



THE THEOSOPHIST

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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

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

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

Address to New Members

TIM BOYD

AS a long-time member of the Theosophical Society, I remember the feeling of enthusiasm and upwelling of aspiration I felt when joining. Inwardly I knew I had taken an important step. We all have various reasons for joining. For some it is because our parents were members. We grew up in a home where the value of the work that this organization is undertaking and its approach to Truth played upon us constantly. It was not something we had to think about or analyze. Theosophy pervaded the atmosphere of our home, and became part of the fiber of our being. There are others who came upon the Society's teaching later in life and found in it a powerful conceptual structure, rich in information about the planes of Nature, the meaning of spiritual evolution, and a history of great people who have associated themselves with this wisdom and with the movement of the Perennial Wisdom throughout time. There are others who encountered the teachings or some person who was alive with a profound connection to these truths and found that something moved them. Something inside of them responded to the life that flowed through that individual.

Once we join, the actual work begins. Nobody who finds their way here is a young soul. In order to have an appreciation for this there must have been many lifetimes of effort towards unfoldment. We do not get here by accident. Many join with the idea that now they find themselves among a group of holy people who have overcome the shackles of the world and can be looked up to for faultless guidance on the spiritual path. Instead they find themselves amidst people just like us, people who have had an experience that confirms a deeply sensed Truth, but who are far from perfect. In joining the TS we are saying 'Yes' to something: 'Yes, there is an abiding, overarching, ever-present Truth, 'yes' I believe I can link myself to that truth and express it in my life. And, 'yes', the three Objects of the Theosophical Society ring true to my inner consciousness.'

Even if two out of three of the Objects do not yet ring true, it suffices as long as the first one does: that this Society came into being to form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without regard to any of the humanly created separations along lines of race,

Delivered after the Closing of the international Convention, Adyar, 31 December 2014.

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creed, gender, caste, or colour. We refer only to a small number of distinctions in the first Object of the TS, but we all know that the levels of discrimination and limitation in our thinking are endless. So we say 'Yes' to that, that it is a possibility, that it is also possible to shape our life in such a way that it can express this great Truth, first in ourselves, then in our homes, and then in the world.

This is not an other-worldly teaching demanding that we abandon our family and friends, and go off to some secluded place. Ours is a much more difficult approach to Truth than just walking away to a cave. What it demands from each one of us is that we find some measure of realization right where we are. In the middle of all the conflicts and strife that every normal life involves. Truth is not absent from 'normal life'. It is not a retreat from the world. The great challenge for us is that this path demands that we learn to embrace the world with all of its imperfections. That is a much more demanding and difficult task. The beauty of it is that we say 'Yes' knowingly to all of this.

'Yes' is a powerful word. We find that this word is an expression of a state of consciousness that can be described as a state of openness.. This means that we are willing to recognize that it is part of our condition as human beings that there are fears we encounter, and that, in the normal course of the world, fear is the predominant underlying emotion that seems to keep us apart from one another. It also means that there is a commitment

to recognize, and in that recognition, to dissipate these false idols of fears, discrimination, hatreds, that seem to be the normal fare of this world.

The TS is a powerful organization, and its power is not just in its members. It came into being from a much more profound source. The Masters of the Wisdom, the Mahatmas, the Elder Brothers — these are the real founders of this movement. We, its members, are certainly imperfect. In our work within the TS it is helpful to remember that we will always find imperfections and difficulties with the various personalities encountered within this organization, but behind every person who joins something greater is standing. If we can train ourselves to look for it, we will certainly see the signs of a guiding presence — the awakening Higher Self.

When I joined the TS, the step I was taking was described as forming another link in a golden chain — one more link has been added to this chain. It is a chain that extends from the very low to the highest heights of consciousness, from a distant past to an unimaginable future. Our recognition of this inner call is necessarily heard, and the appropriate response comes to us continually. It is life itself that responds, presenting us with the necessary guidance in each moment. Our work is to listen, to remove the scales and see with newly opened eyes. We embrace the work of awakening, like from a sleep, deepening our awareness. This work will grace us over the course of our lifetime and will be a source of

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blessing to us, to the people close to us, and to this world. As new members of the Theosophical Society, this is an important step that you are taking. I salute you for the step, for your courage and willingness. In any way that I can help, in any way this Brotherhood that you have become a part of can be of help, you should not hesitate to call upon either — outwardly or inwardly.

I would like for all gathered here to rise and send our silent thanks to these

new members who have taken such a wonderful step. . . . Let us say together, along with our new Brothers, the Universal Prayer written by Annie Besant, which, as new members, they will be saying often as time goes by:

O hidden life vibrant in every atom,
O hidden light shining in every creature,
O hidden love embracing all in oneness,
May all, who feel themselves as one
with thee,
Know they are also one with every other.

Each member is important in his place; there is no one so insignificant that he cannot be a vital cell in the Society's living body and growth. This does not mean that every one must speak or lecture; but if he does, what he says should be definitely worth saying. A man may say just one word at the right time and place, and that will tell more than any number of words poured out haphazardly. Every one thinks, feels and comes into contact with other people. We cannot but leave a mark all the time, wherever we are. The only question is: What shall be the nature of the mark we make, of the influence we bequeath to the people we meet, what shall be the theme of our thoughts, the quality of our emotions, the nature of our actions?

By making Theosophy a transforming power in our own life, we may be able not only to make ourselves far happier than we can otherwise be, but also to share with others the happiness which we create for ourselves.

N. Sri Ram

On Relationship, Part I — Discovering Our Divinity

RAPHAEL LANGERHORST

Prelude

The drama of life, in all its diversity, follows a universal pattern. Unaware of our inherent divinity, we get entangled into matter, our material existence, thereby losing sight of our source and true identity. The result is invariably conflict with fellow beings, restlessness about our purpose, and ignorance of our own divine nature. We rush from one thing to the other, achievements and failures likewise insignificant. When finally we begin to realize their temporary nature, we begin to seek the eternal. Yet we have to struggle with our entanglement, our attachment, and our misidentification until we finally learn discernment, once more establishing our self in Divinity, bringing home the fruits of our journey.

The Ideal

As a child, I used to accept things as they came. Even though I did not like many things (like school), I never questioned the actual adequacy of any situation or circumstance, always trying to adjust myself to the situation rather

than the situation to myself. Along these lines I also had, for a long time, the firm belief in the possibility of an ideal relationship.

Since Theosophy has been omnipresent in my parents' home, especially with a library of several hundred theosophical books of which I made plenty of use, I had very high aspirations which also projected into my ideas of relationships. When my eldest sister got married I was around seven, and I fell quite in love with a young girl of similar age. Of course I was more or less imitating the behaviour of my elder sister, without any idea of the sensual aspects of such undertakings. Nevertheless this went on for several months and I sometimes visited her in Augsburg (Germany) while she sometimes came to Austria (not alone by ourselves, of course). Naturally enough, we simply lost sight of each other.

But even at this early age I still clearly remember the love I felt for this girl, plain devotional love which we humans feel in our so-called loftiest moments. Such love I had felt several times during the following years for one girl or the

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other, but seeing (with my theosophical background) the impurity and lack of response on that level, I never engaged with any of them, still hoping to find a pure heart one day. And, frankly enough, isn't this a familiar story?

Reality

Then I got entangled in a relationship that almost killed me. Whence the discrepancy between ideal and reality? This is what we will look at in this article.

The idea or concept of relationships has become so common in our culture that we take it for granted without questioning the sanity or implications of this concept. We only question our relationships, but never our concept of relationships, least of all the necessity for such a concept. Despite all this, the concept we have built in this modern day and age is artificial, and is a means for bondage in various aspects.

What is worse is that we usually spend a lifetime to figure out this simple fact, until we eventually may be able to let go of our attachment to this concept. And only then we begin to engage people and actually know them for the first time instead of just our own concept of people. Nevertheless, relationships in their practical form are a necessity to ensure continuity of the physical life of human beings. Given a theosophical perspective, our idea of relationships can become very different than what is impressed on us from outside, finally leading to the ideal of our childhood, but with understanding, awareness, and serenity.

Proper understanding of all this can be helpful especially to young people, and even more so to young Theosophists, while trying to establish our life in one way or another. So let us look at the implications of relationships.

The Bridge

The field of manifestation is expanded between two seemingly opposite principles: spirit and matter. Human existence spans the entire range between these two extremes. That is, within ourselves we find both the densest matter, the physical, as well as pure spirit, our divine source. Spirit is often used synonymously with consciousness, although it is not quite the same. The main difference is that spirit is much more capable of expressing consciousness, while matter tends to blind and isolate, its main aspect being inertia. So consciousness (or mind) is really another aspect, which in fact mysteriously links spirit and matter.

During our incarnation, we naturally tend to concentrate our consciousness on the world around us. However, the resulting implication is that we lose touch with our inner spiritual nature as we grow up from infancy through childhood to adulthood. Since it is our inner divine, pure spirit that is also the source of all higher aspirations and good qualities which we are capable of expressing, we often lose these ideals throughout our struggles in life, with our awareness directed outwards.

The path to our spiritual essence leads inwards, while the path to matter

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draws our consciousness out towards external objectiveness.¹

As we lose touch with our higher aspects, our spiritual nature, we also begin to feel a sense of emptiness and incompleteness, scarcity, and deficiency. Since it is the divine that is our fundamental basis of being, our essence, we will never be able to find fulfilment or sufficiency outside our self. All such attempts necessarily lead to disappointment, or worse.

So we realize that it is not outside ourselves where we need to find our inner needs, even though we may subconsciously believe so as a result of lack of inner awareness and wisdom. But if nothing else, experience will patiently teach us this most important lesson, until we begin to truly search within. When this search begins, we may still have difficulties and our senses will claim our attention and bind us to the world in which the senses operate, desiring excitement one way or another, because we are always attracted to what we do not understand truly.

We will be unable to overcome this tendency unless we realize our confusion about identity. It is not the temporary physical body or our emotions, or even our thoughts that are our true self. All of them are in fact external to our true inner nature. Each of them in turn will claim sole reign over our life, and each of them in turn will fight to the bitter end for this sovereignty until we manage to withdraw our mistaken identification from our external aspects and make of

them the willing servants they ought to be. Only as such, calm and deprived of their self-delusion, will our external aspects be able to reflect our divine qualities from within.

When we begin to withdraw our identification and gratification from these aspects, they will become our most furious enemies, until one after the other is overthrown and made subservient to our supreme divinity that we truly are. This is the battle that we have to fight as human beings, on our way from sensual animalism to calm and self-sufficient Divinity.

Triple is the gate of this hell, destructive of the self — lust [body], wrath [emotions], and greed [thoughts]: therefore let man renounce these three [caused by confusing the non-self with the self].²

The Means

So, how to work out these things? Generally speaking, the first step in terms of relationships is to question our motives, which are usually selfish, and to really understand the necessity to let go of destructiveness. If taken seriously, this involves pain, just like a surgery on our body, which it really is, at all levels. Apart from that, our real need (not just in terms of relationships) is to establish ourselves firmly in our divinity to relinquish our slavery to our lower personal aspects and senses.

There is no need to go into detail about certain practical steps along these lines since once the direction is taken with honesty, we will encounter what we are

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in need of (not necessarily what we think we need). (See Leadbeater, van der Leeuw, and Taimni references at the end of the article.)

However, one key aspect should be mentioned specifically. This is purity of mind and body, from this result secondary constraints, like purity of food (vegetarian/vegan)³ and balance, among others. Only if these constraints are sufficiently met with a pure heart, altruism, dedication, and peace of mind, like the perfect peace of a calm lake, only then is our divine light able to shine through and reflect into our lower mind, to bring about awareness of the divine life around us, and especially within.

The more we darken ourselves, the less we are capable of expressing our higher aspirations.

Good and Evil

Let us look at the dangers of impurity and selfishness, especially with regards to relationships. This will also shed some light on the issues and struggles usually associated with relationships.

Obviously, our selfishness is, at least to ourselves, usually not obvious. However, let us investigate it a little more deeply.

Since there is more to a human being than just a physical body, we also interact with other people on energetical, emotional, and mental levels, if not even others. This, however, immediately has certain implications. For example, a very possessive person naturally drains other people energetically, and oppresses them

mentally, especially if that other person is very giving and open as well as unaware of these hidden side of things.⁴ We often believe, given our ignorance, that our emotions, energy level, and thoughts only affect ourselves, as kind of private non-existent, immaterial imaginations.

But these energies work their way, ignorance notwithstanding. This, properly understood, puts a lot of responsibility on us, especially in terms of how we influence other people, even more so those who are close to us.⁵

If we understand at the same time our own imperfection and impurity, and show the adequate humility, we become much more careful and far less engaging towards other beings as well as less manipulative. Given this perspective, we ought to develop some commitment towards ourselves in terms of purity, which can ultimately be found within our divine nature. So that is where our path is leading us.

But how to become pure in the face of dominance of our senses and bodies? Again, this is a question of our identification with these our outer garments, which bind us to external objects and keep us captive in the world of senses. But how to learn detachment if we know of nothing else? Especially here, Theosophy comes in handy because through it we can learn about the constitution of our own being, particularly our higher aspects. Also, we can become humble, develop humility as we learn that human evolution is only one intermediary step in the grand scheme of the cosmos.

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This humility, paired with knowledge about our self, and regular meditation, helps us to direct our awareness inwards to our higher aspects. Directing our awareness thus, we allow our loftier nature to influence our personality to increasingly reflect higher aspirations, allowing us to increasingly direct our awareness inwards.⁶

Thus we are also able to transform our anxiety and restlessness to inner peace and equanimity, which is a requirement to develop purity of heart and action, by reflecting our inner nature. Our thoughts, emotions, and actions thus transformed and guided from within — not by casting aside our responsibility (as with spiritism, mediumship, and such), but from actual self-responsibility we begin to be able to actually relate to other people, without the relation being a mere game of our uncontrolled senses and desires.

The One Key

Divinity is immanent in all life, be it good or so-called evil, and is indivisibly one, reflecting into diversity through manifestation. It is this inner unity of all that produces the quality of love in human beings. The more we are able to relate to this unity, the one light in all, the more we become love itself, totally and absolutely naturally.

It is from this our higher aspect, that is within us and within others alike, from which we should direct and conduct our life and our relations. This is the only way to achieve actual unity, for which we are longing and which we cannot find in the world of sensuality, our outer garments. It is also the only way to resolve conflict, which arises from separated and isolated identities, invariably leading to self-inflicted suffering.

We have to patiently work towards this high ideal, not blindly, as it used to be in our childhood, but with awareness, wisdom, dedication, unselfish love, uttermost affection to our divinity with uttermost detachment from our lower aspects, and realizing our one source and the secondary nature of our lower personality. Finally, we are able to let go of our fixations and to develop tolerance, mutual respect for the divine in each of us, and the ability to deal with all practical matters of our life and relations with serenity, because we can renounce our entanglement and patiently work out our Dharma.⁷

Losing sight of our higher ideal is to die at the same time. Thus, while still being slaves to our bodies, we have to work our path, out of the mud of selfishness and self-pity, towards self-responsibility, purity, love, and divinity. ✧

Endnotes

1. I. K. Taimni, *The Science of Yoga*, Samadhi Pada, Sutra 29.

2. Annie Besant, *Bhagavadgitā*, xvi. 21.

3. C. W. Leadbeater, *Vegeterianism and Occultism*.

4. ———, *The Hidden Side of Things*.

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5. Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, *Thought Forms*.
6. A beautiful and uplifting meditation along these lines is given by J. J. van der Leeuw in his excellent book, *Gods in Exile*.
7. Inherent divine duty.

References and Reading

(The suggested reading should lead to self-responsibility and discernment. This forms the basis for wisdom and understanding our relation to our self and others.)

Annie Besant, *Ancient Wisdom*

———, *Bhagavadgitā*

Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, *Man, Visible and Invisible*

———, *Thought Forms*

H. P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*

Mabel Collins, *Light on the Path*

C. W. Leadbeater, *The Chakras*

———, *The Hidden Side of Things*

———, *The Masters and the Path*

———, *Vegeterianism and Occultism*

I. K. Taimni, *The Science of Yoga*

J. J. van der Leeuw, *The Fire of Creation*

———, *Gods in Exile*

**I am not this body which belongs to the world of shadows;
I am not the desires which affect it;
I am not the thoughts which fill my mind;
I am not the mind itself.**

**I AM THE DIVINE FLAME within my heart,
eternal, immortal, ancient, without beginning, without end;
more radiant than the sun in all His noon-day glory,
purer than the snow, untouched, unsullied by the hand of matter,
more subtle than the ether is the Spirit within my heart.**

I AM THAT, THAT AM I.

Vedic Invocation to Meditation

Transcending Science — A New Dawn – II

JACQUES MAHNICH

Doors opening — New Trends in Scientific Communities

Today, Science and technologies seem at the top of their power, with their influence spread all over the world and their triumph looking unchallengeable, but unexpected difficulties are emerging from within. They may reveal some bottom line to the current way of thinking in Science.

This science is based on the basic concepts that all Reality is material, physical. There is no other Reality than the materialistic reality, consciousness is a by-product of the physiological brain activity, matter is lacking any consciousness, evolution has no goal, and God exists only inside human brains.

This is the mechanistic, materialistic philosophy, which was shaped three centuries ago and dominant during the XIX century. For the last two hundred years materialistic scientists claimed they will be able to explain everything using physics and chemistry. It was just a matter of time and investment.

The last decades produced nice models trying to describe Reality as theorized,

seen, measured and validated: the two major ones are (1) the Standard Model, which describes the building blocks of the universe, together with the creation process of the particles, all based on Quantum Field Theories. This model got even another observational proof with the discovery of the Higgs Particle in 2012. The other one (2) is the Big Bang Model, the cosmogonist model of the universe, based on the General Relativity Theory. The two models seem perfect and in agreement with most of the observations in each of their validity domains. There is just a small hiccup: nobody has been able, so far, to reconcile both these theories to give a consistent view of Reality.

Albert Einstein and other scientists dedicated their lives to the search for the famous TOE (Theory of Everything) with no success. And there are many other discrepancies, acknowledged by the scientific communities: General Relativity, as it is, theorized the existence of gravitational waves induced by cosmic events like neutron stars and formation of black holes or collision of galaxies. After more than twenty-five years of listening

Mr Jacques Mahnich is President, St Jean Lodge, *French Section*. Theosophy-Science Lecture delivered at the international Convention, Adyar, 28 December 2014.

to the cosmos, no gravitational waves have been detected, nor any graviton the particle which is supposed to carry the gravitation interaction. On the particle side, the strings theory, then the superstrings theories, and now the M-theory tried to provide us a model of Reality with an almost infinite number of potential universes (100500). After more than thirty years of intensive investments and testing, we are still searching for proofs of super symmetry. More or worse the multiverse theory cannot be observed, therefore it cannot be fully validated.

We even start hearing that '*we may know that maybe we don't know*': visible matter accounts for only 4% of what the universe should require to validate the basic physical laws according to today's general relativity. So, the basic models seem really in jeopardy, and the accumulation of dead-ends is finally triggering some commonsense reactions with some scientists, but very few, because the large majority is still believing the old materialistic creeds. It is interesting to note that it is similar to a religious creed, which generates blind faith and with the same aftermaths than some religious creeds which are based on models which cannot be verified or which are so far apart from everybody's perceptions. The foundations of materialistic science is starting to shake, too much inconsistencies are undermining the belief in the all-powerful science.

These facts, together with the rigid materialistic mindset pervading academic grounds, are triggering the development

of scientists' movements aiming at a broader scope of research, including other plans of consciousness than the physical one. A recent example is a group of scientists, including Mario Beauregard, Rupert Sheldrake, Charles Tart, and others who created a movement aiming at opening the landscape of Science. They organized an international Summit on Post-Materialist Science, Spirituality, and Society in February 2014 to discuss the impact of the materialist ideology on science and the emergence of a post-materialist paradigm for science, spirituality, and society. The Summary Report of this gathering can be found at the following address: <<http://opensciences.org/>>.

A manifesto was published, and the following extract gives the magnitude of the initiative:

- a. Mind represents an aspect of reality as primordial as the physical world. Mind is fundamental in the universe, that is, it cannot be derived from matter and reduced to anything more basic.
- b. There is a deep interconnectedness between mind and the physical world.
- c. Mind (will/intention) can influence the state of the physical world and operate in a non-local (or extended) fashion, i.e., it is not confined to specific points in space, such as brains and bodies, or to specific points in time, such as the present...
- d. Minds are apparently unbounded and may unite in ways suggesting a unitary One Mind that includes all individual, single minds . . .
- f. Scientists should not be afraid to investigate spirituality and spiritual experi-

ences since they represent a central aspect of human existence.

The final point of the manifesto states that:

The shift from materialist science to post-materialist science may be of vital importance to the evolution of the human civilization. It may be even more pivotal than the transition from geocentrism to heliocentrism.

Definitively something is going on in the world of Science. We need to keep our attention on these movements, they may be announcing a new wave of researchers with a broader mindset.

And something is also moving in our theosophical communities.

Opening and Sharing in Theosophical Communities

Theosophical communities have spread all over the world since the creation of the Theosophical Society in 1875. In the course of its history, it recorded departures, secessions, and some parallel organizations were created, some still alive today. Some of them have kept the spirit of the founders of the TS and are working toward the same goals, if not with the same references. A new approach is starting to emerge, with a willingness to open communication between these various theosophical movements for the benefit of Theosophy. During the summer of this year, an open gathering was organized in Naarden, the Netherlands, and came up with a Declaration highlighting

the value of working together, and to implement available synergies in the domain of theosophical studies. Science is one of them. The Naarden Declaration advocates Unity in diversity. It can be more than a wish list, it can be viewed as a kind of impulse for the Theosophical Movements in the future, and it will be up to theosophists, individuals, and leaders, to transform it into reality. The Declaration says:

In an undogmatic manner and through harmonious cooperation we will strengthen the Theosophical Movement for the benefit of humanity. In the spirit of unity and brotherhood, we endeavour to make Theosophy a living power in the world. We commit ourselves through learning, training, and cross-pollination to popularize and keep the teachings alive for future generations.

As Theosophists and students on the spiritual path, we know, thanks to the Traditions of the world, the synthesis of which is the Ageless Wisdom, that Reality is above all possible description, and that its manifestation, Nature, is a wonderful and magnificent landscape in which we, human beings, among many other streams of living entities, are doing our recurrent pilgrimage towards the next step of evolution.

Our heritage, the Theosophical teachings, has opened for us a window and has given us knowledge and tools to observe, experiment, and live inside this instance of Reality as participants in the course of evolution.

It is a wholesome, integrated sum of knowledge which provides us with multiple road-maps to reach our destination. The main difference with the scientific approach is that it is based on wisdom, at the service of humanity, which seems to have completely vanished from the materialistic scope.

Wisdom is this inner quality of mind, a potential which, when awakened through the self-transformation process, can give the clarity of mind necessary for an integral understanding of Nature and the essential selflessness for the acquired knowledge to benefit all sentient beings.

Current scientific philosophies have lost this wisdom, and therefore cannot lead to an integral understanding of Nature. The partial, distorted glimpses of scientific knowledge are limited to the domains of the lower triangle of human constitution, including the physical, emotional and mental aspects. The very fact that the mechanistic model implies that only the physical realm has a reality and that all other aspects are physically derived from it, gives an incoherent view of Nature: Matter creates Life which can produce Mind. Soul and Spirit are outside the Science boundaries. And, more importantly, there are no models to describe the transition phases between the two domains.

This leads to the conclusion that Science can probably continue on its path forever without touching on higher realities, as long as its paradigm is based on a materialistic philosophy. In the meantime, the cultural values which it puts forward are endangering humanity. For it to change

course, there are two possibilities. The first one could be new discoveries which cannot be explained by current models, and there are already many, and these may open the road towards new models which are more encompassing of a greater reality. But this would be very remote and random. Moreover, it may not lead to dramatic changes in the philosophy and the associated cultural values. We already have some examples like the invention of the concept of dark matter and dark energy.

Observations around the 1930's led Space scientists to conclude that the General Relativity model was not able to represent the movement of external stars in large galaxies. Based on that model, they should have been centrifuged a long time ago. Because scientists could not imagine that gravitation, as the leading force in the visible universe, could be different in various places in the cosmos, they have invented the dark-matter concept as the embodiment of an unknown substratum (WIMPS), the effect of which is similar to gravitation, in order to bring back the model under control. But, so far, no WIMPS have been detected. The same applies to dark energy: having discovered, in the last decades of the previous century, that the visible universe may be accelerating its expansion, they invented the concept of dark energy, endowed with a gravitation-type reverse effect, that is, a repelling gravitation. And we are left with no more than 4% of the universe as a known quantity visible space objects obeying the basic model of physics.

The second possibility to influence the course of Science may reside in the complementarity between Science and Traditions/Theosophy. Science is looking at Nature from the bottom, and stops short at the border of mind. It is a form of knowledge of the phenomena and their interactions. Ageless Wisdom brings a holistic model of the manifested world, together with description of fundamental processes like cosmogenesis and anthropogenesis. It teaches not only the descriptions of phenomena, but, more importantly, their root-causes. However, even if a large gap exists between the two approaches, some bridges must be there, hidden by the materialistic forest on one hand, and the cloudy Traditions on the other. We may need adventurers capable to speak both languages, free from any dogmas and ready to enter this no-man's land.

Transcending Science — Building new bridges

To enable and support such an adventure, a project is proposed to the community of seekers of Reality.

This project, hosted on the Internet at THEOSCIENCE.ORG, is, first of all, a place to foster and nurture the synergy between Science and Traditions. It is currently in the preliminary phase <<http://www.theoscience.org/forum>>, gathering inputs to build its basic methodology, scope of work, domains for study, and communication tools. The official web site opening is targeted for the first trimester of 2015 and an e-journal will publish its progress on a regular basis.

The project goals are :

1) To bring, or to bring back, Science culture to the forefront of theosophists' attention: to be in a position to understand and argue on science subjects, one has to be curious and willing to learn a minimum of the language of science not necessarily the most abstract mathematical models, but the basic scientific approach: observation, measurement, abstract modeling, and prediction. Madame Blavatsky promoted this knowledge acquisition as a necessity: 'Know all that you can. Become conversant with and sift all that the schools have declared, and as much more on your own account as is possible.' Lodges may want to include these types of studies in their programmes.

2) To reignite working groups with scientifically-oriented theosophists wherever possible: Science has always been one of the three pillars of theosophical studies, and many Science and Theosophy study groups have been active and some, but a few, are still active today. Large Theosophical communities like USA and India, and also other countries, have knowledgeable scientists or science-oriented members. Organizing or reigniting Science-Theosophy Groups would be an important step.

3) To organize cross-communication/cross-fertilization between these Groups throughout the world: this is synergy which can feed and emulate each other. Common research programmes could enhance the quality of the studies and avoid duplication of efforts. We have also seen the emergence of a willingness

to work together with other streams of theosophists. This is an opportunity for cross-pollination.

4) To develop dedicated research programmes on specific subjects where bridges between Science and Theosophy are foreseen. This can be considered as a major step, where mature studies and researches can be brought to the attention of the scientific community at large.

If successful, implementing these objectives should bring a better understanding of Reality, not only in closed circles like Theosophical communities, but also to the public at large, allowing the eternal values of the Ageless Wisdom to spread with convincing power, convincing enough to awaken attention towards universal values which may influence the trajectory of the mad car of humanity.

Having said so, one needs to be realistic: this is a long and difficult path, full of road-blocks which we need to clear-up. We may want to explore the lessons learned from past experiences in these domains.

Why weren't we successful enough in convincing the scientific communities of the value of spiritual traditions for the sake of understanding Reality? Maybe some dogmas crept in and the attitude of 'We are the ones who know everything, you cannot know and you'll never know' is not the most productive one. We may want to be a little bit more humble. We may even want to start by saying that 'We know what the Ageless Wisdom heritage has given us and we will try to transpose it into a language which can be understandable and workable by scientists.'

This is the first stone of a methodology capable of building the foundations, one of the pillars for future bridges. The other pillar, on the Science side, will have the same difficulties to resolve: the language of Science is very often unintelligible for ordinary people. Therefore, there is a need for a transitional language, bridging this important gap.

Another potential pitfall from previous experience is the tendency to either wrap-up science with theosophical garments or to try to do science on theosophical truths. Usually, it does not bear any fruit. A middle-way approach may be required.

With an open-minded attitude, we may also want to be ready to revisit, if need be some of our pieces of knowledge in the light of the twenty first-century discoveries and understanding of Nature. As the Dalai-Lama said: 'If Science can demonstrate that some of the Buddhist beliefs are not consistent, I am ready to revisit them.'

We are convinced that an open heart, free from dogmas and prejudices, can pour the Ageless Wisdom milk into the 'experimental tubes' of Science and can transform the iron of the lower mind into the gold of the Oneness to guide again humanity across this critical phase of its evolution.

Conclusion

Something is happening in our world. Human evolution is accelerating, and universal values are vanishing, leaving us with no more seat belts in a Science-

driven world. At the same time, questioning and openings started to bloom and the quest for a better understanding of Reality is burgeoning. The Theosophical communities, guided by the Ageless Wisdom heritage, has a role to play in this phase and shall be ready for it. Humbleness and joyfulness are our two legs on that road.

Life is a wonderful experience. Radha Burnier described it as:

Life has immeasurable dimensions and subtleties. It is rich, creative, dynamic. Truth, being the discovery of the beauty, meaning and mystery of Life, is also necessarily without limit, necessarily subtle and dynamic, a blessing without parallel. ✧

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S. HARIHARA RAGHAVAN, *PUBLISHER*

The Theosophical Society — Finding its Aim?

ROBERT KITTO

IN *The Key to Theosophy*, we find:

ENQUIRER. Then what is the good of joining the so-called Theosophical Society . . .? Where is the incentive?

THEOSOPHIST. None, except the advantage of getting esoteric instructions, the genuine doctrines of the ‘Wisdom-Religion’, and, if the real programme is carried out, deriving much help from mutual aid and sympathy.

— H. P. Blavatsky (HPB),
The Key to Theosophy, 1889 ed., p. 21.

To what extent have the aspirations of the above THEOSOPHIST been realized? That it remained necessary eleven years after its 1875 founding for a further¹ attempt to be made at setting out Aims — and thereby ‘the real programme’ of The Theosophical Society (TS) — is indicative of the special difficulties encountered by the Founders in their pioneering work of disseminating Ancient Wisdom to Westerners. HPB’s 1886 manuscript — now referred to as the ‘Original Programme’² — was, in

part, a response to those believing they knew the real programme better than the Founders and the Brotherhood of Adepts behind the scenes. The challenge came from those — as HPB expressed it — motivated by ‘self-culture’ at the expense of ‘mutual-culture’. The full statement is important as it throws light on the meaning of ‘Brotherhood’ within the context of the TS:

Theosophy teaches *mutual-culture* before *self-culture* to begin with. Union is strength. It is by gathering many theosophists of the same way of thinking into one or more groups, and making them closely united by the same magnetic bond of fraternal unity and sympathy that the objects of *mutual* development and progress in Theosophical thought may be best achieved.

— HPB, *Collected Writings*, vol. 7, p. 160.

What HPB calls ‘Mutual-culture’, however, is dependent upon individuals having a reasonable understanding of shared Aims and Objects. Whilst the separate Societies, Lodges, and Centres of today are superficially united in three

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(necessarily simplified) Objects³, it is easily arguable that these, because of their simplification, fall into further misunderstanding and misapplication. If one reads and studies the Literature of the Society, then one will find that:

◆ Universal Brotherhood (Object 1) is not simply a cohort of members. (Mahatma KH describes it as ‘an association of strong magnetic yet dissimilar forces and polarities centred around one dominant idea . . .’⁴).

◆ ‘Study’ of comparative religion, etc., (Object 2) does not mean study in a modern intellectual sense. (‘See in study a means of exercising and developing the mind never touched by other studies’⁵).

The investigation of the ‘unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man’ (Object 3) is not intended to elicit a ‘phenomenal’ interpretation (for as Mahatma KH makes clear; ‘It is not physical phenomena but . . . universal ideas that we study’⁶).

Worse still, the three Objects fail to refer to Theosophy, and thus lose their contextual setting. This is a surprising omission given HPB’s assertion in *The Key to Theosophy* that the TS should show ‘that such a thing as Theosophy exists’. Theosophy was necessarily undefined during the establishment of the TS, but we now benefit from the literature of the founders, and can say: Theosophy is a body of teachings and doctrines, having consistency with that disseminated by the founders of the modern Theosophical Movement, explanatory of Universal Laws; Laws that establish the

principle of Unity inherent in Nature and which are the basis of Universal Brotherhood. The three published Objects, therefore, do not exist in isolation but have Theosophy as their basis. A set of comprehensive and coherent Objects or Aims should make appropriate reference to Theosophy.

Detached from Theosophy, the Objects become ambiguous. Understanding them relies on the study (and contemplation and assimilation) of commentaries scattered throughout various articles and publications. Yet how many members shy away from such ‘study’ because of classroom connotations, or are unwitting victims of cultural ‘dumbing-down’ pressures? How many TS members can reasonably summarize the Aims of the body of which they are part? In some parts of the Movement even a simple definition of Theosophy becomes lost.

The TS Adyar is particularly vulnerable as the much-vaunted and attractive ‘Freedom of Thought’ principle risks giving way to an ‘Anything goes’ Society as individuals in small but sufficient numbers cause Lodges to drift onto their own. Individual Freedom of Thought *should not* cause the Society itself to be diverted from its work, and sporadic efforts have sought to address this issue: The 1949 ‘Freedom of the Society’ resolution published by the TS Adyar declares that ‘the [Theosophical] Society seeks ever to maintain its own distinctive and unique character by remaining free of affiliation or identification with any other organization’. Notwithstanding

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this, the TS Centenary World Congress held in 1975 found it necessary to warn that ‘Our freedoms are essential, but a Lodge or Society too loosely run can do the Cause more harm than good’. Later still, the past International President recognized continuing issues, saying:

Some TS Lodges, especially those which are in theosophically remote areas, tend to center their work on whatever their own small membership finds interesting. Lodges and groups within our Society do have the freedom to work on themes of particular interest to them, and carry on activities which are to their liking, but the freedom must be exercised within the framework of the Society's character and structure. Were each unit to function without regard to the whole, the Society would not exist as a worldwide body, a globally spread family of harmoniously minded members.

— Radha Burnier, *The Theosophist*, ‘On the Watch-Tower’, July 1996 issue.

However, functioning without regard to the whole occurs repeatedly because of unclear boundaries as to ‘the framework of the Society's character and structure’ and Theosophical groups are led into diversions of their members own making with the potential for dissension and disharmony being, all too often, the consequence. It is sadly the case that all the evidence of its short history shows that the TS has rarely been a ‘family of harmoniously minded members’.

Miraculously though, the TS survives and continues to exist as a worldwide

body. However, to what extent this is due to the Society itself or to the supporting effect of the more defined boundaries of independent parts of the Theosophical Movement is unclear (the ULT, for example, has a prominent, straightforward, one sentence Aim at the head of its web pages). The TS, meanwhile, has seen Lodges drift into Magic, neo-Paganism, Spiritualism, ‘Mind-Body-Spirit’, over-diluted Buddhism, solipsism (egoistic self-absorption), or other forms of New-Age self-preoccupation and ‘self-culture’⁷. Members do not always recognize deviation from Theosophy, or recognize the un-Theosophical self-gratification inherent in repeating unqualified assertions such as ‘I myself am Ruler of the Universe’, (Helen Schuman, *A Course in Miracles*), ‘[I am] the Truth’ (Eckhart Tolle, *A New Earth*), or seeing the Universe as a personal shopping catalogue: ‘Make room to receive your desires’ (Rhonda Byrne, *The Secret*), and so on. Given that each has — at some time — featured in Theosophical Lodges, one must wonder at the first-time encounters of aspiring Theosophical newcomers — can they expect ‘the genuine doctrines of the Wisdom-Religion’? And if their search is for genuine doctrines, can they expect ‘much help from mutual aid and sympathy’? Is it even possible for the ‘real programme’ to be carried out in such circumstances?

A lack of clarity allows for the dissemination of surrogate or pseudo Aims; not necessarily bad or negative ones, but different Aims, self-devised or

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‘self-culture’ Aims, or Aims affected by accretions, contemporary influences, ‘Chinese whispers’, or innumerable causes of drift from the eternal truths.

It is a sad irony that the TS does not give prominence to comprehensive Objects, for those aims found within the literature are as pioneering, noble, and far reaching as it is possible to imagine. Though initially sparking interest in phenomena and their underlying natural laws, the Society emphasized Universal Brotherhood and clearly established the metaphysical basis of this unity in Universal Law. A published circular of 1878 set out various points related to the Society’s purpose and concluded by saying:

. . . finally, and chiefly, to aid in the institution of a Brotherhood of Humanity, wherein all good and pure men, of every race, shall recognize each other as the equal effects (upon this planet) of one Uncreated, Universal, Infinite, and Everlasting Cause.

— New York Circular drafted mainly by Colonel H. S. Olcott, 1878, in H. P. Blavatsky, *Collected Writings*, vol. 1, p. 375.

Readers of *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett* will have observed the early development of this Aim, for example:

The chief object of the TS is not so much to gratify individual aspirations as to serve our fellow men . . . Letter 2, p. 8. The Chiefs want a Brotherhood of

Humanity, a real Universal Fraternity, started; an institution which would make itself known throughout the world and arrest the attention of the highest minds. Letter 12, p. 39.

— *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* in chronological sequence.

Not merely postulating a basis for mutual feelings of good will or community, these early teachings cannot be accurately paraphrased by contemporary spiritual sound bites such as ‘all you need is love’ — Universal or otherwise. There is, instead, a vitally important ontological basis to Brotherhood, founded upon an understanding of the One Life in which we all impact each other and around which the Theosophical teachings are centred.

H. P. Blavatsky’s *The Key to Theosophy* remains one of the clearest expositions of the meaning of both Theosophy and of ‘the real programme’ of the Society itself. Therein she argues that Theosophy can demonstrate Brotherhood on ‘logical, philosophical, metaphysical, and even scientific grounds’ and in the following section set out the important, and oft quoted, aim that:

It [The Society] was formed to assist in showing to men that such a thing as Theosophy exists, and to help them to ascend towards it by studying and assimilating its eternal verities.

— H. P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*, 1889, p. 57.

It should be noted that whereas a purpose of such ‘studying and assimilating’

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is not only the potential ‘spiritual growth of every individual who comes within its influence’⁸ it also serves the higher and altruistic aim of ‘the relief of human suffering’⁹:

The truths and mysteries of occultism constitute a body of the highest spiritual importance . . . given . . . for their practical bearing on the interests of mankind. Letter 12, p. 38.

— *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* in chronological sequence.

The Founders, however, never envisaged the TS as a social or charitable organization, and HPB stressed the moral, rather than physical, nature of its aims:

Its aims are several; but the most important of all are those which are likely to lead to the relief of human suffering under any or every form, moral as well as physical. And we believe the former to be far more important than the latter.

— H. P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*, 1889, p. 24.

The Theosophist selflessly living his or her own spiritual life can morally

best serve the world. As HPB says: ‘It is an occult law that no man can rise superior to his individual failings without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of which he is an integral part.’¹⁰ Thus, we may see that the TS has a magnificent and noble purpose not only *to make Theosophy known*, but to act as the locus for non-egoistic individuals (those having developed the same ‘magnetic bond of fraternal unity’) who strive in their spiritual and moral development with an ultimate goal being the interests of humankind.

As one of the Aims of the TS is to make Theosophy known, then we should clearly say so. As the dissemination and study of Theosophy has the aim of assisting in the spiritual and moral progress of humanity, then let us say that, too. It is vital that proper expression be given to the Aims (or Objects) in their inherently Theosophical context. We should display this clearly on all literature, web pages, and so forth. Let us stop hiding our light under a bushel, or worse still, allow dimmer alternatives to obscure our great purpose. ✧

Endnotes

1. The first such document was an 1878 Circular drafted mainly by H. S. Olcott, ‘The Theosophical Society Its Origin, Plan and Aims’. This is also published in HPB’s *Collected Writings*, vol. 1 p. 375-378.
2. H. P. Blavatsky, ‘Original Programme’ letter from Ostend, 1886. *Collected Writings*, vol. 7 p. 145-171.
3. The Theosophical Society, having its headquarters at Pasadena, USA, has 5 published objects.
4. *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* in chronological sequence, Letter 10, p. 27. Further explanatory statements are to be found in HPB’s *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 18, pp. 40-47, etc).
5. Ianthe Hoskins, *Foundations of Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 61 ‘Bowen Notes: The Secret Doctrine and Its Study’.

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6. *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, chronological edition, letter 12.
7. HPB contrasted 'self culture' to 'mutual culture' in the 'Original Programme' letter, *Collected Writings*, vol. 7 p. 160.
8. H. P. Blavatsky article 'Spiritual Progress' in *The Theosophist*, May 1885, also *Collected Writings*, vol. 6, p 331.
9. H. P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*, 1889 ed., p. 24 .
10. ———, *The Key to Theosophy*, 1889 ed., p. 203.

True progress involves insightful perception, and awareness of right and wrong from a loftier, far-reaching standpoint. Only by the acquisition of wisdom can an ultimate answer be given. Meanwhile, individuals must struggle to learn what is right and wrong by a process of meeting situations, making mistakes, pondering and discussing. Members of the TS can help in this process because they have the invaluable background of Theosophical study and the Theosophical world view. The Theosophical Society itself has as its function only to provide the opportunities and means for people to reach a state of Wisdom.

Radha Burnier
The World Around Us

Weaving the Fabric Glorious

JOY MILLS

THE Stoic Philosopher, Seneca, is credited with saying that the good things which belong to prosperity are to be wished, but those that belong to adversity are to be admired. Then we have much to admire in both the present condition of the world we live in and much of our lives, for no life is without adversity and the pains of misfortune. At times it looks like misfortune only breeds more misfortune and that the problems that beset us outrun solutions. In fact most of our solutions seem to carry within the seeds of new problems. How can we admire adversity when we wish ardently for those good things which belong to prosperity?

Shakespeare too echoes Seneca:

Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running
brooks.

Sermons in stones, and good in everything.

(As You Like It)

‘Good in everything’? Pollution, war,

violence, disease, racialism, and the endless list of our current woes — can have no good in them! Where is that precious jewel? Are the uses of adversity ever sweet? Francis Bacon could write: ‘Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes; and adversity is not without comfort and hopes.’ And the prophet Isaiah did not lose faith in the ultimate triumph of the good even when the Lord seemed to serve only ‘the bread of adversity and the water of affliction’.

Nearer home, Washington Irving confided in his *Sketch-book*:

There is in every true . . . heart a spark of heavenly fire, which lies dormant in the broad daylight of prosperity; but which kindles up, and beams and blazes in the dark hour of adversity.

Would we indeed seek out wise answers were we unaware of problems, if the questions of purpose and meaning did not vex us? Would Gautama have become the Buddha had he not witnessed the sorrows of disease, old age, and death? Would any of the world’s great teachers have sought to understand the cause of

Reprint from April 1990, *The Theosophist*. Ms Joy Mills is a former international Vice-President and National President of both the Australian and American Sections of the Theosophical Society.

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human sorrow, the purpose of existence, and the way to liberation, had they not seen and experienced the sufferings of the human state? To be honest, it is not in high moments of joy that we seek a philosophy to sustain us, but rather in those hours of pain when the hearts cries out, 'Why, oh why?' Truly, as Washington Irving indicated, there then blazes up a heavenly fire which burns until an answer can inform the pain with meaning, and the realization dawns that we need to seek beneath the surface of things for the purpose of existence.

So begins that self-conscious journey which, in nearly all traditions, has been called the path or the way, that journey which leads inward to the very heart of life itself, to the heart of the universe, to the centre of being, to that unnameable, unknowable reality which is at once the source and the goal of all existence. Out of our pains and sorrows wisdom grows and shines, like the jewel on the toad's head. And the marvel is that every experience, every incident, every event in our lives speeds us on. The good in all experiences is distilled, and we grow in understanding, compassion and wisdom. As in the state when 'learning becomes possible' (*Light on the Path*), something of the good in every event conduces to teach the meaning and purpose of human existence. 'Life is, after all', an early commentary on that little work puts us right, 'the great teacher'.

Perhaps life may be even more than a teacher, for as the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition holds, there comes an aware-

ness of modes of being or acting that reflect great universal principles. Those expressions of the archetypal divine paradigm, the heavenly man of *The Secret Doctrine (SD)*, though referred to as vestures, are the true powers latent in us. We are all the time, through every experience visiting us, every event of all our incarnations, awakening those powers, or, to use the familiar Buddhist metaphor, weaving that fabric glorious of the three vestures that make up our essential nature. HPB translating an ancient text says:

Out of the furnace of man's life and its black smoke, winged flames arise, flames purified, that soaring onward, 'neath the Karmic eye, weave in the end the fabric glorified of the three vestures of the path. These vestures are: *nirmānakāya*, *sambhogakāya*, and *dharmakaya*, robe sublime. (verses 140-1, *The Voice of the Silence*)

The metaphor may seem strange: flames weaving a fabric, vestures we are to wear, yet poetic licence graphically points to deeper truths. For vestures imply something to put on that we do not already have, and indeed HPB speaks of donning a robe. However, what we are weaving in and through our lives are only latent capacities outwardly expressed, the deific powers referred to by the Mahatma KH in his very first letter to A. P. Sinnett. The theosophical worldview is that on their unfoldment or revelation hangs the future of human kind.

Dr Herbert Guenther points out in

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Buddhist Philosophy in Theory and Practice that:

The conviction in the ultimate buddhahood of man has found its expression in the idea of three kāyas. It is tempting to see in them metaphysical principles and misunderstand their logical character. . . in concretizing them as is evident from their lexical (and hence entirely misleading) translations by bodies. The three kāyas are value experiences and principles of interpretation.

We are daily and even hourly weaving, 'beneath the karmic eye', the mode or manner of our presence in the world. The inner buddha-pattern is the human archetype. To put it in another way: the potential of divinity is already present, but its actualization or its awakening which is the *essence of being buddha* can only be brought about in incarnation. In *The Voice of the Silence*, as in the language of Mahāyāna Buddhism and every tradition, the inner pattern is threefold: *dharmakāya*, *sambhogakāya*, and *nirmānakāya*. The primary aspect is the *nirmānakāya*: 'To don *nirmānakāya*'s humble robe is to forego eternal bliss for self, to help on man's salvation' (v.145): Indeed, when one has truly awakened the stream is crossed:

'Tis true thou hast a right to *dharmakāya* vesture; but *sambhogakāya* is greater than a *nirvāṇi*, and greater still is a *nirmānakāya* — the Buddha of Compassion. (v. 306 *The Voice of the Silence*).

We can realize our inherent buddha

self only as we undergo the melting implied by HPB's furnace of man's life and its black smoke'. Adversity that really burns forces us into wakefulness which interiorly transmutes. Nothing so disturbs slumber as toothache. Sedatives may for a time allow sleep, but eventually even if by uprooting the tooth, we have got to deal with the pain. Psychologically also we lull ourselves into somnolent forgetfulness but one day, in this life or the next, we must confront those psychological afflictions, the *kleśas*, or modes of consciousness which underly human misery and suffering. These afflictions obscuring our deific powers are five: non-awareness of reality or a non-knowing of the noumenal, called *avidyā*; egoism, *asmitā*; attraction to pleasure, *rāga*; recoiling from pain, *dveśa*; and desire for continued sentience or *abhiniveśa*. We may intellectualize the unity of life, the oneness of existence, but as the pseudo-Dionysius taught: 'We must not only learn the truth; we must suffer it.' And suffer it we do in all the experiences of life, finding finally on the forehead of the toad of adversity the bright jewel of wisdom.

Yet even now, even here, weaving as we are the fabric glorious of those vestures of our essence, we may learn to see and even more to act out what we must one day be if the world is to become healed and whole. Characteristically, the Adepts consciously activate and function with those aspects or vestures, while we unconsciously weave them. Lama Govinda analyses:

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The body of an ordinary human being is māyā, and also the body of an enlightened one is māyā. But that does not mean that the body of an ordinary man can be called a *nirmānakāya* . . . the body of an enlightened one is his conscious creation, that of an unenlightened one, the creation of his subconscious drives and desires. Both are māyā, but the one is conscious and the other unconscious. The one is the master of māyā, the other its slave. The difference consists in the knowledge (prajñā). (Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism)

We are weaving the fabric of our lives ‘beneath the karmic eye’, unaware that the same law of karma not only binds us to the wheel of pleasure and pain, but can also set us free by an understanding of the creative nature of that lawfulness, karma and creativity being intimately related semantically and in fact.

Study of the doctrine of the *trikāya*, or three vestures of our buddha-nature, helps understand not only the ultimate nature of our buddhahood, our essentially deific powers or capacities, but something of what is even now required were we responsibly earnest in advancing towards the set goal. By studying the archetypal pattern called Buddhahood, or Christhood, or Krishnahood, or self realization or self-transcendence, we may actualize that pattern in our lives. Theosophically, the triplicity of our essential nature has been somewhat simplistically expressed as ātmā-buddhi-manas; the modes of action by which that triplicity expresses itself in incarnation are Guenther’s value-experiences

corresponding to the *buddha’s trikāya* or triple vesture.

Hence HPB calls the *dharmakaya* ‘no body at all, but an ideal breath; consciousness merged in the universal consciousness’. (See Notes to The Voice of the Silence). It is as Guenther suggests, ‘a model of possible actuality’, which interestingly expresses the functioning of Atman too in terms of its individualizing function, since, strictly speaking, Atman is no principle but according to HPB that universal which makes all particulars possible. The *dharmakāya* is ultimately the vesture of truth, that which sustains or underlies all existence, the mode by which atma as an individualized point within the Universal reveals itself. Lama Govinda suggests:

. . . we experience the *dharmakāya* as the luminous forms of purely spiritual perception — as pure, eternal principles of form, freed from all accidentals — or as the exalted visions of a higher reality. (Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism)

The fifth of ‘Ten Great Joyful Realizations’ reads:

It is a great joy to realize that in the *dharmakāya*, wherein mind and matter are inseparable, there existeth neither any holder of theories nor any support of theories. . . . once any truth . . . has been ascertained all theories concerning it are useless. Accordingly, in the *dharmakāya* or state of the fundamental truth, no theory is necessary or conceivable; it is the state of perfect enlightenment. (*Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrine. Evans-Wentz*)

Weaving the Fabric Glorious

Further, in the *dharmakāya* stage all enlightened ones are the same; consequently, it is the value-experience of completeness, of universality, of oneness.

The sambhogakāya forms the spiritual or ideal character of a buddha; it means the body of bliss, in the sense of rapture, ecstatic vision, from which all true inspiration wells forth. To quote Guenther, it is 'empathetic buddhahood'. The vesture or outer mode of action of the buddhic nature lies in that supreme interior contentment that manifests itself in loving compassion for not only all existent beings but even for all adverse experiences befalling us.

Finally, is the *nirmānakāya* robe, that vesture to don which — as HPB tells us — is to become a saviour of humanity, to enter upon the bodhisattva path of compassion and love in the world of outer action. Designated as the body of transformation it marks the individuality of an enlightened one. Here inspiration turns into wise action. Illumined consciousness is not the discriminative 'slayer of the real', but *manas taijasi*, as SD puts it. Wise action flows from detachment, freedom from all impediments, obscurations, afflictions, personal desires, the stain of egoism. The Suvāna-prabhā (v. Suzuki's *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*) says:

The Tathāgata, when he was yet at the stage of discipline, practised diverse deeds of morality for the sake of sentient beings. The practice finally attained perfection, reached maturity, and by virtue of its merits

he acquired a wonderful spiritual power. The power enabled him to respond to the thoughts, deeds, and livings of sentient beings. He thoroughly understood them and never missed the right opportunity to respond to their needs. He revealed himself in the right place and in the right moment; he acted rightly assuming various bodily forms in response to the needs of mortal souls. These bodily forms are called the *nirmānakāya* . . .

H.W. Schumann uses *nirmāna* to mean both manifested beings and magical creation. The latter expressed an idea in the Mahāyāna tradition that the earthly or incarnated buddhas are the projections of the *dharmakāya*. Hence, again the *nirmanakāya* experience of unity when free from all colouration brought about by the *kleśa-s* or psychological conditionings or ignorance. The function of the earthly buddhas, so well exemplified by Gautama, is to expound the dharma, the essential truth. The exposition however is not simply through verbal teachings, sermons or aphorisms, but in speech and action. The very presence of such a one sympathetically evokes the dharma nature in every being, for there is that essence of truth, of dharma in every one of us.

It is great joy to realize that in the self emanated, divine *nirmānakāya*, there existeth no feeling of duality. (Ten Great Joyful Realizations)

The magical creation produced by meditation on the non-duality of

Weaving the Fabric Glorious

existence, which is the unique hallmark of the nirmanakāya or the bodhisattva, is the realization of a world healed of divisions, of a humanity healed, blessed and made whole again.

The powers are there within us, even as we are now weaving the fabric glorious which is the outer raiment of our inner potential. And as the last of the 'Ten Great Joyful Realizations' assures us:

It is a great joy to realize that the path to freedom which all the *buddhas* have trodden is ever existent, ever unchanged, and ever open to those who are ready to enter upon it.

The way is not easy, but no one ever promised us a rose garden; only the opportunity and the challenge to create it in the deserts and wildernesses and forests.

The teaching concerning the trikāya is one of the sublimest in the entire range of occultism. It is in order to bring forth into self-conscious functioning this living threefold buddhic essence in the constitution of every human being, that the masters of wisdom and compassion, when on the threshold of nirvāna, renounce that lofty state and return to guide and teach humanity. (*Fountain-Source of Occultism*, G. de Purucker).

In the *SD*, HPB described one of the great mystics, Jacob Boehme, as a 'nursling of the *nirmānakāya*', a charming phrase that can well apply to all spiritual aspirants on the inward path to the one Self from which all selves emanate. We are even now even here 'nurslings' of the great buddhas of compassion, who through self-renunciation live but to benefit humanity. Though the nursery may seem at times a sultry hothouse, it is the heat that refines experiences into the gold of wisdom. 'Out of the black smoke, winged flames arise', and our lives take on ever more meaning and purpose. Our ears catch the cry of the whole world, and that beckons us on to the loftiest of goals, to awaken to our true potential and responsibility. Our destiny, HPB said, is 'written in the stars'. The poet and seer, Novalis, wrote: 'Do I not choose myself all my destinies since eternity?' Truly, 'none else compels', as all sacred books and great Teachers aver. The high destiny we choose being born is to become participants in the great cosmic celebration of life, no longer eating the 'bread of adversity' and drinking the 'water of affliction', but sharing with all existence the blessings of light, love, understanding, peace and compassion. ✧

The Path is one, disciple, yet in the end, twofold. Marked are its stages by four and seven portals. At one end — bliss immediate, and at the other — bliss deferred. Both are of merit the reward: the choice is thine.

H. P. Blavatsky
The Voice of the Silence

Books of Interest

MASTERS OF WISDOM — THE MAHATMAS, THEIR LETTERS, AND THE PATH, by Edward Abdill, Tarcher/Penguin, 2015, pp. 288, paperback, \$ 16.95.

This book is a rigorous historical and philosophical examination of the controversial spiritual Masters who guided Madame H. P. Blavatsky in opening the world to Eastern and esoteric spirituality in the late nineteenth century. At this time, this Russian noblewoman and occult philosopher enthralled the world with revelations of an ancient ‘secret doctrine’ behind the major faiths and a cosmic theology that united the insights of religion and science. She said she was operating under the guidance of hidden Masters of wisdom, or Mahatmas, who led her to reveal for-

gotten wisdom to modern people.

The mythos of Blavatsky’s Masters left a deep mark on Western culture and spawned more than a century of debate: Were the Masters real? What did they teach? Are they reachable today? Now, independent scholar of religion Edward Abdill provides an authoritative, historically reliable, and delightfully readable study of the background and ideas of the Masters — in particular highlighting their message and its enduring relevance. In their own words these Masters present some of their most important teachings, including their views on death and reincarnation, karma, science, and the path to adeptship. The central purpose of their work is far more profound than most people can imagine.

JOHN ALGEO

The real Theosophical Society is an indivisible unit, animated by an individual life! Its soul is the love of truth, its vital principle is kindness, and it dwells in a world above the material, where no enemy can touch it. It depends for its manifestation on earth upon an appropriate vehicle, and the first condition necessary in that vehicle is that it shall be a united whole.

The Theosophical Society is an ideal power for good diffused over the whole world, but it requires material conditions, and the most important of these is a material center, from which and to which the efferent and afferent forces shall circulate. This is a condition of the life of all organizations, and of all organisms, and the Theosophical Society is both; it is an organization on the material plane, an organism on the spiritual. A common center, therefore, is as necessary for spiritual as for physical reasons.

H. S. Olcott

Theosophical Work around the World

Italy

On 27 September 2014, the Italian Section of the Theosophical Society organized an important workshop on the topic 'The Urgency of a New Culture: Neurosciences, Spirituality and Consciousness'. The lecturer was Doctor José Foglia, who is involved in the study of brain function and of the endocrine and immune systems. He is a member of the Theosophical Society and he is also involved in investigating human potential and in developing a new approach in medicine. The seminar was very well received, with more than 90 attendees interested in the relationship between neurosciences and spirituality. Doctor Foglia examined in-depth the subject of the relationship among the states of consciousness, the functioning of the brain, and the reality of what is called the 'mind'.

There was a long-felt need in Italy for a new publication which would provide a significant range of information on the history of the Theosophical Society as well as its foundation and evolution in Italy, including its dissolution in 1939 at the hands of the Fascist regime. For these reasons, Edizioni Teosofiche Italiane — the official Theosophical publishing house in Italy — published the book *La Società Teosofica: storia, valori, realtà attuale* (The Theosophical Society: History, Values and Present Reality), edited by the General Secretary Antonio

Girardi. The book, which has more than 300 pages and about 90 images, was dedicated to the memory of Radha Burnier and of Edoardo Bratina (the General Secretary of the Italian Theosophical Society from 1971 to 1995). It was released on November 2014 and has been really successful in the academic world. It has been introduced to the public throughout Italy.

Adyar

T. Subba Row Medal Award

A day before the 139th international Convention, On 25 December 2014, the General Council of the Theosophical Society was pleased to award the T. Subba Row Medal to Dr John Algeo, former international Vice-President and National President of the TS in America, in recognition of his valuable literary and teaching contributions.

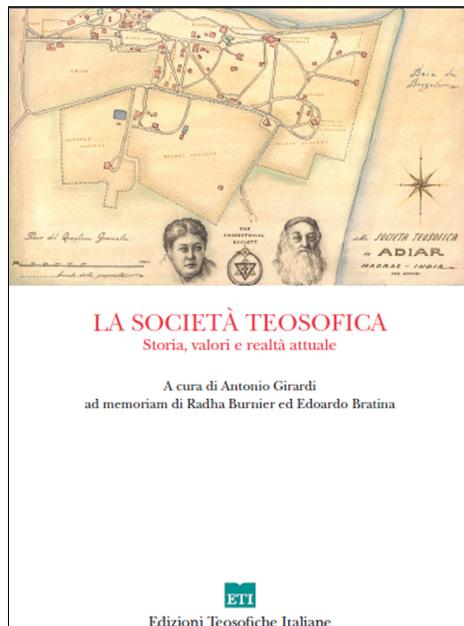
School of the Wisdom

A few days after the 139th international Convention was held, Ms Trâm-Thi-Kim-Diêu conducted a two-week session of the School of the Wisdom at Adyar from 5 to 16 January 2015. About 60 students from 19 countries participated: Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Myanmar (formerly Burma), the Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, Slovenia, United Kingdom, and the

Theosophical Work around the World



Doctor José Foglia, giving a presentation for the TS in Italy on the relationship between neurosciences and spirituality



A new book published by the General Secretary of the TS in Italy, Mr Antonio Girardi on *The Theosophical Society: History, Values and Present Reality*



School of the Wisdom session with Ms Trần-Thi-Kim-Diêu at Adyar from 5 to 16 January on 'The Science of Theosophy: Foundation and Practice'. *First row center, standing from left:* Ms Kim-Diêu, the Vice-President, Dr Chittaranjan Satapathy, and the President, Mr Tim Boyd

Theosophical Work around the World

United States of America. The theme was 'The Science of Theosophy: Foundation and Practice'. Participants had the opportunity to meditate together before each class. The classes were comprised of lectures half of the time, and the other half of discussion and questions and answers.

Ms Kim-Diêu has agreed to lead another session of the School of the Wisdom in January 2016, soon after the 140th international Convention. It will cover Chinese philosophies (including Taoism, Confucianism and Chan Buddhism, and an exploration into the I-Ching). The dates and syllabus will be published in a few months on the website of the Inter-national Theosophical Society <www.ts-adyar.org>.

Adyar Day

Members around the world celebrate Adyar Day on 17 February each year. At Adyar that celebration started with a procession of students of the Olcott Memorial Higher Secondary School through the portico of the Headquarters Hall. The General Manager, Mr Harihara Raghavan, welcoming the gathering, recalled the services of Col. Olcott and C. W. Leadbeater. He then introduced the three speakers who gave short talks: Mr Anoop Jaiswal, director, Theosophy-Science Group; Mr Isaac Jauli, from Spain, now part of the team working in the Archives; and Dr R. Revathy, a resident medical doctor at Adyar. The celebration ended by offering flowers in front of the statue of H. P. Blavatsky

and H. S. Olcott. The 17th of February is significant because it is the death anniversary of H.S. Olcott, J. Krishnamurti, and Giordano Bruno, said to be a previous incarnation of Annie Besant.

Improvements

In Adyar various projects have been started with several visitors who have come to offer their knowledge in areas like architecture, IT, electrical engineering, and the archives. Some came for several weeks, will return at times, and one will stay in Adyar to work with the team in the Archives. That team was established to reconstruct and build a new system for the Archives, so that researchers can make use of it more easily and benefit from the rich history of the TS. The reconstruction work will continue for 8-10 months. A significant move took place in January when the President announced a general raise to salaried workers. The need for raises had been under review for a few months and could now be realized. Only some salary adjustments still need to be made to a few employees. It might be good to know that the volunteer workers and officials at Adyar are not salaried workers.

President's tour

The international President, Mr Tim Boyd, before leaving Adyar on 18 January 2015, inaugurated a weekend programme, 'Liberation through the Arts', presented jointly by the Adyar Library and Research Centre

Theosophical Work around the World

and the local Vishnu Mohan Foundation. The President then went on to Singapore, where he met with Lodge members and the public, with over 100 in attendance. He also met and interacted with younger members of the Singapore Lodge, which has more than 380 members. Organizationally, it is part of the East and Southeast Asia Presidential Agency, to which also Japan, Malaysia, and Myanmar are attached. Mr Chong Sanne is the Presidential Representative and also President of the Singapore Lodge.

Then the President left for California, to the Krotona Institute of Theosophy, where he conducted the annual week-long Partners in Theosophy Programme, directed by Mrs Nelda Samarel. It involves about forty theosophists who invest themselves in building up the work of the TS. Mr John Kern and his wife, Anne, of the Kern Foundation, were also in attendance. This year's programme was about the 'Three Objects', and was very well received, with the three main speakers being Ms Joy Mills, Mr Pablo Sender, and Mr Tim Boyd. At some point the President was interviewed for a cable-television film, 'The Esotericists'. Later in Los Angeles he visited a young children's school to talk about India and a bit about the Theosophical Society. He will return to Adyar in early April to inaugurate the 92nd South India Conference. He would be travelling to North India and later to Kerala (Southwest India) for addressing members there.

India — East Zone Conferences

The 13th East Zone Conference of the TS was held on 14 and 15 February 2015 at Bhubaneswar on the theme 'Altruism is the Key to Theosophy'. Mr. C. A. Shinde, National Lecturer, inaugurated the conference as the Chief Guest and gave a public talk on 'A Life of Service and Sacrifice'. During the conference, Dr Chittaranjan Satapathy, international Vice-President, reviewed the work of the Assam, Bengal, Bihar, and Utkal Theosophical Federations, which have 76 Lodges and about 1,500 members between them. He also gave a well-received public talk on 'Altruism and Theosophy' on the first day (to be published in the April issue of *The Theosophist*). Next day Dr Satapathy also inaugurated the TOS Zonal conference which was presided by the TOS national Director, Mr B. L. Bhattacharyya. Many speakers from all the Federations spoke on subjects related to the main theme of the Conference, hosted by the Utkal Theosophical Federation, celebrating its 50th anniversary. On 17 February, Dr Satapathy also spoke at the joint meeting of two TS Lodges at Cuttack and explained the significance of Adyar Day.

Recent appointments

Mrs Ing-Britt Wiklund was recently elected as General Secretary of the Swedish Section, following Mr Pertti Spets, who held that post for ten years. The President reappointed Mr Pavel Malakhov to be the Presidential Representative for the TS in Russia. ✧

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