



# THE THEOSOPHIST

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# THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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

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

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

# On the Watch-Tower

RADHA BURNIER

## **Implications of Universal Brotherhood**

The work of the Theosophical Society, to put it simply, is to help to spiritualize the world; to take part in a movement of thought, of work, of deep aspiration which will assure to this lower world what already exists in the higher worlds. Everything here must be a reflection of the glory that is in the higher worlds.

What is in the higher worlds? Again, to put it very simply, it is the basic quality of the absolute spiritual consciousness — love. Love implies a profound harmony — we can call it unity — and everything else is part of that harmony or love. We need not speak of peace for example, where there is love. Love is peace. If we take up other so-called spiritual values to examine them as closely as possible with our limited faculties, we will see clearly that everything is contained in that one word. We can say that we are attempting to establish that kind of harmony, love, peace and sense of unity; then we reflect what is in the spiritual worlds, as far as possible in all our relationships. We also reflect all the blessed qualities of the great brotherhood of Adepts, sages and enlightened Ones.

This has nothing to do with the new millennium or the old millennium. This is

what has to happen, and we should bring this about as the basic work of the Society. In the early days of the Society the two Mahatmas who inspired its foundation declared that it is a forlorn hope to try to do this at present, but all the same the attempt has to be made. So they emphasized Universal Brotherhood. Sinnett and Hume, who received the extraordinary privilege of indirect contact with them, said this was not worthwhile. About 1900 years earlier, the attempt had already been made, by Jesus, of course, to bring about that love in relationships, but it did not happen for centuries and it will not happen. So they were not interested in that aim.

Unfortunately that is almost the attitude of all of us, or most of us. We do not take this seriously. We do not even try to understand the full implications of living Universal Brotherhood. Talking about it, organizing programmes and all that, is quite easy, but it is only by creating an atmosphere in which brotherhood is earnestly sought to be lived that an effective beginning can be made. All the teachers, not only Jesus but every spiritual teacher, has tried to help to bring it about. If we just use those words, what happens is we do not see their connection with the many

small happenings in our daily life.

Recently I was told about a member, who has been committed in his own way for many years to the Society's work. He was very upset, because he was not asked to sit on the platform during a particular function. When people feel frustrated and agitated about such a thing, what is their approach to dealing with the problem? They are earnest members of a sort, because mostly we do not see the connection between these things. If a person feels frustrated, he says, 'I am this, that and the other, but other people do not recognize it; they ought to honour the position which I hold, etc.' We can make a dozen or more comments of this kind to show in what way 'other people' have failed. That is one kind of approach to the whole question; the responsibility for my anger, agitation, frustration and all that, is passed on to the ignorance of other people.

Now in a state of resentment, frustration or ill will, is there any sense of Universal Brotherhood? Perhaps a person rarely connects these sorts of incidents to his own life, to the practice of Universal Brotherhood. This is one of the problems because the living of a life of brotherhood is something constant. It is not just for certain occasions. It is certainly not meant for speech making.

Therefore we have to try to understand what the Mahatmas wanted, what every spiritual teacher wants in a deeper way, by relating it to our lives, how they influence our lives, not other people's lives. We relate all similar things to the living of Universal Brotherhood.

### **Equanimity of the Mind**

The *Bhagavadgītā* points out in several verses what equanimity of the mind is. What is the sense of equality? It is not only a belief in establishing economic, legal and other forms of equality in society which people have repeatedly tried to do. Some inspiration from higher sources may have come into the minds of those people who first began to speak about what later became a mere slogan of the French Revolution, and by its widespread influence on the New Continent and other parts of the world. The phrase 'liberty, equality, fraternity', all three principles are of profound value to the spiritual progress of mankind, to remedy the problems in society, but people did not see the inner implication of these principles. They as usual tried to apply these principles in their prejudiced, uncomprehending way and created the opposite of what they were talking about.

The socialist society tried to bring about equality, but it has not done so even at the economic level because principles have to be grasped deeply inside and above all, lived. This is obviously what the great Brotherhood has been trying to do, repeating more than once that what They want is Universal Brotherhood. They refused to entertain Sinnett with more and more phenomena or give him more information about cosmic processes, laws and so on. They even chided him, but it made no impression, perhaps because the inner side of these principles was not part of the common heritage of the West.

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In the West they hardly ever thought of the question of liberty, of freedom, of emancipation, outside certain small religious circles. They thought of it always as a principle which needed to be incorporated into the organization of society. But it was otherwise in the East: the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Jain, the Taoist and the other religio-philosophical teachings neglected in fact the outer side, and they said this is something which has to happen inside. You must free yourself of every mechanical drive which exists within. And if you do, then other things will follow as a consequence. At the outer level everything will begin to improve and human society will become the right kind of society. Therefore, perhaps it was thought necessary to bring into the consciousness of at least the more elevated intellects the importance of these principles of balance. But alas! very quickly, they degenerated into some kind of direction for bringing about social change and not a spiritual change.

Now our question is, as people who give lip service to the principle of Universal Brotherhood, are we also failing to try to understand all its implications? These three values or principles are inextricably linked together; we cannot practise Universal Brotherhood unless we begin to experience a sense of equality at every level.

The beauty of the *Gītā* teaching is that it gives examples (which nobody bothers about) about the different kinds of equalities which the mind invents. One of the verses speaks about how to the wise

person, to the enlightened human being, status makes no difference. Daily status, based on caste — which became important in India — on learning, even on virtue, on gender difference, on the difference between human and the non-human, all these differences belong to the worldly mind. To the enlightened mind those differences do not exist, except at the superficial level. The verse says, to a learned man endowed with humility, a dog, a woman, an outcaste — all are equal in the eyes of the enlightened person. Let us look at it from the point of view of status.

We may not have a caste system everywhere, but we have a class system in which some have status and others do not. In no society, up to now, has that differentiation based on some kind of a class system ceased to exist. Then there are people who do not bother about class or caste, but their judgements of the superior and the inferior are based on, let us say, education and learning. The verse says the learned Brahman is the same as the outcaste who has never had a chance of getting educated. In the eyes of the enlightened person, both are the same. In so many Western countries where there is supposed to be a great sense of equality, if a person has several initials after his name, he is taken to be a superior person, but he may be an idiot as far as relationships and understanding are concerned. The weaker people, animals, women, children — they are all considered to be inferior and exploited. We must see whether these kinds of

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differences are unconsciously accepted by us, because these values pervade human society.

We were speaking about the fact that where there is a drive inside there is no real freedom. You may have all kinds of liberty in the outer life. A person may have enough money to go anywhere to buy what he or she wants. The husband or wife may say 'you please yourself, you are free'. All that kind of freedom outside may exist, but is there an unconscious drive to do what the world does to accept values or act according to those values? Do we unconsciously kowtow to a person who sports titles? This is not necessarily a superior person. It is a simple example. There are so many people, politicians particularly, who manage to go and get an honorary degree from some University, because it is supposed to raise them up immediately. What kind of compulsion, what drive is there inside us to be like sheep psychologically? Do we have the courage to live without those kinds of evaluation?

We may accept something if we have carefully examined it, and find it just and reasonable. And it is rather interesting in this case to see that the *Gītā* also speaks about the learned Brahman endowed with virtue or humility. Humility is the supreme virtue, but he is not superior to the dog, or the outcaste, or women, which is what the *Gītā* says.

A man commits theft and we condemn him or punish him. If he is hungry we may feel, 'why should we give help to this man, he is a thief'. But a hungry man is a

hungry man and we have to ask ourselves, if we are in the same position, if we are very short of money, if there is a family dependent on us, are we really so honest that we can guarantee that we would not touch anything which does not belong to us. We have no right to judge; not to judge in a psychological sense; I am not saying all actions are right actions; they are obviously not; the *Gītā* is speaking about something else. It says to the wise person, pain and pleasure must be the same. To the wise person, the clod of earth, a piece of gold, a lump of rock — they are all the same. Gold is not more valuable than a lump of earth because he sees that in all these different so-called categories there is one 'real' sacred life. That is everywhere, at all times, and therefore, he sees with an equal eye. That is true equality. We cannot tomorrow become like that, but we must at least examine all this. When we are driven to accept worldly values, when we have the sense of superior or inferior by comparing this with that in order to put them in some place on the scale, when we are doing all this, then we really practise Universal Brotherhood.

### The Higher Mind

Most people are still developing the mind which is capable of observing and of pondering over what has been observed. It has to develop and realize the unseen realities and then only it begins to know the purpose of what happens. This means seeing events without reacting, because these events are not important in themselves. They will pass away. Even

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those things that we consider to be very important which may be found in history books, etc., pass away, and the world goes on. But we must first look at our own thoughts to know that is of importance, although it has no real significance, except to make us see in a different way.

There are some people who can look without confusion, in a philosophical and even with a somewhat humorous spirit, because they see the temporality of everything, the unimportance of what takes place. Then the inner quietness increases. When passing things are not given weightage, events are seen with a smile.

Everybody has to work slowly to reach the stage when passing things are not given weightage, and one can see what happens to oneself, one's friends and family. The sense of humour is what puts things in a different way. Let us take a simple example: a person suddenly finds that he has inherited a large fortune, he becomes excited and begins to think what he is going to do with the fortune. On the contrary someone who loses what he has, behaves in a way opposed to that of the person who has inherited a fortune. In both situations, the person has to remain calm, and not feel too concerned; he remains unshaken, whether by so-called good fortune or bad fortune. Looked at from a higher standpoint, they themselves do not matter, but what they do to us does. If one can remain pure within, then the test has been passed. This is very important for all of us. This physical world feels different from what we think it is, when we give significance to what is not real.

The world of our own reactions, and conditioning affects us and we call this experience. But actually when we are no more affected by the experience, when we can see all of nature and all the people in the world with a calm internal eye it is wonderful. The ancient books say that one can be like the lotus leaf on which a drop of water falls, but makes no impress. This is a symbol of a person who remains untouched, and uncorrupted whatever happens. The mind remains calm, learns what is not only deeper, but what is nearer the good and beautiful. We know so many things, and we are proud of that, but all those things that we know of are of no value. Someone like the Buddha helps people to change. When the mind is clear because calmness is natural to it, the quiet mind can reach depths which are impossible at present.

Obviously life has great depths. There are people who have touched those depths, who are not just human — they are super-human, not because they are stronger or cleverer; they have come to what is real and good. This is open to all of us, but we have to begin with the quiet mind. The mind which wanders, which tries to appear cleverer than others, that mind must change. All the cleverness that the world appreciates is not of very great value. It may help at a certain stage to become sharper and see better, but it has no lasting value. But if we find quietness of mind, and begin to look, to listen and be aware we may come to something which nobody can take away from us — the Eternal. ✧

# Into the Great Silence

WAYNE GATFIELD

IN modern society we seem to be almost afraid of silence, so we fill up any silences with small talk, or we pass time with various entertainments. We are uncomfortable with silence, perhaps because it almost forces us to take stock of ourselves and our lives; to come face to face with ourselves, our 'Original Face' as the Zen mystics might say.

Some time ago, I read about Apollonius of Tyana, who was a follower of Pythagoras and his school, and as part of his training remained silent for five years. He did not go into the forest or the desert, but remained in the city where if he needed to communicate, he would use gestures or written notes.

The composer, John Cage, once created a composition which was just over four and a half minutes of silence, which was controversial at the time, but he was probably just trying to get the point across that all music arises in silence and returns to it and it is the silence between the notes that makes the music; without them we would just have a constant sound which would be incomprehensible as music. John Cage did study Zen Buddhism for a while and this influenced his work as

he used silence quite a lot in many of his other compositions. In the same way the silence between the breaths or recitation of a mantra can be seen as the ultimate reality.

Probably this aversion to silence is more of a Western trait, for in the East, particularly in Chinese and Japanese poetry, the silence is of more value than the words, and in their paintings, space is of more value than the actual forms within the painting. Again, the concept of silence plays a major part.

In India, it is said that Kṛṣṇa is born in the dead of night, which means that the Spiritual Self manifests itself when the mind is tranquil and silent. Also, there is the concept of Living Midnight in Taoism which conveys the same idea.

In Theosophy, we all know *The Voice of the Silence*, a poetic and beautiful work translated by H. P. Blavatsky, which mentions Nāda the 'soundless sound' and tells us that:

When to himself his form appears unreal,  
as do on waking all the forms he sees in  
dreams;

When he has ceased to hear the many, he

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may discern the ONE — the inner sound which kills the outer.

Then only, not till then, shall he forsake the region of *asat*, the false, to come unto the realm of *Sat*, the true.

Before the soul can see, the harmony within must be attained, and fleshly eyes be rendered blind to all illusion.

Before the Soul can hear, the image (man) has to become as deaf to roarings as to whispers, to cries of bellowing elephants as to the silvery buzzing of the golden firefly.

Before the soul can comprehend and may remember, she must unto the Silent Speaker be united just as the form to which the clay is modelled is first united with the potter's mind.

For then the soul will hear, and will remember.

And then to the inner ear will speak

### THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE

Mystics of all traditions have realized the value of silence in their meditations and the fact that when we reach a physical and mental stillness of being, something does indeed 'speak' to us deep within and conveys to us ideas that cannot really be expressed in words, though many try with varying success. In many cases these insights are translated into the vernacular of the mystic's religion and create even more division and misunderstanding, but there are also individuals whose words convey to us the reality that all mystics share the same experience and it is just

the limitation of words that erects the barriers. The Sufi poet, Attar, says:

From each, Love demands a mystic  
silence.

What do all seek so earnestly? 'Tis Love.  
Love is the subject of their inmost  
thoughts,

In Love no longer 'Thou' and 'I' exist,  
For self has passed away in the Beloved.  
Now will I draw aside the veil from Love,  
And in the temple of mine inmost soul  
Behold the Friend, Incomparable Love.  
He who would know the secret of both  
worlds

Will find that the secret of them both is  
Love.

Love is something that most mystics find when they enter this Silence, but it is a much deeper experience of love than the one that filters through into our daily lives. It is profound and moving when contemplated by the mystic who struggles to express it in poetry and words or music or teachings. H. P. Blavatsky, although she was adapting the Ancient Wisdom for the consumption of matter-of-fact Victorian intellectuals, also had these intimations as many of her letters and writings show. In her life she constantly stressed the importance of actual practice and experience above the mere intellectual understanding, as did her Masters in their teachings.

Speaking of silence, the seventeenth century Quaker, Robert Barclay, said:

Each made it their work to return inwardly to the measure of grace in themselves, and not being only silent as to words but even

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abstaining from all their own thoughts, imaginations and desires.

So now we can see silence as something much deeper than just the physical idea of silence; even our thoughts, imaginations and desires create 'noise' on another level and to reach a state of total silence we have to quieten our thoughts and emotions, so that we can become aware of the Divinity that permeates all things beyond the illusions that our mind creates.

When asked, 'What is *mouna* (silence)', Ramana Maharshi replied:

That which transcends speech and thought is *mouna*; it is meditation without mental activity. Subjugation of the mind is meditation: deep meditation is eternal speech. Silence is ever speaking [*The Voice of the Silence*]; it is the perennial flow of 'language'. It is interrupted by speaking; for words obstruct this mute language. Lectures may entertain individuals for hours without improving them. Silence, on the other hand, is permanent and benefits the whole of humanity . . . By silence, eloquence is meant. Oral lectures are not so eloquent as silence. Silence is unceasing eloquence. It is the best language. There is a state when words cease and silence prevails.

This state is the one in which the mystic draws his inspiration. In Theosophy, we may refer to it as *Mānasa Taijasa*, when the mind is illumined by the light of *Buddhi* and the realm of words and conditioned thought is transcended so that we enter a silence, or what appears to be a silence to our lower mind and our senses,

but may indeed be something very different to the one who has reached that state. It is the beginning of a whole new range of experiences for the aspirant. John the Solitary, a Christian hermit from the fifth century AD says:

For God is silence, and in silence is He sung by means of that psalmody which is worthy of him. I am not speaking of the silence of the tongue, for if someone merely keeps his tongue silent, without knowing how to sing in mind and spirit, then he is simply unoccupied and becomes filled with evil thoughts . . . There is a silence of the tongue, there is a silence of the whole body, there is a silence of the soul, there is the silence of the mind, and there is the silence of the spirit.

This ties in very closely with what is written in *Light on the Path*, by Mabel Collins:

Look for the flower to bloom in the silence that follows the storm: not till then.

It shall grow, it will shoot up, it will make branches and leaves and form buds, while the storm continues, while the battle lasts. But not till the whole personality of the man is dissolved and melted — not until it is held by the divine fragment which has created it, as a mere subject for grave experiment and experience — not until the whole nature has yielded and become subject unto its higher Self, can the bloom open. Then will come a calm such as comes in a tropical country after the heavy rain, when Nature works so swiftly that one may see her action. Such a calm will

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come to the harassed spirit. And in the deep silence the mysterious event will occur which will prove that the way has been found. Call it by what name you will, it is a voice that speaks where there is none to speak — it is a messenger that comes, a messenger without form or substance; or it is the flower of the soul that has opened. It cannot be described by any metaphor. But it can be felt after, looked for, and desired, even amid the raging of the storm. The silence may last a moment of time or it may last a thousand years. But it will end. Yet you will carry its strength with you. Again and again the battle must be fought and won. It is only for an interval that Nature can be still.

The *Tao Te Ching* says:

Look at it, it cannot be seen  
Listen to it, it cannot be heard  
Use it, it cannot be exhausted

So now we can see a little clearer what is meant by the 'Living Midnight' or 'Kṛṣṇa is born at the dead of night'. What we draw on this side of the Silence is always exhausted because we are in the realm of the manifested Universe where all follows the processes of birth, maturity, old age and death; but when we enter the Silence we draw upon something that is never exhausted; we drink from the Fount of Immortality. We live at the source and enter a whole new realm of experience. In a way the whole concept of Silence disappears as it says in the second of the Stanzas of Dzyan:

Where was silence? Where the ears to sense

it? No, there was neither silence nor sound; naught save ceaseless eternal breath, which knows itself not.

Silence then is a concept that we use to describe something that is beyond the range of perception of our six senses: sight, sound, taste, touch, smell and the lower mind and our emotions. It is a returning to our natural state of being which we feverishly try to shut out by talking, thinking, reading and many other practices that do not bring us into the Silence. Works like the *Bhagavadgītā* and *Aṣṭāvakra-Gītā* speak of transcending the realm of thought and forgetting all that we know with the conditioned mind before we can move on. H. P. Blavatsky also emphasized this in many of her writings. In the Study Notes compiled by one of her students, Robert Bowen, we read:

It is worse than useless going to those whom we imagine to be advanced students (she said) and asking them to give us an 'interpretation' of the *S.D.* They cannot do it. If they try, all they give are cut and dried exoteric renderings which do not remotely resemble the TRUTH. To accept such interpretation means anchoring ourselves to fixed ideas, whereas TRUTH lies beyond any ideas we can formulate or express.

She goes on to say that we should use the ideas given to us as pointers only. Speaking about the attitude of mind to be adopted when following true Jñāna Yoga, she says:

This mode of thinking (she says) is what

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the Indians call Jñāna Yoga. As one progresses in Jñāna Yoga, one finds conceptions arising which, though one is conscious of them, one cannot express nor yet formulate into any sort of mental picture. As time goes on these conceptions will form into mental pictures. This is a time to be on guard and refuse to be deluded with the idea that the newfound and wonderful picture must represent reality. It does not. As one works on, one finds the once admired picture growing dull and unsatisfying, and finally fading out or being thrown away. This is another danger point, because for the moment one is left in a void without any conception to support one, and one may be tempted to revive the cast-off picture for want of a better to cling to. The true student will, however, work on unconcerned, and presently further formless gleams come, which again in time give rise to a larger and more beautiful picture than the last. But the learner will now know that no picture will ever represent the TRUTH. This last splendid picture will grow dull and fade like the others. And so the process goes on, until at last the mind and its pictures are transcended and the learner enters and dwells in the World of NO FORM, but of which all forms are narrowed reflections.

So is it this realm of no form that many mystics enter when they have transcended all the images generated by the mind? Or is the Silence they enter a relative one? I think that perhaps both statements are true depending upon the calibre of the mystic. Mysticism like all else has many levels,

from the sectarian mystic attached to some religion or other to the ones who have transcended attachment to any religion or system of thought. Some mystics have a sporadic entry into the Silence and have no control over it, some have partial control and some have full control and can enter this state at will.

What need is there to take any action? Only profound silence, that is all. (Kuo Hsiang, 13th century Taoist monk)

Thomas Merton, from his 'Thoughts in Solitude':

When I speak, it is a demand that others remain silent so I alone may be heard. When I am silent, I hear my true self and reach my soul. When I am silent, I hear with a caring heart. Silence teaches us to know reality by respecting it where words have defiled it. If our life is poured out in useless words, we will never hear anything because we have said everything before we had anything to say.

So let us try to see how we can enter this Silence and thereby understand a little more. Occasionally when I am in the midst of people in a city, I am aware of this Silence; it tells me that it is something beyond the physical noise that surrounds me. So this Silence does not rely on quietness in a material sense; it is something much deeper that can be found whilst we are surrounded by seeming chaos and drawn on, as the *Tao Te Ching* says, when we are seemingly overwhelmed by noise. Obviously it is easier to enter this Silence when we are in beautiful, peaceful

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surroundings as the physical noise is almost eliminated, but it is not essential, and the quality of the experience will be greater and more useful if it can be found in the midst of noise. I believe that the touch of this Silence can bring us dignity and an appreciation of the wonder and beauty of life beyond the physical chaos, and also insight into the transience of the life of the personal self, the immortality of Spirit and the oneness of all things.

When we can spend some time in this Silence, many things come to light — and the Silence consecrates our being to what is good, true and beautiful, because all things are presence in that Silence. We need to calm the mind as the Master known to us as KH says:

It is upon the serene and placid surface of the unruffled mind that the visions gathered from the invisible find a representation in the visible world. Otherwise you would vainly seek those visions, those flashes of sudden light which have already helped to solve so many of the minor problems and which alone can bring the truth before the eye of the soul. It is with jealous care that we have to guard our mind-plane from all the adverse influences which daily arise

in our passage through earth-life.

We then need to come to a state of Silence, by not attaching ourselves too much to thoughts and images that arise in our daily life. Most things that happen to us do not matter at all in the scale of things and if we do not give too much emphasis to lesser problems, we will have the energy and clarity of thought to deal with the larger ones.

But we give a false value to so many things, as the personality clamours for attention and wants to be heard, to be recognized, to assert itself at the expense of others, to complain and to take itself too seriously in this world of illusions. We need to find that dimension to our being where all that fades into insignificance, and we find ourselves on the shore of a vast ocean of being that fills us with an awe and a wonder at the beauty that we somehow cannot grasp with our day-to-day mind but that fills our hearts from a source somewhere beyond our conditioned understanding. All comes into focus in the great Silence and there we will discover what really does matter. Then we may begin the Great Work in earnest with a rekindled clarity of mind.

**To find out anything, it does not matter what it is, your mind, the whole of consciousness — not a part of it — must be quiet.**

J. Krishnamurti

# *The Secret Doctrine: What It Is, and How and Why We Study It*

JOHN ALGEO

## **What *The Secret Doctrine* Is**

*The Secret Doctrine* is the major work of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, a remarkable Russian woman who was chiefly responsible for introducing Western readers to certain ideas that have been called the ‘Ancient Wisdom’, ‘Esoteric Tradition’, or ‘Secret Doctrine’. In 1875, Blavatsky, assisted by a number of other persons (chiefly Henry Steel Olcott) founded the Theosophical Society in order to make that wisdom better known in the West and to put it into practice through a fellowship of students and investigators. Her published writings fill more than twenty large volumes, of which the most important are the two volumes of *The Secret Doctrine*.

*The Secret Doctrine* is remarkable for the sweep of its vision and the daring of what it affirms. Its subject is nothing less than the origin and essential nature of the universe and of humanity. Yet it is not a coherent treatment of those matters. To read *The Secret Doctrine*, we must first understand the purpose of the book. Some books are for entertainment, some

for instruction, and some for inspiration. Although, to be sure, *The Secret Doctrine* has entertainment, instruction and inspiration in it, none of those are its primary purpose.

H. P. Blavatsky wrote entertaining books — for example, her accounts of her travels in India published originally in Russian journals and translated under the title *From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan*. But anyone who comes to *The Secret Doctrine* for entertainment is likely to be bored. HPB wrote instructional books — for example, *The Key to Theosophy*, which was, and still is, a readable and practical introduction to Theosophical thought and practice. But anyone who comes to *The Secret Doctrine* for instruction is likely to be confused. Many Theosophists have thought of *The Secret Doctrine* as an instructive work, but to approach her magnum opus as a coherent textbook is the wrong approach. HPB wrote inspirational books — for example, *The Voice of the Silence*, perhaps the deepest and richest guide we have to the spiritual life. But anyone who comes

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to *The Secret Doctrine* for inspiration is likely to be dismayed by the mass of uninspiring detail in it.

Certainly, there are entertaining moments in *The Secret Doctrine*, and long passages of instruction, and flashes of inspiration. But HPB's big book serves another end, which we might call 'discovery'. The purpose of *The Secret Doctrine* is not to make us happy by entertaining us, or knowledgeable by instructing us, or sensitive by inspiring us. Its purpose is to help us discover Truth.

Towards the end of her life, Blavatsky gathered about her a group of personal students, to whom she gave instruction. According to P. G. B. Bowen, his father, Robert Bowen, was one of those who took notes on what HPB said about studying *The Secret Doctrine*. Those notes state that we should not suppose that the book contains all and only the truth, or even that we can find Truth in it: 'Come to the *S.D.* . . . without any hope of getting the final Truth of existence from it, or with any idea other than seeing how far it may lead towards the Truth. See in study a means of exercising and developing the mind never touched by other studies.' *The Secret Doctrine* is important, not for the thoughts it contains, but for how we can use it to learn to think for ourselves. It is not a book of entertainment, instruction or inspiration. It is a book of discovery.

While *The Secret Doctrine* is the basic source book of modern Theosophy and deserves respect for its great learning and deep insights, we must never make the mistake of treating it as a 'sacred book'

— an infallible or final authority on Theosophy. The very composition of the book — including the process of its writing, the organization of its contents, and even the substance of its thought — is such as to make its treatment as an authoritative text inappropriate.

### **How to Study *The Secret Doctrine***

The way *The Secret Doctrine* was written makes it clear that the student should not approach the work as a coherent textbook of Theosophy or as an infallible or even consistent treatment of its subjects. How then can the student begin to study this most basic of all Theosophical books? We can consider the approach from two standpoints — rationale and technique, the why and the how of studying the book.

First, technique: What is the best way to go about studying *The Secret Doctrine*? The answer to that question depends partly on the student, because different techniques work best for different persons. However, a method that has been long in use is that described in a work called 'The Bowen Notes'. P. G. B. Bowen recorded that his father, Commander Robert Bowen, a retired naval officer, took notes on instructions that H. P. Blavatsky gave about how to study the book. Those notes were published about forty years after Blavatsky's death in a magazine called *Theosophy in Ireland*. They have been frequently reprinted in a variety of formats.

The Bowen notes tell us that 'reading the *S.D.* page by page as one reads any other book' — for example, a textbook

— ‘will only end in confusion’. The notes also give suggestions on how to go about studying the work. They advise the student to hold fast to four basic ideas: (1) the fundamental unity of all existence with two aspects: consciousness and substance; (2) the vitality of all matter; (3) the micro-cosmic correspondence of human nature to the great cosmos because of our oneness with it; and (4) the hermetic order of the universe as a Divine Economy, which is simultaneously a hierarchy of power and a network of equality.

The Bowen notes also advise us first to get a firm grasp on four crucial passages: in vol. I, the three Fundamental Propositions in the ‘Proem’ (I.13–20) and the six numbered items that recapitulate in the ‘Summing Up’ (I.272–8); in vol. II, the ‘Preliminary Notes’ (II.1–12) and the ‘Conclusion’ (II.437–46). In addition to those four crucial passages, there are a number of others that represent overviews (introductions or conclusions), that identify themselves as being central teachings of the Wisdom Tradition, or that neatly encapsulate basic ideas. Chapter 11 includes a list of such passages, which will repay attentive study as an entree to the ideas of *The Secret Doctrine*. A good way to begin studying *The Secret Doctrine* is thus to understand certain key ideas expressed in key passages. The goal is intuitive insight.

### **Why We Study *The Secret Doctrine***

In addition to knowing how to study *The Secret Doctrine*, we also need to know why we do so. Indeed, the rationale

for studying is far more important than mere techniques. However we choose to do so, what should be our reason for studying *The Secret Doctrine*? The Bowen notes say that study of *The Secret Doctrine* is a form of Jñāna Yoga: ‘The True Student of *The Secret Doctrine* is a Jñāna Yogi, and this Path of Yoga is the True Path for the Western student. It is to provide him with signposts on that Path that *The Secret Doctrine* has been written.’

Writing in her magazine *Lucifer*, Blavatsky responded to the complaint of one Theosophical student that *The Secret Doctrine* is too difficult and incomplete. She replied that ‘a work which compares several dozens of philosophies and over half-a-dozen of world-religions, a work which has to unveil the roots with the greatest precautions, as it can only *hint* at the secret blossoms here and there — cannot be comprehended at a first reading, nor even after several, unless the reader elaborates for himself a system for it’.

Readers should not expect to find a system ready-made in *The Secret Doctrine*, but instead must elaborate for themselves a system out of it. The process of *jñāna yoga* is to try to understand the workings of the cosmos and one’s own place in it. To do this, one constructs theories or ‘mental pictures’. The word *theory* comes from a Greek root that means ‘to look or to view’, and so a theory is a way of viewing things — a mental picture. The danger is always that one will mistake the picture for the reality that it represents, that one will become so enthralled by the elegance and

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consistency and accuracy of the picture that one stops paying attention to the reality altogether and gazes at the picture of it instead.

Fortunately we are discouraged from losing ourselves in our theories by the fact that they are always flawed. As we contemplate our mental pictures, we discover inaccuracies in them, inadequacies and errors. That discovery evokes one of two contrasting responses.

Those who are True Believers say the inaccuracies do not exist, or are not important, and continue to contemplate their mental pictures long after the flaws are obvious. But those who are genuine students will tolerate a certain number of flaws for a while, but as the flaws accumulate, genuine students will decide that the mental picture they have constructed has to be superseded. And they will construct a new, larger, and better picture that corrects the flaws of the old one. In time, of course, flaws appear in the new picture too, and it has likewise to be superseded. And so it goes, with mental picture succeeding mental picture, each correcting the flaws of its predecessor, but introducing flaws of its own. That, as Thomas Kuhn has shown, is also the way science evolves, substituting theory for theory in a process he called the ‘structure of scientific revolutions’. And that is the way the esoteric student, following the path of *jñāna yoga* progresses as well.

If *jñāna yogi-s* are successfully following that path, however, they do not just go on substituting one flawed picture for another indefinitely. Instead, eventually

they come to the realization that ‘no picture will ever represent the Truth’. The process of substituting one picture, one theory, for another goes on ‘until at last the mind and its pictures are transcended and the learner enters and dwells in the World of no form, but of which all forms are narrowed reflections’.

The purpose of the picture of the cosmos and of humanity that we find in *The Secret Doctrine* is to lead us to realize that no such picture can ever be adequate to the Truth that it represents. The purpose of *The Secret Doctrine* is to help us to realize that *The Secret Doctrine* is inadequate — indeed, that all theories, all mental pictures, of the origin and structure and operation of the universe are inadequate. *Jñāna Yoga* uses the mind to lead us beyond the mind. We study *The Secret Doctrine* in order to go beyond *The Secret Doctrine*.

*The Secret Doctrine* is the first word of modern Theosophy, but it is not the last — and it was not intended to be so. It is a marvellous book, not because it entertains or instructs or inspires us, but because it helps us to discover that it is a flawed book, that all books are flawed, that Truth is not to be found in books, but in ourselves. Truth is not in charts and tables and lists, not in chains and rounds and races. Truth is in the recognition that no book, no formulation, no statement can ever adequately represent the way reality is. Truth is in the recognition that there is no higher doctrine than Truth. That is Theosophy. That is the Secret Doctrine. ✧

# The Innermost Within

MARY ANDERSON

IN an old story, there was once a beautiful monastery on a mountain top, but the abbot and the monks were very worried. The old monks were growing older and were dying. There were no novices attracted to the contemplative life. The monastery might die out and fall into ruins or become a mere monument, a tourist attraction, a charming ruin.

The abbot decided to consult a wise Rabbi who lived further down the mountain. When the Rabbi heard what the problem was, he smiled and said: 'Do not worry. All will be well, because the Messiah is among you! Whisper this secret in the ear of each of your monks!'

The abbot thanked the Rabbi, returned to the monastery and did as he was advised. Gradually the attitude of the monks to each other changed. Each of them reflected: 'Who is it? Who is the Messiah? Perhaps it is Brother James whom I do not like or Brother John, to whom I was nasty the other day.' And they all began to see each other in a new light and to treat each other with new respect and affection. To some it occurred: 'Perhaps I am the Messiah! Then I should behave better!' A completely new atmosphere

reigned in the monastery, an atmosphere of love and resultant peace and harmony.

As usual, the occasional visitor came to the monastery: tourists, mountaineers, hikers, backpackers, many young people. Many of them became aware of the wonderful atmosphere in the monastery: the affection, the peace, the joy, the harmony among the monks. They returned home and told their friends, some of whom became interested in the monastic life and joined the monastery.

This is not just a fairy tale, for the 'Messiah' is indeed in each one of us. The innermost being of each of us, indeed of everyone, every living being, is divine. In *At the Feet of the Master*, it is said:

Learn to distinguish the God in everyone and everything, no matter how evil he or it may appear on the surface. You can help your brother through that which you have in common with him, and that is the Divine Life; learn how to arouse that in him, learn how to appeal to that in him; so shall you save your brother from wrong.

There is a beautiful saying: When people see the divine in another, 'Spirit leaps to Spirit across the veil of flesh'. ✧

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# A New Perspective on Reality

SAMPOORAN SINGH

## Introduction

Man is an amphibian who lives simultaneously in two dimensions — a) the *known*, the time-space-causation matrices, the finite, transitory, ephemeral; and b) the *Unknown*, the Timeless, Infinite, Eternal, Immortal. The known constructs — chaos, conflict, duality — lead to nervous tension and chemical pressure. The known leads also to self-destruction or self-annihilation. If the known is observed or listened to, or in the words of Albert Einstein, exploration is carried out by ‘objective observing and understanding’, there is a quantum jump from time to timelessness, from activity to non-action, from movement to non-movement, and from speech to verbal silence.

The personal mind is a conditioned energy, moving through the body, monitored by the brain, operating through the senses. The brain is always conditioned by our response, experience and knowledge (information). It is the centre of all actions, all thinking; so thought and thinking lead to conditioning. It is awareness that can bring about a radical transformation within ourselves. Mind, in

the universal sense, is non-dual, a domain beyond time and space where only frequencies exist. The Universal Consciousness expresses itself in the Mind as a quantum jump from fragmentary experience to the perception of the Wholeness, the Oneness.

## The Limitations of Objective Research

Maurice H. Wilkins, Nobel Laureate in medicine in 1962, wrote:

Science makes progress largely by a combination of two aspects: open-mindedness and the following of abstract concepts. Abstraction involves excluding and narrowing down, which is the very opposite of open-mindedness. Science always puts the most emphasis on this abstracting and narrowing down, on analytical procedures and on the role of the intellect as distinct from intuition and feelings. . . . The logical and rational is a very important element in science. . . . Science as it is today does not tell us very much about the real nature of human beings . . . Science is a human activity. . . . It cannot be separated from all virtues and values.<sup>1</sup>

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**Dr Sampooran Singh** was a scientist from Chandigarh, India, and had numerous papers to his credit on the integration of spirituality and science.

Science pursues materialism for human comfort. He added: 'The whole question of moral, spiritual and other dimensions is normally pushed out of science.'

Scientific applications have raised the living standards of millions beyond expectation. There has been a fantastic, exponential growth in knowledge. But the pursuit of war weapons has also brought man to an extremely dangerous phase of life. The old chasm between knowledge and wisdom has widened dangerously. Knowledge grows but wisdom atrophies; or knowledge proliferates, but wisdom languishes.

### **Recent Discoveries by Neuro-physiologists and Neurosurgeons**

Karl Pribram, an eminent neuroscientist, wrote: 'Brain science must deal with the awareness of awareness. It can no longer afford to shut out that part of the world which we call subjective.'<sup>2</sup> Roger Sperry, Nobel Laureate in Physiology and Medicine, 1981, spoke of the importance of a neglected area of science, namely the study of the human subjective experience, and he noted a profound development:

Current concepts of the mind-brain relation involve a direct break with the long-established materialist and behaviourist doctrine that has dominated neuroscience for many decades. Instead of renouncing or ignoring consciousness, the new interpretation gives full recognition to the primacy of inner conscious awareness as a causal reality.<sup>3</sup>

Sperry also wrote: 'When the brain is

whole, the unified consciousness of the left and the right hemispheres adds up to more than the individual properties of the separate hemispheres.' So these studies raised the issue of consciousness in a new way. He adds: 'When parts come together in a new whole, this new whole exhibits features — emergent properties — that can't be predicted as a new rule from the parts, and cannot be explained entirely in terms of the parts.'<sup>4</sup> Another Nobel Laureate, British neurophysiologist, John Eccles, also emphasizes the need to deal scientifically with the neglected area of inner conscious awareness. Eccles pierces the sensory illusion with one startling but irrefutable assertion: 'I want you to realize that there is no colour in the natural world and no sound — nothing of this kind; no texture, no patterns, no beauty, no scent. . . .'<sup>5</sup> In short, none of the objective facts upon which we usually base our reality is fundamentally valid.

Wilder Penfield, a Canadian neurosurgeon, concluded: 'Our minds and our brains are not at all the same. . . . It is the mind which experiences and it is the brain which records the experience.'<sup>6</sup> The mind is independent and synergistic to the brain. Penfield wrote: 'To suppose that consciousness or the mind has a location is a failure to understand neurophysiology.' The mind exists everywhere.

The whole of mankind is caught in an unprecedented crisis. That means one has to observe very carefully; we must become aware of ourselves, because we are the history of mankind. J. Krishnamurti added: 'If we do not know how to read

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this book, we are going to destroy ourselves.<sup>7</sup>

The order of the universe may be the order of our own minds. Everything that we experience as material reality is born of the conditioned mind, which in turn is the expression of an invisible realm beyond space and time, a realm revealed by science as that of the highest frequency of energy and information. The invisible source of all that exists is not an empty void but the womb of creation itself (Supreme Intelligence).

### Discovery or Intuition

Nature, in its benediction, has embedded a hidden potential in the human psyche to understand life directly, instead of in the abstract, linear terms of representational thinking. The indirect perception is called symbolic, or map, or inferential, or dualistic knowledge; while the direct perception is discovery, or intuition, or intimate understanding of the truth. It is not a step by step process but it happens when there is a quantum jump from a symbolic frame to a non-dual frame of reference of the Mind Continuum. A non-dual thought is synergistic to dualistic thought; for discovery in any field we need a higher quantum energy potential of awareness or consciousness. The discovery happens in the timeless realm. Intuition is beyond our observations, perceptions and logic. Intuition is direct perception in the brain without mediation of the sensory apparatus.

Nature responds to experimental interrogation or experimental dialogue, so

one explores each thought with the 'objective observing and understanding'. We watch every thought and never let a single thought escape without observing its nature. This observing and understanding allows thought to go into abeyance and the mind becomes silent. Discovery or intuition is born in a silent mind, so it expresses itself as Timelessness — this is also called insight. It is insight alone that can decondition the brain. This permits flowering of the brain. This bestows a complete relationship with Mind.

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D. S. Kothari, an eminent physicist, wrote:

The new theorems unless trivial, are of course first 'discovered' and then proved. Discovery is an inspired flash of insight. It is not a step by step process. A rational account of a discovery, the proof, follows and not precedes the discovery.<sup>8</sup>

He again wrote: 'Fundamental discoveries which go deep into the nature of things are the result of uncommon intuition and faith, not cold logic.'<sup>9</sup>

It follows that that 'all great discoveries have arisen from the realm of timelessness, so scientific enquiry is not a cerebral activity and gathering information but a quest of Timelessness, the Divinity, the Life Field. A selfless, unflinching devotion to truth and use of knowledge for man's uplift — higher hierarchical expression of Consciousness — are the only vocation of a scientist'. Maurice H. Wilkins wrote: 'The open-minded enquiry of the scientist

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is not something peculiar to the science itself but is characteristic of the good way of living for human beings in general.<sup>10</sup>

Wills W. Harman wrote: 'The realm of conventional science has dealt with the world of outer experience and has neglected the whole world of human inner experience, where all our sense of values, meanings, goals and so on come from.'<sup>11</sup>

Prigogine stated that 'the behaviour of a reality (is) unrelated to our beliefs, our ambitions, or our hopes'.<sup>12</sup> Erwin Schrödinger stated, 'a moderately satisfying picture of the world has only been reached at the high price of taking ourselves out of the picture, stepping back into the role of a non-concerned observer'.<sup>13</sup> E. F. Schumacher said: 'Our task is to look at the world and then see it as a whole.' David Bohm concluded, that 'to observe nature with a certain kind of objectivity could be called the germ of the scientific attitude',<sup>14</sup> or scientific temper. We also explored science with creativity.<sup>15</sup> *When one is aware of the fact, the 'objective truth' and ignorance of the 'subjective world (inner)', the mind is engaged in 'invention'. If one is simultaneously aware of the subjective world (inner) and the objective world (outer), then the mind is engaged in discovery. Discoveries come as intuitive flashes.*<sup>15</sup> This suggests that objective science, which invariably is not aware of the *knower* (subject) but is aware of the *known* (object) can regenerate the mind to be creative. Objective science is a pursuit of materialism. It follows a part, so it is limited. If this observation is continued for a long

chronological time, the objective science makes a quantum jump to the subjective science, where subjective science takes in its fold the intuition, the timelessness, the Wholeness, the Oneness, the non-dual and non-conceptual frame of reference of Mind Continuum. The dimension of the subjective research is *Science-Education-Ethics-Health*.

The occurrence of seeing or hearing, smelling or breathing, is a movement in the realm of non-duality, or of direct perception. Every activity in nature is direct perception. But human-made activity is indirect perception, so it is in the dualistic field. The ethics imply taking in its ambience the sensual and the trans-sensual world. A living in the *present*, the now, heals, and living in the *past* and *duality* suppresses man's perceptive sensitivity and enhances disease.

Objective science moves from fact to fact. If a fact is observed for a long period of time, the quantum energy potential of the object is enhanced and this makes a quantum jump across the 'event horizon'.<sup>16</sup> Physicists call the boundary 'the event horizon', which divides sharply anything that remains within the speed of light and anything faster than the speed of light. In other words, it divides the time field and the timeless realm. The speed of light is absolute; it is like a wall that no object can crash through. As we approach the wall, time slows down, mass increases, and space becomes curved.<sup>16</sup> This implies that a quantum jump is made from the outer field to the inner realm; when it comes in the realm of the inner field, it

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annihilates or goes into abeyance and the subjective truth is perceived. The Cosmic Consciousness observes Itself by Itself. The subject attains the wholeness of life.

Ilya Prigogine wrote: 'It is physics that presupposes an observer (Universal Consciousness) within the observed world (subjective dimension). Our dialogue will be successful only if it is carried from within nature.'<sup>17</sup> So both Universal Consciousness and the Subjective dimension are 'within nature'. There is nothing objective to perceive, but Universal Consciousness is aware of 'Absolute Subjectivity', or the 'Subjective World'. The quantum energy potential of Consciousness both in Universal Consciousness and the subjective realm is the same.

Fred Alan Wolf wrote: 'We are beginning a new age of awareness, the age of quantum consciousness, the age of conscious atom. By looking within ourselves, we may be able to solve the problems facing us on the final frontier — the frontier of the human spirit.'<sup>18</sup> It appears that exploring the quantum leap from intellect to Intelligence, or 'Symbiosis of Science and Spirituality' can resolve all our problems.

### Relationship

This is an interconnected challenge and response between two people, between 'you and me'. Relationship means communion without fear, freedom to understand each other, to communicate directly. There is love, and not responsibility or duty.<sup>19</sup>

In the psychological mode, or symbolic-dualistic mode, there is a recall of past memory or future projections, and one is never in the present. There is invariable isolation. The scientific mode deals with materialism and is unaware of the subject of cognizance, so it deals with parts and never touches relationship. Subjective science deals with the Wholeness or Oneness of Life, so every relationship is holy and sacred.

There can be true relationship only when there is love and compassion. Love exists only when there is self-forgetfulness, when there is complete communion, not between one or two, but communion with the highest. Relationship exists when one revels in subjective research.

### The Hidden Dimensions of Man

Life is a constant challenge (object) and response (subject, recalled memory). The challenge is always new and the response is always old.<sup>19</sup> The old (thinker) absorbs the new (thought) and modifies it. There are coherent superimpositions of different webs or, in other words, the old grafts itself on the new. Both the thinker and the thought are at the same quantum energy potential and are one.

Albert Einstein wrote that we have to explore the psychological imbalances (thinker-thought complex) by 'Objective Observing and Understanding', which is at a higher quantum energy potential than the psychological mode. You observe a thought to its end, which will flow to timelessness. The ending of thought

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means the ending of time. In ending the psychological imbalances, there is renewal, rebirth, a newness, a freshness, a joy. This renewal is in the timeless realm, which is the hidden dimension of man.

Many eminent physicists are aware of the intuitive aspect of scientific discovery. Fritjof Capra stated that 'Einstein experienced the relativity theory before he formulated it. Bohr experienced quantum mechanics before he formulated it. Feynman experienced quantum field theory and Chew experienced the S-matrix theory before their formulation. . . . Feynman had physics in his bones'.<sup>20</sup> Ken Wilber stated that intuition happens in a timeless realm where 'there is no space, no time, only events (or frequencies)'.<sup>21</sup> Galileo taught us that 'mere acceptance of stimuli which came from the environment and which results in the accumulation of memory in the brain is insufficient for our purpose. He taught us by his own achievement that experiments purposely designed are of vital importance in uncovering the truth hidden in nature. He asked questions addressed to nature and succeeded in receiving answers directly from nature. In doing so, he only needed rather simple devices'.<sup>22</sup> Hideki Yukawa wrote: 'It always presupposed the power of intuition, which both Greek and Chinese geniuses in ancient times were richly endowed [with]. The important point would appear to be balance or cooperation between intuition and abstraction.' The hidden dimension of man is intuition, and not the cold logic of the intellect.

Stillness of the mind comes about only when there is no process of isolation through accumulation but a complete understanding of the whole process of relationship. When the mind is still, balanced, equipoised, it is in the realm of the timeless. In stillness there is no projection of thoughts, or ideals, or concepts, or acquisitions, so there is timelessness.

Love is not different from truth. Love is that state in which the thought process, as time, completely ceases. When time ends, timelessness appears. Where there is love, there is revolution, because love is transformation from moment to moment. So the hidden dimension of man is timelessness, the Reality, the Subjective Science.

To understand the whole movement of Life, or Reality, one requires the *Supreme Intelligence*, not the intelligence of thought, or books, or knowledge, but the Intelligence of Love and Compassion with its sensitivity.

The Eternal, or the Timeless, or the Reality is *now* and *here*, and the now cannot be understood by a man who is caught in the net of time. It is the Truth that liberates, not your striving to be free. Truth is not cumulative; it is from moment to moment.<sup>23</sup>

### Concluding Comment

The principle of objectivation in case of 'objective science' is that the subject of cognizance is in the *inner* realm while the 'objective truth' is in the external field. The principle of objectivation in case of

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‘subjective science’ is, both the subject of cognizance (Universal Consciousness) and the object (subjective world) are in the inner realm and hence both are at the same time quantum energy potential of the Universal Consciousness, the Absolute, the Life Field. *The subjective science is independent and synergistic to the objective science.* To sum up, when the quantum energy potential of the fact or objective truth makes a quantum jump to the inner realm (a higher level of awareness), the objective truth (fact) goes into abeyance, and ‘subjective science’ expresses itself. So the subjective science must flow through the objective science. This is the basis of ultimate ‘Symbiosis of Science and Spirituality’, for which mankind has been waiting for uncountable eons.

There is irrefutable evidence — both experimental or theoretical — that the subjective science is independent and synergistic to objective science. The

subjective research is the new perspective on Reality. It is embedded in the timeless dimension of man. It bestows order, harmony, non-violence and peace.

We have to undertake an inner voyage of self-discovery from self-observation through self-knowledge to Silence. *We want a revolution, a psychological revolution, in which the whole human race has to participate and every man is an equal partner. This revolution will regenerate or rejuvenate the human Mind so that it perceives the new dimension of an integral and all-inclusive subjective Consciousness, that can guarantee human survival along with that of the fauna and flora of the earth.*

Human survival is embedded in the manifestation of a higher quantum energy potential of Consciousness through a) from reason to intuition, and b) from objective science to subjective science. Subjective science deals with the Wholeness or Oneness of Life. ✧

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# My Experiments with Colour-Music

CLAUDE BRAGDON

COLOUR-MUSIC is the organization of light into an emotional language just as — in music — sound has been organized. Such an art might prove to be more powerful and poignant than music itself because light is of all things the most marvellous. M. Luckiesh, in his *Artificial Light: Its Influence on Civilization*, says: 'If mobile light becomes a fine art, it will be man's most abstract achievement in art, and it may be incomparably finer and more ethereal than music.' Until the advent of the electric light the necessary means for the organization of this new art were lacking; and only in comparatively recent years has it been possible to produce light of any required volume, colour, and intensity, completely and easily under control.

## Pioneer Experiments

But even before the advent of electrical illumination colour-music had been a subject of speculation and experimentation. Colour scales, analogous to the musical scale, had been worked out, and Bainbridge Bishop, a pioneer in this field, constructed a colour-organ which formed for a time one of the attractions

of P. T. Barnum's famous Museum, on Broadway, New York. This instrument disappeared in the fire which destroyed Barnum's country house at Bridgeport, Connecticut, but extant drawings and descriptions give an idea of what it was like.

It had a regular organ keyboard, pedals and stops, set in a case in the upper part of which, directly above the keyboard, was a semi-circular panel of ground glass on which the colour-music was made to appear. The instrument was placed before a sunny window, the light from which was admitted to the back of the case through little apertures glazed with variously coloured glass, each opening provided with a shutter so arranged that by pressing the keys the shutter was thrown back, letting in differently coloured light. This light, diffused and reflected on a white screen behind the ground glass panel and on the panel itself, produced a colour thereon softly shaded into the neutral tint of the glass. The instrument was arranged with a stop so that music and colour could be played separately or together. By the use of other stops the amount of light could be diminished or increased. The

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colours controlled by the pedals were such as could be used as a fundamental accompaniment to tint the ground with the key-note colour to indicate the key, or to change from one key to another.

At his studio in London, A. W. Rimington developed a light organ upon which he gave colour-music recitals to his friends. Both he and Bishop, as a necessary preliminary, established a correspondence between a subdivided spectrum and the musical chromatic scale of twelve semitones. Their instruments were played from a musical score upon an organ keyboard, the chief difference between them being this: Rimington, coming later in time, and therefore having electric light at his disposal, projected his colours on a screen, stereopticon-wise.

### Harnessing the Rainbow

There have been other experimentalists in this same field. It is one which I myself invaded, and this is the story, not of my triumphs, but of my failures. I cannot now remember what first interested me in the idea of colour-music. Perhaps it was the obvious analogy between the notes of the diatonic scale and the colours of the rainbow, for my first instrument, like Bishop's and like Rimington's, based on this analogy, was played from a musical score upon an organ keyboard. Though this was the obvious thing to do, later experience convinced me that it was not the right thing.

Each art-form should progress from its own beginnings and develop in its own unique and characteristic way. Any

arbitrary and literal translation of a highly complex, intensely dynamic art unfolding in time as does music, into a correspondent mobile-colour expression could never be in the highest sense successful. Correspondences between the arts of course exist, but each art is unique and singular, and in this singularity dwells its most thrilling appeal. These first experiments convinced me that in the harnessing of the rainbow I should preoccupy myself less with the likeness between colour and music than with their differences.

Music unfolds in *time*. Now time implies succession — one thing following another — movement, change. Colour-music unfolds in *space*. Space implies simultaneousness: in space alone perpetual immobility would reign. If there be a workable correlation between music and mobile colour, it should therefore be sought rather in the domain of harmony which involves simultaneity, than in melody, which is all succession. Moreover, the eye is less analytical than the ear, which means, in this connection, that light-changes should succeed one another less rapidly than sound-changes in order to be separately apprehended. It may be that as the eye becomes more educated it will crave more movement and complexity (such was Rimington's experience), but calmness, serenity, seem somehow of the very nature of light, just as sound seems to imply movement and passion. For music is a seeking — 'love in search of a word', while light is a finding — 'a divine covenant'.

Accordingly, in my second experiment,

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without abandoning the colour scale analogous to the musical scale, I attempted no literal translation of music into colour, but rather the induction of a 'musical' mood through the appeal of visible beauty into which the element of mobility entered. The best image I can give of this instrument (never fully completed) is of a great cathedral rose-window the colours of which undergo changes at the will of the operator analogous to a succession of musical chords, with modulations from one into another.

### My First Machine

These experiments were undertaken in the interval between labours of an altogether different sort. They taught me little except what not to do, they were appallingly expensive, but the whole experience was joyous and exciting, the memory of which I would not be without.

I set up my first machine in an empty store, the windows of which were darkened by black building paper. Here I gave my first Colour-Music Recital, my friend Louis Siegel officiating at the organ. Leopold Stokowski happened to be in Rochester that afternoon, and I tried to get him to come, but he had to attend an orchestra rehearsal. After I had explained to him what I was trying to do he made the remark that in light there was probably inherent a greater art than music for the reason that light was a more wonderful medium than sound. I was glad afterwards that he had not come to my recital, so inferior it was to what I had imagined it might be. I salvaged what I

could of that first machine, and sent the rest to the city dump.

### Memorable Nights

For my second experiment, undertaken a long time afterwards, I hired what had once been a hayloft over a livery stable, later converted into a garage. I was busy all day at the office; domestic and social life absorbed my evenings, so the only time I had to devote to colour-music was late at night. At the end of an evening spent at a party or at the theatre, or coming down town for the purpose, late at night, I would seek out that alley door and steal up that dark stairway like a lover going secretly to meet his mistress, so eager was I to keep this tryst with light. Seated all alone at the keyboard in the cavernous spaces of that enormous room, with the touch of a finger I would conjure out of the darkness forms and colours of such intoxicating beauty that I lost all sense of where I was — even of who I was. I realized how Michelangelo must have felt all alone high aloft on his scaffolding while he was painting the Sistine ceiling, for I was visited with strange exaltations which make these nights memorable.

This second venture came to an abrupt end through lack of money to continue: the initial cost of the machine was excessive, I was paying an electrician nine dollars a day, the rental of the loft was a considerable item, and I found that I was spending more than I could possibly afford. I therefore terminated my lease, discharged my workman, and sent this machine also to the city dump — and

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without undue regrets, for although an improvement on the first one, its limitations made it useless for the realization of the thing I had in mind.

### Brice's Light-Theatre

Van Deering Perrine the painter, and Thomas Wilfred the lute player were among those who shared my interest in colour-music. We conceived the notion of forming a nationwide — perhaps a worldwide — organization of people interested, in any active way, in light as a medium of emotional expression, to be called the Prometheans. We succeeded in interesting my friend Kirkpatrick Brice so deeply in our project that he agreed to build an experimental light-theatre on his estate at Huntington, Long Island, and finance it for a limited period of time. I drew the plans for this building, the first of its kind, so far as I am aware. It consisted of a large workroom with a shell-shaped cyclorama at the far end, made of white plaster. Opposite this, and separated from it by the length of the room, was a projection-booth and switchboard. Above was a bank of seats for a few spectators, so enclosed that they could see nothing but the white field of the cyclorama upon which the colour-music was made to appear at the will of the operator.

As soon as the building was completed Wilfred moved to the farm at Mr Brice's invitation, and took up his residence over the garage so that he might work all day and every day in the well-equipped laboratory. Although both Perrine and I had devised and exhibited mobile colour

machines, Wilfred, a skilled mechanic and electrician, with clear-cut ideas of what he wanted to do and how to go about it, soon assumed the dominant position in our triumvirate, with the result that Perrine and I were more or less relegated to the role of spectators rather than participators. Our Society died in the womb, so to speak: the whole thing had become a one-man affair. Wilfred constructed his Clavilux single-handed, and in due course gave a demonstration of it at the Grand Street Playhouse, in New York. From that time forth Wilfred has devoted himself to the improvement of his instrument and to the giving of mobile-colour recitals — a field in which he has no competitors.

The light-laboratory passed into other hands after Mr Brice's death, and is now doubtless converted to other uses. For the third time I experienced arrestment in my pursuit of that Immortal Beloved, colour-music, my secret ardour only increased by frustration. Although the necessity of making a living forced me to follow paths more remunerative, subjectively I must have been busy with this problem, for whenever I took it up again in some interval of enforced leisure, my ideas seemed to have clarified and crystallized into some more definite and more beautiful pattern.

### Technique of Colour

Convinced that the musical parallel was not the best approach to a new art of mobile colour — colour-music — I decided that the first thing to find out would be the instinctive emotional reactions to colour and light common to

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everyone. Though this is a comparatively new field of research, certain facts have been established. In general, pure colours are preferred to tints and shades, and of pure colours, red and blue are the favourites. The colours of the spectrum divide themselves naturally into three groups, corresponding to the three primaries: blue, green, and red. The first comprises blue, indigo, and violet, the 'cold' colours, occupying the electric end of the spectrum, and highest in vibratory rate. The second comprises green and yellow; and the third, orange and red — 'warm' colours, occupying the thermal end of the spectrum, and lowest in vibratory rate. Each group, and each colour of each group has a different effect upon the human consciousness, that of the first group being, in general, subduing; of the second, tranquillizing; and of the third, stimulating.

This was confirmed by my own experience in the theatre, where I learned that the colour and quality of the light had a marked and definite effect upon an audience. Cold light induces a mood bordering on the mystic or the melancholy. A comedy scene cannot be played in a blue light. 'Amber' produces a contrary effect; it is a cheerful light, and therefore good for comedy. Red light is stimulating, exciting, even irritating — good therefore for scenes of strife and combat. It is astonishing to what extent the lighting of a scene may enhance or impair its effectiveness without the spectator being in the least aware.

Attempts have been made to determine the symbolical significance and

characteristic 'mood' of each one of the spectral hues at different degrees of intensity — for it is clear that the dark values of a colour would produce an effect different from that produced by the light values. Beatrice Irwin's conclusions with regard to the effect of different colours upon consciousness seem to me well based, and in my researches I came upon a chart by Charles E. Vautrain in which his findings in this field are tabulated. From whatever sources he drew his data, his conclusions seem justified.

### Correspondences with Human Auras

I found another approach to what I was after in the analogy between the three groups of colours in the spectrum and the triune nature of man, familiar to Theosophists, which Delsarte made the basis of his *Art of Expression*. Delsarte held that the legs and loins represent the physical nature — the *will*; the torso the emotional nature; and the head the intellectual or spiritual. He taught that each part was itself a triplicity, correspondingly related. In the torso, for example, the genital and digestive regions correspond to the physical; the solar plexus region to the emotional, and the breast to the mental and spiritual nature, and so on.

Were we to interpret the spectrum in similar fashion, attributing to each of its three main divisions a like meaning, 'influence' or function, it is clear that the red end, being lowest in vibratory rate, would correspond to the physical nature (proverbially the most sluggish); the middle, or green section to the emotional; and the blue end, containing the colours

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of highest vibratory rate, would have relation to the mind and spirit. Reason, observation, and experience would seem to confirm such a classification, and Delsarte's theory is capable of a more extended application. To him 'below' stood for the nadir of ignorance and impotence; 'above', the zenith of wisdom and power. Sombre and degraded hues would therefore have relation to the first, and clear and luminous ones to the second. This is curiously confirmed by Dora Van Gelder's clairvoyant examination of the human aura: there the muddy, dark, unclear colours are at the bottom, they correspond to man's unregenerate nature, while the bright, clear, luminous colours are at the top.

With only these simple concepts and these scant data for a guide, it seemed to me possible to approximate a colour-expression of musical 'moods' and also to test out the musical parallel. This seemed the right way to go to work, but having now no time, place, or equipment, I had no other resource than to continue my theorizing as follows:

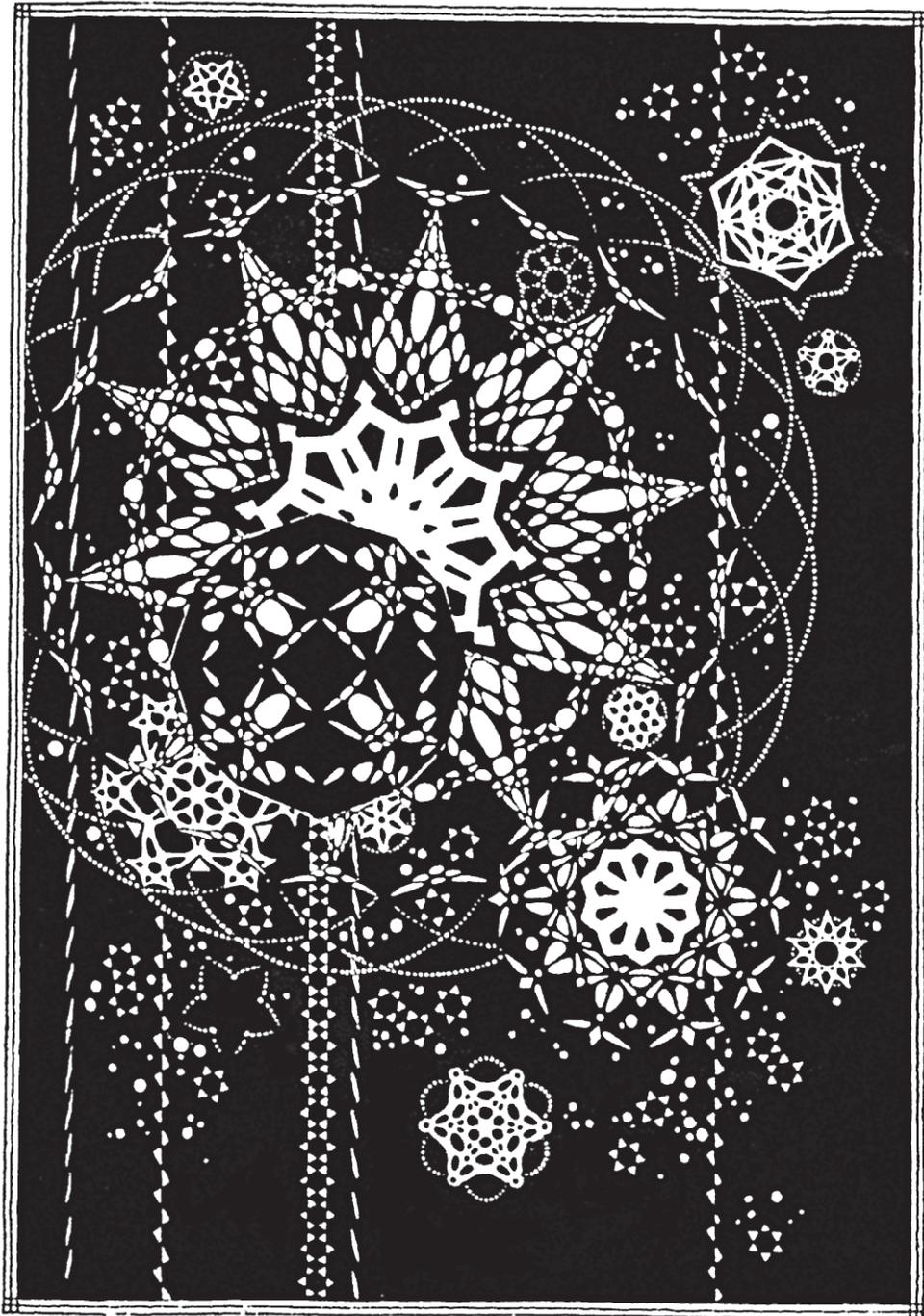
### Music and Mathematics

In colour-music, *form* should play an important part; for here is another golden ball to juggle with, which no art purely in *time* affords. It is true that music has form, pattern, and an architecture of its own, but these things are perceived with the mind's eye, or subjectively; they are not clear, concrete, palpable, as are the forms of space. Musical sounds weave invisible patterns in the air, and one of the more

remote achievements of our uncreated art may be to make these patterns visible. Meantime, with the entire treasury of forms to draw from, only such as are *abstract* seem suitable for this purpose, because the forms of nature are so full of associations with that world of concreteness and materiality from the tyranny of which this art, like music, should enable us to escape. Pure colour, which is itself abstract; music, which is abstract sound; and forms which are abstract, should constitute, in my opinion, the elements of this new art.

The colours (until the eye becomes more educated) ought to succeed one another not too rapidly; meet, mingle, and undergo transformations like those retinal images seen with the eyes closed, or like an accelerated sunset. Superimposed upon this changing colour background, like an air upon its accompaniment, abstract forms in pure white light should appear, develop, wax and wane, in synchronization with the music as intricate and precise as in an animated cartoon. It was thus that I saw colour-music 'in my mind's eye'.

The colour element would present no difficulties; it could be achieved in a number of different ways; by projectors, prisms, polarized light. The music need be none of my affair, that I could delegate to others; but what of the form element? What should be its nature, and from what source should it be drawn? Music is in the last analysis mathematics made audible. The ideal solution would be to make mathematics visible as well. I had



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already discovered a way in my search for that new ornamental mode named by me 'Projective Ornament' because derived from the projections of symmetrical solids and hyper-solids (four-dimensional forms). Some of the configurations evolved by this method were of extraordinary intrinsic beauty — like flowers and frost. The 'what' was therefore provided for; now as to the 'how'.

### Colour Projection

My own experiments, Perrine's and Wilfred's convinced me that no colour-music *machine*, such as the Clavilux, no matter how intricate or ingenious, could be completely satisfactory: in time it would betray its limitations and a loss of interest would result — as in the case of a card trick after one found out how it was done. Colour-music must be infinite in every one of its three dimensions of colour, form and movement. Nothing less than this would satisfy for long.

I could think of only one way to meet this condition: a separate form-and-sound film for every composition — the animated cartoon technique, in other words a technique which, however trivial the subject treated, had been brought to the highest point of perfection. It so happened that I knew one of the pioneers in this particular field, and by visiting his studio I found out at first hand how animated pictures were drawn, photographed, and mathematically synchronized with the music on the basis of twenty-four 'shots' for every second of time.

Clearly, to make even one reel such as

I had in mind would be impossible of accomplishment single-handed, for that sort of thing involved the coordination of several highly specialized varieties of talent directed by one mastermind and an outlay of money to which my former expenditures were as nothing. The utmost I could hope to achieve unaided would be to provide a series of drawings corresponding to those made by the 'animators' representing the beginning and end of a movement, to which the 'in-betweeners' impart the illusion of motion by means of a great number of supplementary drawings. This much I determined to do.

Accordingly, I bought a secondhand Victrola and a record of Beethoven's 'Moonlight' sonata (*Sonata quasi una Fantasia*), together with the piano score, my earlier efforts having been concerned with that particular piece. I began by making a note-by-note colour-translation of the first two movements in conformity with Wilson's ophthalmic colour scale, which seemed to me the best. This would give me the clue to the colours and colour-sequences to be employed. Next I made a similar translation of the music in terms of form by means of a series of drawings embodying my idea of what this translation ought to be — at least one drawing to every measure, one hundred and seventy in all. These corresponded to so many 'stills' in a moving picture, which would have to be supplemented by as many others — a vast number — as the necessity for the illusion of movement might require. I went through the same

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process with Waldteufel's *Les Patineurs* (Skaters' Waltz), Delibes' *Pizzicati* and *Valse Lente* from the Sylvia Ballet suite, and Sibelius' *Valse Triste*. This involved the making of hundreds of drawings, some so elaborate that they took me several days to do.

### Attitude of Investors

This was as far as I could go single-handed. The next step would be to have sound-film made under my direction and the colour sequences established by actual experiment. I could direct these operations, given a suitable laboratory and the right people and equipment with which to work. As these could be found ready-made only in the moving picture industry, it was at that door which I must needs knock. Armed with excellent introductions I interviewed high officials in this industry, always with the same ultimate result: I was received politely, listened to with attention, asked always the same questions to which I made always the same replies. Sometimes I attended 'conferences', but invariably I was dismissed with vague excuses, or still more vague assurances that the matter would be taken up at some future time; or I was referred to some other member of the same organization or of another, in the end only to complete a circuit which finished where it began. Of all the people I interviewed only three showed genuine interest and

understanding, but not one of these was so situated as to do anything to help me except to pass me on to someone else whom he thought might.

The reason they all shied away from my colour-music as I presented it to them was because it was too untried, too unlike anything else to enable them to judge of its attractive value, and none of them wanted to shoulder the responsibility of making a wrong guess. One high official whom I interviewed told the mutual friend who had provided the letter of introduction that the 'trouble with Mr Bragdon is that he is about ten years ahead of the times'. The attitude and argument of all of them amounted to this: they could not invest money in experimenting with something the issue of which was avowedly problematical, and even if successful the sale of which on a large scale could not be insured in advance. From their own point of view, which was strictly commercial, they were probably right, and there the matter rests.

But though I proved myself a poor salesman, I gained by these means a glimpse into the inside workings of that fabulous world fed and sustained by ministering to the 'escape complex' of millions of human beings. I found in that world no vision, no imagination, no idealism divorced from the desire for profit, but only a beaver-like competence to do some poor thing *well*. ✧

When I rise up, let me rise up joyful like a bird. When I fall, let me fall without regret like a leaf.

Wendell Berry

# Theosophical Work around the World

## New Zealand

The 116th Annual Convention of the New Zealand Theosophical Society was held in Wellington, beginning on 13 January 2013. Of special note: this Convention also marked the 125th anniversary of the Wellington Lodge.

Two days of business were followed by excellent speakers. Workshops were all dedicated to the theme, 'To Know, To Dare, To Will and To Be Silent'. Guest speakers included: Linda Oliveira (National President, Australia TS) who offered presentations on 'Gnosis: From the Known to the Unknown', 'The Way of the Warrior' and 'To Dare to be Silent: Towards a Quiet Mind'; Alyn Ware shared his perspectives on 'Conflict Resolution', 'The Politics and Spirituality of Nuclear Disarmament' and led a peace heritage walk into the city; Renee Sell shared NZ-TOS's current activities.

## North America

The Winter 2013 issue of *Quest* magazine, published by The Theosophical Society in America, features Food as its theme, and includes a related list of titles on the historical, ethical, psychological, health and spiritual aspects of food; it is illustrated with beautiful works by Gaugin. An article by Mr John Ciancosi, who was a Buddhist monk for twenty-three years, advocates vegetarianism not as a rule but because it is conducive to developing compassion and wisdom, and is ecologic-

ally healthy. Dr Will Tuttle, a recipient of the prestigious Courage of Conscience Award, a Dharma Master in the Zen tradition and a convert to veganism, describes the appalling suffering of animals on factory farms. He wrote the best-selling book, *The World Peace Diet*, which exposes the spiritual, cultural, sociological, anthropological and historical aspects of 'our culture's daily meals'. Ecologically, animal farming is a 'tragic devastation', leading to the extinction of 200,000 species every year; moreover, although enough food is grown to feed a population of twelve to fifteen billion in a world of seven billion, about one billion die from malnutrition because of feeding most of the grains and pulses to imprisoned factory farm animals. Those who eat flesh imbibe the terror, despair, rage and other feelings of the animals consumed, and the trauma of those who work on factory farms causes them to inflict trauma on others, and this harms all of us because we are interconnected. Anne Sermons Gillis, a minister, discusses food addiction and eating disorders and suggests that our unhealthy society is not the result of unhealthy food and food production but that 'we allowed our food to be mass-produced, poisoned and lose quality because we are already sick . . . Sick people grow and eat sick food. People in harmony . . . eat nourishing food'. Our 'eating habits cannot change from the outside in — they must change from the inside out'. ✧

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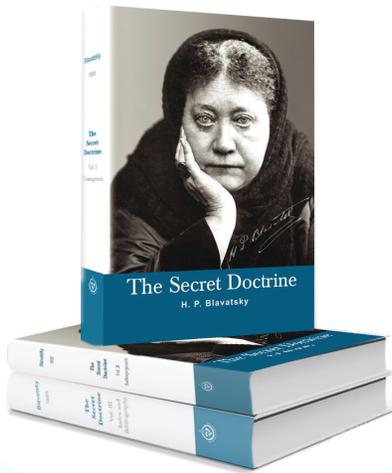
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