



THE THEOSOPHIST

VOL. 135 NO. 12 SEPTEMBER 2014

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NOTE: Articles for publication in *The Theosophist* should be sent to the Editorial Office.

Cover: A Coppersmith Barbet enjoying fruits of the Adyar Gardens — A. Chandrasekaran

Official organ of the President, founded by H. P. Blavatsky, 1879. The Theosophical Society is responsible only for official notices appearing in this magazine.

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

TIM BOYD

Convergence

I have a clear memory from my early days at the university that occurred during a class session. The school was notable for the number of its Nobel Prize-winning professors. In addition to this stellar group there was also another tier of professors who were highly recognized in their various fields. In the normal university setting, at least at that time, these were people one would hear about, but never encounter unless one was pursuing a specific advanced graduate degree. What was different about the school I was attending was that all these professors were required to teach some undergraduate courses, often prerequisites for an undergraduate degree. This was a brilliant approach because at an early stage in the students' university life it made it possible for them to come in contact with people whose thinking, research, and ideas were shaping society.

The moment I remember so clearly took place in a class on astrophysics. In spite of my initial aversion to the subject, I was quickly fascinated with the methods and ways of thinking applied to the attempt to comprehend the physical universe. Part of my excitement about the subject was the animated and interactive presence of

the professor. He was involved in some cutting-edge research around the Big-Bang idea. During one class session I asked our professor a question. I do not remember exactly what that question was. What I do remember is that in the question I used the word 'why'. I suppose that our professor saw this as an opportunity to convey a message to the entire class, this fresh and impressionable group of young minds. He made no attempt to answer the question, but he did speak directly to my use of the 'why' word. What he said was that the question 'why' was not the concern of science, and if that was the sort of question that interested me, I would be better served speaking to someone in philosophy or the divinity school.

A few days later I ran into a friend who was pursuing a doctorate in the divinity school. I shared with him my recent experience in the astrophysics class, and asked him how such a question was approached in his discipline. Although now his response would not have affected me so deeply, at that time I was sufficiently young and naive to be surprised. He told me that 'why' was also not the concern in the divinity school. The study of divinity at the school examined 'how' and 'when' such 'why' questions arose in history; the

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movements and thinking that formed around them; the social and institutional consequences, but any attempt at either an intellectual or experiential response to the question was not their concern. The Divinity School was a 'graduate professional school for the academic study of religion'.

In recent times, the last four to five hundred years, a shift has taken place in the way human society values and processes knowledge. In earlier days the people who were instrumental in shaping the affairs of the heart and mind were those who were deemed wise. Always these were people whose vision and experience was broad — people who had thought about, experimented with, and arrived at conclusions about the variety of life's processes. Many of these individuals could be described by the term polymath — people whose expertise spans a significant number of different subject areas. In the culture of the Western world such names as Leonardo da Vinci, Michaelangelo, Galileo, Nicolaus Copernicus, Francis Bacon, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), and Omar Khayyam are examples of people with this synthesizing approach to knowledge. The expectation for the wise was that they be possessed of an expansive vision. A profound awareness of science, the arts, mathematics, poetry, philosophy, medicine, and spirituality was the norm for such people.

One of the hallmarks of our current time is the high degree of specialization that has taken place in virtually all fields of knowledge. Before the coining of the

term 'scientist' in the late 1800's, people who engaged in the study of nature and the physical universe were called 'natural philosophers'. Natural philosophy was the attempt to describe and understand the workings of Nature and the universe. As a philosophical endeavor, it was not focused on practical results. However, applications did arise out of the ferment of observation and analysis. During the 19th century, science became a profession accompanied by the necessary institutions to support it.

Today the time of the polymath has passed. Due to the high degree of specialization, particularly in the sciences, it has become virtually impossible for one person to be an expert in more than one field of study. Even the process of scientific discovery requires the effort of teams of people. This state of affairs has been the source of phenomenal discoveries and an ongoing exponential growth in our overall knowledge base. It has also been the source of significant problems. Mahatma Gandhi foresaw some of the consequences of this trend in human behaviour and values. He famously said: 'The expert knows more and more about less and less until he knows everything about nothing.' This thought was differently expressed by the Zen philosopher Shunryu Suzuki: 'In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities. In the expert's mind there are few.' In the Maha Chohan's letter (1880) the two poles that were dominating the direction of human thinking were described as 'brutal materialism and superstition'. At that time science was leading the charge

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for the materialistic worldview. The prevailing trend that has dominated scientific thinking for the past three to four hundred years has been named 'reductionist materialism'. It is called reductionist for a couple of reasons: 1) it reduces the universe and the allowed thinking about the universe to the physical realm only; and 2) it bases its analysis of that universe on an understanding of the smallest particles of physical matter as the building blocks of everything else. These smallest particles were once thought of as atoms, but now are recognized as sub-atomic. This line of thinking and the necessary dead end to which it was leading humanity was clearly recognized at the time of the founding of the Theosophical Society. It was one of the reasons that the TS came into being.

In our time, science has become the voice of authority in virtually all things. The gulf between the religious and scientific views has widened. This dominance has been achieved because, unlike most religious claims, the claims of science can and must be demonstrated. Although the range of scientific discovery and the development of far-reaching technologies is impressive, it still deals only with the physical realm. It can make no comment on the world of values, insight, love, intuition, or consciousness. It deals with a world of knowledge, not wisdom; of how, not why.

In the Maha Chohan's letter the predictable result of a continuation in the ever-increasing trend of science-led materialism was discussed. He asks the question: 'How is the combative *natural* instinct of man to be restrained from inflicting hitherto

unheard of cruelty and enormities, tyranny, injustice, and so on, if not through the soothing influence of a brotherhood, and the practical application of Buddha's esoteric doctrines?' The clear message was the need for the spiritualizing influence of the message of Theosophy to 'practically react upon the . . . moral code.' Theosophy and the movement that followed its reintroduction was not viewed as merely a better system of information, but as an active agent capable of shaping values, of influencing 'the ideas of truthfulness, purity, self denial, charity, etc.' Today the concepts of Theosophy have entered into the mainstream of thought in ways that few could have foreseen. The core ideas of brotherhood, oneness of all life, the multidimensional nature of reality, karma, reincarnation, are familiar ideas to most people worldwide. Traditionally, these were seen as purely metaphysical or philosophical ideas.

In the Mahatma Letters, Master KH makes the statement that 'modern science is our best ally'. Particularly in the field of quantum physics, scientific language and thinking are aligning with some of Theosophy's core teachings. The ageless wisdom is finding new terms, this time scientific, to express its profound ideas. In the language of quantum physics, non-locality, or entanglement, the central quantum observation that two objects separated in space react upon each other, is a scientific indication of the fact of Oneness, or brotherhood. Nothing is separate. Wave/particle duality as an aspect of the central quantum concept of complement-

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arity describes the ‘collapse’ of waves of possibilities into particles. From the perspective of consciousness, these particles are perceived as things, events, people, or vehicles of consciousness. In theosophical terminology we could speak of the ‘possibilities’ of Atma collapsing into expression in Buddhi, and likewise with Manas to Kama, and so on. Discontinuity, which is observed in the phenomenon of an electron’s ‘quantum leap’ to a higher or lower energy level, repeats the inner experience of creative insight, or illumination.

We find ourselves in a period of convergence, where the formerly radical ideas embodied in Theosophy are finding a widening acceptance. Although the deeper significance of these ideas is largely unappreciated, a common language is developing to move into the previously forbidden territory of consciousness. The necessary work of spreading ideas, of preparing the soil, is not over, but has been done sufficiently well for these concepts not merely to take root, but to begin to flower. ✧

The ideals which have lighted my way, and time after time have given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been Kindness, Beauty and Truth. Without the sense of kinship with men of like mind, without the occupation with the objective world, the eternally unattainable in the field of art and scientific endeavours, life would have seemed to me empty. The trite objects of human efforts — possessions, outward success, luxury — have always seemed to me contemptible.

Albert Einstein

NOTICE

Ms Marja Artamaa has been appointed as International Secretary of the Theosophical Society effective 24 August 2014.

Mr Tim Boyd
President

The Visionary World of Stockhausen

ALAN SENIOR

THE German composer Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928-2007) had views in many ways similar to those of Alexander Scriabin, and had studied philosophies ranging from Schopenhauer and Nietzsche to Theosophy and anthroposophy, which also influenced Holst, Bax, Schoenberg, Rudhyar, and Cage — in fact all those composers who believed that the secret of the universe was to be solved by ecstatic intuition rather than the intellect. But we have to enter Stockhausen's world, with its 253 individually performable works, quite openly.

One three-hour piece, *Sternklang* (*Star Sound*) of 1971, should be performed outdoors, said Stockhausen, preferably in a large park with the twenty-one instrumentalists spread out but able to hear each other, whilst the public walked around. . . This was the nearest he could get to the spherical auditorium at the 1970 World Fair in Osaka, Japan, which had been found to be the ideal venue to perform his 'space music' with its combination of multi-directional, electronic sounds produced alongside the performing musicians. Inside were ten rows of speakers, over fifty in all, some located below the audience,

and Stockhausen had presented a five and a half hour daily dose of his works for six months to an estimated audience of over a million people. It was perhaps the equivalent of Scriabin's unrealizable temple in the Himalayas for the performance of his *Mystery*. All this was indeterminate, somewhat unpredictable music, but in Stockhausen's hands it became *controlled* chance. It was combined with elements from an impulse generator with filtered noises and multi-channel tape machines producing layers (or 'clouds') of sound, the musicians often combining at random. So here was an innovator always searching for new sounds never heard before, longing for a permanent spherical building suitable for his spatial music, fitted all around with loudspeakers, with the music coming from above, from below, and from all points of the compass.

Stockhausen has been described as daring, charismatic, eternally creative, compelling, and spiritually elevated, but also unsettling and provocative . . . technically brilliant with controversial spiritual aspirations — a visionary guru in fact. Like Scriabin he developed what he called 'intuitive music' through which

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he hoped the *higher mind* might contact the cosmic universal spirit. The American composer, artist, and astrologer Dane Rudhyar once asked: 'When does sound become music?' and today there have been changes in what constitutes musical sounds and the responses of those hearing them — *new* sounds in *new* circumstances, added to an expanded category where technical knowledge has altered the way in which we react. Technology has produced original combinations of vibrations perceptible to the ear which, in order to be experienced fully, as Rudhyar observed,

requires the embryonic growth of a new mind and a consecrated will to achieve psychic and intellectual transformation . . . to stimulate, to arouse, to break down crystallizations, and to make you live a more intense, creative, transforming type of life . . . in other words, a new kind of consciousness.

Stockhausen called himself an adventurer, an inventor, an experimenter, and a discoverer. But, for him, living in a society dominated by visual images, the world of sound was far more spiritual, which is why musicians are so important for human evolution, he said. The 1960s, when his music really emerged, were characterized (if you can remember) by the

transpersonal expansion of consciousness, the questioning of authority, a sense of empowerment, the anti-war and women's movements, and the experience of sensuous beauty and community.

Bob Dylan's song, 'The times they are a-changing', spoke to the young who

longed for a different and better world, but unfortunately there were others who helped promote the drug culture. The Beatles meanwhile were influenced by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, though the words of George Harrison's song, 'Within you and without you' might equally have come from Krishnamurti: 'Try to realize it's all within yourself, no one else can make you change, and to see you're really only very small, and life flows on within you and without you.'

Stockhausen's contribution came from various schools of occultism in an era that also fostered 'global awareness' well before economic globalization. He not only encouraged East-West music, he *absorbed* orientalism, aiming for a global musical unity. He was also aware that many physicists, cosmologists, and genetic scientists were seeing how we were slowly moving towards a unified world concept. Stockhausen declared that making music is a spiritual activity, the sounds created being a vehicle for people to discover their inner selves and what they have forgotten about themselves (meaning that we are essentially *spiritual beings*). All the rest, he stressed, is secondary and technical. 'In our arid, rigid, confrontational, dualistic age we need unity in music as an urgent necessity or we will die as a civilization.'

A positive, non-pessimistic philosophy was important for Stockhausen, where love-thoughts always overcame death-thoughts. Death in many forms had dominated his boyhood years. He had seen the mental breakdown of his mother, who was 'institutionalized', then murdered by

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the Nazis. During his musical training in the 1940s he had said farewell to his father who was killed on the Russian Front, whilst he, at sixteen, was drafted as a stretcher-bearer in Germany, dealing with hundreds of dead or dying at the end of the war. Here he sometimes serenaded dying soldiers with his favourite American 'pop' numbers, 'Tea for Two' (which Shostakovich also arranged in Russia) and 'Honeysuckle Rose'. No wonder, with this grim, almost surreal background, he later 'fled from reality' as one commentator put it. But rather than being broken by such experiences he came to see death as far less important than people usually suppose it to be, and he believed what the theosophists have always maintained — that the soul of man is immortal, without limit, with death seen not as the end of life but as a transition from one stage to another, with the certainty of final attainment. His later studies of Buddhism also led him to the idea of Nirvāna, where the individual no longer exists due to there being consciousness of Self . . . as he said, 'the only real death in the Universe.'

Pure mind transcends death, he said, because it is beyond time and liberates us from duality. 'The kind of music and the amount of music one has heard during one's lifetime is decisive for the soul's state after death.' This points to the influence of Rudolf Steiner and the necessary development of meditative listening. Stockhausen wanted us not to be conscious *of* the music but to be conscious *as* the music — 'we are the music'. This

means that if we are completely swallowed up in the process of listening, we will never be the same again after having heard the music. And he believed that the endless ultra-violent films produced by Hollywood will eventually be rejected, with more and more people discovering quiet meditation as something completely different, because the visual world fails to reach their souls. This is why he tried, to the end of his life, to create 'cosmic music' — music aimed at making contact with the supra-human world, 'cosmic ways of experiencing the world', as he put it, with music seen as the best medium for that visionary process. Thus music for him was a vessel for people to tune into the supranatural world and, indeed, their real selves, but the listener must come to this music without any preconditioning, discovering new layers within himself, with no ready-made compartments.

Stockhausen often spoke of *supra-humanity*, when people transform themselves into something else — superhuman spirits operating at a higher level, where consciousness attains a new dimension. This came from having been taught, at one time, by Sri Aurobindo, whose philosophy has links with Nietzsche's *Übermensch* (see *The Theosophist*, Vol. 130, No. 12, Sept. 2009, pp. 447-452). Musicians must, he stressed, be in complete command of themselves, leading the kind of lives necessary for performing high-quality, intuitive music. And, like the American composer Alan Hovhaness, he believed that his intuitions were guided by the angelic kingdom, trusting in this inner

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experience of always being accompanied and protected by an angel, no matter what happened to him. He believed, too, that the spiritual preparation of the performers (something that Scriabin had advocated) would lead to the music transporting the audience into a spiritual realm, with the sounds acting as a vessel for those cosmic forces that run through everything, beyond any mental level. This is the dawn of a spiritual era, he said, beyond exclusive religions and ideologies, as we move gradually towards global consciousness. 'But it will not happen,' he added, 'until we end the completely materialistic and fatalistic outlook lying behind the military-dominated, self-defensive attitudes.'

The Vishnu Purana describes the drastic state of affairs experienced today, identified then as the Kali Yuga or end time of, and one can easily recognize here the alarming circumstances currently being experienced all over the modern world:

Prosperity and devoutness will decrease day by day until the world has been completely ruined. Possessions alone will decide rank. Only riches can ensure devotion. Passion will be the only link between the sexes, falsity the only way to success. Women will be degraded to objects of lust.

But the teaching tells us that

when the practices taught by the Vedas and the institutes of law shall have nearly ceased, an aspect of that Divine Being who exists in the character of Brahma shall descend upon the earth. By his irresistible might he will destroy . . . all whose minds are devoted to iniquity. He will then re-

establish righteousness and the minds of those who live at the end of the Kali Age shall be awakened, and shall be as pellucid as crystal.

Let us hope so.

Stockhausen always felt that his music was a quest for unity to bring us to the essential One, and to help weather the shocks and disasters to come, after which will come a rebirth. But musicians must now develop a technique 'to reach the intuitive level at all times — a group activity to create an atmosphere of peace, which requires an immense spiritual effort to combat the negative, destructive forces in society'. This was why he composed so much for voices, to help awaken a new consciousness of the oneness of the human family. Singers, he said, must be filled with the divine spirit, transmitting a profound joy in life, becoming like the music being sung, to provide spiritual nourishment. All this demands opening oneself to intuition, 'so as to infuse every note with spiritual intention, which demands specific preparatory spiritual exercises' (again echoing the intentions of Scriabin for *The Mystery*). Then, when they perform it, they will hopefully make contact with 'cosmic energies' and universal consciousness. It involves, he stressed, constant meditation and transformation of the lives of both musicians and audience the rejection of materialism for a spiritual life. The highest of aims, then, but how closely can audiences of today respond?

The process also includes the concept of chance in this intuitive music making,

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and he also spoke of creative ecstasy, which again links him to Scriabin. He constantly talked of not *making* the music but of relaying the vibrations he received, with the self no longer in operation, to try to connect the player to that ‘inexhaustible source’. So we have here the idea of ‘music from beyond’, with the musicians ‘tuned in like receivers’ to obtain those vibrations from a higher sphere, then transforming them into sounds by being completely open in a state of constant awareness. This would then allow the vibrations of the universe to penetrate our individual human existence: ‘music should above all be a means of maintaining the soul’s link with the beyond’, he said.

Stockhausen described our planet as a schoolhouse, its inhabitants at different stages of development, and with everyone having something to teach everyone else, whether higher or lower on the evolutionary ladder. And new music was the means to draw people upwards, to develop into higher beings — which is why some could not take his increasing complexity and polyphony. The real meaning of each piece, each sound, would only become important to the listener when he or she was transformed by the music’s more complex rhythms, designed to bring about significant changes in consciousness. Stockhausen absorbed many occult ideas and declared that this planet has been cultivated by higher forms of existence that established a culture here and who return from time to time — say every 10,000 years — to see how things are progressing. ‘In my opinion,’ he said, ‘this planet’s culture

has undergone an enormously decadent development, and we are now once again about to wake up, to remember . . .’

Stockhausen predicted difficult times ahead for all of us — devaluation, extreme poverty, military governments, wars with China, the Arab nations, and the Africans, with peace brought about only through sheer exhaustion. So he declared, jokingly, that after death he would think twice about coming back into incarnation! The only peace he foresaw immediately would be created within, aided by listening to serene, tranquil music. But he stated that he would eventually retire to the constellation Sirius, important in Egyptian mythology and believed by some to have a special link to the Earth’s destiny, a place ‘where everything is music’, the language of more highly developed beings, one day to become *our* universal language. This fascination with the star produced, in 1977, a 1½ hour, eight-channel vocal composition called *Sirius*, which had four different versions.

Both Sirius and the Pleiades seem to have been a great source of inspiration for Stockhausen. So, one might ask: what are those ‘sweet influences of the Pleiades’ referred to in the Book of Job? The answer, for some, lies in occult literature and the belief that those fully attuned to energies transmitted from these stars can be freed from all blockages in their subtle bodies — astral, etheric, and mental. Ignoring the wealth of so-called ‘star knowledge’ from ‘tuned-in’ channellers, some of whom claim that UFOs are coming to Earth from this system, Alice Bailey wrote that the Pleiades have an influence on the consciousness

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of selected seekers who have experienced the ‘sacred void’, or an *emptying*, which prepares them for contact with the Divine Mind via intuitive, heightened awareness, which was so diligently sought after by Scriabin. In Bailey’s *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* of 1930, you will find references to these ideas, from the influence of the Pleiades as the source of electrical energy in our Solar System, to Sirius seen as ‘the origin of the Logoi mind’, with the entire work of the Great White Lodge (the Spiritual Hierarchy) controlled from Sirius — all of which means more to those who have undergone a seven-year study in the Arcane School, a course founded by Alice and her husband Foster Bailey ‘to serve humanity and to cooperate with the Divine Plan, to expand consciousness and develop soul-powers.’

Many ‘seed men’ (to use one of Dane Rudhyar’s terms) are said to have received ‘great waves’ of the Pleiadian energy, which have stimulated the heart centre and transformed their consciousness to such an extent that they are able to ‘live the Wisdom’ and to become vehicles sharing these ‘seed ideas’ with others. In the process they have eliminated their egos through inner transformation, whilst overcoming all inhibiting and illusory conditioning of the lower, rational mind. You will remember that Alcyone, the brightest star in the Pleiades, was the name given to Krishnamurti in his teenage years. It represents this transformative quality of consciousness which leads to the ability to work and function at the level of the higher mind, and to aid in the liberation

of mankind from the conditioning which imprisons us — one of the main concerns in Krishnamurti’s teachings, together with desirelessness, good conduct, and love, the keynotes of his early book, *At the Feet of the Master*. (It was not uncommon in those days for star names to be given to members of the Theosophical Society who were believed to have attained a high spiritual level).

All this may seem to be a ‘retreat from reality’ but the most important aspect of this ‘star influence’ for Stockhausen and others was *sound* and *vibration*, plus the belief that Sirius, the Pleiades, and our own Sun are strongly linked, with Sirius said to be that ‘source of the mind of the Logos’, the deity or principle of creation or emanation, ‘the divine principle governing the universe’ according to the third century BC Stoic philosopher Zeno. Theosophy identifies three different Logoi, unmanifest and manifest, and the third one being the Creative Deity which gave birth to the universe. With ideas like this pervading his consciousness, we can see why Stockhausen believed that the function and meaning of music is not for entertainment but for sacred service, to be used in answering those fundamental questions, ignored in our present culture, about the reasons for our existence. Then, he said, the restrictions of space-time will be obliterated as ‘the inner eye opens to produce an imaginative extension of mere hearing’ — the music multi-dimensional with choreography, lights, costumes, sound diffusion, the unexpected and the unforeseeable, with the musicians

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often becoming mime artists and performing from memory. Like Varèse he found our instruments, performances, and acoustical conditions too primitive and underdeveloped for the different vibrations he longed to work with, feeling his many ideas would never be realized. Yet his ambitions were to culminate in a vast operatic project, *Light*, in seven sections, each to be performed on the seven days of the week, as we will see. But sometimes he reverted to more conventional notation in his scores, particularly in his more intimate chamber music.

Gruppen (Groups) of 1957 has been called an early masterpiece and it inspired, together with the composer's semi-scientific and part-visionary lectures, enormous admiration *and* inspiration from all kinds of people — from college professors to 'way-out' rock stars. The Beatles were to use similar sounds in *their* music and they included Stockhausen's portrait, among others, on the cover of the LP 'Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band'. Audiences were impressed when they saw the composer quietly meditating on the stage before the music began, which no doubt also appealed to young Maharishi enthusiasts and the 'psychedelic set'. But the music, once started, was anything but meditative . . . *Gruppen* has been called many things, such as 'a tonal labyrinth', 'a mind-expanding *tour de force* through a hall of mirrors', and 'a controlled pandemonium'. One hundred and nine players are divided into three orchestral groups, each with its own conductor. But this conflicting

piece is assured and virtuosic, and there are many quiet, tranquil passages interspersed with very loud, restless music and constantly-changing time signatures. It was also entirely new, dynamic, and liberating, partly influenced by Richard Strauss's *Alpine Symphony*, when you sometimes have the feeling of sections of the orchestra answering each other across a valley in the Swiss Alps, where Stockhausen actually conceived the composition. But the audience for *Gruppen* might only receive a limited acoustic perspective by remaining seated in one place, and its 'spatial feel' — where the music merges, then diverges (like moving sound) — cannot really be captured in a recording, even with surround stereo. This was written before New Age spirituality and the counterculture occurred, inspired by Indian philosophy and Indian classical music, when concerts contained 'light shows', psychedelic art, actors, dancers, visual artists, poets, and audience participation — all brought in during the '60s in a spirit of spontaneity to help break down many musical forms. So this multilayered composition, with more than one orchestra placed in different parts of the concert hall, was a precursor to the many experimental phases and musical innovations to come.

Karlheinz Stockhausen was always experimental in his music, which belonged to no genre, no school and no fashion. But it led to some harsh criticisms such as 'chaotic, experimental plinky-plonky music' or 'my four-year-old made better sounds banging on some metal in the alley,' or even 'music I'd use to chase the

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mice out of my house!’ Thomas Beecham, when asked if he had encountered any Stockhausen, said: ‘No, but I think I once trod on some.’ Such responses show the difficulties in coming to terms with Stockhausen’s experimental phases. But he was always sincere and serious about his quest for new, meaningful sounds. Such comments may be superficial, but they have tended to colour people’s opinions about the composer’s so-called ‘noises’, which are often not noisy, but thoroughly intimate, quiet and extremely inventive, even though we would not ordinarily describe them as music, however well organized.

Jill Purce, who has spoken at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society in England, pioneered the International Sound Healing movement; she is an exponent of overtone chanting and worked with Stockhausen for three years. Overtone chanting originated in Mongolia and this mix of natural harmonics emitted from a fundamental note produces a unique sound and is the basis of Stockhausen’s *Stimmung* of 1968. But the idea of six voices singing without words for 75 minutes, supported by electronic music, remains strange, puzzling, and difficult to comprehend for many people. However, Jill Purce believes, like the composer, that the intense concentration needed during the chanting creates psychological processes that allow the participants ‘to enter into the world of spirit’. It is interesting that Matthew Fox (writer, Dominican scholar and Director of the Institute in Culture and Creation Spirituality in Oakland,

California) reported similar occurrences with members of his women’s choir when performing antiphons by the twelfth century Abbess Hildegard of Bingen. He said that he had never met a singer who did not have mystical experiences performing them, as they have to hyperventilate to get to the notes, which sometimes sends them into trances. ‘Hildegard wasn’t ignorant of the power of breath to put people into altered states of consciousness,’ he said, ‘far healthier and cheaper than cocaine to contact the transcendental.’

Stockhausen’s *Hymnen* (Anthems) of 1966-68 lasts for about 114 minutes and again shows him as a risk-taker, whilst living ‘in abundant expectancy’ that it would work out well. He had become interested in music of all countries and races, and he included about 40 national anthems in *Hymnen*. Here, nothing is what it seems, a distortion of the familiar with continuous transformation (electronically) to trigger all kinds of emotional responses as the anthems merge into each other. National anthems are to do with history and time — past, present, and future. But they also stand for separation, nationalism, and sometimes isolation. By combining them Stockhausen was suggesting integration and, indeed, global consciousness. They are continually transformed, as we must be transformed before ridding ourselves of narrow-mindedness, in order to feel ‘the unity of all peoples and nations in a harmonious human family.’ That was Stockhausen’s message for ‘a profoundly sick society’, and those frequent distortions reflect the degree of destruction we must

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experience before there can be world peace. Echoing Rudhyar, he declared: 'We have to go through these crises . . . there is no other way.' But he was aware that there are many groups throughout the world, however small, striving for a better future. 'I believe that despite the great physical crisis, purification must come . . . that the next step will bring spiritualization on a larger scale.'

Amongst the instructions and preparations Stockhausen gave for two later pieces, one calls for the performers to have fasted alone for four days, another to imagine energies within the body (meaningful, perhaps, for those with yogic and meditative experience). Yet another instruction calls on them to clear away all thoughts and to await '*the voice of the silence*', then to play single sounds 'until you feel the warmth that radiates from you.' Moods, improvisation, indeterminacy, suggestion, and evocations all appear in the process which, although dependent upon teamwork, should create a strong sense of freedom.

Play a tone for so long, he wrote amongst a group of non-authoritarian instructions, ' . . . until you hear its individual vibrations. Hold the tone and listen to the tones of the others — to all of them together, not to individual ones — and slowly move your tone until you arrive at complete harmony, and the whole sound turns to gold, to pure, gently shimmering fire . . .

This was an attempt to play *intuitive music* in a group, absolutely timeless and centred on *now*. It is not related to

improvisation in the ordinary sense, or to the subconscious mind, but to the *supra-conscious*, when the higher mind, beyond thinking, 'enters into the performers.' Then, he said, the musicians are able to play 'out of the void' with no pre-established styles or traditions. And he added that in intuitive music the concept of the composer as *writer of music* no longer suffices.

Stockhausen never wanted to repeat himself, and new realizations would continually occur, all completely different. He knew how difficult it was for musicians to break away from their environment, training, and techniques, and to be told: 'Do not think anything, then start to play.' It also involved the cessation of emotions, conditioning, and all outside influences to be replaced by inner calm in order to achieve that oneness with the other performers, and hopefully to undergo that life-changing transformation he continually spoke about. 'It will take time', he said, 'not just with this generation but also with the one to come.' Then, with the same language used by Rudhyar, he added: 'I have great confidence in what will emerge from these seeds.'

Stockhausen is known to have studied the Indian approach to sound which spoke of the first manifestation of spirit, telling how various mantras and repetitions of certain sounds seem to be linked to different planes and centres of consciousness. The mantras and poems in the Vedas and the Upanishads are said to connect with these higher planes of consciousness, or even to open the consciousness

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to divine influences, with music having 'initiatory powers' so that the Real can enter, 'creating illumination to one who is ready,' said Sri Aurobindo in his epic poem *Sāvitrī*. The writings of Sri Aurobindo were a great influence, particularly his 'Supramental Vision of Time' which attempted to restore Vedic wisdom, the Sanātana Dharma — eternal Truth of being, or the evolution of consciousness. This involved transformation into *supra* (greater) mentality, whereby the higher mind will descend into the world . . . not in some future time, said Aurobindo, but now. Such a development from mind to supermind he called 'Truth-Consciousness to dominate the conscious being'. This mystical philosopher also talked of 'a Dark Present but a Bright Future' for humanity. But it would require aspiration and personal effort, he said, to turn the soul from the egoistic to the transcendental and universal:

for the spiritual seeker this change of consciousness is the only thing he seeks and nothing else matters. . . . The Supramental or the Supreme Truth cannot be reached in one bound or even in many bounds; one has to pursue a calm, patient, steady progress through many intervening stages without getting attached to . . . lesser Truth.

So mantras, allied to the right kind of music were, for the composer, products of the higher mind, which he was always seeking to contact, and to hear 'music from beyond'. The vibrations or waves or rhythms might then 'overshadow' the

composer so that he is able to capture them and make audible the sound-images or sound-colours and ideas from the illumined or intuitive mind. Hence Stockhausen's use of the term 'intuitive music' — which, he said, 'comes into the consciousness with a sort of halo of eternity.' These were the ideas he tried to convey to the audience at the première of *Mantra* of 1970, composed not for voices but for two ring-modulated pianos, antique cymbals, and wood block, with a short-wave radio producing morse code, which could not be easily done now as morse code has been phased out.

Stockhausen's final immense project *Licht* (Light) was begun in 1977 and subtitled 'The Seven Days of the Week'. Like Scriabin's projected *Mystery* the performance would be a seven-day event (seven always indicating completion in occult literature), and his invention of a linguistic system also reflects Scriabin's attempts, when both composers found existing languages to be inadequate for their task. What is more, Stockhausen wished the pictorial and dynamic aspects to be inseparable from the music, so that the staging requirements are complex and difficult to mount. The word 'light' refers to various states of cosmic manifestation and consciousness in esoteric literature. Stockhausen was fully aware of light used as a description of spiritual achievement, the realization of transcendental truths, or as inner light found in the New Testament, where Christ states: 'I am the light of the world' (John 8:12), and 'While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be

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children of light' (John 12:36), and 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works . . .' (Matthew 5:16). It has frequently appeared in works by other composers, always as an all-illuminating manifestation of spiritual attainment. So each day in Stockhausen's opera was an aspect of light and colours, also reflected in stones, jewels, plants, animals, human races, planets, and stars, drawn from 'the science of correspondences' in esoteric philosophy. This was based on the principle of essential similarities between structures and systems, important in the study of the inner side of Nature, and Stockhausen probably knew of Blavatsky's Table of Correspondences connecting hierarchies, principles, senses, colours, elements, and so on. Kandinsky also sought to define 'the authentic' through colour in his art, declaring that shades of colour awaken extra-fine emotions in the viewer. Stockhausen based *his* scheme on the seven planets of antiquity and historical traditions associated with weekdays; for example, Monday was about birth and fertility, Tuesday conflict and war, Wednesday reconciliation and co-operation, Thursday travel and learning, and so on.

This cycle of seven operas, some lasting for five hours but remaining incomplete, would take longer to perform than Wagner's Ring Cycle and it was also influenced by the ceremony and ritual of the Japanese Noh Theatre, with further links to Judeo-Christianity, the Vedas, the Hindu god Agni and Aurobindo's 'supramentality'. Each of the characters Michael, Eve, and Lucifer have their own

colours (exoteric and esoteric) and their own instruments. Michael is described as the 'visage of Christ' and 'Creator Son', ruler of our local universe, and in Stockhausen's plot represents the progressive forces of development; Lucifer is the antagonist, and Eve works towards a renewal of the 'genetic quality' of humanity through the re-creation of an essentially 'musical' human race . . . Stockhausen may have been aware of Blavatsky's insistence that Lucifer was the Bearer of Light, similar to the legend of Prometheus, the one who brought intelligence to mankind against the wishes of Zeus. But he chose to depict him as the cosmic spirit of rebellion and anarchy, with the colour black.

Each day of the week has themes based on human experience. Wednesday, called Collaboration and Reconciliation Day, posed so many staging problems that they were almost impossible to solve . . . such as the scene above an African jungle with the sounds of wild animals. The most complicated vista of all is where sixteen string quartet members board four helicopters. Whilst flying in different flight paths their music has to be transmitted by four microphones, and four cameras provide a video link to the auditorium where multiple video screens are set up so the public can watch and hear the four musicians playing synchronously . . . very polyphonic and demanding music.

Since his death in 2007 we have heard very little of the music, despite the promotional efforts of his trumpeter-composer son Markus, and his champions Pierre Boulez and Kent Nagano. Perhaps, as some think, his actual presence and direction

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were needed to make sense of the many large-scale pieces, and to inspire both performers and audiences. Others say that the works are generally too long — ‘some interesting sections interspersed with long stretches of interminable tedium’ was one criticism. So listening to these lengthy pieces can leave people uninvolved, the music lacking that architectural strength necessary for huge compositions, and Stockhausen remains incomprehensible to many music-lovers. Also, he had freely admitted that most of the colleagues he worked with did not share his spiritual views and aspirations; nor were they willing to put in the effort to reach that ‘higher knowledge’ he envisaged. But he remained convinced that sound synthesis and space music, with their dynamic subtleties and ability to transform known sounds into something completely different, would be dominant in future decades, with these sounds moving in all directions and at many speeds *around* the audience, if ideally performed in a spherical auditorium. And he felt, too, that the use of new combinations and new media would lead to spiritual experiences and heightened consciousness, to expand our perceptions and sensibilities; then, and only then, would the new music be

appreciated. Meanwhile, he said, we are just at the beginning of this new art.

However, millions continue to visit his websites, showing the vast influence he continues to exert, whilst his one-time teacher Olivier Messiaen proclaimed him, alongside Pierre Boulez, as a leading figure in the future of music. ‘*Only music,*’ said Stockhausen, ‘is capable of bringing about experiences of supernatural time-processes and of flying through unlimited space, and of making you really feel you’re a spiritual being, not primarily identified with the body.’ So music, for him, was all about being shaken to the depths of one’s soul by beauty, wealth of imagination, intelligence, power, delicacy, subtlety . . . or even feeling oneself taken *out of* the body. And his use of the word ‘beauty’ is interesting when related to the concept of the Russian painter, Nicholas Roerich, who said:

Art will unify all humanity. Art is one — indivisible. Art has its many branches, yet all are one. Art is the manifestation of the coming synthesis. The Gates of the ‘Sacred Source’ must be wide open for everybody, and the light of art will influence numerous hearts with a new love. At first this feeling will be unconscious, but after all it will purify human consciousness . . . ✧

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What Science has Contributed to Spirituality: The Mind at Present

NILDA VENEGAS BERNAL

THE current approach of science to the truths expressed by the great spiritual traditions is an expression of the crucial movement for the collective awakening of human consciousness. Until very recently, general thought on this was dominated by a rationality centred in the physical field, which represented conventional science.

Since the instruments and techniques developed for specific research have gone beyond known limits, this has produced a rejection of what was previously established — the dominant paradigm; and a new stage opens which offers possibilities that transcend or penetrate beyond the physical or the tangible.

The world and its subtle fields can be experimented on and investigated to be understood. The researcher can recognize his or her involvement and participation in the investigation and observation process. This reminds us of Krishnamurti's explanations about the 'observer' and the 'observed'.

In the constant process of negation of what was previously known to give way to the new, past knowledge can be

included, but with a new understanding and a holistic view. The true scientific mind remains open, and without identifying itself with only past knowledge, is able to maximize its potential to access new realities not yet perceived.

We can cite determining points in the fields of quantum physics, relativity, biology, psychology, and so on, that harmonize the principles described in the great spiritual traditions of the Orient, like Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, and so forth and find that these are essentially expressed in Theosophy. Leaders in those fields find with joy the great resonance of the new postulations of science with those eternal truths.

The Mahachohan, in his letter of 1881, said:

The doctrine we promulgate being the only true one, must, supported by such evidence as we are preparing to give, become ultimately triumphant as every other truth. Yet it is absolutely necessary to inculcate it gradually, enforcing its theories, unimpeachable facts for those who know, with direct inferences deduced from and

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corroborated by the evidence furnished by modern exact science.

These words speak of our present, one in which each of us from our own place can participate in this opportunity to collaborate with the expression and realization of those transcendental truths, at a moment in which science and spirituality begin to speak similar languages.

Psychology and Consciousness

Currently, meditation techniques for mental health, better known as contemplative sciences, are at their peak. In this field, a contemporary scientific approach to spiritual practices and values is being achieved, that is, a tendency towards integration of the knowledge of man and about man, which can allow a more complete vision. Scientific studies that demonstrate the connections between the different states of consciousness, and their effects on brain activity and on the body in general, are becoming increasingly common.

The growing collaboration and integration of the teachings of Buddhism, neurosciences, and the sciences of the mind have changed the appearance of new standardized techniques and models to cultivate mental health and well-being. Interpersonal Neurobiology is based on the integration of knowledge proceeding from various disciplines.

Integration could be considered as a common underlying mechanism in various ways to arrive at well-being. The way in which we pay attention to the present moment can directly improve the functioning of the body, mind, mental health, and inter-

personal relations. This form of attention develops the brain circuits in such a way that it allows us to establish a responsive and harmonious relationship with our own mind.

Jon Kabat-Zinn, Emeritus Professor of Medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, believes that 'one definition of mindfulness is paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.' In the field of psychology, which as Jung once said is the science of the soul, nowadays the practices of Mindfulness can be studied and investigated. Deep psychology invites us, and has done so for some time, to attend to our inner self. In *Psychology and Alchemy* Jung states: 'Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes'.

We are reminded of the quote by Master KH when he tells us: 'The moral and spiritual sufferings of the world are more important and need help and cure more than science needs aid from us in any field of discovery.'

The individual who presents some kind of problem or suffering, either physical or mental, as we all do in our lives by the very nature of our existence, can have contact during the therapy with a transformative and authentic way to focus on problems. It is possible to show how 'the sense of attention to what *is*' can be discovered only through our own experience. This deliberate treatment without effort, freely, without judgement, and not reactive, allows the acceptance of that which is painful. In

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this process which permits the participants to see how and what each feels and thinks, they are detached from the thoughts that are the bases of their suffering. To the extent that the cognitive fusion which controls the habitual psychological processes can be observed, and thereby progressively weakened, we are entering into a state of metacognition, in which the individuals achieve internal freedom and are capable of increasing their capacity to realize that they are not simply thoughts or emotions. There is an observation that permits us to be free in the moment of here and now, and that is 'the only moment'. The attachments and impediments that are the profound cause of suffering are overcome. The natural practice of this form of attention results in a state of psychological well-being, of peace, serenity, and happiness that can reflect itself in the lives of the people — in the form of increased giving, equanimity, sense of beauty, and compassion.

The way in which we centre our attention contributes to the modelling of the mind. When we develop a concrete way to attend to the experiences of here and now, and see the true nature of the mind, we are in front of a special form of attention that is Mindfulness. Heart and mind are defined by the same word in the Orient. 'Mindfulness' includes an affectionate and compassionate quality of being present with a generous and friendly interest.

The path of suffering, about which the Buddha showed us its nature and transcendence, is manifested in the practice of medicine of the body and mind. To be healthy is to accept, understand, integrate,

and transcend. The quality of Love and its implicit kindness allows the transformation of the human being.

In analytical psychology the totality of the person is considered as a goal towards which the psychological development in the therapeutic process takes us. The therapist or analyst can accompany the individual in these stages relating to the structure of the self, when the psychological contents are opened to integrate the aspects not previously known, amplifying them as an individual part of the totality.

The opening of the door of the unconscious permits a progressive integration that takes the individual to a transcendence of the duality of the mind. The process of individuation that Jung expresses keeps taking shape and the individual recognizes his internal unity, or totality; that unity connects and unites the individual with other human beings, but he still perceives that he was never separated but always profoundly bound and connected to them.

Jung states in *Psychology and Alchemy* that 'Were it not a fact of experience that supreme values reside in the soul, psychology would not interest me in the least, for the soul would then be nothing but a miserable smoke.' Also in *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche* he inspires us as follows: 'Life always has to be treated as something new.' Krishnamurti said that 'to discover something new, one must start with himself, he must set out on a journey, doing it completely naked, especially from knowledge. . . .' And so we ask ourselves, what is the quality of the mind that permits us to always live what is new? . . . Can we name it? ✧

Ancient Egyptian Religions

KETAN SHAH

EGYPT is said to be the oldest tourist destination in the world. The focus of most visits remains the great monuments of the Nile Valley and the pyramids of Giza. The land's lifeblood is the river Nile, whose narrow fertility is in stark contrast to the arid wastes of its flank from the Mediterranean to the Sudan. This stark duality between fertility and desolation is fundamental to Egypt's character and has shaped its development since prehistoric times imparting continuity to diverse cultures and peoples over five millennia. Egypt has a sense of permanence and timelessness that is buttressed by religion, which pervades every aspect of life. Although the religion of ancient Egypt is as moribund as its legacy of mummies and temples, its ancient fertility rites and procession of boats still hold their place in the celebrations of Islam and Christianity. The result of Egypt's ancient legacy is a multilayered culture, which seems to accord equal respect to both the ancient and modern. Throughout history what has united the Egyptians is a love of their homeland, extended family ties, dignity, warmth, and hospitality towards strangers.

Admiration of modern Egypt and fascination with its ancient monuments soon leads to curiosity about its past, and in particular its religious past, which seems to be heavily present in surviving monuments. This over-representation does not tell the whole story, as will be seen upon closer examination: the ancient Egyptians were not religious in our sense of the word.

The Jain religion can be thought of as the recognition by human beings of a superhuman potential in each one of us. Each individual human being can consider himself or herself capable of achieving a status that frees one from the cycle of birth and death. The effect of such thoughts on individuals can lead to the setting-up of a system of self-study and introspection leading to self-realization, and to the drawing up of a code of beliefs and conduct inspired by their religious faith. This faith is extended to both mythical and historic figures that are respected and revered for having achieved a state of freedom from the cycle of birth and death. Interpretation and reinterpretation of their teachings is codified into a rich legacy of ecclesiastical literature.

In ancient Egypt, religion was not like

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this. The Egyptians recognized many gods; they did not have one universal system of religious belief. They had no sacred books, analogous to the Kalpa Sutra; there were no theological commentaries or treatises, neither was there any dogma. The well known Book of the Dead was really a book of the 'Underworld' which was thought to be a mirror image of Egypt itself. Like the Hindus, the polytheism of the ancient Egyptians led to tolerance. Apart from two brief periods in their history when there was an attempt to promote a (solar) monotheism analogous to Judaism, Christianity, or Islam, the Egyptian never suffered from persecutions carried out in the name of religion; there were no Egyptian saints, no martyrs. The Egyptians were a gentle people for whom the family was important. Hence, their religion was based on family life. The gods were given wives, goddesses given husbands; both had children.

Temples continued the domestic theme, being called 'mansions' of the gods, and architecturally they were based on the house form, with rooms in them for eating and sleeping. The innermost sanctuary was regarded as the bedroom of the god. The daily ritual of the temple was domestic in form; the morning ritual gave the god his breakfast, the evening ritual gave him his dinner. Ancient Egyptian religion did not indulge in bloodbaths with animal or human sacrifices. Instead each god lived in peace in his home, the temple very often as part of a trinity of deities, a holy family consisting of father, mother, and child.

For much of their history, the Egyptians

were accommodating other people's gods and always ready to receive additions to their own pantheon. They received but did not feel any great need to give; hence there was no real attempt to persuade non-Egyptians to worship Egyptian gods. In their ancient religion, the basis of religion was not belief but cult, particularly the local cult, which meant more to the individual. Thus many deities flourished simultaneously and the Egyptians were seemingly ever ready to adopt a new god or to change their views about the old. The myriad gods worshipped by the ancient Egyptians fell into three main categories:

1) Local gods, who were the inanimate objects (fetishes), or animals, birds and other living creatures associated with a particular locality.

2) Personal gods, the objects or creatures chosen by individuals to receive their allegiance.

3) Universal gods, the cosmic deities who represented the forces of Nature — the sun, the moon, the stars, wind and storm.

The predominant characteristics of much of Egyptian religion were animism, fetishism, and magic. In less primitive times, theories were promulgated that turned magic into religion. Being an agricultural people, the ancient Egyptians were brought into daily contact with animals and birds; it was not surprising that they should turn such creatures into objects of worship. There was also the belief that certain animals possessed divine powers — the cow, for example, represented fertility, the bull, virility — 'which led to the cult of sacred animals,

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birds, and reptiles, each of which was considered to be the manifestation on earth of a divine being. Hence the thousands of mummified ibises, baboons, and crocodiles that have been found all over Egypt. Inside the temples, the Egyptians kept real live cats, bulls, ibises, or hawks and worshipped them as gods; and when they died, mummified and buried them as they did their kings.

The third type of god worshipped by the ancient Egyptians was the cosmic god — moon, storm, wind, and especially the sun. This type of deity represents a higher order of divine being, since it is difficult to personalize a cosmic god, with the result that comprehending this type of god demands a greater degree of intellectual effort. Whereas the fetish and local gods were developed prior to 3050 BC, the cosmic gods were properly developed during the historic era after 3000 BC, as evidenced by the stunning monuments and temples at Karnak, Luxor, and Abu Simbel.

During the historic period, the sun in particular became a universal god, worshipped throughout the land; and with the founding of the Egyptian state during Dynasty I, with the union of Upper and Lower Egypt, it was elevated to the status of state god. Despite the existence of both a state god and local gods, the Egyptians thought it perfectly normal to worship all at once.

The peculiar characteristics of the land in which the Egyptians lived, influenced their religion by diversifying it. There were two distinct halves, Upper and

Lower Egypt, and different ethnic groups such as the Semites and Africans. Further, all forty-two provinces had differences in speech, ways of life, customs, and religions. In each province, town, and village religion took on a special form peculiar to that particular place. Each locality had its own deity, who was often worshipped in a way that was special to him or her, and who was often equipped with myths and legends of his or her own.

During periods of unrest or when there was a weak central government, religious differences were intensified. However when the country was united, a strange process commenced. The principal deity of the town or city that was the seat of the official royal residence became the state god. His temple was visited from all parts of the country; he was recognized by all. The fame provided to the state god caused other towns to wish for a god of such distinction. And so they either introduced the worship of the state god into their own temples, or they ‘discovered’ that he was in reality one and the same god as their own local deity; and the two deities would be blended into one — for example *Amun-Ra*, King of the Gods. He not only had a vast temple dedicated to him at Karnak on the east bank of the Nile, but his jurisdiction also extended to the vast necropolis (City of the Dead) on the west bank, best known to tourists as the Valley of the Kings and Valley of the Queens. Tutankhamen’s tomb was found here, Tut-Ankh-Amun meaning, Living Image of Amun.

As a uniform way of life developed in Egypt, this process of merging deities,

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called syncretism, should logically have led to the blending of all the gods and goddesses of Egypt into one god with a very long name made up of all the syllables of the names of all the other gods. However, the Egyptians were not the most logical of people, and this 'happy' state was never attained.

The Egyptians thought the Nile came from the place where the world began. Accordingly they oriented themselves towards the cavern at Aswan where the Nile has its mythological source. The mythological cause of the annual flooding, the Inundation, was the goddess Isis, weeping copious tears into the Nile, in commemoration of her dear, dead husband, Osiris. Considering that the Nile was so vital to the Egyptians, it is surprising that this great river was not elevated to the position of the most important god in the land. In fact, the Nile as such was not deified at all. Instead it was represented by Hapy, the Spirit or Essence of the Nile. Many are the figures of Hapy that can be seen in temples: he is depicted as a man with a pendulous belly (always a sign of a prosperous and well-fed man to the ancient Egyptians, a man to be respected) and the breasts of a woman.

The characteristics peculiar to the land of Egypt — long narrow valley surrounded by desert, a river which ensured a plentiful supply of water, and fertile soil, made the ancient Egyptians into a highly conservative, parochial, even complacent society. They lived in a land that was productive, but nevertheless demanded constant hard work, and forced its

inhabitants to be practical. The Egyptians therefore tended not to indulge in any great flights of fancy. They were parochial: their eyes were turned on their neighbourhood. In spite of their narrow, inward-looking way of life, many Egyptians must have posed the eternal, universal questions — who created the world? and the sun and the stars? who created life on earth, both animal and human? what happens when one dies? — and found acceptable answers to their questions by conceiving gods and a religion that were developed directly from their own experience of life as they lived it in the land of Egypt.

The great number of gods worshipped in ancient Egypt meant that there was no one version of the answers to these questions. Egyptian religion seems to comprise many religious beliefs. One of the reasons is that the Egyptians, conservative as they were, never discarded any of their old beliefs in favour of new ones; they simply assimilated them. They were quite content to have several different explanations for the same thing, for each explanation might serve in different contexts. There were, for instance, several variations on the theme of the creation of the world, for the great creator gods such as Atum, Ra, Ptah, and Neit each had his or her own version.

But whichever deity performed the act of creation, there was one underlying image: in the beginning, water covered the earth and all was dark and void. This primordial water was called the Nun, and it is a natural image for the Egyptians to

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have conjured up. They must have seen their land covered by water during the Inundation, and have seen, when the flood-water began to recede, little islands of land began to emerge from the primordial waters of the Nun.

There were many ideas of what the universe was. The sky was visualized as a cow whose feet rested on the earth (Hathor); or as a woman who supported herself with hands and feet on the earth (Nut). The sky was said to be a sheet of water on which the stars sailed in boats, just as the Egyptians themselves sailed on the Nile. Or else the sky rested on four fabulous mountains situated at the four corners of the earth — the pillars of heaven. The sun was said to be the right eye of a great god whose left eye was the moon (Atum; Ra). It was born every morning as the calf of the celestial cow; or as the child of the Sky Goddess. It was rolled across the sky by a beetle (Khepri) until in the evening it became an old man (Atum). The sun, moon, and the stars were said to sail in ships over the heavenly ocean. There was said to be a second heaven under the earth; through this heaven a river ran just as the Nile runs through Egypt. Every night, the sun descended under the earth, where it traversed the underworld Nile. And every morning, it ascended the earth again through two whirlpools at Elephantine (Aswan).

Religion pervaded every aspect of life in ancient Egypt, apparently making the Egyptians into a very religion-ridden society. However this does not mean that they were more pious than other people,

or more devout, godly, humble, spiritual, or pure in heart. It simply means that Egyptian history was the story of the interplay between gods and kings; that for much of that history the economy of Egypt was organized around the temples; that religious beliefs affected the way in which the Egyptians dealt with death.

At the same time there was a private religion. Because ordinary Egyptians had no admittance to the innermost areas of a temple, the only opportunity they were given to behold the deity came when the cult statue, which was normally kept in the temple's innermost sanctuary, was brought out of its shrine on the occasion of one of the great festivals that took place at certain times of the year; and carried in procession around the town for the edification of the populace. Whereas the Egyptians erected official temples for local and universal gods, private individuals had their own beliefs, their own private god or gods, and were happy to construct with their own hands small shrines near their houses for their personal gods to whom they could turn for aid and comfort.

Meanwhile the official state religion of Egypt concerned itself with promoting the well-being of the gods, which they reciprocated by maintaining the established order of the world. The vehicle through which the gods received favour, and in turn dispensed it, was the king, aided by a hierarchy of priests. One of the important aspects of Egyptian religion was the fact that the king was regarded as a god. Tradition stated that in the beginning, kingship came to the earth in the shape

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of the god-king, Ra, who brought his daughter, Maat, the embodiment of Truth and Justice with him. Thus the beginning of the world was synchronous with the beginning of kingship and social order.

The pharaohs of Egypt legitimized their claim to the throne in ways that were influenced by religious beliefs. The god-king Horus (the falcon one sees on the tail fins of Egypt Air) was the son of the god Osiris, who had been king; and so every new king of Egypt became a Horus to his predecessor's Osiris. Theology was another means through which this was accomplished. Here, the principal god of the time was said to have assumed the form of the reigning king in order to beget a child by his queen; that child later claimed to be the offspring of both his earthly and his heavenly father.

The king was the unifying factor in Egyptian religious life. In theory he was chief priest in every temple. Obviously the king could not be in every temple at once. However this fiction was maintained in the reliefs one sees carved on the walls of temples which always show the king making offerings to the gods. The king was the embodiment of the connection between the world of men and the world of gods, the lynchpin of Egyptian society. It was his task to make the world go on functioning; it was his task to make the sun rise and set, the Nile to flood and ebb, the grain to grow; all of which could only be achieved by the performance of the proper rituals within the temples.

It is perhaps appropriate here to point out the vast differences between what

the word 'temple' meant to the ancient Egyptians and what it means to us today. Egyptian temples symbolized the earth; the ceilings of the temples were painted with stars to represent the firmament. Recent visitors to the Valley of the Kings in Thebes will remember seeing striking ceiling murals of the sky in some well preserved tombs such as that of Rameses IX. The temple walls were decorated at the base with carvings of the marsh plants and reeds that grew on the banks of the Nile.

The Egyptians believed that the earth was constantly threatened with forces of chaos that had existed before the world was created; they had been overcome but were an ever-present danger; only the gods could keep them at bay. These gods appeared in different guises all over Egypt, where they had to be equipped with homes — temples, the mansions of the gods. Inside these houses, the gods could be protected and nourished so that they could perform their divine tasks.

From the beginning of the historic period, circa 3000 BC, which was also the beginning of writing there (think of it in the context of the birth of Mahavira circa 500 BC), there were two distinct types of temples in Egypt: the memorial or funerary temple, dedicated to the worship of a dead king; and the cult temple, dedicated to the worship of one or more of the many deities of Egypt. A supreme example of the former is Abu Simbel and of the latter is Karnak. Each type of temple owned property and estates which rendered the temple self-supporting but also produced great wealth.

The cult temple, especially, played an

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important part in the life of the community. However, for the ordinary person its role was not that of a place of worship. The Egyptian temple was nothing like a derasar, church, mosque or synagogue. It was not a place to which one might go for spiritual comfort, to praise god, to discuss theological points or to be instructed in religious matters. Although some temples were equipped with special areas where an ordinary person might speak to the god, normally cult temples were concerned with the religion of the state and the maintenance of the bureaucracy.

Ancient Egyptian temples were big business. The temple was a landowner; the ordinary Egyptian could and did rent land from it. It was the repository for legal documents, the place where births and marriages were registered and contracts drawn up. Schools were centered on temples; scribes, artists, and doctors were trained there. Some temples even had hospitals within their precincts. Surgery, including prosthetic surgery was practised there. Annual taxation was determined by the temples' sacred lakes' 'Nileometer' which measured the level of the annual flood, and hence the likely grain harvest. There are many parallels with our Oshwal Mahajanwadi in Ngara, Nairobi.

Just as the Egyptian temple was unlike anything modern man understands by the word 'temple', so an Egyptian 'priest' was not like the modern concept of a spiritual leader; neither was he a recognized authority on religious law. They were not preachers and did not have parishioners. They were not deliverers of sermons

because congregations of worshippers did not feature in the life of an Egyptian temple. They were not expected to be authorities on religious doctrine, for there was none. There was no central system of religious belief or organization. Each town had its own, and so the priesthood of any temple followed the customs and practices peculiar to the temple.

A majority of the priests in a temple were part-time laymen, who after their period of temple service, went back to their homes to carry on normal life. In theory, the king appointed all priests; and in every temple in the land, they served as his surrogates. A career in the priesthood was open to women also. Important positions, notably those of the goddess Hathor, were occupied by women, although most priestesses acted as musicians and enchantresses.

To become a priest, a man did not have to have any special calling or gift for religion. His task was that of administrator of temple property, estates, and revenues; and within the temple his function was as a domestic servant to the god, ministering to his daily needs. This was the case whether the god was a living animal or bird kept in the temple as the representative on earth of a god, or a golden effigy of the deity. The one stipulation for entry to the temple was that a man, or woman, be pure. To achieve the required purity a priest (or priestess) had to purify himself for several days before entering a temple by chewing natron (bicarbonate of soda) and fumigating himself with incense.

On the day that he entered the temple, he had to wash himself, cut his finger

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and toe nails, and in the case of a priest, be shaved and depilated of all body hair. Very much like the sky-clad Jain monks! Male priests had to be circumcised. Neither priests nor priestesses were required to lead celibate lives outside the temple. But they had to be prepared to observe the prohibitions — observed by their particular temple. The advantages of being a priest were many, including a share from the income from temple estates, exemption from certain taxes, and immunity from state labour such as work on dykes and canals.

There was no rigid division between the sacred and secular world in Egypt. The secular world viewed the temples as places of business. The priests of the temples worked to maintain the equilibrium between the world of the gods and the world of men. The worship of gods therefore, was just one of the many activities undertaken by temple bureaucracy, which was also responsible for many of the functions that nowadays would come within the province of local government or community organization.

However the worship of gods was the chief *raison d'être* for the existence of the temples. Hymns of praise were sung to the gods. However the Egyptians adopted a businesslike approach to their prayers which were made in the spirit of *quid pro quo*. The priest or the king makes an offering

to the god and the god reciprocates in kind. Thus, for example, if the king offers the god fruit, the god in turn rewards the king with the gift of the orchards that produce the fruit. All this makes Egyptian religion sound less than spiritual. In many ways it was. On the other hand there is evidence, from texts which exhort priests to live in accordance with high moral principles, that spiritual ideals were not entirely absent from Egyptian religious life.

The Egyptians had a very relaxed attitude towards their gods. They regarded their deities as a class of beings much like themselves; they had the same need for food and drink; they would suffer pain, age, or death; they had the same vices and virtues, they were just as apt to commit acts of folly, treachery, or trickery. However their lapses did not earn them scorn from their worshippers, instead, they merely moved the Egyptians to treat their gods in a tolerantly amused manner and, as might be expected from an agricultural people, often to describe their activities in a frank and earthy way.

In spite of this, the gods of ancient Egypt were beings to be respected, for it was only through their beneficence and goodwill that Egypt prospered, as she undoubtedly did, for over three thousand years — arguably one of the longest uninterrupted civilizations the world has ever known. ✧

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

The Idyll of the White Lotus

The Number Seven and our Society

H. P. BLAVATSKY

THE thoughtful reader must have pondered well over the mysterious import that the number *Seven* seems to have always had among the ancients, as succinctly epitomized in our June number, as well as the theory of cycles, discussed in the July issue. [Both issue are available on the web at: <www.theosociety.org/pasadena/theos-hp.htm>.] It was there stated that the German scientists are now giving attention to this manifestation of the numerical harmony and periodicity of the operations of Nature. A series of statistical observations, embracing some centuries of historical events, tend to show that the ancients must have been perfectly aware of this law when constructing their systems of philosophy. In fact, when statistical science shall have been fully perfected, as it seems likely to be, there will be constantly increasing proofs that the evolution of heroes, poets, military chieftains, philosophers, theologians, great merchants, and all other remarkable personages, is as capable of mathematical estimate upon the basis of the potentiality of numbers, as the return of a comet by the rules of astronomical calculations. The comparatively modern system of

life insurance rests upon the calculated expectancy of life on the average at certain ages; and, while nothing is so uncertain as the probable longevity of any single individual in a community, nothing is more certain than that the probable life-chance of any one person, in the mass of population, can be known on the basis of the general average of human life. In fact, as M. de Cazeneuve, in the *Journal du Magnetisme*, justly observes, the law of numerical proportions is verified in every department of the physical sciences. We see it in chemistry as the law of definite proportions and multiple proportions; in physics, as the law of optics, acoustics, electricity, and so on; in mineralogy, in the wonderful phenomena of crystallization; in astronomy, in the celestial mechanics. Well may the writer, above-quoted, remark: 'Physical and moral laws have so infinitely numerous points of contact, that, if we have not as yet reached the point where we can demonstrate their identity, it is nonetheless certain that there exists between them a very great analogy.'

We have attempted to show how, by a sort of common instinct, a peculiar

Reprinted from the September 1880 issue of *The Theosophist*.

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solemnity and mystical significance has been given the Number *Seven* among all people, at all times. It now remains for us to cite, from the experience of the Theosophical Society, some facts which indicate how its power has manifested itself with us. Continually our experiences have been associated with *Seven* or some combination or multiple of it. And it must be remembered that, in not a single instance, was there any intention that the number should play a part in our affairs; but, on the contrary, what happened was in many cases exactly the reverse of what we desired. It was only the other day that we began to take any note of the striking chain of circumstances, and some have only been recalled now at the moment of writing.

The two chief founders of our Society were the President, Colonel Olcott, and the Conductor of this Magazine. When they made each other's acquaintance (in 1874), the office number of the former was *seven*, the house number of the latter *seventeen*. The President's Inaugural Address before the Society was delivered on November 17, 1875; the Headquarters were established in the 47th street, (the up-town streets in New York are all designated by numbers), and Colonel Olcott's office was removed to 71 Broadway. On the 17th December 1878, our delegates to India sailed for London: the voyage, owing to storms and fogs, lasted *seventeen* days; on the 17th January, 1879, we left London for Liverpool to take the steamer for Bombay, got on board the next day, but lay all night in the Mersey,

and on the 19th — the *seventeenth* day from our landing in England, we got to sea. On March 2 — *seventeen* days after reaching Bombay — we removed to the bungalows where we have ever since been living. On the 23rd March, thirty-five (7 x 5) days after landing, Colonel Olcott delivered his first public oration on Theosophy, at Framji Cowasji Institute, Bombay. On July 7, the first Prospectus, announcing the intended foundation of the THEOSOPHIST was written; on the 27th September, the first 'form' was made up at the printing-office, and on October 1 — our 227th in India — the magazine appeared.

But we anticipate events. In the beginning of April, last year, Colonel Olcott and the Conductor of this magazine went to the N. W. Provinces to meet Swami Dayanand, and were absent from the Headquarters thirty-*seven* days, and visited *seven* different cities during the trip. In December of that year we again went northward, and on the 21st (7 x 3) of that month, a special meeting of the Society of Benares Pandits was held to greet Colonel Olcott and elect him an Honorary Member in token of the friendliness of the orthodox Hindu pandits for our Society — a most important event.

Coming down to the Ceylon [Sri Lanka] trip, we find, on consulting the diary, that our party sailed from Bombay, May 7, the steamer starting her engines at 7:7 am. We reached Point de Galle on the 17th. At the first meeting in Ceylon of candidates for initiation, a group of *seven* persons presented themselves. At Panadure, *seven* were also initiated first, the

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evening proving so boisterous and stormy that the rest could not leave their houses. At Colombo, fourteen (7 x 2) were initiated the first night, while, at the preliminary meeting to organize the local branch temporarily, there were twenty-seven. At Kandy, seventeen comprised the first body of candidates. Returning to Colombo, we organized the 'Lanka Theosophical Society', a scientific branch, on the 17th of the month, and on the evening, when the Panadure branch was formed, thirty-five names (7 x 5) were registered as follows. Seven priests were initiated here during this second visit, and at Bentota, where we tarried to organize a branch, there were again seven priests admitted. Thirty-five (7 x 5) members organized the Matara branch; and here again the priests taken into fellowship numbered seven. So, too, at Galle, twenty-seven persons were present on the night of the organization — the rest being unavoidably absent; and at Welitara the number was twenty-one, or three times seven. Upon counting up the entire number of lay Buddhists included in our seven Ceylon branches, that are devoted to the interests of that faith, we find our mystical number seven occupying the place of units, and what adds to the singularity of the fact is that the same is the case with the sum total of priests who joined our Parent Society.

Our septenary fatality followed us all throughout the return voyage to Bombay. Of the Delegation, two members, having urgent business, took an earlier steamer from Colombo, thus reducing our number

to seven. Two more fully intended to come home from Galle by the vessel of the 7th July, but, as it turned out, she did not touch there and so, perforce, our band of seven came together on the 12th — the fifty-seventh day after our landing. The sea voyage from Ceylon to Bombay may be said to begin upon leaving Colombo, since the run from Galle to that port is in Ceylonese waters. From friends — five laymen and two priests — again seven — who came aboard at Columbo to bid us farewell, we learned that the July THEOSOPHIST had reached there, and being naturally anxious to see a copy, urgently requested that one should be sent us to look at, if possible, before 5 o'clock pm, the hour at which it was thought we would leave port. This was promised us, and, after our friends left, we watched every craft that came from shore. Five o'clock came, then six and half-past six, but no messenger or magazine for us. At last, precisely, at seven, one little canoe was seen tossing in the heavy sea that was running; she approached, was alongside; on her bows, painted on a white ground was the Number Seven; a man climbed over the ship's rail, and in his hand was the paper we were waiting for! When the anchor was up and the pilot's bell rang for starting the engines, two of our party ran to look at the ship's clock: it stood at seven minutes past 7 pm.

At Tuticorin, Mr Padshah, one of our party, went ashore as his desire was to return by rail to Bombay, so as to see Southern India; the little boat in which he went ashore we noticed, after she had got

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clear from the crowd of craft alongside, bore the number forty-seven. Going down the coast on our outward voyage, our steamer touched at fourteen (7 x 2) ports; coming home, our vessel, owing to the monsoon weather and the heavy surf along the Malabar Coast, visited only seven. And, finally, as though to show us that our septenate destiny was not to be evaded, it was at exactly seven o'clock — as the log of the S.S. *Chanda* shows — when we sighted the pilot off Bombay harbour, at 7.27 the bell rang to slow down the engine; at 7.47 the pilot stepped on the 'bridge' and took command of the ship, and, at 9.37, our anchor was dropped off the Apollo Bunder, and our voyage was

thus ended on the 24th of July, the *seventy-seventh* day after the one on which we had sailed for Ceylon. To ascribe to mere coincidence this strange, if not altogether unprecedented, concatenation of events, in which the Number *Seven* was, as the astrologers might call it 'in the ascendant', would be an absurdity. The most superficial examination of the doctrine of chance will suffice to show that. And, if, indeed, we must admit that some mysterious law of numerical potentialities is asserting itself in shaping the fortunes of the Theosophical Society, whither shall we turn for an explanation but to those ancient Asiatic philosophies which were built upon the bedrock of Occult Science?

It is said that the average number of lives spent on earth between individualization and the attainment of Adeptship is about 777. Out of these about 700 are spent in acquiring experiences in the savage and semi-civilized conditions, about 70 in acquiring experiences in civilized conditions and perfecting the moral nature, and the last 7 in treading the Path which leads to Adeptship.

Self-Culture in the Light of the Ancient Wisdom

I. K. Taimni

Theosophical Work around the World

European Congress

The 37th European Congress was held from 30 July to 3 August 2014 in Paris, France, at the Adyar Theatre and the premises of the TS in France. The theme, 'Bridging Science and Spirituality', attracted more than 180 participants from twenty-three countries and was covered by eighteen speakers, among them the international President, Mr Tim Boyd, and several scientists from other countries.

The Congress provided a holistic and multifaceted overview of the subject, testifying that 'science is our best ally'. It took place in a warm and earnest atmosphere, was well received, and the participants left with many new lines of thought for future studies. It was also a memorable gathering for both members and sympathizers, helping to strengthen friendships and create new ones.

The Congress talks were given in English or French with translation projected simultaneously on a screen on the stage. The President gave two lectures. In the first one he showed how spirituality and modern science are in harmony, differing only in terminology. In the second he shed light on the basic concepts of Theosophy.

Mr Andrej Detela, Slovenian scientist and writer, delved deeply in his two lectures into the nature of silence and perception of time. Mr Ulrich Mohrhoff, physicist and researcher from India,

spoke first on quantum physics, and then explored how it is coherent with Indian philosophical view. Dr Muriel Pécastaing-Boissière, TS member, senior lecturer, and historian at the Sorbonne University, France, spoke about Annie Besant's search for truth using scientific methods. Mr Luc Lambs, TS member, senior scientist and researcher at Toulouse University, France, explored astrophysics and ecology with the help of occult chemistry.

Ms Trān-Thi-Kim-Diêu, Chairperson of the European Theosophical Federation and the General Secretary of the French Section, explored the theme of the Congress by suggesting that the bridge between science and spirituality can be found in philosophy. Additional speakers included Mr Antonio Girardi, GS of the Italian Section; Mr Colin Price, GS of the English Section; and Mrs Sabine Van Osta, GS of the Belgian Section. Other TS members who spoke included Mrs Graciela Ricci, semiologist from Italy; Dr José Foglia, neuroscientist from Uruguay, and Mr Jacques Mahnich, aeronautical engineer from France.

Short talks were delivered by Ms Els Rijneker, GS of the Dutch Section; Mr Wim Leys, Vice General Secretary of the Dutch Section; Mrs Tarja Pursi, Vice General Secretary of the Finnish Section. Other TS members giving short talks included Dr Nilda Venegas Bernal,



Members of the European Theosophical Congress held from 30 July to 3 August in Paris, France



French TOS President, Mr Michel Chapotin, hands over the teddies to Mrs Svitlana Gavrylenko, the head of the Ukrainian delegation, while our International TOS President, Tim Boyd, shows a bilingual message addressed to the Ukrainians saying, 'Fraternal kisses to you all from your French sisters and brothers'

Theosophical Work around the World



Members of the International Education Conference held in July at 'Olcott', the international headquarters of the Theosophical Society in America



TSA National Secretary, Mr David Bruce, with Ms Danelys Valcarcel, and Mr Walter Terpack

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psychiatrist from Spain; Mrs Maria João Figueira, chemical engineer from Portugal; and Elvira Carbonell, a resident worker at the national headquarters of the TS in America.

During the Congress, a well-known and talented Russian pianist, Ekaterina Derzhavina, gave an exceptional piano recital of J. S. Bach's 'Goldberg Variations'. Italian, French, and Finnish members gave an entertainment programme, culminating with the performance of the European anthem, Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy', by Laurent Cabanel, a professional lyric artist.

At the closing it was announced that the next European Congress will be organized by the Spanish Section in 2017.

The Congress programme was live-streamed over the Internet and videos of the lectures, opening, and closing can be watched at <http://vimeo.com/efts/videos>. All videos can also be accessed on the website of the EFTS at <http://ts-efts.org/> where, in addition to lectures, photos and news of the Congress were published.

TOS in Ukraine

The Theosophical Order of Service in Ukraine has five branches. The Kiev branch has adopted a refugee camp set up to look after both Ukrainian and Russian families fleeing the eastern regions of Ukraine, where there is military tension with Russia. The members have been busily collecting and delivering clothing and household goods to the camp. The children particularly appreciate toys, of

course. Therefore TOS members in France knitted teddies for them. When a delegation of ten Ukrainians was in Paris for the TS European Congress in late July, the French members handed over 175 hand-knitted teddies.

USA

In July, the Theosophical Society in America hosted a four-day educational conference called 'Education for a New Humanity.' The idea for the conference came from Ms Danelys Valcarcel, a resident worker at the TSA national headquarters, as a project that she conceived while attending a training session at the Krotona School of Theosophy in Ojai, California. Representatives from the Montessori, Waldorf, Krishnamurti, Theosophical, and Raja Yoga schools were invited to share their teaching methods with an enthusiastic group of forty-five participants. The conference included lectures, slide shows, discussion groups, and a panel discussion.

National Secretary David Bruce gave a presentation called 'Theosophy Behind Bars', in which he described the work of the TSA prison program. A special guest appearance was made by Walter Terpack, a TSA member for several years, who participated in the prison program for three years before his release last year. Mr Terpack testified to the transformative power of Theosophy and the importance of the prison program in reaching out to men and women who are incarcerated across the country. ✧

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The School of the Wisdom sessions at Adyar are planned to be held as follows:

♦ Nov. 3 to 14, 2014, 'The Voice of the Silence', Dir.: Prof. R. C. Tampi. ♦ Nov. 17 to 28, 'The Psychology of Yoga', Dir.: Mr P. K. Jayaswal. ♦ Dec. 1 to 12, 'Self-transformation and the Spiritual Life', Dir.: Mr Vincente Hao Chin, Jr. ♦ Jan. 5 to 16, 2015, 'The Science of Theosophy: Foundation and Practice'. Dir.: Ms Tran-Thi-Kim-Dieu.

Class timings are Monday to Friday, from 8.30 to 11 am and 3.30 to 5 pm, with meditation from 8 to 8.30 am.

For more detailed information please visit our website at <www.ts-adyar.org>.

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