues worldly pleasures and ambitions, he does feel something lacking in his life that eventually leads him to search for the truth and the purpose of life.

In the 'New Testament', Jesus said to the Jews who believed in him: 'If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed . . . *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*' (John 8:31, 32). In the *Bhagavadgītā*, the disciple Arjuna expresses his belief and faith in Lord Kṛṣṇa and prays for a vision of the Lord (Brahman) without the

distortions of the material world and is blessed by the Divine vision. The vision was that of infinity within which is the entire universe with all its diversified manifestations (XI.13).

The Buddha's search for the truth took him from one hermitage to another to learn the scriptures and to discover the truths of existence. It was years later when sitting in meditation under the Bodhi tree that he received enlightenment. He declared that *tr̥shnā* or desire for sentient life was the cause of suffering in the world. In his first sermon to the world he talked about the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path that could lead to liberation. He states in the Noble Truths that there was suffering in the world and there was a cause for this suffering that was *tr̥shnā* or desire, and there was a solution and it was the Noble Eightfold Path of right perception and living. But he also spoke about the chain of causation that shackled human beings to the wheels of birth and death. *The Mahatma Letters* quote the Buddha from the *Mahavagga Sutra*, regarding the 'Chain of Causation' (Letter no. 10):

From Ignorance spring the *samkhāra-s* [*samskāra-s*] of threefold nature — productions of body, of speech, of thought. From the *samkhāra-s* springs consciousness, from consciousness springs name and form, from this spring the six regions (of the six senses, the seventh being the property of but the enlightened); from these springs contact from this sensation; from this springs thirst (or desire, *kāma, tanhā*); from thirst, attachment, existence, birth,

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old age and death, grief, lamentation, suffering, dejection and despair. Again by the destruction of ignorance, the *samkhāra-s* are destroyed, and their consciousness, name and form, the six regions, contact, sensation, thirst, attachment (selfishness), existence, birth, old age, death, grief, lamentation, suffering, dejection, and despair are destroyed. Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.

When we look at the world around us we see suffering everywhere and men caught up in the 'whirling wheel of strife and stress' through attachment and desire. *The Light of Asia* states:

If ye lay bound upon the wheel of change,
And no way were of breaking from
the chain,
The Heart of boundless Being is a curse,
The Soul of Things fell Pain.

The Light of Asia states further:

Ye suffer from yourselves. None else
compels,
None other holds you that ye live
and die,
And whirl upon the wheel, and hug
and kiss
Its spokes of agony.

As the Buddha explains in the Chain of Causation, the process of bondage arises from *trshnā* or the desire for sentient living and ignorance of the purpose of life. By removal of ignorance the whole chain of bondage is reversed and the aspirant is led to the path of enlightenment and bliss.

The search for truth and the way to enlightenment has always preoccupied the

minds of thinking men in all ages. The Theosophical Society's motto, 'There is no religion higher than Truth', indicates that genuine progress can only be made when there is a proper understanding of the nature of existence and the laws governing the Universe. With this understanding man realizes the purpose of life and his role in the world.

The purpose of evolution is to lead to higher levels of consciousness and as the third of the Fundamental Propositions in the Proem of *The Secret Doctrine* states, 'the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul — a spark of the [Universal Over-Soul] — through the Cycle of Incarnation, (or 'Necessity'), in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law'. Vedic tradition mentions four aims of the worldly life for human beings. These are *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *moksha*. The pursuit of wealth or *artha* and the pleasures of the worldly life or *kāma* were expected to be guided by *dharma* or righteous living. The worldly life was therefore not denounced, but was to be lived ethically and morally with care for the welfare of others. The tradition also mentions that the latter part of life was to be devoted to spiritual pursuits for liberation or *moksha*. There was great wisdom in the adjunct that a part of one's life be spent in the pursuit of spiritual endeavours and working for the well-being of others. This created a balance between the material and the spiritual aspects, and gave a purpose to life. The pursuit of wealth (*artha*) and pleasures of the worldly life (*kāma*), however, are the only aims that are pursued by man and human greed sees

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no bounds. In order to attain wealth and position, all the principles of moral and ethical living are compromised.

The philosophy of the Stoics has a lot to teach us in this respect. The Stoics taught that harmony and happiness are achieved by striving for virtue rather than pleasure. Virtue, according to them, consists of understanding nature through reason, accepting by self-discipline the cosmic purpose, and living in accordance with duty, truth and natural law. Much of the conflicts in the world could be avoided if men lived virtuous lives in harmony with nature.

What we are witnessing in the world at present is an intense race for greater and greater wealth, more and more worldly comforts, and the ambition for power whether political or economical. As long as the true purpose of life is not understood, human suffering will not end and man will not rise to the glory of enlightenment that is his destiny. The ancient sages proclaimed to man:

satyam vada, dharmam chara

Speak the truth and follow the path of righteousness.

Most people will agree that it is moral to tell the truth and immoral to lie and yet in social life a recourse to untruth is normal. This is so even in the business world. In one of the Mahatma Letters the Mahatma KH writes (Letter no. 30):

What would you think of a gentleman, or a lady, whose affable politeness of manner and suavity of language would cover no

falsehood; who, in meeting you would tell you plainly and abruptly what he thinks of you, or of anyone else? And where can you find that pearl of honest tradesmen or that god-fearing patriot, or politician . . .

The comments made by the Mahatma are very significant and need careful consideration. In order to achieve success in business, politics or other social activities human beings resort to much untruth. In speech it is the common human trait of saying nice things to others that may not be true or not meant. This is regarded as common courtesy and a display of good manners. Yet this is falsehood that prevents the flowering of intuition. At the same time speech is not meant to hurt and therefore discrimination is required in one's dealings with others.

Similarly, the way of *dharmam* or righteousness is the way of love and compassion where there is mindfulness for all life. The Buddha pointed the way in the Noble Eightfold Path. He taught that only with a right understanding of the purpose of life can a person take the right steps on the path. Being caught up in the world of illusion man is unable to realize the purpose of life and the real nature of things.

Everything in nature from the smallest forms of life to distant star systems reveal a divine designer who is perfecting the forms through which the universal life is manifesting itself. Thinkers, poets and sages have expressed wonder at the creator of this beautiful Universe. It is amazing that billions of stars and their

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satellites move in a great orchestra in deep space without any of them coming in the way of others. They all move with mathematical precision. This movement of stars reveals the work of some great intelligence that leads everything to greater and greater perfection and beauty.

The human mind however remains caught up in the illusions of this world of *māyā* and therefore is unable to see the majesty of creation in everything around it: the perfection in the symmetry of the petals and scent of the rose flower, the ability of the birds flying high in the skies to navigate their way around, or the seed that remains hibernating in the ground and sprouts when the right season arrives. In every form of life that surrounds us, there is innate beauty that reveals the work of a great artist or creator. The sensitivity and awareness to perceive the work of nature requires a lifting up of the consciousness from observation of the superficial to the sublime in everything.

The illusion of separateness manifests in many ways and provides the causes for conflict in the world. Since ancient times men in their search for truth have given their own definitions and interpretations of truth resulting in different schools of thought. These have been the cause of schisms and conflict throughout the ages. Instead of leading their adherents and followers to a path of love and compassion that the founders advocated, traditional religions have caused much conflict, violence and suffering in the world.

Kahlil Gibran, in his book, *The Wanderer*, refers to the story of two

philosophers who met on the way and discussed their quest for the truth. One of them said that he was searching for the 'fountain of youth' and the other one said that he was seeking 'the mystery of death'. They then got into an argument accusing each other of spiritual blindness. While they were wrangling, a third man came on the scene and said: 'My good men, it seems that you both really belong to the same school of philosophy, and that you speak in different words. One of you seeks the fountain of youth, and the other seeks the mystery of death. Yet indeed they are but one, and as one they dwell in you both.' This story tells us about the conflicts human beings get involved in to assert the rightness of their belief systems.

Lord Mahāvira, the last *Tirthankara* of the Jaina faith, provided a solution to the disagreements and confrontations between peoples of different faiths through his principle of *Anekāntvāda*. He declared that truth had many aspects and people perceived aspects of it and proclaimed them as the total truth, when in fact their vision or perception was that of only the partial truth. To illustrate this point he gave the example of four blind men around an elephant. They were all touching the elephant from different positions and therefore gave differing views of what it was like; one of them stated that it was like a rope as he was standing near its tail; the second man standing near the leg insisted that it was like a pillar and the third man standing by its side and feeling its body mass stated that it was like a wall and the fourth

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blind man standing in the front near the trunk, described him as similar to a hose-pipe. They were all stating partial truths but none had the sight of the elephant in its totality.

In the preaching of their doctrines the proponents of the various religions have a similar myopic view of truth. In *The Mahatma Letters* is a stark commentary on the human condition in the context of the traditional religions and the cause of evil. One of the Mahatmas writes (Letter no.10):

I will point out the greatest, the chief cause of nearly two thirds of the evils that pursue humanity ever since that cause became a power. It is religion under whatsoever form and in whatever nation. It is the sacerdotal caste, the priesthood and the churches; it is in those illusions that man looks upon as sacred, that he has to search out the source of that multitude of evils which is the great curse of humanity and that almost overwhelms mankind. Ignorance created gods and cunning took advantage of the opportunity. Look at India and look at Christendom and Islam, at Judaism and Fetichism. It is priestly imposture that rendered these gods so terrible to man; it is religion that makes of him the selfish bigot, the fanatic that hates all mankind out of his own sect without rendering him any better or more moral for it. It is belief in God and gods that makes two-thirds of humanity the slaves of a handful of those who deceive them under the false pretence of saving them. Is not man ever ready to commit any kind of evil if told that his God or gods demand

the crime — voluntary victim of an illusionary God, the abject slave of his crafty ministers? . . . For two thousand years India groaned under the weight of caste, Brahmins alone feeding on the fat of the land, and today the followers of Christ and those of Mahomet are cutting each other's throats in the name of and for the greater glory of their respective myths. Remember the sum of human misery will never be diminished unto that day when the better portion of humanity destroys in the name of Truth, morality, and universal charity, the altars of their false gods.

The observation made by the Mahatmas more than a century ago, about the human condition, still apply. All over the world we witness the clash of ideologies in one form or another. Incorrect interpretations are made of the teachings of the scriptures and the priestly class mislead the members of the faith to believe in something that is not true and likely to lead to conflict. Therefore we read about violent clashes between Hindus and Moslems or Christians and Moslems in one part of the world or another. Even within members of the same faith, among the different sects like the Sunnis and Shias or the Protestants and Catholics there is considerable mistrust and violence. The Mahatmas' observation that established religions have been the cause of much suffering in the world is entirely true.

When the Theosophical Society was set up in 1875, it envisaged the creation of a Universal Brotherhood without any distinction of race and religion that divide the world and keep it in the darkness of

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ignorance. It was expected to be 'the cornerstone, the foundation of the future religions of humanity'. The second Object provides the platform for an objective study and comparison of the various religions, philosophies and science. If human beings were to follow these

principles there would be less conflict in the world.

The Society's proclamation, There is No Religion Higher than Truth, must guide us in all our actions if we are to make Theosophy the cornerstone of the future religions of the world. ✧

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**This is a wonderful, unique discourse:
The living self is the image of the Supreme Being.
It is neither old nor a child;
Neither it suffers pain, nor in death's snare is caught;
It is not shattered nor dies;
In all time it is pervasive.
It feels not heat nor cold;
Neither has it friend nor foe;
It feels not joy nor sorrow:
All is its own; to it belongs all might.
It has neither father nor mother;
Beyond the limits of matter has it ever existed.
Of sin and goodness it feels not the touch —
Within the heart of each being it is ever awake.**

Adi Granth, Gaund, M.5, p. 868

The Evolution of the Universe

Annie Besant's Second Review of *The Secret Doctrine*

ANNIE BESANT

'How swiftly some of the main points had been grasped,' Dr Besant remarks in her *Autobiography*, comparing her first review of *The Secret Doctrine* in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (25 April 1889) with the second review which appeared two months later in Charles Bradlaugh's weekly paper, *The National Reformer* (23 June 1889). The first review appeared in our January issue; the second is repeated below. Not only does the reproduction of these early reviews synchronize with the jubilee edition of *The Secret Doctrine* published at Adyar, but they reveal the magnificent mind which Annie Besant brought to her first encounter with Theosophy.

The Secret Doctrine. By Mme Blavatsky. In two vols. (London: Theosophical Publishing Co., 7 Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C.)

The *National Reformer* reaches so many different types of readers, all of whom must be more or less liberal-minded, that it seems likely that among them all some will be found to take interest in the unfamiliar views of the universe set forth in this very remarkable work. Mme Blavatsky, from whose pen it comes to us, is a personality as remarkable as her book. She has been lauded as the apostle of a new revelation; denounced as the inventor of the greatest imposture of the age. That she is an impostor no one who knows her will believe; while the fact that she is possessed of wide and deep oriental learning, and has access to rare and recondite sources of information, will be

apparent to anyone who even skims these volumes. But skimming is more likely to repel than to attract: the unfamiliar archaism and yet more unfamiliar mysticism of the *Book of Dzyan*, which is claimed as one of the oldest MSS in the world; the subtle metaphysics, which become wholly unintelligible and even contradictory unless the delicate gradations of phrase be noted and understood; the Oriental atmosphere in which the mental images live and move; the antagonism of the whole intellectual trend to the thought of our Western civilization; all this is but too likely to make the nineteenth century Englishman raise his eyebrows, shrug his shoulders, and throw the book down. For the Orient begins to study the universe just where the Occident ceases to study. With telescope and with microscope, with scalpel and with battery,

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Western Science interrogates Nature, adding fact to fact, storing experience after experience, but coming ever to gulfs unfathomable by its plummet, to heights unscalable by its ladders. Wide and masterful in its answers to the 'How?', the 'Why?' ever eludes it, and causes remain enwrapped in gloom. Eastern Science uses as its scientific instrument the penetrating faculties of the mind alone, and regarding the material plane as *Māyā*, illusion, seeks in the mental and spiritual planes of being the causes of the material effects. There, to it, is the only reality; there the true existence of which the visible universe is but the shadow.

The Ladder of Evolution

It is clear that for such investigations some further mental equipment is necessary than that normally afforded by the human body. And here comes the 'parting of the ways' between East and West. For the study of the material universe, our five senses, aided by the instruments invented by science, may suffice. For all that we can hear and see, taste and handle, these accustomed servitors, though often blundering, are the best available guides to knowledge. But it lies in the nature of the case that they are useless when the investigation is to be into modes of existence which cannot impress themselves on our nerve-ends. For instance: what we know as colour is the vibration frequency of etheric waves striking on the retina of the eye; between certain definite limits — 759 trillions of blows for the maximum, 436 trillions for the minimum — these waves

give rise in us to the sensation which the brain translates into colour. (Why the 436 trillion blows at one end of a nerve become 'Red' at the other end we do not know; we chronicle the fact, but cannot explain it.) But our capacity to respond to the vibration cannot limit the vibrational capacity of the ether; to *us* the higher and lower rates of vibration do not exist, but if our sense of vision were more sensitive we should see where now we are blind. Following this line of thought we realize that matter may exist in forms unknown to us, in modifications to which our senses are unable to respond. Now steps in the Eastern sage and says: 'That which you say *may* be, *is*; we have developed and cultivated senses as much superior to yours as your eye is superior to that of the jellyfish; we have evolved mental and spiritual faculties which enable us to investigate on the higher planes of being with as much certainty as you are investigating on the physical plane; there is nothing *supernatural* in the business, any more than your knowledge is supernatural, although much above that accessible to the fish; we do not speculate on these higher forms of existence; we *know* them, by personal study, just as you know the fauna and flora of your world. The powers we possess are not supernatural; they are latent in every human being, and will be evolved as the race progresses. All that we have done is to evolve them more rapidly than our neighbours, by a procedure as open to you as it was to us. Matter is everywhere, but it exists in seven modifications of which

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you know only four, and until lately knew only three; in those higher forms reside the causes of which you see the effects in the lower, and to know these causes you must develop the capacity to take cognizance of the higher planes.'

Unless evolution be a dream, or we have reached the topmost rung of its ladder — a tolerably absurd assumption — there is nothing irrational *per se* in this statement. Whether it be true, whether such men with highly evolved psychological faculties exist, is a matter for evidence: some people are as certain of their existence as they are of the existence of their own fathers and mothers; and those who know nothing about the matter are somewhat hasty if they take on themselves to deny it. It may be further suggested, as a hint towards further mental evolution, that it is beyond the possibility of doubt that psychological faculties not yet normal are showing themselves in many persons: clairvoyance, mesmerism, hypnotism, point to the existence, under abnormal conditions, of an inner vision that transcends the eye-power, and of faculties not yet understood. The grave difficulty in all investigations in this as yet little trodden region of psychology, is the tendency to lose control of the judgement in face of the abnormal; the grave danger lies in the possibility of upsetting the mental balance, of so straining the mind that the student may cross the line which separates sanity from insanity.

Secret Knowledge

This introduction seems to me

necessary in order to lead any reader who is new to the phase of thought with which we are concerned, to grasp something of the ideas which underlie 'The Secret Doctrine'. For these ideas come from 'The Wise Men of the East', in whose hands, as in the hands of their predecessors, it is stated that the MSS are on which the present work is based. In an antiquity before which Roman and Greek and Hebrew are but as plants of yesterday, Indian sages thought, observed, and pondered on their observations, generation after generation taking up the task. The garnered knowledge was ever kept secret from the mass of ordinary men, revealed only to those who after long probation became Initiates. With the evolution of the race has come the time when some of this knowledge would be useful to mankind, and during the last few years portions of it have filtered out. In the book before us we have the record of the evolution of the universe, and the genesis of man, which whoso will read let him gird up the loins of his mind for prolonged and strenuous effort.

Briefest outline only can here be given for two reasons: first, that space would not allow of lengthened exposition; second, that anyone who wants to understand the Secret Doctrine must study it for himself. You cannot map a continent on the palm of your hand, nor compress a mountain into a marble. Briefly then:

Cosmic Origins

Ere the visible universe comes into existence there is Absolute Be-ness —

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Being in the abstract — boundless, infinite, changeless. On this conception we will not dwell: every student knows the endless contradictions into which we flounder when we strive to describe the Absolute in terms of which relation is the essence. The moment we begin to be precise, we contradict. At the commencement of a cycle awakens the Unmanifested Logos — abstract and potential ideation, the root of the later Mahat, the universal, intelligent soul — and thence the second Logos with its double aspect, Purusha and Prakṛti — Spirit-Matter, ‘Father-Mother’ — and Mahat the Son. From this Triangle of Being, Purusha, Prakṛti, and Mahat go forth all life and form, in numerous hierarchies, on the seven planes of existence. Spirit crystallizes, as it were, into matter through the first three, becoming more and more consolidated and gross, reaching its turning point in the fourth, becoming intellectually self-conscious as it thus grows denser; from the fourth it climbs upward again, shaking off the grossness of its material envelope but retaining the experience it could not otherwise have won, until, wise with all it has gathered during its struggles and its wanderings, it returns whence it came forth and rests. Such a cycle forms a Manvantara, and this is followed by ‘the sleep of Brahma’; when he awakes, another cycle commences, but on a higher plane. My readers must turn to the book to fill in this bare outline, and they will find it worth their while.

Anthropogenesis

What part does man play in this vast

drama of a universe? Needless to say, he is not the only living form in a Cosmos which, for the most part, is uninhabitable by him. As Science has shown living forms everywhere on the material plane, races in each drop of water, life throbbing in every leaf and blade, so the ‘Secret Doctrine’ points to living forms on higher planes of existence, each suited to its environment, till all space thrills with life and nowhere is there death, but only change. Amid these myriads are some evolving towards humanity, some evolving away from humanity as we know it, divesting themselves of its grosser parts. For man is regarded as a sevenfold being, four of these parts belonging to the animal body and perishing at, or soon after, death; while three form his higher self; his true individuality, and these persist and are immortal. These form the Ego, and it is this which passes through many incarnations, learning life’s lessons as it goes, working out its own redemption within the limits of an inexorable law, sowing seeds of which it ever reaps the harvest, building its own fate with tireless fingers, and finding nowhere, in the measureless time and space around it, any that can lift for it one weight it has created, bear for it one burden it has gathered, unravel for it one tangle it has twisted, close for it one gulf that it has digged.

The physical and mental evolution of man is traced step by step for us in the second volume, the life of each race, with its characteristics, being sketched. How curiously this Eastern teaching now upholds, now contradicts, our Western

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views, will be marked with interest by the careful reader. One matter, small in itself, but significant in its bearings, may here be put on record — the knowledge, quite lately reached by Western Science, that the pineal gland, of much-debated function, is the remains of ‘the third eye’. This has now been ‘discovered’ by the West, but it is a very very old story in the East.

Science and the Social Order

Very attractive, and showing wide acquaintance with the latest discoveries of science, is the third section of Volume I, ‘Science and the Secret Doctrine contrasted’. It is of curious interest to note how some of the latest theories seem to catch glimpses of the occult doctrines, as though Science were standing on the very threshold of knowledge which shall

make all her past seem small. Already her hand is trembling towards the grasp of forces beside which all those now at her command are insignificant. How soon will her grip fasten on them? Let us hope not until the social order has been transformed, lest they should only give more to those who have, and leave the wretched still wretcheder by force of contrast. Knowledge used by Selfishness widens the gulf that divides man from man and race from race, and we may well shrink from the idea of new powers in Nature being yoked to the car of Greed. Hence the wisdom of those ‘Masters’, in whose name Mme Blavatsky speaks, has ever denied the knowledge which is power until Love’s lesson has been learned, and has given only into the hands of the selfless the control of those natural forces, which, misused, would wreck society. ✧

The world is a dwelling degrading to its owner, where the lawful is mixed with the unlawful, good with evil, sweet with bitter.

Look upon the world with the eye of the cloistered ascetic; not as one loving it blindly.

‘Ali

Life — a Movie, a School, a Pilgrimage

D. P. SABNIS

THE majority of people hurriedly conclude that there is no ‘meaning to life’; it is because they never bothered to know the real purpose of life. According to them death is the end of life and that is all.

We set for ourselves short-term goals. As long as we have some goal, we feel our life is meaningful. But almost all our goals are transitory. We realize one goal and then we go after another. We must realize that the ‘quest’ for ‘life’s meaning’ is a ‘spiritual quest’, which each one has to undertake. Everyone’s life is meaningful, provided we change our attitude towards what life brings to us. The life of a teacher or a student, a doctor or an engineer, businessman or a sweeper, for that matter everyone’s life, could be meaningful provided each lives his life with the aim of ‘Self-actualization’ and ‘self-transcendence’.

Hence the importance of understanding life as a real movie, a school and a pilgrimage — and man as an actor, a pupil and a pilgrim. But which ‘man’? It is the ‘Individuality’, the Ego, who is the Actor, Experiencer and also an Eternal Pilgrim. It is this ‘Ego’ or Actor who chooses the

world as a stage, screen or platform for performing in the live-movie, before taking birth. He chooses the circumstances, his role, his family, parents, co-actors, his personality, etc. The word ‘personality’ is derived from the Latin word *persona*, meaning a ‘mask’, which the actors used to wear. Behind this mask the actor remained hidden and anonymous. These different roles done by the actor, are our personalities. We are so absorbed in playing the role in this mundane world that we are seldom aware of our true Self.

In a given life, we might be playing the role of mother, father, brother, daughter, clerk, officer, business magnate or a sweeper. We must try to give the best performance, no matter how insignificant the role. Sometimes in a movie, we see that the performance of a supporting actor or actress is praised more than that of a hero or a heroine — an apparently insignificant role gains prominence. In a way, there are no insignificant roles. It is our attitude that matters. The success of a movie is dependent on each actor performing his or her role well; we are also

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dependent on other actors in our real life. In olden times, an inquiry was set up to find out the cause of a battle that was lost. The inquiry revealed that the battle was lost because the soldiers were discouraged, as the horse slipped, killing the General of the army. But why did the horse slip? Because the horseshoe came off, and in turn it was because the blacksmith had not nailed it properly. So the saying goes that ‘the battle was lost for want of a nail’. Hence the importance of careful and cheerful performance of one’s duty in life.

Life is also a school. There are some archetypal experiences, like motherhood, poverty, etc., which each ego has to experience in one life or the other. Perhaps the greatest thing we can learn from the ‘school of life’ is the spirit of giving, rather than taking, without expecting anything in return — the art of caring, a smile, a kind word, a friendly gesture can work wonders.

In the ‘school of life’ we are put in a certain painful or unfavourable situation again and again until we learn the necessary lesson.

Learning is a never-ending process. In the ‘school of life’, we get all kinds of students. Some keep failing. Some fail and give up, while others fail but ever keep trying. One may go through the appointed course (or complete it) in 700 births, in 70 years or 7 months, 7 minutes or in 7 seconds. Unfortunately there are

‘no takers’ for this golden opportunity. For most of us, the process of learning in the ‘school of life’ is very slow. We, even the Theosophists, live under the wrong impression that one life is not sufficient to complete this course, and keep on prolonging our self-liberation process. If not now, then when? If the average life span of a person be 60 years, he spends nearly 58 years on things like playing, studying, sleeping, eating, bathing, shopping, working, recreating, etc. He has hardly two years left for his moral and spiritual advancement. But he spends even this period on trivial things. Man is born not merely to eat, drink, grow and then pass away but also to uplift himself spiritually and brighten his future. ‘Now or Never’ should be our motto in life.

Life is compared to a pilgrimage and man is called an Eternal Pilgrim gathering experience from every life. Each of us is a pilgrim-soul on an eternal pilgrimage. As soon as we become aware of the purpose of life — that life is for the Evolution and Emancipation of the soul — we begin to take that Evolution into our own hands. We are not alone on this pilgrimage. We have to reach the ‘Destination’ in the company of other pilgrim-souls and not by isolating ourselves. Interdependence is an important aspect of spiritual progress.

No one can lift us out of the mire; but self-effort, along with the guidance of the Spiritual Beings or Guides, will definitely help. ✧

Few see through the veil of māyā.

Bhagavadgītā, VII.25

Spirituality at the Workplace

F. M. SAHOO

SPIRITUALITY was a topic that was considered inappropriate for social and behavioural research. Many behavioural scientists viewed spirituality as the core concern of philosophers. However, world scenarios and the business climate in recent times have stressed the urgent need for discussion and practice of spirituality in the workplace.

Some people, of course, feel sceptical about whether spirituality can mix with work. Others feel apprehensive that some religious pressure will be put on them at work. Still others feel enthused at the possibility of a spiritual revolution at work. The word 'revolution' has two meanings. The first is the fundamental revolution. The other definition is equally important. What does the earth do every twenty-four hours? It completes one revolution, returning to where it began. The second meaning of 'revolution' is to 'return to where you began'.

Humanity went through both types of revolution when the astronauts first went to the moon. Revolutionary technologies were manifest. An equally fundamental shift took place in our consciousness. Edgar Mitchell, an American astronaut on the Apollo 14 flight, said:

The powerful experience of seeing the Earth and our whole solar system against the background of the cosmos had a very profound effect on me, an overwhelming sense of being connected with the universe, of feeling connected to all things . . . We went to the moon as technicians, we returned as humanitarians.

Defining Spirituality

Although most people describe themselves as spiritual, they define the term in many different ways. Experts also vary in their definitions. An internet search reveals more than five hundred definitions of spirituality. Some of the oft-quoted definitions are given below:

1. The best of that which is human
2. A quest for existential meaning
3. The transcendental human dimensions

However, Pergament and Mahoney (2005) define spirituality as a *search for the sacred*. There are two key terms in this definition: *search* and *the sacred*. The term 'search' indicates that spirituality is a process; it involves efforts to discover the sacred. People can take a virtually limitless number of pathways in their attempts to discover and preserve the

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sacred. Spiritual pathways may range from traditional religious institutions to non-traditional avenues.

While 'religion' and 'spirituality' were used interchangeably in the long past, the clarity of distinction between the two has been attained in recent times. Religion represents an institutional, formal, outward, doctrinal and authoritarian system. In contrast, spirituality denotes an individual, subjective, emotional and inward expression.

In recent years psychologists have carried out a large number of studies to examine the relationship between religious experience and mental health. The findings are perplexing. Some studies indicate a positive association between them, while others show a negative relationship. Thus, psychologists have distinguished two forms of religious experience: *external religiosity* and *internal religiosity*. External religiosity is indicated in the form of attending places of worship, rituals and other outward behaviour. Internal religiosity refers to attitudes and values. Accordingly, spirituality has been likened to internal religiosity.

Spirituality, defined as a search for sacredness, not only highlights the search process; it also involves efforts to hold on to the sacred once it has been discovered. People can take a number of routes to discover and conserve the sacred.

What are the roots of this discovery process? Some point to the role of an innate genetic basis. Others have pointed out the role of critical life events. The challenges people face may reveal human

limitation and prompt them to seek out the sacred. In addition, the social context, including the family, institution and cultural milieu, play important roles in stimulating the discovery process.

The search process or sanctification holds three important implications for our lives. First, we are likely to preserve and protect sacred objects. Second, we are likely to invest more of ourselves in pursuit of the sacred. Third, we are likely to derive more meaning, strength and satisfaction from sacred aspects of our lives.

Spiritual Intelligence

The systematic approach towards the study of spirituality has centred around the construct of *spiritual intelligence*. The evolution of interest in this area has also followed a logical sequence of events. It is a known fact that both researchers and change agents were interested in the study of *rational intelligence* during the early part of the twentieth century. They measured intelligence operationally and expressed intellectual capacity in the form of intelligence quotients (IQs). IQs were regarded as stable and strong predictors of academic attainments and professional success.

However, the mid-90s brought a drastic change in these scenarios. Goleman's book, *Emotional Intelligence* (1991), popularized the concept of the *emotional quotient* (EQ). This was strengthened by the neuro-psychological finding that our brain, though structurally one, has two functional units — *feeling brain* and *thinking brain*. In evolutionary terms, the

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feeling brain is older than the thinking brain. The Nobel Prize winner, physiologist Roger Sperry (1981), showed that the left hemisphere of the brain is linked with logic and language while the right hemisphere is associated with emotion and pattern recognition. EQ is a basic requirement for the effective use of IQ. If 'feeling' areas of the brain are damaged, we *think* less effectively.

Thus, the primacy of emotional intelligence was recognized in the 1970s. Compared with rational intelligence, EQ was considered as a stronger predictor of academic and occupational success. But the turn of the century signalled another interesting and enduring development. The construct that unifies rational intelligence and emotional intelligence was advanced to explain our search for meaning and values.

Spiritual intelligence refers to that intelligence with which we place our actions and lives in a wider, richer and meaning-giving context. It is a necessary foundation for the effective functioning of both IQ and EQ.

The Webster dictionary defines *spirit* as 'the vital principle, which gives life to a physical organism in contrast to its material elements'. In other words, it is 'the breath of life'.

Spiritual intelligence prompts us to ask fundamental questions. Why am I born? What is the purpose of my life? What are my worthwhile goals? Anthropologists and neurologists argue that it is this longing for meaning and its evolutionary value that have prompted humans to come

out of caves. This longing is also responsible for the growth of the human brain.

Neither IQ nor EQ, separately or in combination, are enough to explain the full complexity of human intelligence. IQ and EQ play finite games, whereas SQ plays infinite games. SQ has no necessary connection to religion. For some people, SQ may find a mode of expression through formal religion, but being religious does not guarantee SQ.

Scientific Evidence

A great deal of scientific evidence for SQ does exist. In recent years, neurological, psychological and anthropological studies of human intelligence and linguistic process offer supportive evidence.

First, in the early 1990s, a neuropsychologist, Michael Persinger, found that temporal lobe activity was linked with mystical visions. More recently, a neurologist, V. S. Ramachandran, at the University of California, identified a built-in spiritual centre located among neural connections in the temporal lobes of the brain. Ramachandran (1997) labelled this centre 'God spot'. On scans taken with positron emission tomography (PET) these neural areas light up whenever research subjects are exposed to discussions of spiritual or religious topics. These vary with cultures. Westerners respond to the mention of 'God'. Easterners respond to symbols meaningful to them. It may be indicated that the PET scan is one of the modern imaging techniques. Through injection a harmless radioactive substance is passed to the

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neural areas of the brain. The concentration of this substance is deep in those areas of the brain involved in a particular activity at a given point of time. Of course, the God spot does not prove the existence of God, but it shows that the brain has evolved to ask 'ultimate questions', to have and to use a sensitivity for wider meaning and values.

Secondly, the work of Austrian neurologist, Wolf Singer, in the 1990s, on the binding problem, shows that there is a neural process in the brain devoted to unifying and giving meaning to our experience. It is the neural process that literally 'binds' our experiences together. Prior to Singer's work on unifying synchronous neural oscillations across the whole brain, neurologists and cognitive scientists only recognized two forms of brain neural organization. One of these forms, serial neural connections, is the basis of our IQ. Serially connected neural tracts allow the brain to follow rules, to think logically and rationally step by step. In the second form, bundles of up to a hundred thousand neurons are connected in haphazard fashion to other massive bundles. These neural networks are the basis of EQ.

Both serial and parallel computers exist and have different functions, but neither kind operate with meaning. No existing computer can ask 'why?' Singer's work on unifying neural oscillations offers the first hint of a third kind of thinking, unitive thinking, and an accompanying third mode of intelligence, SQ. Spiritual intelligence can deal with fundamental questions of

why, questions of meaning.

Third, Harvard neurologist and biological anthropologist, Terrance Deacon, has recently published new work on the origin of human language (*The Symbolic Species*, 1997). Deacon shows that language is a uniquely human, essentially symbolic, meaning giving activity that co-evolved with rapid development in the brain's frontal lobes. Neither existing computers nor even higher apes (with rare and limited exception) can use language, because they lack the frontal lobe facility for dealing with meaning.

Operational Parameters of SQ

In evolutionary terms, SQ has 'wired' us to become the people we are and gives us the potential for further 'rewiring' for growth and transformation. We use SQ to deal with existential problems. SQ makes us aware that we have existential problems and it enables us to solve them. SQ is our compass 'at the edge'. Life's most challenging existential problems exist outside the expected and the familiar, outside the given rules, beyond past experience, beyond known skills. In the chaos theory, 'the edge' is the border between order and chaos, between the known and the unknown. It is the place where we can be at our most creative. SQ, our deep intuitive sense of meaning and values, is our guide at the edge. SQ is in our conscience. We use SQ to be creative. We call upon it when we need to be flexible, visionary or creatively spontaneous.

We can use SQ to become more spiritually intelligent about religion. SQ

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takes us to the heart of things, to the unity behind differences. A person high in SQ might practise any religion, but without narrowness and prejudice. Similarly, a person high in SQ could have many spiritual qualities without being religious at all.

SQ allows us to integrate the intrapersonal and the interpersonal. It helps to transcend the gap between self and others. Although emotional intelligence includes both components (interpersonal skill and intrapersonal skill), SQ is needed to bridge the gap between the two.

Finally, we can use our SQ to solve the problems of good and evil, problems of life and death, the deepest origins of human suffering. The indicators of highly developed SQ include the following:

1. The capacity to be flexible;
2. A high degree of self-awareness;
3. A capacity to face and use suffering;
4. A capacity to face and transcend pain;
5. The quality of being inspired by vision and values;
6. A reluctance to cause unnecessary harm;
7. A tendency to see unity in diversity;
8. A tendency to ask 'why?' or 'what if?' questions and to seek fundamental answers.

Pragmatic Strategies

Correlated with the growth of interest in spiritual intelligence, workplace spirituality began as a movement in the early 1990s. It emerged as a grassroots movement with individuals seeking to live their faith and/or spiritual values in the

workplace. Soon after, many organizations sprang up to further such movement.

1. International Centre for *Spirit at Work* (www.spiritatwork.org)
2. World Business Academy (www.worldbusiness.org)
3. Spiritual Business Network (www.spiritualbusiness.net)
4. Foundation for Workplace Spirituality (www.workplacespirituality.org.uk)

In the late 1990s, The Academy of Management (www.aomonline.org) formed a special interest group called the Management, Spirituality and Religion Interest Group. This is a professional association of management professors from all over the world who are teaching and doing research on spirituality and religion in the workplace. This action by the Academy of Management was a significant step in legitimizing workplace spirituality in the workplace as a field of study. Similarly, Division 36 of the American Psychological Association (Psychology of Religion and Spirituality) launched a new Journal in 2008 to reflect the wave of interest. Research carried out in India is disseminated through Global Dharma Centre (www.globaldharma.org) and Times of India (website. <http://spirituality.indiatimes.com>).

The International Centre for Spirituality and Work provides an operational definition.

Spirituality is an innate human attribute. All people bring this as an integral part of themselves to the workplace. Spirituality is a state or experience that

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can provide individuals with direction or meaning or provide feelings of understanding, support, inner wholeness or connectedness. Connectedness can be to themselves, other people, nature, the universe, a god, or some other supernatural power.

The definition implies both a vertical component and a horizontal component. The *vertical component* represents a desire to transcend the individual ego or personal self. The vertical component might be God, Spirit, the Universe, Nature, Higher Power or something else. This dimension is experienced as a conscious sense of profound connection to the Universe/God/Spirit. This might be experienced internally as moments of awe or peak experiences. A strong sustained vertical component reflects outer behaviour as a person (group) who is centred and able to tap into deep inner strength and wisdom. Generally, quiet time in nature or other reflective activities or practices are required. Examples include meditation rooms, time for shared reflection, silence before meetings, prayer and support for employees to take time off for spiritual development.

The *horizontal component* represents a desire to be of service to other humans and the planet. In the horizontal, we seek to make a difference through our actions. A strong horizontal component is demonstrated by a service orientation, compassion and well-aligned visions and values. A person with both strong vertical and horizontal components has a clear grasp of mission, ethics, values and activities.

Spirituality in the workplace means that employees find nourishment for both the vertical and horizontal dimensions. It is about individuals and organizations seeing work as a spiritual path, as an opportunity to grow and to contribute to society in a meaningful way. It is about care, compassion and support of others, about integrity and people being true to themselves. It means individuals and organizations attempting to live their values more fully in the work they do. Examples of vertical organizational spirituality include meditation time at the beginning of meetings, retreat or spiritual training time set aside for employees, and appropriate accommodation of employee prayer practices. Companies with a strong sense of horizontal spirituality take care of the following: caring behaviour among co-workers, a social responsibility orientation, strong service commitment to customers, environmental sensitivity and community service activity. The vertical and horizontal dimensions should be well-integrated so that motivation (stemming from the vertical) and actions (springing from the horizontal) are explicitly linked.

The drive to create a more spiritual work environment has taken steps. By and large the following activities are included:

1. Bereavement programmes
2. Wellness information displayed and distributed
3. Employee Assistance Programmes
4. Programmes that integrate work/family
5. Management systems that encourage personal and spiritual transformation

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6. Servant leadership — the desire to serve others

7. Stewardship — leadership that supports growth and well-being of others

8. Diversity programmes that create inclusive cultures

9. Integration of core values and core business decision and practices

The drive to make a difference in the world takes forms of practice mainly at three levels: individual, leader and organization. The discussion of specific strategies at these three levels brings clarity to an understanding of practice components of workplace spirituality.

Individual Efforts

Spirituality at the workplace takes a tangible form only when individuals, leaders and organizations work harmoniously towards such goals. Individuals need to develop *spiritual character* in the workplace. Spiritual character is denoted by the following equation:

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Spiritual Character} = \\ \text{Spiritual context} + \text{Spiritual purpose} \\ + \text{Spiritual values} \\ \hline \text{Ego desires} \end{array}$$

As indicated by the expression, individuals need to work in the context spiritualized by supportive belief systems. Individuals ought to believe that collective good is possible through spiritual means. This is furthered by a spiritual goal or purpose. Moreover, spiritual values are to be sought. Of course, spiritual values are basically human values such as truth

(*satya*), righteousness (*dharma*), peace (*śānti*), love (*prema*) and nonviolence (*ahimsā*). Here again, love is the unifying force. Words soaked with love constitute truth. Action with love gives rise to righteousness. Emotion saturated with love generates peace. Understanding with love takes the form of nonviolence. When individuals integrate their words, thoughts, emotion and action with love, human values are preserved and promoted. The other guiding principle for the individual is the responsiveness to conscience — an inner prompting. People may encounter some situations where organizational decision conflicts with the individuals' moral consideration. In such difficult situations, people with spiritual character listen to the dictates of their conscience. At the call of conscience, many individuals have ventured to oppose the immoral and corrupt practices of the organization.

The rich tradition of human heritage advises people 'to start early, drive slowly and reach safely'. Spiritual teachers of India have advised to make an early beginning. A small increment every day may be very helpful.

While practising spirituality at the workplace one has to view spirituality on the basis of success. Workplace spirituality is not a one-way street. It is a two-way street. One has to work to grow spiritually and growing spiritually is instrumental to working better. Finally one has to talk one's thought and walk one's talk. Individual attempts are strongly facilitated by spiritually-based leaders.

Spiritual Leader

Anyone who expresses his or her spiritual Self with confidence can be a spiritual leader, whether they influence one or ten or a hundred others. Spiritually-based leaders exhibit four key faculties.

1. They have a clearly held spiritual view of life. They have a clear definition of spirituality; they know their own relationship between spirituality and religion. They continually ask: 'How can I approach this situation from my spiritual view of life?'

2. They explore their spirituality from the inside. Carl Jung remarked: 'He who looks outside dreams, he who looks inside awakes.' Such a leader looks into his or her heart. They take consistent time to nurture their spiritual growth, they identify their spiritual purpose and values in life and continuously check up on their purity and unity of thought, action and words.

3. They embody their spiritual principles in their leadership. They see spirituality as the basis of their success. They appreciate work in terms of spirituality opportunity and spiritual growth. They seek to 'talk their thought' and 'walk their thought'.

4. They engage in revolutionary activity. They promote fundamental change based on their spiritual view of life.

When an executive operates his or her business from a spiritual point of view, does it change their definition of the 'bottom line'? The term 'bottom line' originally meant the last line of an income statement, the profits that remained after costs were deducted from revenues.

Over time, it has come to mean something broad, 'the key result' or the 'most important outcomes' of an enterprise.

When we focus on spiritually-based measures of a 'bottom line', we are more likely to stay uplifted in our vision. We are more likely to see beyond the profit motive, beyond even the self-interest of the organization, and beyond even the welfare of the society in material terms. We are likely to become embodiments of Spirit who can see what is eternally important and make sure the time and energy we spend at work truly contributes to what is ultimately important.

In addition to the effort of spiritually-based leaders, organizations need to adopt some useful practices in this direction.

Organizational Soul

Since the fall of Enron and Worldcom, corporate scandals have made a mark on the conscience of the business world. Today, people want to do business with companies that have strong moral values. The challenge for business, however, is creating a caring value-based atmosphere without it negatively affecting their bottom line. Dr Margaret Benefiel's new book, *Soul at Work*, says that not only can collective spirituality make for happier employees — it can also boost business profits.

Benefiel argues that spirituality and profitability can be combined so that these two goals work in synergy. She writes, 'spiritually grounded organizations perform better and better enrich their stakeholders'. She urges others to follow

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a new business model and reap enormous rewards that are more than financial. Synergy can be attained by adopting certain routes.

Articulate Values. It is possible to attend to soul by including precise language in vision and mission statements. For example, Document Management Group's (Dublin, Ireland) vision statement includes a commitment to build a workplace in which 'our people can find meaning, significance and success through their work, and where personal and workplace values align to achieve greater outward harmony and spiritual life'. The harmony between financial concerns and human concerns leads to healthier, happier organizations.

Match People with Vision. The caring environment must find people with similar wavelengths. Southwest Airlines (USA), for example, hires for attitude and trains for skills. It is believed that the congruence with their mission would heighten employee retention and customer satisfaction. This would lower costs and boost profits.

Special Activity of Personnel Division. The importance attached to organizational soul can take manifest forms. The personnel wing of the organization needs to devote time and energy in training employees to integrate spirituality with their work behaviour.

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Create Specific Structure and Processes. Structure and practices can be adopted to further spirituality at the workplace. For example, at the Grayston Foundation in New York, a moment of silence punctuates business meetings, and the senior management team takes quarterly day-long retreats off sites. Texas Instruments has provided 'Serenity Rooms' where employees experience calm moments. This strengthens the harmony between financial goals and human concerns.

Conclusion

The discussion on workplace spirituality does not rule out the possibility of critics' comments. However, most of the critics point out the elements of conflict and confusion arising out of religious practices in organizations. The critics argue that spirituality and religious practices are a matter of personal beliefs and these must not be allowed to play their role in organizations. They apprehend that such a climate would dilute and distort organizational goals. Yet, a close and thoughtful examination of present crises and uncertainties deepen our impression that a hunger for a spiritual climate is likely to solve the problem of self-interest. The preservation and promotion of common goods is sure to be facilitated by a spiritual revolution taking its roots in present-day workplaces. ✧

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