



THE THEOSOPHIST

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Cover: Mrs Radha Burnier

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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

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

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

On the Watch-Tower

M. P. SINGHAL

THE wheel of life on 31 October 2013 turned swiftly. At 5.30 p.m. on that day my wife and I saw Mrs Radha Burnier in her residence at Parsi Quarters to get her blessings before going to Bali, Indonesia, to attend the Indo-Pacific Federation Conference. She asked a few simple questions and said, 'very good'. Bidding good bye we left her at about 6 p.m. At Chennai airport, after we checked in for our flight, we received a phone call informing that the President had passed away at 9 p.m. We returned to Adyar after cancelling the journey. Lying in state at the Headquarters Hall her smiling face reflected peace, as if she was in deep sleep or meditation. As most readers are already aware, Radha Burnier, International President of the Theosophical Society, was born on 15 November 1923 in the Society campus. She was the daughter of our fifth International President, N. Sri Ram. Mrs Burnier was in her fifth term as President of the TS, having taken office as the seventh President in 1980. She served this office longer than any other President and lived also longer.

She supervised research and publication work of Adyar Library and Research Centre, as the Director during 1959 and 1979. She was also a well known exponent

of Indian classical dance having acted in the film 'The River' by Jean Renoir. She was a very warm-hearted person and had greatly endeared herself not only to the members of the Society but to all those who came into contact with her.

A new President will now be elected by the members of the Theosophical Society, in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Society. Necessary steps have already been initiated in this direction. It is important that this election should be conducted by all concerned in a truly Theosophical spirit and in conformity with the highest ideals of fairness, impartiality and objectivity.

This brings us to the much wider question of translating Theosophy into our daily lives, or living theosophically. In the Preface to *The Key to Theosophy* Madame Blavatsky points out, 'To the mentally lazy or obtuse, Theosophy must remain a riddle; for in the world mental as in the world spiritual, each man must progress by his own efforts. . . .' In this there is a caution that students of Ancient Wisdom need to work hard to assimilate the theosophical teachings so they can become an inseparable part of our living. Most members of the Theosophical Society, irrespective of their country, language or

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belief system, reflect generally a distinct theosophical culture of friendship, consideration, courtesy, patience, tolerance and helpfulness. In the world, nothing disappoints and disillusiones an outsider more when he witnesses untheosophical conduct by a member or a group of members of the Society. We should care for the dignity and feelings of all persons we meet.

We are given a three step plan of Study, Meditation, and Service. Study gives us knowledge. By meditating on what we have learnt we get insights into wisdom. Thus armed with wisdom, we are able to serve wisely. We may begin to see the element of divine life in all beings — unity in the midst of diversity. We have been to the moon and back, but unable to meet a neighbour across the street who is in pain and needs our love and compassion. Love remains merely a word unless we use it to serve.

We have received condolence messages from many individuals, and from many Sections of the TS worldwide on this occasion. They are full of loving thoughts and feelings. Let us look at those messages which have come from past Vice-Presidents in order they held their post.

Miss Joy Mills Krotona: 'Krotona residents met in the main Hall for meditation in tribute to Radha, pledging ourselves to continue with the great work to which she gave full measure of devotion . . . I treasure beautiful memories of times we spent together. She gave us all a beautiful example of truly selfless service.'

Mr Surendra Narayan Delhi: 'With a deep sense of devotion I pay my profound respects to Radhaji, who is now no more with us physically. She lived to work for the cause of human welfare and liberation never thinking about herself. Her life was a glaring example of what the Masters of the Wisdom expect us to be — ideal workers of the Theosophical Society.'

Mr John Algeo USA: 'The passing of Radha Burnier marks the end of an era. She was the President of the Theosophical Society Adyar from 1980 until her death on 31 October 2013, an auspicious day as All Hallow Even (All Saints 'Eve). She was a daughter of Nilakanta Sri Ram, who was the fifth President of the Theosophical Society, and she was a student in Rukmini Devi Arundale's school of classical Indian dance (the Kalakshetra Foundation). She played a central role in Jean Renoir's 1951 film *Le Fleuve (The River)*, Radha came to Miami to lecture and give dance performances.

Later I got to know her when I was the President of the Theosophical Society in America. She was a strong-minded and strong-willed woman. She never (in my experience) betrayed a moment of doubt about the correctness of her opinions or the appropriateness of her actions.

Ms Mary Anderson UK: 'What may strike one above all in the life and activity of Radha Burnier is the many-sidedness of her character. She was outstanding in her interests and her activities, as a magnificent dancer, a Sanskrit scholar, a profound thinker, a wise speaker and writer, an organizer, and above all one who

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sympathised with the underprivileged and was always ready to help where help was needed. She will be missed for all those qualities and remembered with affection by those who worked with her.'

Mrs Linda Oliveira Australia: 'Mrs Burnier was the longest serving President of the Society, occupying this office even longer than the Founding President, Colonel Olcott. She exemplified a possibly paralleled dedication to the Society and its work until the end . . . Radhaji demonstrated repeatedly in her talks and her writings a relatively rare fusion of heart and mind. On many occasions this was reflected in a superior kind of wisdom, which made itself known in different ways. She also kept alive the spirit of serious reflection and open minded enquiry in TS May she have a well deserved rest.'

Mrs Diana Dunningham Chapotin, International Secretary, TOS France: Radha Burnier's contribution through TOS needs special mention. She was greatly concerned about the ethical problems posed

by science, the effects of corporate greed and personal selfishness on the environment, the exploitation of the masses by international Conglomerates, the oppression of women, the injustice caused by caste and class systems, political and economic corruption and the abuse of animals — among many other issues. The keynote of her presidency can perhaps be said to be the Human generation and humanitarian action with personal care and generosity.

Mrs Radha Burnier was a visionary and a path finder. On one occasion she said, 'Let our members become independent thinkers and path finders, instead of depending on others.' She set the direction of the journey and the goal, leaving the contours of the Path to individuals.

The need of the hour is to stay united in our great mission of transforming the humanity and the whole world by living theosophy in our daily lives. Let us remember what Mother Teresa said, 'All of us cannot do great things, but all of us can do small things with great love.' ✧

It is the motive, and the motive alone, which makes any exercise of power become black, malignant, or white, beneficent Magic. It is impossible to employ *spiritual* forces if there is the slightest tinge of selfishness remaining in the operator . . . The powers and forces of animal nature can equally be used by the selfish and revengeful, as by the unselfish and the all forgiving; the powers and forces of the spirit lend themselves only to the perfectly pure in heart—and this is DIVINE MAGIC.

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The Secret Doctrine: Book of Books

MICHAEL GOMES

FOR a nineteenth-century book issued by a small publisher detailing abstruse matters of cosmology and human destiny, *The Secret Doctrine* has gone on to have a remarkably resilient and influential career. Its two bulky volumes, comprising over 700 pages each, have remained in continuous print since its appearance in 1888. The book's ideas, which seemed so radical 125 years ago, of a living universe made manifest through patterns of cyclicity guided by karma and reincarnation, have become part of the currency of our time. The impact of these ideas may be debated but what cannot be questioned is the fact that *The Secret Doctrine* has produced a literature of its own, rich in editions and commentaries. A bibliography alone would run over 50 titles.¹

When *The Secret Doctrine* was first announced in the pages of the January 1884 *Theosophist* it was advertised as 'A New Version of *Isis Unveiled*', Mme Blavatsky's first book, published in 1877. The publisher's notice promised 'new arrangement of the material, large and important additions, and copious notes and commentaries'. It would be issued in monthly instalments by *The Theosophist*

in sections of 77 pages, and would be completed in two years. An example of what was planned can be seen in a chapter, 'On the Gods, and Pitri-s, the Deva-s and the Daimone, Elementaries and Elementals and other like Spooks', completed by April 1884.² It was not used in *The Secret Doctrine* as published, for on 6 January 1886, Mme Blavatsky wrote to Col. Olcott, 'Secret Doctrine *is entirely* new. There will not be there 20 pages quoted from *Isis*. New matter, occult explanations. . . .'³

This new work would begin with a preliminary volume showing what was known of a once universal secret doctrine 'during the 500 years that preceded the Christian period and the 500 years that followed it'⁴ before going on to the volumes with the stanzas. Otherwise, she wrote to Olcott, 'the public would get crazy before five pages, *too metaphysical*'.⁵ Bertram and Archibald Keightley, uncle and nephew, who helped to edit the manuscript for publication in London, thought differently and suggested that the book follows its natural order, starting with a volume on cosmology, followed by another on the development of humanity.

Dr Michael Gomes is a scholar and author of Theosophical subjects, living in America.

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Each volume would be subdivided into three parts, dealing first with the world-view put forth in the stanzas of Dzyan, then the occult symbolism referenced in them, and closing with an attempt to reconcile these ideas with the science of her time. HPB's intended preliminary volume would serve as a third volume on occult history.

Bound in light grey cloth the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* appeared at the end of October 1888, the second by December. It was published by the newly formed Theosophical Publishing Company, the first of many books from what would become the Theosophical Publishing House. The book was published simultaneously in America from printed sheets sent from England. Copies for sale in America were bound in dark blue cloth with William Q. Judge as publisher on the spine. The first edition of 500 copies sold out immediately and a second printing ('edition') was issued before the end of the year. The two volumes of *The Secret Doctrine: the Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy* bore the dedication from its author, 'To all true Theosophists in every country and every race, for they called it forth and for them it was recorded'.

The Secret Doctrine was not as widely reviewed as its predecessor, *Isis Unveiled*. *The Theosophist*, 1889, reprints some of the reviews from papers as varied as the *Memphis Appeal* to the New Orleans *Southland*. The review that was to have the most impact appeared in London's *Pall Mall Gazette* of 25 April 1889. The

anonymous reviewer was sympathetic and suggested that the book deserved a hearing.

The book deserves to be read; it deserves to be thought over; and none who believes in the progress of humanity has the right to turn away over-hastily from any contribution to knowledge, however new in its form, from any theory, however strange in its aspect. The wild dreams of one generation become the commonplaces of a later one, and all who keep an open door to Truth will give scrutiny to any visitant, be the garb of Asia or of Europe, be the tongue of Paris or of Ind. If this counsel be of folly or of falsehood, it shall come to naught, but if of Truth ye cannot overthrow it.

We now know the reviewer was Annie Besant, and this review led her to meet Mme Blavatsky and join the Theosophical Society, which would become her life work.

Almost immediately, Theosophists attempted to make sense of the book. In London the group around Mme Blavatsky hired a stenographer for the Thursday evening Lodge meetings where she was subjected to all sorts of questions regarding the information presented in *The Secret Doctrine*. From January to June 1889 her comments were taken down and edited for publication as *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, 1890 and 1891. These two slender booklets remained the sole source of elaboration from the author of *The Secret Doctrine* on points the reader might find needing further explanation.

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In 2010 the full transcription of these meetings, covering over 600 pages in print, were published in book form as *The Secret Doctrine Commentaries* edited by myself.⁶ Here was Mme Blavatsky unfiltered in dialogue with other readers of the book, elucidating and elaborating on concepts not found anywhere else in her wide corpus of works. Only the first five stanzas of Volume I were dealt with. Eventually the group turned to the study of other things as the subject matter was found to be too complex for the majority of those attending.

Another attempt at decoding the book can be found in *Theosophical Gleanings, or Notes on The Secret Doctrine*, published initially in Mme Blavatsky's magazine *Lucifer* in 1890/91 and rescued from oblivion by Joy Mills who wrote the introduction to its republication in book form in 1978.⁷ The authors, 'Two Students', were never identified, but their material bears a similarity to further *Studies in the Secret Doctrine* issued in 1895 by Isabel Cooper-Oakley and A. M. Glass.

By the beginning of the 1890s there was need for a new printing of *The Secret Doctrine*, and G.R.S. Mead, HPB's secretary, and Annie Besant, co-editor of her magazine, brought out a Third and Revised edition in 1893. 'Awkward phrases' were corrected, references verified, and citations put in block quotes. This was issued without much comment, but when a Third Volume to the book was added in 1897 a casuistic review appeared in one of the Theosophical journals

impugning the integrity of the editors. The writer, James Morgan Pryse, who had been a printer at the London headquarters, took issue with Mead's statement that the material printed in Volume III was 'excluded from Volumes I and II, because of their inferiority to the rest of that work', insisting instead that HPB's writings had been tampered with. Years later Pryse repudiated his statements, but the aura that HPB's writings had been tampered with continued.⁸

An edition of *The Secret Doctrine* bound in four volumes was issued in 1919 by the Aryan Theosophical Press of the Theosophical Society at Point Loma, California. The text was reset and footnotes were numbered consecutively and set in two columns; and in 1925 a facsimile of the 1888 edition was issued by the Theosophy Company of Los Angeles. Printed on thin paper it was bound as one volume. Commemorating the book's fiftieth anniversary, the Theosophical Publishing House at Adyar issued a six-volume edition in 1938 utilizing the editorial work done on previous printings. The original two volumes were bound as four, following the natural break between the stanzas and commentary; volume five comprised the material from the Third Volume, with six being an extensive index. This edition was reprinted in London in 1950 and in Wheaton, Ill., in 1952; it was last reprinted at Adyar in 1971.

Although various Theosophical writers used material from *The Secret Doctrine* as the basis of some of their books, such

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as Annie Besant's *The Building of the Kosmos* (1894) and G. de Purucker's *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* (1932), the golden age of *Secret Doctrine* commentaries lay ahead.

Elizabeth Preston's self-explanatory *The Story of Creation according to The Secret Doctrine* appeared in 1947, followed by *The Story of Man according to The Secret Doctrine* in 1949. Ernest Wood's *A Secret Doctrine Digest* was published in 1956. The book was based on a series of lectures Prof. Wood had given in the Spring of 1951 at New York's Gotham Book Mart. Geoffrey Barborka's *The Divine Plan* was issued in 1961. Sri Krishna Prem and Sri Madhava Ashish's *Man, the Measure of all Things* in 1966, and Sri Madhava Ashish's *Man, the Son of Man* in 1970, looked at *The Secret Doctrine* from corollaries with other traditions. The works of Edward L. Gardner, Dr Corona Trew and Adam Warcup should also be noted. All these studies were made available through the Theosophical Publishing House in London, in Adyar, India, and in Wheaton, Ill..

The centenary of the book's publication, 1988, gave a further boost to this area of study. Boris de Zirkoff, compiler of the H. P. Blavatsky *Collected Writings* series, brought out a new edition of *The Secret Doctrine* in 1978. The two volumes, with a 520-page index and bibliography bound as a separate volume, were published by the Theosophical Publishing House and superseded their previous editions. Following the pagination of the original edition, it borrowed

heavily on the Third edition and its use of placing HPB's extensive use of citations as block quotations. In 1984 a Secret Doctrine Symposium in San Diego brought together presentations and papers from contributors in a number of countries, as can be seen by the printed proceedings,⁹ and in 1988 the Theosophical Society, Pasadena, held a centenary celebration that was attended by members from various groups.¹⁰ The English Section of the Theosophical Society and the Adyar Lodge of the Theosophical Society both brought out centenary souvenir booklets commemorating the book's publication. Quest Books in the USA reissued what had been a special issue of *The American Theosophist* dealing with the impact of *The Secret Doctrine*. Comprised of 21 studies by a number of experts in the area, the book, *H. P. Blavatsky and The Secret Doctrine*, edited by Virginia Hanson and Shirley Nicholson, though small in size (240 pages) offered one of the best overviews of the themes contained in the work.

Theosophists were not the only ones to contribute commentaries on the book. Early in the twentieth century *The Temple Artisan*, the journal of the Temple of the People in Halcyon, California, published their own continuation, the 'Stanzas of Dzjin' from members of their group. This was brought out in book form in 1915 as *Theogenesis* with a commentary by A. S. Raleigh. Alice Bailey added a series of new stanzas to her 1925 book, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*. The British

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occultist Dion Fortune circulated to members of her group, the Fraternity of the Inner Light, her version known as *The Cosmic Doctrine*, which followed the outline given in *The Secret Doctrine*.¹¹ Dr M. Doreal gave his own interpretation, which is still reprinted by his group, the Temple of the White Brotherhood in Colorado.

Modern examples of restatements, such as Harvey Tordoff's *O Lanoo*, attempted to clarify the wording of the stanzas of Dzyan. It was published by the Findhorn Press in England in 1999. Dorothy Boux's 2003 *The Eternal One* takes the stanzas and adapts and illustrates it with Boux's calligraphy.¹²

As much as there have been attempts to expand on *The Secret Doctrine*, there has also been a move to shorten and condense the book into a more readily accessible size. In New York, Katherine Hillard produced an abridgement in 1907; over 587 pages, it rearranged some of the subject matter for continuity, translated all the Sanskrit terms into English, and utilized a triune division of the human constitution in place of the sevenfold one in the book. Basil Crump abridged HPB's text on the stanzas and added his own commentary in *Evolution as Outlined in the Archaic Eastern Records* published in Peking in 1930. An abridgement made by Elizabeth Preston and edited by Christmas Humphreys was brought out by the Theosophical Publishing House in London in 1966. It still functions as a textbook for Theosophists.

More recently, my attempt at making

the book — the whole book, as previous abridging tended to focus on the section on the stanzas — more approachable was published by Penguin in 2009. Taking the stanzas for what they claim to be, the result of deep philosophic insight, it presents them as subjects for meditation as well as intellectual stimulation. The second part of the volumes on the esoteric aspects of certain symbols are usually overlooked, but it contains some of Mme Blavatsky's best writing on one of her key interests — ancient symbolism — and I tried to present a comprehensive selection. With an index that also serves as a glossary of terms used in the book, it comes to 255 pages plus a 17-page introduction by myself providing context.

Aside from editions, commentaries, commemorative publications, abridgements, translations,¹³ and bibliographies,¹⁴ there must also be a category for apocryphal matter. P. G. Bowen's 'The Secret Doctrine and Its Study' was originally published in the January–March 1932 issue of *Theosophy in Ireland* without much comment at the time. But when it was reprinted as a booklet in 1960 by the Theosophical Publishing House, London, as *Madame Blavatsky on How to Study Theosophy*, it took on a life of its own. It purported to be 'extracts from notes of personal teachings given by HPB to private pupils during the years 1888 to 1891, included in a large MSS volume left to me [P. G. Bowen] by my father [Robert Bowen], who was one of her pupils'.¹⁵

Offering what it claimed to be HPB's

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advice on how to study *The Secret Doctrine* and some basic concepts of the book, it served as an easy guide to an already wordy subject. 'Reading the *S. D.* page by page as one reads any other book', she is quoted as saying, 'will only end us in confusion'. It was best to approach it by first reading the 'Three Fundamental Principles' given in the Proem, followed by study of the numbered items in the Summing Up to Vol. I (Part 1), then the Preliminary Notes that start Vol. II, and the Conclusion at the end of Vol. II. This method would be enough to give the student a grasp of the subject matter, and its simplicity no doubt helped with the book's resurgence of popularity among Theosophists.¹⁶

Yet this was not the approach followed during Mme Blavatsky's lifetime. Sydney V. Edge, who was one of her personal pupils, in his introduction to a reprint of *Theosophical Gleanings* by Two Students issued by the Indian Section in 1893, advises that

The Secret Doctrine cannot be mastered after one reading or even after several readings; a thorough knowledge of it depends on (a) the perseverance of the student; (b) his intuition. Many are inclined to undervalue the book and these mostly belong to the ranks who have never studied properly.

Any one who has taken the trouble to read deeply, will at once testify to the value and suggestiveness of the teachings contained in this work. It is in its suggestiveness that lies the real value of the *Secret*

Doctrine to the student. Not only are we face to face with a mass of priceless teaching, but in almost every page we meet with valuable hints and half-veiled suggestions, which need but the intuition of the student for their full comprehension. A truth which we have discovered either partially or entirely for ourselves is always of more value to us than one which has been explained by another, and to those who prefer a field for original research and study, the *Secret Doctrine* offers valuable opportunities.¹⁷

Aside from no one else ever seeing Bowen's notes, there are a number of other difficulties with this material. So far no Robert Bowen has been found in membership records of the time. Most Lodge meetings were only open to members or associate members. The dates given for his association with HPB do not match with what we know of her life at the time. In a letter in the Archives at Adyar, dated 6 March 1891, Countess Wachtmeister writes:

The Thursday evenings are continued, though HPB is seldom present; in fact, we rarely see her now. She shuts herself up for days together.

While on 19 April 1891, the date Bowen concludes his meetings with Blavatsky, the Countess writes:

HPB is certainly growing more and more feeble, and she feels that to be able to do any work at all she must be quite alone, so as to enable her to concentrate her energies.

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So there appears to be some discrepancy.

Then there is the matter of the intended Third and Fourth volumes of *The Secret Doctrine*. After the pages for the book had been typeset, HPB added an additional note after the closing paragraph of Vol. II.

These two volumes should form for the student a fitting prelude for Volumes III and IV. Until the rubbish of the ages is cleared away from the minds of the Theosophists to whom these volumes are dedicated, it is impossible that the more practical teaching contained in the Third Volume should be understood. Consequently, it entirely depends upon the reception with which Volumes I and II will meet at the hands of Theosophists and Mystics, whether these last two volumes will ever be published, though the Third is ready, and the Fourth *almost* completed.¹⁸

When Annie Besant published HPB's remaining papers in 1897 as the Third volume of *The Secret Doctrine*, critics claimed this was not the material HPB had intended. Over the years it has been suggested that volumes III and IV had been destroyed (for various reasons) or conversely that they were being held back till the time was right. The material published by Annie Besant is reprinted as Volume XIV of the *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings* series with a long introduction by Boris de Zirkoff advocating against accepting it as HPB's intended volume. A more recent study by Daniel Caldwell in *The American*

Theosophist shows the similarity between what was published by Besant and what is contained in the draft of *The Secret Doctrine* in the Archives at Adyar.¹⁹

No analysis of *The Secret Doctrine* would be complete without mention of the work of David Reigle over the past thirty years. Specializing in interpreting the Sanskrit and Tibetan terminology used in the book, his research, from his 1983 *The Books of Kiu-Te or the Tibetan Buddhist Tantras: A Preliminary Analysis* to his 1999 collection of papers *Blavatsky's Secret Books*, has shown how well-versed Mme Blavatsky was with these traditions.²⁰ His latest endeavour is the website Pranja Quest, where he continues to share his findings.

With this abundance of material, how does one approach this 1400-page book of small print and double that amount of commentary material? Readers in 1888 would also have been familiar with Mme Blavatsky's previous book, *Isis Unveiled*, and A. P. Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*, and *The Secret Doctrine* makes frequent reference to them. This would add another 1400 pages of reading material! John Algeo's study course *Getting Acquainted with The Secret Doctrine* suggests a number of strategies as well as giving a synopsis of the main features of the book.

However we approach *The Secret Doctrine*, one should keep in mind HPB's dictum that esoteric texts function on a number of levels. It can be taken in a literal way, on a symbolical level, and as a transformative experience where the very interaction with the text affects our

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consciousness. Most people come to the book hoping to understand it and find that they do not. Perhaps part of its secret appeal is that it functions, as Śankarāchārya says about the Veda-s, not to instruct us about the Absolute but to turn our attention to IT.

As Annie Besant observed: ‘The value of *The Secret Doctrine* does not lie in the separate materials, but in the building of them into a connected whole.’²¹ To see that interconnectedness, to grasp that vision of the whole, was something the original readers of the book commented on. Describing the effect *The Secret Doctrine* had on him, W. Kingsland wrote in 1889:

We stand before the mystery of Life;
we catch a glimpse of the awful depths
of our own being, and those heights to

scale which we must become — gods!
We stand for a moment on the verge of
that infinite consciousness where there is
neither great nor small, being or non-
being, time or space, light or darkness,
sound or silence.²²

The idea of seeing the universe as an organic whole is much more common today than when *The Secret Doctrine* was published, and the scientific worldview has come closer to it, as can be seen in a recent book, *Journey of the Universe*, which charts contemporary findings of science about the development of the cosmos and which reads like a commentary on Mme Blavatsky’s book.²³ The impact of these ideas can affect us on a deeper level and translate as a beneficent force in our daily lives. ✧

References and Notes

1. An extensive but incomplete bibliography of books, pamphlets, and monographs relating to *The Secret Doctrine* is given as Appendix 1 in John Algeo’s *Getting Acquainted with The Secret Doctrine*, Olcott Institute, TSA, 1995.
2. Published as ‘Elementals’ in *Lucifer*, August, September, October. 1893; *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett (LBS)*, pp. 88–89 gives the suggested chapter heading.
3. Blavatsky to Olcott, 6 January 1886, *The Theosophist*, August 1931, p. 667. The events leading to this change are given in my article ‘The Making of *The Secret Doctrine*’ published in the May 1988 issue of *The Theosophist*.
4. Blavatsky to Sinnett, 3 March 1886, *LBS*, p. 195.
5. Blavatsky to Olcott, 23 September 1886, *The Theosophist*, March 1925, p. 780.
6. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine Chronicles*, The Hague, 2010.
7. Two Students, *Theosophical Gleanings*, Wheaton, Ill., TPH, 1978.
8. Pryse, *Theosophy*, September 1897, pp. 314–16, *The Canadian Theosophist*, January 1927, p. 246.
9. *Symposium on H. P. Blavatsky’s Secret Doctrine, Proceedings*, Wizards Bookshelf, San Diego, 1984.
10. *Report of Proceedings, Secret Doctrine Centenary*, October 29–30, 1988, The Theosophical Society, Pasadena, 1988.
11. An edited version was eventually published in 1949; the unedited text was issued by the Society of the Inner Light in 1995.
12. Published by Shephard-Walwyn in London, 53 pages.

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13. Translations can only get a passing reference here. *The Secret Doctrine* has been translated into all the major European languages; the Russian translation was done by Helena Roerich and published in 1937; the Theosophical Publishing House at Adyar reissued a facsimile of it in 1991.
14. The sole published entry in this area is Thaddeus P. Hyatt's 53-page *A check list of some of the books and authors quoted or referred to in the two volumes of 'The Secret Doctrine' by H. P. Blavatsky*, Stamford, Conn., 1940.
15. The 'Bowen Notes' as they are called have been reprinted many times; John Algeo includes it as Appendix 3 in his Study Course, *Getting Acquainted with The Secret Doctrine*, Olcott Institute, TSA, Wheaton, 1995.
16. Both A. J. Hamerster's 1940 *Two Books of the Stanzas of Dzyan*, TPH, Adyar, and the 1988 *Invitation to The Secret Doctrine* from TUP Pasadena, follow this approach to the book.
17. Edge, Introduction to *Theosophical Gleanings*, Madras, 1893.
18. Transcribed from the handwritten original in the archives of the Theosophical Society, Pasadena; in the published version, the last line reads, 'though they are almost completed'.
19. 'The Myth of the "Missing" Third Volume of *The Secret Doctrine*' by Daniel H. Caldwell, *The American Theosophist*, Late Spring/Early Summer 1995, pp. 18–25.
20. Both titles are published by Wizards Bookshelf of San Diego.
21. *Lucifer*, May 1895, p. 179.
22. Kingsland, 'The Secret Doctrine', *Lucifer*, July 1889, p. 420.
23. *Journey of the Universe* by Brian Thomas Swimme and Mary Evelyn Tucker, Yale University Press, 2011.

By reason of the extraordinary growth of human intellect and the development in our age of the fifth principle (*Manas*) in man, its rapid progress has paralysed spiritual perceptions. It is at the expense of wisdom that intellect generally lives, and mankind is quite unprepared in its present condition to comprehend the awful drama of human disobedience to the laws of Nature and the subsequent Fall as a result.

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Liberating Beauty

RADHA BURNIER

ACCORDING to the Platonic philosophy, the soul of man has dwelt before it was drawn into this world of shadows, in the pure world of being, where there is no becoming, a world of perfect beauty, harmony and light. Therefore, here in this world of senses, which is a world of ephemeral shadows and mere images, when the soul has certain experiences, for instance, when it finds an object beautiful, it is a reminiscence of what it has known in the invisible world of perfection, and forgotten for a while.

According to Hindu thought also, the Spirit of man, his true self, is the ground of all ultimate values. Man is in essence divine, limited though he might be by the vestures with which he is clad; and the very nature of the divine is to take the form of Truth, Goodness and Beauty. These are the attributes of perfect being, as also are Bliss and pure Consciousness.

These divine attributes are always co-existent. In the absolute state none of these attributes exists without the others. In fact, they are merely aspects or faces of the divinity, reflections of the very same light. It is therefore not possible to reach to a knowledge of absolute beauty, or truth or goodness, unless the consciousness which knows these attributes is in the

purest condition, not subject to extraneous pulls and modifications. And in that very state of knowledge or of being is also found Bliss, which is a delight of the Spirit, far removed from pleasure which is but its dim shadow.

The true nature of man, being thus divine, while in this world of sense perceptions, he is ever impelled to seek among the shadows for that which recalls a reality which some deep part of himself has known. So it was said in India that the perception of beauty, in whatever measure that might be, is a convergence of the past experience of the soul.

As Beauty which is absolute is ever co-existent with Bliss, it is natural that in people's minds pleasure is linked with the relative beauty which they perceive in forms, for as said before, pleasure is the gross counterpart in the world of the senses of a delight of the Spirit, which is Bliss.

So when pleasure is realized from a particular object, or when the mind recognizes the possibility of pleasure in an object, it may appear to be beautiful. A lover who is enamoured of a woman in whom he recognizes a source of pleasure to himself and whom he wishes to possess finds every kind of beauty in her, which is not apparent to others. The same

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woman does not appear to be replete with all the beauty that his mind endowed her with previously, when she ceases to be, through surfeit, an object of gratification.

Every form and object which is seemingly beautiful, because the feeling of beauty is founded on the pleasure of the senses and of the mind, sooner or later is found to lose its charm. Even the beauty derived from the subtler pleasures of the senses, free of the desire for possession, such as the beauty felt in looking at a landscape or listening to a piece of music, disappears after a time. Those who live constantly in a very beautiful place or close to a thing of beauty, do not thrill to it any more, as they did when the object first fell upon their view and gave a stimulus to their senses. Not infrequently, of course, it happens that an individual thinks that he ought to appreciate beauty, and therefore will periodically give verbal expression to a beauty which does not truly touch him inwardly, because he has ceased to be stimulated by it. We are not referring to such verbal expressions, but to the response within.

The very nature of pleasure and therefore of the beauty that is associated with pleasure is that it either wearies and palls, or it is ever seeking further stimulation. So a well known critic, Eric Newton, declares that the test of the presence and intensity of beauty is pleasure caused by gratification of the desire to repeat the experience. In contradiction to this, another well-known writer, Jacques Maritain, says that the perception of beauty produces delight, 'but the high delight of the spirit,

the absolutely contrary of pleasure, or the agreeable tickling of the sensibility'.

When pure Beauty is touched upon even for a moment, the consciousness is in a state of release for that moment from the impediments and limitations which normally distort and cramp it. And in that moment of release there is also the delight of the spirit, for both beauty and true delight are coexistent with the consciousness in its pure state, as mentioned before.

This experience of momentary release and delight which accompanies the perception of beauty, acts as a stimulant on the one who has had the experience, and he seeks to repeat it. It is not only the grosser forms of pleasure, such as the desire to possess physically attractive objects, which man wants to have over and over again. But he has a thirst for experience which begins at the grosser level and then, as he grows in evolution, it is asked with finer enjoyments.

So, there are people who occupy themselves with what they think is the beautiful. They want continual fulfilment through it; they seek the enjoyment of stimulation; they are as completely absorbed in the desire for repetition of this type of experience and the excitement it gives, as others are absorbed in the stimulation which intellectual knowledge gives.

The desire for repetition of experience creates, of course, a habit and an addiction, however beautiful or elevated may be the experience which is sought to be repeated. The thirst for experience of whatever nature is the very obstacle which prevents realization of divine Beauty and Bliss, for

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it draws the mind into endless pursuit, ever modifying the consciousness.

Even when there is not the longing to repeat the same experience, there is the expectation of a similar experience, based on the memory of what was previously known. The mind is thus in a condition of restlessness. The consciousness becomes insensitive and ceases to reflect the divine, being engulfed by the darkness of finite things.

‘He who rushes to lower beauties, as if grasping realities, when they are only like beautiful images appearing in water, will doubtless, like him in the fable, by stretching after the shadow, sink into the lake and disappear’, says Plotinus.

Pure Beauty, the Beauty of the Divine, cannot be captured by wanting it. One cannot see beauty because there is the intention to see it. It is not the revelation of something new, but the revealing of something which ever exists, which takes place when the perceiver in some way partakes of its nature, that is, when he liberates himself from all the impurities which arise in his being from the desire-born activities of the mind. In Wordsworthian language:

Think you 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things forever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?

So, to learn to see Beauty in all its splendour is not a matter of merely appreciating beautiful objects or cultivating a taste for certain things. Some ancient Indians have described it as the delight which is

born with the cessation of thirst. ‘There is a beauty which offers no stimulation. . . One comes upon that beauty, not by desiring, wanting, longing for the experience, but only when all desire for experience has come to an end,’ says Krishanji.

This does not mean turning away from the world and refusing to look at the wonders of creation — the trees, the rivers, the sky, the faces of people, and so on, all of which do image the One Beauty — but looking at them with a different eye, ‘purged from the mists of sense’.

‘We must stir up and assume a purer eye within, which all men possess, but which is used by a few alone.’

This inward eye opens, only when there is a state of mind tending towards the highest of human goals, which is freedom. It is a state of mind in which the transformations caused by attachments are coming to an end, when there is a non-dependence on anything outside, and the limitations caused by the sense of time, space, name and form are broken asunder. These limitations exist because there is attachment to particular objects and forms, the memory of them and the desire for further pleasure. When the soul or spirit is liberated from these limitations, then it assumes its own true form, which is the form of the purest consciousness, itself shining with beauty and reflecting the divine. Therefore, one of the greatest of Indian writers on the subject of Beauty has said that he who would see it must have a heart, which being free of impurities, is bright with clarity. Unless the heart is clear as crystal and delicate and sensitive

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like a budding flower, it is not capable of vibrating in harmony with life, transcending the limitation of separate existence.

Michelangelo said: 'Beauty is the purgation of superfluities.' He probably referred to the work of a sculptor who releases beauty from a stone by removing superfluities. But the remark most aptly applies to what has to take place within each individual. Beauty is neither objective nor subjective, for it is everywhere, waiting to be realized. The realization comes when any individual looks at himself as a sculptor does upon the stone from which he is going to liberate an invisible beauty, and then proceeds to remove what is superfluous, cutting and polishing till it assumes a Beauty hitherto unseen.

When there is no beauty within, there is no beauty without, only the image of beauty. But if through right perception and knowledge one begins to liberate the

soul or Self from the sordid prison-house constructed by an engrossment in the desires of the body and the senses, then there is a greater and greater insight into immortal Beauty. And with each insight, there is increased clarity, for even a momentary vision of the Real is like purifying ablution. So in liberating Beauty, Beauty becomes the Liberator.

'The miserable man is not he who neglects to pursue fair colours and beautiful corporeal forms; who is deprived of power and falls from domination and empire; but he alone who is destitute of this divine possession, for which the ample dominion of the earth and sea and the still more extended empire of the heavens must be relinquished and forgot, if, despising and leaving these far behind, we ever intend to arrive at substantial felicity by beholding the Beautiful itself.'

(Plotinus)

The chief Things of Beauty, are Light and Proportion. Thy Christ in thee is both these; the Light, and the Wisdom of God. Then thou livest Beautifully, when this Light runs along thro' thy Thoughts. Affections, Actions, shining in all, and making every thing proportionable to itself.

Peter Sterry

Mrs Radha Burnier





Placing the urn containing the ashes of Mrs Radha Burnier in the Garden of Remembrance.



Memorial meeting, 9 November 2013

In the World But Not of the World

MARY ANDERSON

WE may sometimes hear the expression: ‘In the world but not of the world’, and we may ask ourselves, ‘What is the difference?’

The difference lies in two little words, two prepositions only: ‘in’ and ‘of’, but they make a world of difference! Let us consider these prepositions. ‘In’ implies place or location. Something or someone may be somewhere, temporarily or permanently. In a sense, it is a neutral term, colourless, dispassionate. But ‘of’ implies possession, belonging. It is not neutral, but may even have a passionate connotation. Even a little child may speak of ‘*my* toys’, ‘*my* teddy bear’, ‘*my* dolly’ and defend them as his or her possessions.

When we speak of ‘in the world’ and ‘of the world’, what is implied by ‘the world’? The preposition, be it ‘in’ or ‘of’, changes the meaning of ‘the world’. ‘In the world’ implies being situated in the physical world, the world of matter. This is not derogatory. Let us not forget that matter is as divine as spirit and not to be belittled, as it is or was by various ascetic traditions which spoke or speak of ‘the world, the flesh and the devil’, as to be condemned and avoided. ‘Of the world’,

on the other hand, implies identifying with certain values known as ‘worldly’, meaning not material, but rather materialistic. So, in the case of ‘of the world’, a possessive, emotional connotation is immediately introduced. In the same way, we speak of ‘worldly wisdom’, which is not wisdom in the deeper sense but rather means skill in finding the best way, often a ruthless way, of getting what one wants, of achieving one’s own ends, be they material or be they imagined to be ‘spiritual’.

Someone who aspires to spirituality may feel that the first step is to flee from the world with its temptations, to retire, to become a hermit, to live out of the world. But such a person may still be ‘of the world’, assailed by temptations in solitude even more than when he or she remained in the world, for being ‘of the world’ is a state of mind and not just a location. Sometimes it may be wise to flee from outward things, outward circumstances. For example, someone who is overcoming alcoholism should avoid frequenting bars. But ultimately we cannot flee from ourselves.

There certainly have been and perhaps

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still are hermits who were or are genuine saints. But I do not think that avoiding certain surroundings, seeking solitude, should be condemned. We can be alone in solitude and yet inwardly close to others, in solidarity with them, and so not lonely. It is a matter of temperament, of our personal dharma, at least in this life, whether we remain in the world or seek solitude. Monks and nuns or hermits may meditate in solitude, may pray for others and may generate helpful and healing impulses or thought-forms which may contribute to changing the world. I am reminded of a poem by an American theosophist in which she describes a young woman who goes about in the world doing good actively. She has a friend who is a nun and who also does good in her own way:

Her thoughts flew to her friend across the mountain, shivering in her rough habit as she sat in meditation by the convent fountain.

I alone know the reason why she did that, walled herself up with God. Her lover spat upon her, and her friends and family said: 'Afraid of life! She's as crazy as a bat. It were better for her if she were dead!' *She* knew what she must do in the bleak years ahead.

In a world dedicated to the deed, machine-enslaved by the high priests of the thing, only a few can know the howling need for spiritual stockpiling. She will bring petitions to the Throne increasingly while her life lasts. I on my part will go up and down in the world, and where I go, will

fling my love upon the winds. We will not know where the seed falls, or in what furrows we may sow.

Our only hope is to light similar long-burning lanterns where and when we can, and trust that maybe one will be a star shining in the jungle for a light to man, struggling back to the place whence he began, seeking the map of Paradise, mislaid early in his trek. A few must pray and plan for the vast multitudes a few betrayed. A few must serve as lamps in the dark forest glade.

Avoiding the world should not be a form of escape. In any case, we cannot escape from ourselves.

At the other end of the scale from the hermit who avoids being in the world in order not to be of the world or who is genuinely not of the world, we have the Avatāra, the Bodhisattva or the Messiah, who is no longer of the world, who is inwardly free, but who is in the world, who limits his freedom but limits it outwardly only, in order to help and serve others to be a beacon to them. Even great spiritual teachers, without necessarily being Avatāra-s or Bodhisattva-s or Messiahs, can often give advice in everyday practical matters. Ramakrishna, Ramana Maharshi and Krishnamurti often did so. Such ones are not blinded by personal considerations, as most of us are consciously or unconsciously. Their eye is single and their body full of light.

We need not be afraid of remaining in the world. Not only does true wisdom enable us to act wisely, to practise Karma

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Yoga as skill in action. But, vice versa, living a good life opens the way to Wisdom. It has been said: 'Live the life and you will come to the Wisdom.' Aldous Huxley puts it this way:

The nature of the One Reality is such that it cannot be directly and immediately apprehended except by those who have chosen to fulfil certain conditions, making themselves loving, pure in heart, and pure in spirit. (*The Perennial Philosophy*, p. 2)

We do not act physically alone. All our physical actions are accompanied by thoughts, feelings and motives, which are also actions.

The true artist works in physical matter, creating great beauty: buildings, statues, paintings, the movements of the dance, poems, symphonies, etc. He or she works in the world of matter. He or she lives in the world, but his or her greatest work is achieved in forgetfulness of self. Then that artist is not 'of' the world. But any physical work can be art, even art which is not of this world. Work considered to be drudgery can be creative. The workman who digs holes in the road, only to fill them in again, the factory worker busy at the assembly line, the housewife or the servant, cleaning, dusting, washing, washing up — all of them can be artists in this sense.

So much depends on our attitude. The poet George Herbert wrote:

A servant with this clause makes drudgery
divine?

Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,

makes that and the action fine.

This is the famous stone that turneth all
to gold.

It is not for nothing that Zen monks, for example, are enjoined to engage in physical labour. There is the saying applied in some Christian monastic orders: 'Laborare est orare' — 'to work is to pray'. In *At the Feet of the Master*, we read: 'Think how you would do a piece of work if you knew that the Master was coming at once to look at it.'

We may do things for the love of God or of some dear one or for the love of what we do or simply out of love. The main thing is that we forget ourselves. Then we can really be aware of what we are doing. Then we are not 'of the world' though we are certainly 'in the world'. We ARE the world.

One who is active in doing good in the world may be personified as a warrior, as Annie Besant was, or as a knight. The knight in medieval Europe had a code of knighthood, of chivalry, probably resembling that of the Kshatriya: to uphold justice, to defeat oppressors, the unjust and the wicked, to defend the weak, especially women who are, then as often now, the victims of injustice and cruelty.

But a deeper meaning may be attached to this, as in the case of Arjuna in the *Bhagavadgītā*. The enemies, the cruel oppressors defeated by the knight may well refer not just to outer but to inner enemies, that is, their own weaknesses, negative traits of character in themselves, such as hatred, cowardice, injustice and selfishness.

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The spiritual is not the worldly. One cannot proceed in realms of the spirit according to worldly means. As Krishnamurti has said: 'If you are to reach the other shore, you must not start from this shore, but you must start from the other shore.' How can this happen if all we know is this shore? Perhaps by forgetting this shore, by forgetting self, by expecting nothing, by being open to anything that may come. If we are to cross the stream, no longer to be of the world, must we not leave behind in our heart of hearts everything we know, everything we possess? — as Christ replied to the rich young man who sought the Kingdom of Heaven and who already fulfilled the conditions of a good life, saying he had always kept the commandments. But this was not enough. He was told to sell all he had and give the proceeds to the poor. But he could not do so 'for he was very rich', perhaps rich not only in worldly goods but maybe also in knowledge, in popularity, in self-esteem.

As mentioned as examples of those who are truly in the world but not of the world, we may cite the Avatāra, the Bodhisattva, the Messiah. These are beings who have evolved beyond the human stage, but who out of compassion for those still at the human or sub-human stages, remain in close contact with the world or even return to incarnation in the world.

The Hindu tradition speaks of Avatāra-s as, to quote Dr Annie Besant:

. . . the holiest of the holiest, those manifestations of God in the world in which he shows himself as divine, coming

to help the world that he has made, shining forth in his essential nature, the form but a thin film which scarce veils the divinity from our eyes. (*Avatāra-s*, p. 2)

There are said to have been nine Avatāra-s, the first four of them perceived as having appeared in animal form. The best known of the human Avatāra-s were King Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, though the Lord Buddha is also seen as an Avatāra, the ninth. In the *Bhagavadgītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa declares what is the function of an Avatāra:

Whenever there is decay of righteousness . . . and there is exaltation of unrighteousness, then I myself come forth. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the sake of firmly establishing righteousness, I am born from age to age. (IV.7–8)

Rāma was the perfect king, giving an example of ideal kingship, being pure, just and strong. Lord Kṛṣṇa was and is revered as the mischievous but adorable child of his foster-mother, the killer of demons threatening the villagers, the irresistible lover of the souls of the Gopi-s, the enchanting flute-player, the guide, philosopher and friend of the warrior Arjuna, to whom He reveals himself as the incarnation of the Lord of the Universe.

As indicated in the words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Avatāra-s incarnate when there is need for reform. It is said that Śrī Kṛṣṇa had a lesson for the Kshatriya-s. Similarly, the Lord Buddha has a lesson for the Brāhmaṇa-s who were giving more importance to the form, to the letter of the

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law than to its spirit and forgetting the need for compassion towards all beings. Buddha, like Christ, it is said, did not come to bring a new religion but to reform an existing religion, but in the course of time a new religion developed in both cases.

In Northern Buddhism the Bodhisattva is revered as a kind of Avatāra, one who has reached the threshold of Nirvāna but refuses to enter the bliss of Nirvāna until all living creatures are also ready to enter therein. Bodhisattva-s remain in the world although they are not of the world. The vow of Kwan-Yin expresses this:

Never will I seek or receive private, individual salvation; never will I enter into final peace alone; but forever and everywhere will I live and strive for the redemption of every creature throughout the world.

Being in the world does not mean in the case of a Bodhisattva, that he or she is our next-door neighbour or that we may meet him or her on the street. A Bodhisattva may indeed be among us and may help us but will not be recognizable unless for those who have 'eyes to see'. But their aid is ever present. To quote Mme Blavatsky's *The Voice of the Silence*:

Self-doomed to live through future Kalpa-s, unthanked and unperceived by men; wedged as a stone with countless other stones which form the 'Guardian Wall' such is thy future . . . Built by the hands of many Masters of Compassion, raised by their tortures, by their blood cemented, it (that guardian wall) shields mankind, since man is man, protecting it from further and far greater misery and sorrow. (293)

In Judaism and Christianity we have the concept of the Messiah. Many orthodox Jews await the coming of the Messiah. Most Christians believe that the Messiah was Jesus Christ in his incarnation in Palestine at the beginning of the Christian era, and some Christian sects await his return from day to day. A girl I knew belonged to such a sect and apparently from her family's flat at any time of day or night a loud voice would be heard calling, 'Jesus is coming!'

In recent years interesting discoveries have been discussed regarding the origin of Christianity, revealing that the traditional view is something of a 'cover-up'.

In the Jewish tradition, two Messiahs are sometimes mentioned: A kingly Messiah, descended from King David, and a priestly Messiah, descended from Aaron, the first Priest. Sometimes it is suggested that the two roles may be filled by the same person. They are seen as two pillars joined by an arch, signifying *Shalom* or peace, perhaps 'the peace of God that passeth understanding'. These two pillars were reflected and deformed in the later situation in Europe, where the Emperor ruled over the so-called 'Holy Roman Empire', representing secular power, and the Pope represented spiritual power. But ideally this concept corresponds to the Hindu and Buddhist ideal of the Chakravartin and the Buddha.

To quote Heinrich Zimmer's *Philosophies of India*:

There is an ancient mythical ideal — an idyllic compensatory dream, born of the longing for stability and peace, which

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represents a universal, worldwide empire of enduring tranquillity under a just and virtuous world-monarch, the chakravartin . . . who should put an end to the perpetual struggle of the contending states. (p. 128)

According to the Buddhist conception, the Universal Monarch is the secular counterpart of the Buddha, the 'Enlightened One', who himself is said to have 'set in motion the wheel of the sacred doctrine' . . . His wheel, the Buddhist dharma, is not reserved for the privileged castes . . . but is for the whole universe, a doctrine of release intended to bring peace to all living beings without exception. (pp. 129–30)

The Hindu world-monarch, pacifying

mankind by incorporating under his sole sovereignty all the kingdoms around about — the 'great king' . . . 'king above kings', was to be proclaimed equal in rank to those world-redeeming Buddha-s, who, through their doctrines, set in motion the wheel. (p. 135)

The sun, the light and life of the world, shines on all alike, without distinction, so too shines the true Cakravartin. (p. 136)

How long will we have to wait for such a monarch, for such a Buddha? Perhaps until the next Golden Age, which is certainly not just around the corner. In the meantime, perhaps it is up to us to be *in the world* but not *of the world*. Then the world will be ready in due course. ✧

Freedom from the sense of possession, whether with regard to things, persons, one's country, race or religion or even one's real or imagined virtues, calls for a ripe understanding. Such freedom makes life simple, without superfluties, and streamlined in a manner which manifests the real beauty and nature of the indwelling Spirit.

N.Sri Ram

The Yoga of Compassion

S. RAMU

YOGA essentially means attunement. The Yoga of Compassion is attuning to a compassionate state-of-being.

Compassion is a keen awareness of, and sensitivity to, the suffering one witnesses with a deep yearning to see it relieved. Compassion literally means 'to suffer with,' which implies a mutuality in the experience of suffering. Compassion is loving kindness, expressed in the context of suffering.

The Buddha means the 'awakened one'. He was awakened to compassion when he became sensitized to the suffering he witnessed.

Compassion is not a relationship between the giver and the recipient. It's a relationship between equals. Compassion becomes real when we recognize our shared humanity. — Pema Chödrön

Compassion is not the mere display of kindness or sympathy to someone in distress. It calls for complete identification with the suffering experienced by another and relieving that suffering.

Compassion is one of the 'powers latent in man' that alleviates suffering. Theosophy teaches us that the cosmos is guided by justice and love. There are different kinds of love such as patriotic love,

filial love, conjugal love, etc. One type of love is kindness expressed as compassion to relieve suffering.

Genuine Compassion often pours out only from a heart that has suffered. The heart that is affected by the suffering of others is better able to alleviate suffering effectively rather than a mind that is distressed at the sight of suffering.

Annie Besant was moved to deep compassion by the terrible plight of the girls toiling in the match industry. It is suffering caused by the sheer injustice of man against man that made people like Annie Besant, Gandhi, Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King Jr. take up compassionate causes.

The overwhelming suffering of humanity is caused by intolerance, lack of compassion, hatred, prejudice, anger, fear, greed, gratifying desires, religious superstitions, blind materialistic pursuits, selfishness, and violent tendencies, illusions about the nature of existence and ignorance of the fundamental truths that govern life and all the relationships life entails. A Theosophist helps alleviate suffering as well as strives to remove the root cause of suffering.

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Only the development of compassion and understanding for others can bring us the tranquillity and happiness we all seek.

— H. H. Dalai Lama

Compassion ennobles the life of all. H. P. Blavatsky said that ‘To be true, religion and philosophy must offer the solution to every problem. But Religion and philosophy are as far from the solution as they ever were . . . but to these there must be somewhere a consistent solution.’ I would suggest that the possible ‘consistent solution’ referred by HPB may well be ‘Compassion’.

The true Theosophist is a compassionate yogi. The Theosophist earnestly allows the constant unfolding of the power of compassion ‘latent in him’. The Theosophist realizes that only by his compassionate living can he awaken compassion in others.

The simplest acts of kindness are by far more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer. — Mahatma Gandhi.

Spirituality has to do with the level of consciousness and there are markers or signatures of higher consciousness. Compassion is the signature of higher consciousness. Great sages have felt compassion for the suffering caused due to the entanglement of the spirit in matter or the spiritual being entangled in materialism, which ultimately is the illusion of mistaking the phenomenal world for Reality.

It is compassion, the most gracious of virtues, which moves the world.
— Thiruvalluvar.

The compassionate state is marked by

a raised level of consciousness when one is deeply moved by suffering. In that state of compassion a jet of creative goodness springs from oneself. Valmiki, Vyasa, Shakespeare, probably Homer too are examples of such creativity. These authors gave us master-pieces of creativity, poignantly moved by the fundamental human predicaments as seen in the endurance tests, the pain and suffering their characters had to go through. Ultimately, it is creativity that solves human problems and alleviates suffering and adds joy to life.

Until he extends the circle of his compassion to all living things, man will not himself find peace. — Albert Schweitzer.

Compassion to all without exception is the universal religion that is the basis of all true religions. ‘Samatvam Yoga Uchyate’ — equanimity is Yoga (*Bhagavadgītā*) ‘right understanding’ or the ‘right knowledge’ mentioned in the various scriptures mean non-discrimination and oneness. A superior Yoga is the capability to consider everything as ‘the same’ – in the sense of each and every entity of men and materials around as ‘being a bit of Brahman — the Primordial energy’. In the *Bhagavadgītā*, being established in ‘sameness’ and equanimity, is recommended for flawless yogic action. The spirit of oneness is the foundation of genuine compassionate action.

Compassion is our basic and first instinct. All mammals, the Dalai Lama says, practise a basic compassion that stems from the mother-infant bond. We

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humans thus have, by nature, a sense of love and affection.

Our natural instinct to be compassionate is impeded by the analytical intellect of our conditioned mind and its thoughts. Consciousness is our essential quality and compassion is its innate faculty. In the awareness of this conditioning, there is the possibility of transcending the limitations and awakening compassion. Egotism is a strong impediment to the practising of the Yoga of Compassion.

Many people wonder why haven't the teachings of sages, saints, philosophers and humanists lifted our individual and collective consciousness to the desired level of compassion? Why is there such a stark absence of sensitivity? Why are we benumbed? Even when compassion is seen, it seems an occasional experience, more as a relief from a life dominated by conflict.

It's a little embarrassing that after forty-five years of research and study, the best advice I can give people, is to be a little kinder to each other. — Aldous Huxley

Many countries spend huge amounts of precious resources in rapidly increasing security systems, crime detection and the criminal justice system and also on lifestyle related health issues. It would be good if they give preference to education in the formative years, on universal values such as compassionate living, and a modest lifestyle where there is scope for preventing the unnecessary spending of resources and they can be used towards more productive causes. Parents, teachers

and caregivers should set an example for a modest lifestyle and compassionate living. President Obama said, while commenting on a recent man-made tragedy due to an act of violence, 'we should ask ourselves if we're doing all we can to widen the circle of compassion in our own communities.'

A society that promotes indulgence, gratification and too much competitiveness based on exploitation is highly unlikely to be sensitive to the suffering of fellow human beings and be compassionate. Economic wealth created without the parallel nurturing of values such as compassion, will only lead to envy, social tension and violent crimes. Many think that tougher laws will take care of such ills, not to speak of the easy availability of guns. It is surprising that interconnectedness and compassionate living is hardly taught to children and the youth. And yet people complain about growing conflict and violence. Education is designed to make people think that only the intellect counts: knowing how to solve problems, knowing how to get by, knowing how to identify an advantage and seize it. But the functions of the intellect are insufficient without love, friendship, compassion, and empathy.

The intellect is a tool of the ego and looks at everything from the point of view of 'What is in it for me?' One of the causes for lack of compassion is we are conditioned to judge, evaluate and ask 'what is in it for me?' Can we transcend that psychological compulsion so that compassion can flow unhindered? 'What

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is in the intellect or reason? It goes a few steps and there it stops' said Swami Vivekananda.

If it is not tempered by compassion, and empathy, reason can lead men and women into a moral void. — Karen Armstrong.

One of the human faces of the ego is selfishness. This aspect of the ego lacks any capacity for empathy, compassion, generosity or love; and, worst of all, will *never* ever acknowledge that which is sacred. The awakening of compassion requires sublimation of the ego.

No doubt compassion is the highest wisdom, but to be actualized and sustainable, it has to be rooted in the realization of the truth of the oneness of being. Attuning to the 'oneness of being' is the ultimate Yoga. In that sense Christ and the Buddha were true yogi-s and they were compassion personified. 'The "beingness" is the same in all' said Ramana Maharshi. Every being has an experience of 'I am' and that is the same in all. I am this and you are that (identity) is a superimposition that appears to give rise to separateness. The illusion of the sense of separateness and wholesome compassion cannot coexist. Compassion is communion of the spirit with spirit, and spirit being the same in all beings, oneness of being is automatically implied. In other words, compassion, to be true, has to be

rooted in the spirit of oneness. Compassion cannot be generated, taught, awakened or practised in isolation. Many may ask 'How to Awaken Compassion? But 'how' implies a process which works mostly for changing something that is made up of matter. In the spiritual context, it is realization rather than process that brings about fundamental transformation.

In conclusion let us ponder on the words of Samdong Rinpoche:

One should be mindful of the misery in the world in general and of all living beings in particular. Be mindful and aware of it, feel it! By feeling it, you will develop loving-kindness and compassion for all sentient beings, and to the extent that compassion unfolds within you, your delusion of self will decrease. These two qualities of compassion and loving-kindness in a person indicate that he is beginning to develop spiritually. Perhaps, at first, he will show them in small ways but later he will embrace the whole universe. The power of compassion and wisdom are much stronger than the power of ignorance and hatred. This being so, we should fill our minds with compassion, loving-kindness and wisdom and radiate these to all living beings together with a strong wish for their happiness. Never forget to send out the force of loving-kindness to all sentient beings.

The duty of the philanthropist is to work with the tide and assist the onward impulse.

KH

Silence

ALVIN OCHANDA

SILENCE can at times be more disturbing than noise, probably even irritating, or scary, This is because it reveals the complicated mechanisms of our thought patterns. This means that it is only through silence that we are able to realize how our mind jumps from one thought to another, not being able to settle on one thought for a period of time. It reveals the restlessness of the mind and brings to surface our weakness in concentration. Therefore silence is a good thing because it is the great gate through which we are able to see our true behaviour of mind, and thereby through various methods and ways be able to tame, to hold it by its girdle such that it is able to dwell on one thought for a longer time. When you are able to dwell on one thought for a long time then you are able to completely understand the nature of that thought, thoroughly scrutinizing and thereby mastering it. This is a quality of concentration.

Sedate phobia or the fear of silence, is when the mind gives rise to fearful thoughts that are brought about by uncertainty or unfamiliarity with silence. It is the fear of the unknown. Silence is from whence everything springs forth. It is the beginning

of existence or awareness. Most of the modern day society suffers from this disorder unconsciously. Common symptoms of this disorder include when someone goes into the house and the first thing he does is to switch on the Television or radio, before heading straight into the shower, humming or singing when alone, or among the youth when one loses his or her ear phones and gets a mild panic attack.

Another symptom is feeling uneasy in a crowd that is quiet prompting you to say something which at times embarrasses you. This phobia gives rise to innumerable sorrows. To transcend this fear we have to understand that there is no place in this world that is empty, or a vacuum or that is silent, or that is lonely; where is this place that you are when you say you are lonely? Presumably, in a world of six billion people it is very hard to find such a place. It may only mean that you have retreated into yourself, into your thoughts. Evading this fear of silence only postpones the fear. You must face the silence head on, and start being mindful of the silence. Listen to the quiet, and grow accustomed to the silence, gradually because silence is everywhere, in the spaces

Mr Alvin Ochanda is a member of Nairobi Lodge. Talk delivered in Nairobi Lodge in July 2013.

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between the noises, before and after a piece of music. It is the canvas for the painting of life. Mindfulness (living in the present) tames the mind and makes it able to face the silence in peace and calm, without giving rise to doubt, fearful or weird thoughts.

In 1951, a well known artist and composer, John Cage, wanted to experience complete silence. This is because he feared for the future of music, thinking that with silence there would be an end to music. To do this the engineers at that time had created a room in which they said there was no sound, called anechoic chamber (without echo). It is a room designed in such a way that the walls, ceiling and floor absorb all sounds made in the room, rather than reflecting them as echoes. Such a chamber is also externally sound-proofed. So, Cage entered the chamber expecting to experience complete silence, but he felt a shock, for this was not what he experienced. Later he wrote: 'I heard two sounds, one high and one low. When I described them to the engineer in charge, he informed me that the high one was my nervous system in operation, the low one my blood in circulation.' Cage had gone to a place where he expected total silence, and yet heard sound. In conclusion, Cage made a declaration that 'Until I die there will be sounds. And they will continue following my death. One need not fear about the future of music.' The realization he had of the impossibility of silence led to the composition of a song named *4'33*."

There is no such thing as an empty space or an empty time. There is always something to see, something to hear. In

fact, try as we may to make a silence, we cannot. Sounds occur whether intended or not. And so the art or science of combining these sounds, vocal or instrumental sounds (or both), to produce beauty of form, harmony, and expression of emotion is called music. The purpose of music is to sober and quieten the mind, thus rendering it susceptible to divine influences.

We therefore realize that silence is hard to find, if you are searching or looking in the wrong places, especially with all the electronic devices and machines we have in our modern day society, roaring and making all forms of sounds. These noises occupy our mind and make silence hard to reach, but the silence is inherently there, ever. We have to search for silence in the right places and make time to enjoy it every day. Everyone instinctively knows that deep inside each one of us and not outside of us, there is a beautiful realm that relaxes and revitalizes, beckoning us, to retreat in times of trouble, to dwell in the peace within, untouchable. That is the place to search for the silence, that we so much long for.

As Mahatma Gandhi has rightly said, 'In the attitude of silence the soul finds the path in a clearer light, and what is elusive and deceptive resolves itself into crystal clearness. Our life is a long and arduous quest after Truth.'

It is good to be silent. The man who says nothing saves himself from a lot of harm. In *At the feet of the Master* we are advised to keep silent, to have no desire to speak, or if we must to speak very little, but better still to say nothing, unless

Silence

what is to be said is true, kind and helpful. Among the qualifications, to know, to dare, to will and to be silent, to be silent is the hardest of them all. We should always think well before speaking. Silence will even prevent you from displaying your stupidity in public. Others may even think you are wise, even though silence may not be a mark of wisdom.

The universal symbol for silence is placing the index finger in front of closed lips. This is the most widely recognized gesture of silence. The gesture can be used to demand silence without raising one's own voice. The rose, sometimes depicted clasped by or on top of closed lips, is another well-recognized symbol of silence stemming from various mythologies.

Silence is the great gateway to the self; through it one may be able to reach great depths of intuition. Take silence seriously like an endeavour. And at a practical level, when a wrong is being committed to an innocent or weak one failure to speak out is wrong. In the Golden Stairs we are advised 'a valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked'.

Silence is a healer. When you feel stressed out the silence of letting go heals. If its a forced silence, then you will be very busy verbalizing internally, which will not allow you to even stand on the portal of silence. Such silence should be a hushed, peaceful silence, quietly letting the depressing thoughts come to the surface and on thorough examination of the thoughts from all angles if a solution comes up well and good; if not, the thoughts go, with faith and a sense of

release, knowing that through mother nature all will be well.

Deep listening is also a kind of silence that will relieve the suffering of another person, 'also known as compassionate listening.' It is where you listen with only one purpose and that is to let him or her pour out his or her heart. Even if he or she says things that are full of wrong perceptions, full of bitterness, you are still capable of continuing to listen with compassion. Because you know that in listening you give that person a chance to suffer less. For that moment, you do not interrupt, you do not argue. You just listen with compassion and help him to suffer less.

All the great teachers always advocated silence, from Orpheus, Pythagoras, Confucius, Buddha, Jesus to Apollonius of Tyana and Ammonius Saccas. For the Pythagoreans, the disciples were required to stay for three or even five years in silence, immersed in deep study. There has been evidence of people who after a period of profound and sustained silence were able to break through in great ways, for example Nelson Mandela, who while in prison was able to experience prolonged silence. After his release, he plunged himself wholeheartedly into his life's work, striving to attain the goals he and others had set out almost four decades earlier.

The great teachers had their moments of silence. Guatama Buddha sat under what is known in India as the Bodhi tree or pipal tree where he vowed never to arise until he had found the truth about suffering. Jesus had his forty days and nights in the wilderness.

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Mother Teresa said 'In the silence of the heart God speaks. If you face God in prayer and silence, God will speak to you. Then you will know that you are nothing. It is only when you realize your nothingness, your emptiness, that God can fill you with Himself. Souls of prayer are souls of great silence.'

Identifying the Silence

In a deep profound silence that lasted for almost a second, you could not tell what was happening; stuck in some kind of limbo a silence that you temporarily get lost in. You could not measure the moment of that silence, you could not differentiate between you and the silence, you could not define your physical location.

A silence like when you have been asked a question and you don't have the answer, the silence when you are told something so honest that you need a few minutes to digest, a silence which after the door closes you are all alone in the house. These are very small temporary moments that we are able to experience the real silence. Nature will always try and give us a glimpse to the eternal through various hints like the last drop of water falling from the tap into the bucket. There is a silence that always captures us, and with practice we can pause and prolong that silence towards a deeper experience. Silence is not the absence of something but the presence of everything. ✧

A man who would find a new life, a new way of living, must enquire, must capture this extraordinary quality of silence. And there can be silence only when there is death to the past, without argument, without motive, without saying, 'I will get a reward.'

J. Krishnamurti

**ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY**

Adyar

Theme: 'New Mind for a New World'

26 to 31 December 2013

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 25 December

8.00 am General Council Meeting
2.00 pm General Council Meeting

Thursday, 26 December

8.00 am Prayers of the Religions
OPENING OF THE CONVENTION
3.30 pm Reception
5.00 pm Memorial for Mrs Radha Burnier
7.30 pm Ritual of the Mystic Star

Friday, 27 December

8.00 am Universal Prayer and Meditation
SHORT LECTURES
'The Urgency for a New Mind'
Mr Ricardo Lindemann, *Brazilian Section*
'The Mind: a Vessel for Ignorance or a Vessel for Truth?'
Mrs Linda Oliveira, General Secretary, *Australian Section*
9.30 am INDIAN SECTION CONVENTION — I
5.00 pm PUBLIC LECTURE
'The Compassionate Mind'
Mr Bhupendra Vora, *English Section*
7.30 pm Western Classical Music

Saturday, 28 December

8.00 am Devotional Meeting
Mrs Manju Sundaram, *Indian Section*
10.00 am 'Electoral Democracy: Challenges and Opportunities'
Mr T. S. Krishnamurthy,
Former Chief Election Commissioner, India

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- 3.00 pm SYMPOSIUM
'Regenerating Wisdom'
5.00 pm BESANT LECTURE
'Sustainability: The World's Big Challenge'
Dr Rajendra K. Pachauri,
Director General, The Energy and Resources Institute
7.30 pm The World Mother — a dance feature

Sunday, 29 December

- 8.00 am Universal Prayer
SHORT LECTURES
'Inspired Living: The Basis for Understanding'
Mr Tim Boyd, General Secretary, *American Section*
'The Nascent Mind'
Mr R. C. Tampi, *Indian Section*
9.30 am INDIAN SECTION CONVENTION — II
3.00 pm THE THEOSOPHICAL ORDER OF SERVICE
'The TOS, its Place and Work in the Theosophical World'
5.00 pm THEOSOPHY–SCIENCE LECTURE
'The Wisdom of Contemporary Physics'
Dr Ulrich Mohrhoff, *Professor of Physics, Pondichery*
7.30 pm Classical Carnatic Music

Monday, 30 December

- 8.00 am Universal Prayer and Meditation
SHORT LECTURES
'Let every Moment be a New Dawn'
Mr S. Sundaram, General Secretary, *Indian Section*
'Vertical Mutation of Mind'
Mr P. K. Jayaswal, National Lecturer, *Indian Section*
9.30 am QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
5.00 pm PUBLIC LECTURE
'A Power that Maketh all Things New'
Mr Pedro Oliveira, *Australian Section*

Tuesday, 31 December

- 8.00 am Prayers of the Religions
CLOSING OF THE CONVENTION
9.30 am Admission of New Members

Theosophical Work around the World

Adyar

Rich tributes were paid to Mrs Radha Burnier, International President of the TS, at a memorial meeting held at Adyar on Saturday 9 November 2013. Dr Radha Burnier passed away peacefully at her birth place, Adyar, on Thursday 31 October 2013 at 9 p.m. Mr M. P. Singhal, International Vice-President of the Society, Dr Chittaranjan Satapathy, International Secretary, and Mr Harihara Raghavan, General Manager of the International Headquarters, read out the condolence messages received from various parts of the world. The speakers said that it would be difficult to measure the impact Radhaji had on many lives: but the hallmark of her life was simple living and high thinking. She lived a clean life in the true sense, with dignity, clothed in simplicity, totally dedicated to Theosophy, the Theosophical Society and to human regeneration. She served the TS in various capacities selflessly, most notably as its seventh President for thirty-three years. She was noted for her highest intellectual acumen, intuitive wisdom and deep insight into all aspects of life. A notable aspect was her charity towards everyone who needed it. She shunned publicity and lived the life of a hermit (yogi) at the Ashram of Adyar .

Opening of the School of the Wisdom

The first session of the School

commenced on 11 November 2013, on the book, *Light on the Path*. Mr Pedro Oliveira, a member of the Australian section of the TS and former International Secretary of TS, was the Director. There was meditation in silence for the welfare of the people and TS members in Philippines which was struck by a typhoon of high intensity in the history of the country, preceded the opening of the School. Mr M. P. Singhal, International Vice-President welcoming the Director and students said, 'Wisdom cannot be transmitted like information. Information becomes knowledge when it is reflected upon, and becomes wisdom when it is practised in daily life.'

Headquarters

A few weeks before the former President, Mrs Radha Burnier, passed on to the higher planes, she had granted Charters to as many as 17 Lodges. These are, H. P. Blavatsky Lodge in Costa Rica; Adamant Lodge, Om-Tara Lodge, and Satya Vedana Lodge in Russia; Maputo Lodge in South Africa; Thunupa Lodge in Bolivia; Blavatsky Lodge and Sirius Lodge in Brazil; Aurora Lodge in Sweden; Far North Lodge and Canterbury Lodge in New Zealand; Panjabari Lodge, Gandhia Lodge, Sahayatri Lodge, Bhaskarjyoti, and Kadabur Lodge in India; and Laya Lodge in Ukraine.

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Subsequently, the Theosophical Society in Ukraine, with 5 Lodges, has been issued a Charter for Regional Association with Ms Svitalana Gavrylenko as its Organizing Secretary. The 6 Lodges in Russia have been organized into a Presidential Agency with Mr Pavel Malakov as the Presidential Representative. All the Lodges in Bangladesh have also been organized into a Presidential Agency with Mr B. L. Bhattacharya as the Presidential Representative. Mr Chong Sanne has been appointed as the Presidential Representative for East & South-East Asia Presidential Agency which includes Singapore, Malayasia, China, Hongkong, Taiwan, and Japan but excludes the countries where Sections already exist.

Foundation Day

On 17 November 2013, the 138 Anniversary of the Foundation was celebrated at the International Headquarters. Hon'ble Mr V. Ramasubramanian, Madras High Court judge, delivered the Foundation Day lecture. He pointed out that the triad of Love — Beauty — and Truth formed the essence of Theosophy. Mr S. Harihara Raghavan, General Manager, welcomed the chief guest and the gathering. Mr M. P. Singhal International Vice-President gave his closing remarks. Flowers were offered to the statues of founders of the TS by all delegates.

Indo-Pacific Federation Conference

The 12th Triennial Conference of the Indo-Pacific Federation of the Theosophical Society was held in Bali, Indonesia

from 1-6 November 2013, hosted by the Indonesian Section. There were about hundred representatives to the conference from India, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand, with additional guests from Belgium, France, Brazil and Finland. The theme of the conference was '*Practising Theosophy*' and many of the presentations focussed on answering the question of how we, as an organization and as individuals can turn the Theosophy we understand from an intellectual concept to one that informs and becomes an active part of our lives.

Vicente Hao Chin Jr, inspired by the words of the Mahachohan: "*We have to preach and popularize a knowledge of Theosophy*" shared with us a vision of a future Theosophy where we take our theosophical principles, such as the universal values of non-violence, honesty, respect for differing views and discovery of our true nature, out into programmes in the community where they can be of value in the process of social transformation.

Dr Ravi Ravindra the guest speaker spoke on '*Actorless Action*', '*Knowledge and the State of Unknowing*' and on '*Mindfulness in Action and Mindlessness in Love*'.

Mrs Linda Oliveira emphasized the importance of discovering the 'Inner Diamond' using non-violence as a mechanism of practising Theosophy.

There were many other speakers during the conference including General Secretary of Indian Section, S. Sundaram, and a panel of speakers from the Theosophical Order of Service who discussed the

Theosophical Work around the World

importance of service as part of our journey to awaken compassion in the lives of our members.

The conference started on the day of Radha Burnier's cremation in Adyar with many of the guests learning of her passing as they arrived. This affected the attendance of some delegates from Adyar. But during the opening ceremony, work of Radha Burnier was reflected upon by Mr S. Sundaram, who had known her since he was a small boy, Linda Oliveira, Vic Hao Chin Jr., Ravi Ravindra and Pedro Oliveira. After the presentations a few minutes of silence was observed.

Slovenia

Mrs Breder Zagar conducted the Autumn School held in Sonck near Koper on *At the Feet of the Master* from 18-20 October; twenty-five members attended. She also offered her tribute to Mrs Radha Burnier.

Dutch Section

On 2 November, Els Rijneker, the General Secretary of The Netherlands, arranged a commemorative meeting on the passing to peace of the President Radha Burnier in the Besant Hall of ITC in Narden. When all members were sitting in silence, a big white candle was lighted by the Chairman of ITC. The hall was decorated with the portraits of Radha Burnier and her books were displayed on a table. Pictures of Radha Burnier from different stages in her life were shown.

India

The General Secretary of the Indian Section Mr S. Sundaram organized two meetings on 1 November and 11 November at the Indian Section Headquarters, Varanasi, to pay homage to Revered Radhaji and it was reported that Lodges and Federations in India paid tributes to Radha Burnier by organizing meetings in her honour. ✧

A new way of thinking has become the necessary condition for responsible living and acting. If we maintain obsolete values and beliefs, a fragmented consciousness and self-centred spirit, we will continue to hold on to outdated goals and behaviours. Such an attitude by a large number of people would block the entire transition to an interdependent yet peaceful and cooperative global society.

H. H. Dalai Lama

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