

Freedom of Thought

As the Theosophical Society has spread far and wide over the world, and as members of all religions have become members of it without surrendering the special dogmas, teachings and beliefs of their respective faiths, it is thought desirable to emphasize the fact that there is no doctrine, no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none which any member is not free to accept or reject. Approval of its three Objects is the sole condition of membership. No teacher, or writer, from H. P. Blavatsky onwards, has any authority to impose his or her teachings or opinions on members. Every member has an equal right to follow any school of thought, but has no right to force the choice on any other. Neither a candidate for any office nor any voter can be rendered ineligible to stand or to vote, because of any opinion held, or because of membership in any school of thought. Opinions or beliefs neither bestow privileges nor inflict penalties. The Members of the General Council earnestly request every member of the Theosophical Society to maintain, defend and act upon these fundamental principles of the Society, and also fearlessly to exercise the right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof, within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.

Freedom of the Society

The Theosophical Society, while cooperating with all other bodies whose aims and activities make such cooperation possible, is and must remain an organization entirely independent of them, not committed to any objects save its own, and intent on developing its own work on the broadest and most inclusive lines, so as to move towards its own goal as indicated in and by the pursuit of those objects and that Divine Wisdom which in the abstract is implicit in the title 'The Theosophical Society'.

Since Universal Brotherhood and the Wisdom are undefined and unlimited, and since there is complete freedom for each and every member of the Society in thought and action, the Society seeks ever to maintain its own distinctive and unique character by remaining free of affiliation or identification with any other organization.



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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.

Implementing the Ageless Wisdom

(A Summary of the General Council Planning Meeting,
ITC Naarden, the Netherlands, July 2018)

TIM BOYD

Mission Statement

To serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realization of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation, and the Unity of all Life.

SINCE its founding in 1875 the Theosophical Society (TS) has grown into an organization with membership, branches, and sections in more than 70 countries worldwide. The scope of TS activities has similarly grown and changed over the years, with publishing, education, programs, lectures, TS centers, communication, and meetings assuming new forms to suit ever-changing times. One of the recognized features of our time is the rapid nature of change. Unlike the recent past, no nation, culture, or geographical location is unaffected by the currents of change sweeping the planet. This condition places strong demands on all of us. More is required of us than mere repetition of past formulas or insistence upon “staying the course” in maintaining the forms of previous activities. With all of its uncertainty, this is a powerful moment in which we are living. It is a time that cries out for the depth of understanding and potential for harmonious living that the Ageless Wisdom can provide. The question for the TS now, as in

the past, is “How can we communicate this wisdom to the world in a usable way?”

Historically, the General Council (GC) of the TS has met for a few hours once each year — on the day before the opening of the annual International Convention at Adyar. This approach has placed severe limitations on the ability for heads of national Sections to share necessary information, and allowed little or no time for meaningful dialogue on long-range plans for the international organization. In an effort to provide an opportunity for more extended planning, in 2015 a second meeting specifically devoted to strategic planning was added immediately following the close of Convention. At the GC meeting in December 2016 it was determined that a 5-day planning meeting would be held in March of 2017 at the International Theosophical Centre in Naarden, the Netherlands. That meeting was primarily focused on brainstorming — allowing the space for all manner of ideas to come to light and be considered. Mere ideas were not

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enough, and each of the more than 40 projects proposed at that meeting had people assigned to make them real.

During the course of the year the progress and difficulties of the various projects were monitored by a small coordinating team, charged with both reporting and helping to keep the work on track. Special attention was given to 11 priority projects. In the beginning of July this year we met again at the ITC in Naarden, this time as an official GC meeting. In all, 30 members (20 GC members and 10 invited participants) attended from a variety of countries: The Netherlands, England, Belgium, India, the USA, Kenya, Finland, Sweden, New Zealand, the Philippines, Spain, Germany, Italy, Brazil, and Argentina. It is the intention to formalize this extended meeting as an additional annual meeting of the GC. The report which follows is a summary of this year's gathering.

1. The policy paper includes the mission statement of the TS

The policy paper discusses the direction of the work of the TS, and will frequently be updated. All policies are, of course, subject to approval of the GC. A major feature is the mission statement included above, which emphasizes the TS role in and for the world, the reason why it exists. It is extremely important, as it clarifies the task or role of the TS in the world, not only for TS members, but also for people at large. It also refers to the three Objects of the TS. For internal use it may have a strong impact, with a

greater focus on our work, on what members and people can/should expect, such as our Lodge work. It clarifies that we are not to please the spiritual ambitions of our members, nor a New Age style of organization. As a statement, it can be considered "the other side of the coin" of our Freedom of Thought statement, being the practical implication of our three Objects. *Sections are requested to include the mission statement in all TS publications, while TS writers are encouraged to write articles, giving their view on the statement.*

2. Introductory books lowering threshold for people at large

Many of the introductory books we continue to reprint are over 100 years old. While the pearls of wisdom in these books are timeless, communication has changed considerably since, as has our approach to Theosophy. Many, recently published books are for "seasoned" TS members, whereas some of the introductory books deal more with the interest of the writer, rather than the reader. The public at large spends little time reading complex books to meet with initial interest. The plan is to publish a range of contemporary low-cost introductory publications (books, brochures, and other communication channels) with special emphasis on the spiritual life of the beginning reader, where possible, making links with practical daily life. Thus theosophical concepts become recognizable for the reader in a modern, undogmatic way, thus raising interest, triggering further contacts, and deeper

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study. The publications, if possible translated in all major languages, can also be used for introductory courses in theosophical lodges.

3. Make TS Publishing Houses future-proof

The publishing world has been undergoing very rapid changes due to the popularization of ebooks and the rising cost of printing and distribution. The different theosophical publishing houses are also undergoing difficulties in sustaining their operations. It has been deemed desirable that publishers explore areas where they can cooperate with each other, adapt to new approaches in publishing and distribution, and seek ways to increase the reach of theosophical literature in the world. The team on this project has proposed that there be one global ebookstore for all theosophical books, taking advantage of the present capability of Quest Books USA to sell ebooks on their site. This is now being explored.

4. Meditation course for a broader public

One of the services that the TS can offer is a meditation course for the general public — those seeking inner peace or equanimity. The team is now gathering time-tested practices that have been used within and outside the TS, and a few options will be recommended to the different Sections.

5. Establishing theosophical schools

A major project that had been agreed

upon is establishing theosophical schools in various parts of the world. As a specific initiative, the General Council has approved founding a theosophical school in Adyar up to high school level to start mid-2019. In addition, new initiatives are now going on for new schools in the Philippines, Argentina, and Brazil.

6. Theosophy World: An online theosophical resource centre

The website <theosophy.world> is an interesting one to explore all important theosophical resources, an exciting development in the promulgation of Theosophy and spreading the message of the ancient wisdom teachings. There is a large diversity of material ranging from articles to videos, ebooks to photo galleries, early publications, quotes, poems, audio archives and much more. It also links to other useful like-minded websites, resource libraries and theosophical centers, becoming a truly central place to start searching from. New content is being added almost daily so students are advised to check it out by entering <theosophy.world> into the web browser. It is freely available to the general public and TS members alike. We hope the site continues to be a growing shared resource, valued by all theosophists and other truth seekers. It is currently in English but plans are afoot to make content available in other languages soon. Key questions are: how to enrich the current site, what are reliable sources, how to take the current site forward, and get more support from Sections and members. If you have

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any content you would like to share or would like to improve, please email <content@theosophy.world>.

7. Internal site-sharing best practices within the TS

Around the world many Sections have already developed many practices that have proven successful and effective in many aspects of theosophical work, such as membership record and lodge management, establishment of retreat centers or communities, dissemination methods, online courses, seminars, nurturing new members, and so on. Sections which have difficulties in these areas can learn from these experiences, difficulties, and successes. They do not have to start from scratch. A team is now compiling best practices on theosophical work from Sections around the world and this will be uploaded in a theosophical resource site. This will have restricted access and will be limited to certain officers of the TS.

8. TS Centers

The Theosophical Centers that have been established around the world are some of the unique gems of the TS. While every center is unique in its own right and often autonomous in its governance structure, they also have much in common. Several have been in operation for generations and have rich histories. The centers can be regarded as theosophical laboratories, where activities and programs are intended to make manifest the mission and objects of the TS. The intention of this project is to implement

strategies that will enhance the strength and vitality of these valuable resources in the 21st century. The emphasis of the project is on volunteering, programming, information-sharing, and collaboration. Minor Lile has been appointed as TS Centers Coordinator to facilitate this project. Minor and his wife, Leonie Van Gelder, were managers and residents at Indralaya, a theosophical center in the US, for nearly twenty years. He can be contacted by email at <mlile@theosophical.org>.

9. Harmonizing core teachings

For the past one hundred years, certain basic theosophical teachings that have been popularized in the TS have internal contradictions or have terms or nomenclatures that have different meanings and have caused confusion among new students of theosophy. Examples of these are the use of the words Monad, astral body, Logos and the different versions of the principles of the human being, life after death, and so on. While it is not the intention to make final definitions, which would contradict the freedom of thought declaration, recommendations for initial use for new students can be useful. A team has been tasked to solicit the opinions of writers, leaders and scholars to hopefully come up with proposed harmonization of basic teachings for introductory theosophical literature. Whatever recommendation the team proposes will not be taken as an official position of the TS.

10. International speakers list

The list of international speakers is

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aimed to create an authorized list of international speakers, who are competent and available to be invited to give lectures or seminars, or conduct schools or workshops. The list would be updated yearly by a team at Adyar, and introduced at the December Council meeting. Recommended criteria for an international speaker has been created. These criteria are very important, as each speaker acts as a representative of the international TS. The aim is also to create a policy for funding the travels. Travels should generally be covered by the inviting Section, possibly supported by the regional Federation. Overseas travels may be considered to be funded. Aim is also to support Sections or Federations for weaker areas to encourage theosophical study.

11. Self-Transformation Seminars

The Self-Transformation Seminars have been conducted in about 20 countries and facilitators have been trained in 10 countries. It has been found to be useful and effective as a seminar offered by the TS, both for members and the general public, for personal development and spiritual growth. The plan is to encourage more Sections to conduct this seminar and to train more facilitators who can transmit this to the public.

12. Animal rights and welfare

Nowadays many animals are being bred solely for production, therefore society accepts factory-farming as a

means for producing meat. Humankind should know by now that animals do have emotions, can feel pain, and that some animals even have a level of self-awareness and a remarkable sense of justice. Knowing this, the TS should not remain silent about the indescribable suffering that is inflicted on our younger brothers and sisters. Although the TS as an organization cannot align itself with any movement, it is imperative that we help cultivate an informed awareness of this issue. A working group created a concept manifesto dealing with this theme: "A society without any animal products would be ideal." Primarily because of the appalling suffering caused to animals, a vegan diet is what we strongly propagate, with its obvious environmental considerations and benefits.

Future outlook

The Theosophical Society is part of a movement that is planetary in scope. As we learn to move toward a collaborative approach in our work, our effectiveness and relevance will grow. Now, as in the past, our greatest resource is our committed members. We look forward to an exciting development within the TS, where teams all over the world are working together across a range of projects to fulfill the Theosophical Society's mission of serving humanity. New projects will be added in due time. This most important process will be coordinated, followed, and approved by the General Council. ✧

“O Weaver of Thy Freedom . . .”

ALI RITSEMA

THE Voice of the Silence (*VofS*), as passed on by H. P. Blavatsky (HPB), contains chosen fragments from *The Book of the Golden Precepts* and is intended for the daily use of *lanoo*s (disciples). This *Book of the Golden Precepts* forms part of the same series as that from which the “Stanzas” of the *Book of Dzyan* were taken, on which *The Secret Doctrine* is based. *VofS* is “Dedicated to the Few”, according to HPB, originally meant for the few real mystics in the Theosophical Society.

Instructions are given in three Fragments: “The Voice of the Silence”, “The Two Paths” and “The Seven Portals”. The title of this article is quoted from the third Fragment, “The Seven Portals”, and has reference to the previous Fragment where the voice of the candidate is asking: “Shalt not thou, Master, of thine own Mercy, reveal the Doctrine of the Heart? Shalt thou refuse to lead thy servants unto the Path of Liberation?” (102)

And then the pupil is informed by the Teacher about the two Paths to Nirvāna.*

Although there is One Path, he says, at the end it is twofold, its stages are marked by four [fourfold Dhyāna*] and

seven Portals. One is the *Open* path, called the Path of Liberation with immediate bliss; the other is the *Secret* path, the Path of Renunciation with bliss deferred, the “Path of Woe”. Both are the reward of “merit”. (179) The choice is up to the disciple: “Thou canst choose either.” (194)

And the disciple, now called “*Śrāvaka*”,* tells his spiritual Teacher in Fragment III that his choice is made: “I thirst for Wisdom. Now hast thou rent the veil before the Secret Path and taught the greater *yāna*.* Thy servant here is ready for thy guidance.” (196)

The Teacher then points out: “Prepare thyself, for thou wilt have to travel on alone. The Teacher can but point the way.” (197)

This is how it is: the spiritual path, as pointed out in the esoteric philosophy, is an individual path. Nobody can walk the path of somebody else. Likewise the “weaving of one’s freedom” is an individual matter. Walking this path, weaving one’s freedom is an individual undertaking to the “other shore”, the nirvanic state: “The way to final freedom is within thy Self.” (169)

The *Śrāvaka* in Fragment III has chosen to tread the secret path through the

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Pāramitās,* the golden keys to the Portals of which the last and seventh is *Prajñā*,* the key to which makes of a human a Bodhisattva. And the Teacher tells him:

Before thou canst approach the last, *O weaver of thy freedom*, [emphasis added to reference the title] thou hast to master these *Pāramitās* of perfection — the virtues transcendental six and ten in number — along the weary Path. (215)

The Portals are noble gates of virtue leading to *Bodhi** and *Prajñā*, the seventh step of Wisdom. To get there, the *Śrāvaka* has “to fight [his] way through . . . seven strongholds held by cruel and crafty powers — passions incarnate.” (200) He is being told that the way is hard and thorny and the Portals ever narrowing. (205)

When we choose, like the *Śrāvaka*, to “walk” this secret Path, or better to “become” this Path as it in fact is, we have set our feet on the Bodhisattvic Path. A Bodhisattva is on the Arya Path, the path of “the holy”, which has four stages and can only be entered through great spiritual development and “growth in holiness”; these stages are called the “four fruits”. The Arhat (Arhan) is one who entered the best and highest path and is thus emancipated from rebirths. He is the “worthy one, deserving divine honours”, the fourth “fruit”, according to the *Theosophical Glossary*.

This is interesting because we find in *The Secret Doctrine* I, Stanza VI, Śloka 7 what — in my view — the mission is for humanity on earth, here addressed to the *Lanoo*:

Reach the fourth “fruit” of the fourth path of knowledge that leads to Nirvāna, and thou shalt comprehend, for thou shalt see.

It is very well possible that this relates to the “upward” movement towards a more spiritual level of consciousness on humanity’s evolutionary journey; to my understanding an unavoidable challenge for mankind. And we are made aware that “no Arhan . . . becomes one in that birth when for the first the soul begins to long for final liberation”. (173)

In the commentary on the quoted Stanza it is stated that three further higher grades have to be conquered by the Arhat who would reach the apex of the ladder of Arhatship.

The Secret Path, this Bodhisattva Path, implies as purpose the “Secret life”, a life as a *Nirmānakāya*. Such a life requires the weaving of a new vesture:

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. (140)

These three vestures are *buddhic* bodies or forms and named: *Nirmānakāya*, *Sambhogakāya* and *Dharmakāya*. From these vestures the *Nirmānakāya* is the glorified one; this vesture is the outcome on the Path of Renunciation. The *Bodhisattva* develops this vesture in himself as he proceeds on the Path. When he dies, he remains in that glorious body he has woven for himself, *invisible* to mankind, to be part of the guardian wall to watch

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over and protect mankind, giving up nirvanic bliss, as stated in *VofS*, Glossary 3. This is in contrast with the *Sambhogakāya* and the *Dharmakāya*, who choose to leave earthly concerns and every possible relation with this earth behind.

The above quotation shows that the “thirst for Wisdom” requires purification, a purification in the furnace of life whereby gradually all impurities in our nature, causing the black smoke, are being burnt up in the fire of wisdom while the arising winged flames, purified flames, are weaving a new vesture.

In this respect the *Pāramitās* could be seen as the threads for the fabric, the weaving material.

All the portals can only be opened by the golden keys when the necessary transcendental aspect of the required virtue has been acquired. This means refining the virtues to the most exquisite level by constant and thorough investigation: reforming one’s Self by meditation and knowledge.

It is obvious that this is not easy and therefore guidance for “weaving thy freedom” is given by the Teacher in many ways. Some of the guidance is easy to understand and some give rise to pondering. For example:

Before thou canst approach the foremost gate thou hast to learn to part thy body from thy mind, to dissipate the shadow, and to live in the eternal. . . . (217)

Is it possible to part thy body from thy mind? If so, how do we do that?

One of the first instructions — in Fragment I — might be of help: “The mind is

the great slayer of the Real. Let the disciple slay the slayer”, preceded by: “Having become indifferent to objects of perception, the pupil must seek out the *rājāh* (dominator, ruler) of the senses, the thought-producer, he who awakes illusion.”

We are mostly prey of the senses, thoughts, emotions, memories and impulses from the personality evoked through the consciousness stored in the cells of the organs of the body. The cells in our body are interconnected to our mind and therefore to the state of our mind. When our mind is focused on the personal, material side of life, the cells will be in accordance with it thereby blocking impressions from the Heart, the most spiritual organ of the body, the abode of the “Wisdom from above”. When we are able to become aware of these blockages, having sought out the *rājāh* of the senses, having made the “flesh . . . passive, head cool, the soul as firm and pure as flaming diamond” (81), we liberate ourselves from the bodily influences of the personality — dissipate the shadow, as the personality is often referred to — giving way to the whispers of the Heart.

In this process of “parting the body from the mind” and becoming more receptive to the “Heart’s Wisdom” the cells will become more, and ultimately be, predominantly of a spiritual nature, thus making the body accordingly more and more etheric: spiritualized. Then we can say: the disciple is, through the impulses from the “Heart”, slaying the illusory nature of the mind: slaying the slayer of the Real.

With regard to this, the instructions in

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The Voice of the Silence are rather stern:

Strive with thy thoughts unclean before they overpower thee. Use them as they will thee, for if thou sparest them and they take root and grow, know well, these thoughts will overpower and kill thee. (54)

Ere thy Soul’s mind can understand, the bud of the personality must be crushed out, the worm of sense destroyed past resurrection. (57)

Kill in thyself all memory of past experiences. Look not behind or thou art lost. (75)

Behind all this there is one thing of major importance which should not be overlooked and never be forgotten: the “ground” on which we “walk”, the motive, the drive from within. This ground must be right and strong and the foundation of all our efforts; otherwise we will not be able to meet fearlessly, life after life, the trials and pitfalls on our path.

Taking the spiritual Path for the sake of ourselves, would be a selfish act.

Therefore the Teacher points out to the beginner that he must know that:

the *Open Path* [is] the way to selfish bliss, shunned by the Bodhisattvas of the Secret Heart, the Buddhas of Compassion. To live to benefit mankind is the first step. To practise the six glorious virtues is the second. To don *Nirmānakāya’s* humble robe is to forego eternal bliss for self, to help on man’s salvation. To reach Nirvāna’s bliss, but to renounce it, is the supreme, the final step — the highest on renunciation’s path’. (143–145)

So, we have to question ourselves:

Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry? (307)

How do *we* respond to these questions? Will we be like the *Śrāvaka*? Do we also “thirst for Wisdom”?

If so, then choose thy way, O weaver of thy freedom . . . but only to wed woe and to remain unselfish to the endless end.

*End Notes

Bodhi: True, divine Wisdom (*VofS*, 128, footnote)

Dhyāna: the state of meditation of which there are four degrees. (*VofS*, Glossary to Part III)

Nirvāna: freedom from the trammels of “*māyā*” or illusion seems to me an appropriate explanation in this context.

Pāramitās: the six transcendental virtues; for the priests there are *ten*. (*VofS*, Glossary to Part III).

Prajñā: A synonym of *Mahat*, the Universal Mind. The capacity for perception. (*Theosophical Glossary*)

Śrāvaka: a listener, or student who attends to the religious instruction. From the root *śru*. When from theory they go into practice or performance of asceticism, they become *Śramanas*, “exercisers” from *śrama*, action. (*VofS*, Glossary to Part III)

yāna — vehicle: thus *Mahāyāna* is the “Great Vehicle” and *Hinayāna*, the “Lesser Vehicle”, the names for two schools of religious and philosophical learning in Northern Buddhism. (*VofS*, Glossary to Part III).

Theosophy-Science: Past & Present

JACQUES MAHNICH

TALKING about Science and Theosophy or more generally Science and Traditions of the world, there is often a sense of imbalance on the quantitative and qualitative aspects. Quantitatively, as of today, there are more than seven million scientists all over the world, doing theoretical and applied science in more than 250 academic disciplines. They publish more than one million research papers per year and their annual budget represents almost 2% of the world GDP. They are living in a no-border world with a universal language, mathematics, and all papers are now published and/or translated in what became a standard language, English. This, together with the scientific applications developed by industries, has created a tremendous capability to influence our way of living and thinking, and also an increased capability to destroy humanity: in addition to the nuclear threat, we are now facing new threats like nanotechnologies, genetic engineering, and one which is the combination of many uncontrolled industrial developments and which will affect not only some isolated spots, but all life on earth — the

global warming. Qualitatively, science is influencing deeply the shaping and behaviors of our modern societies, for good and not so good.

It looks gloomy, but is that assessment of the situation new to us? Some 35 years ago, David Bohm (scientist and philosopher) wrote:

Thus, as is now well known, this way of life has brought about pollution, destruction of the balance of Nature, overpopulation, worldwide economic and political disorder, and the creation of an overall environment that is neither physically nor mentally healthy for most of the people who have to live in it.

At the same period of time, J. Krishnamurti told us :

We are facing a tremendous crisis; a crisis which politicians can never solve because they are programmed to think in a particular way — nor can the scientists understand or solve the crisis; nor yet the business world, the world of money. The turning point, the perceptive decision, the challenge, is not in politics, in religion, in the scientific world, it is in our con-

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consciousness. One has to understand the consciousness of mankind, which has brought us to this point. One has to be very serious about this matter because we are really facing something very dangerous in the world — where there is the proliferation of the atomic bomb which some lunatic will turn on. We all must be aware of all this.

So, it is not a new departure from past history, but we observe that there is a strong acceleration in the degradation of our natural and social environments. The question is no more about “is it true or not?”, but “what can we do about it?”

Science being one of the three pillars of Theosophy, it must be a powerful lever, specially at a time where the majority of our brothers and sisters believe in the capabilities of Science to bring comfort and happiness in their lives, even if it is not yet the case.

Science and Traditions of the world, together with Theosophia, are dealing with the same subject: Reality, even if the approaches are different. There is only ONE Reality. We know that Modern Science is dealing with some layers of Reality, mainly the physical one, plus some glimpses of the energetic, emotional and mental ones, but it stops short at the intellectual border, even if intuition is stepping in unconsciously in most of the major discoveries which seems to happen perchance.

The end result of this approach is that Science cannot build a holistic understanding of Reality, and many key char-

acteristics of the scientific models are still not at all understood. For example, the Standard Model which describes the elementary particles’ constitution and behavior cannot accommodate gravitation, does not account for dark matter or dark energy, neutrino oscillations, and so on. We still do not know why most of the fundamental constants like the gravitational constant, the Planck constant, the Hubble constant, and so forth have their specific values and if they are really constant or not.

If, on one hand, Science cannot build a holistic model of Reality, and on the other hand, Traditions of the world have this holistic vision embedded into their sacred texts, there must be a path to bridge the two, because, again, Reality is ONE, even when viewed through different eyes.

Let us remember how Madame H. P. Blavatsky described this Reality :

This “Be-ness” is symbolized in the Secret Doctrine under two aspects. On the one hand, absolute abstract Space, representing bare subjectivity, the one thing which no human mind can either exclude from any conception, or conceive of by itself. On the other, absolute Abstract Motion representing Unconditioned Consciousness.

The Secret Doctrine Vol. I, “Proem”

And she added that Consciousness and Matter are not opposed, but complementary:

Spirit (or Consciousness) and Matter are, however, to be regarded, not as independent realities, but as the two facets or aspects of the Absolute (Parabrahman),

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which constitute the basis of conditioned Being whether subjective or objective.

SD Vol. I, "Proem"

Bringing this model of Reality to the forefront of Science should enable new foundations for a global understanding of It and a new way to do Science. To use the words of HPB, talking about the soul of that future science:

a science which has the view of the cosmos as "embodied consciousness", with everything in the cosmos alive, and governed by "consciousness centers" which embody themselves.

If and when that model will be understood and acknowledged, a real revolution may start in the scientific community, and therefore in the rest of the world. So, the next question is: "Why has it not happened yet?" There is such a wealth of knowledge and achievements on both sides that it seems incredible not to be able to bridge the gaps. There must be some serious reasons that we have to understand and recognize if we want to give some chances to our endeavor.

There are three major factors which are playing a role in the way Reality is approached:

1) First of all, the mindset of the actors, which is the result of all conditioning factors in our human lives: birthplace, family background, education, religion, events in life, and so on.

If we take on one side the example of a Westerner born in a conservative Catholic family, educated in a materialist

school system, who succeeds in his (her) career and has become a celebrity in modern mainstream Sciences, and on the other side a child born in India from the Brahmin caste, raised in the pure tradition of the Vedas, and deeply versed in the studies of the sacred texts, we can understand the almost impossible gap which prevents effective communication. Of course, this is an extreme case, and there are fortunately examples where each party can connect with the other one with an open mind. The Wisdom Tradition provides such a level playing field to enable all cultural backgrounds to understand each other.

2) The second major roadblock we have to recognize and to overcome is the difference between methodologies used to dig into the mysteries of life: Traditions are using a top-down approach where Science is using a bottom-up approach. These two methodologies have their merits and shortfalls.

The top-down approach starts from a set of models or "truths", often coming from revelations. These models allow a complete description from the abstract concepts down to the observable, through some logic which is not always explicit, at least for ordinary people. It gives a complete description of "Reality". It may lead to some dogmas because, usually, these realities — as each tradition has its own description of Reality — are not challengeable easily.

The bottom-up approach starts from observations, and tries to reconstruct the underlying models. It is heavily biased

by the instruments of observation and by the fact that there are no guiding principles, except mathematical logic and consistency. At the same time, it gives complete freedom to the seeker in interpreting the data and the models. It can also lead to some dogmas like reductionist materialism when Science tries to speculate on the overall scheme of man and the universe.

Both approaches can bring to us some glimpses of understanding, but neither of them are self-sufficient, at least in the present state of our world in its cycle of evolution. And because Reality is ONE, there must be a point where these two cross over and where it must be possible to draw a line — or create a bridge — between the two.

3) Finally, the language is always a barrier to overcome, whether learning the other's language, or using a common language. Science uses mathematics which has the advantage of obeying a strict logic. It has the inconvenience, specially with modern science, of being almost unreachable for many people. Traditions use very allegorical and veiled language, some of them having completely disappeared from the surface of the earth. Sacred texts have been replicated and modified so many times, including on purpose, that it is very difficult to capture and understand the core teachings.

Theosophy is using the language of the Traditions of the world, quoting many sacred texts, and deciphering or restoring some of them. But, even for theosophists, it requires a lot of study and practice to get a

clear picture of the fundamentals of life.

So, the task requires an unbiased mind, sharp intellectual capabilities, a methodology, and a language which can pave the way for a common understanding. Back to the question, "What can we do?", maybe we want to have a look at what we have done in the past and what we are currently doing as theosophists.

What have we done in the past?

A lot of things. It all starts in 1925 as a Theosophical project launched by the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society. Annie Besant, then President of the Theosophical Society, together with George S. Arundale, decided to start a Theosophical World University. The objective was "a *vital need* for the introduction of theosophical inspiration and understanding into *every branch of human study and research*". Pioneers of this University were people like Dr J. H. Cousins in Adyar and Prof. J. E. Marcault in London. Later on, the educational work was delegated to Theosophical Research Centers (TRC) within the TS. This triggered the organization of national theosophical research centers.

One of the oldest ones is probably the London Theosophical Research Center (TRC), started in 1934, and active under this name until 1982. Its objects were in line with the initial objects of the Theosophical World University :

1. To ensure that the Theosophical Society shall receive the *full benefit of every advance in science*, medicine, art, education and other realms of knowledge.
2. To influence the world of thought by

the application of theosophical principles.

The ways to achieve these goals were very focused on building bridges between Science and the Theosophical Tradition. The methodology of the Science Group of the Theosophical Research Center was:

- ◆ to reinterpret *in modern terms the occult teachings* as given in *The Secret Doctrine* and other books.

- ◆ to *attempt to correlate* occult teachings with modern science,

- ◆ to develop more popular expositions of Theosophical ideas in the language of today to appeal to scientifically-minded people.

TRC in London was very productive and published many transactions and books on various subjects like Archeology, Medicine, Psychology, Physics, Cosmology, and so on.

A Science Group Journal was published, starting in 1957, as the official organ of the Group. It included articles from other Theosophical National Research Centers, like TSA, Holland, Australia, and so forth.

Many other national Sections developed such Research Centers and published bulletins like *Theoscientist*, *Holistic Science and Human Values*, Theosophy-Science Research Center Journal, Theosophical Research Center Transactions in UK, Theosophy-Science Group Newsletter in Australia, and so on.

So, we have a legacy of researchers and research papers. The momentum created at the launch of the project, in the 1930s, generated dynamism, and a great motivation inside the theosophical

communities to acquire scientific knowledge and to study and detect potential bridges with the Wisdom Tradition.

We also have outstanding individual contributions made by some of our past leaders and by other theosophists and affiliates. The most well-known is *Occult Chemistry*, whose first glimpses appeared in the *Lucifer* magazine in 1895. The first edition was printed in 1909, followed by a second edition in 1919, and a third one was published under C. Jinarajadasa in 1950.

It is maybe the first time scientific investigations were made using the Wisdom Tradition as a theoretical basis and extrasensory perception as a tool. It has triggered a lot of interest and further works, seeking a match with many modern science discoveries, until now.

Some of the contributors:

- ◆ A. Tanon — *Théosophie et Science* (1948)

- ◆ James S. Perkins — *A Geometry of Space and Consciousness* (1964)

- ◆ I. K. Taimni — *Science and Occultism* (1974)

- ◆ E. Lester Smitt — *Occult Chemistry Re-Evaluated* (1982)

- ◆ Ravi Ravindra — *Science and the Sacred* (2000)

- ◆ Edi D. Bilimoria — *The Snake and the Rope* (2006)

- ◆ Stephen M. Phillips (A very prolific author) —

- *Extra-Sensory Perception of Quarks* (1980)

- *Anima, Remote Viewing of Subatomic Particles* (1996)

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- ESP of Quarks and Superstrings (1999)

- The Mathematical Connection between Religion and Science (2009)

The last publication deserves our attention, as one of the best and most current synthesis of the state-of-the-art in Physics and other sciences, under the light of the Wisdom Tradition. Most of the recent scientific discoveries are reviewed and presented: Superstring, Membranes and M-theory, Super-symmetry, Super-gravity, ESP, DNA encoding, and so forth

What are we doing today?

At a time where mundane Science is skyrocketing in terms of advances in discoveries and knowledge acquisition on the physical plane, Theosophy Research Centers seem to have lost some of their initial momentum. Many have stopped their activities, even in large and highly-developed countries like the USA, and the remaining active cells are barely known outside of Theosophical communities. Few are connected with the scientific groups, and, among theosophists, the follow-up and understanding of scientific discoveries and models are scarce.

This does not mean we have lost pace with scientific knowledge acquisition, because many individual theosophists are active in their scientific domains. It means that, as an international group, we are not using the potential synergy which organized groups can deliver. Among our international theosophical community, we probably have “champions” in many scientific disciplines who could develop study groups on specific subjects, using

a common methodology. It would enhance the understanding of the scientific aspect of the Wisdom Tradition, and then it would enable dialogue with the scientific community.

Inside the scientific community, it may be useful to note that there is the beginning of a stirring movement to escape from purely materialistic dogmas. Even if it represents a very low percentage of the mainstream scientists, it is a sign of openness towards a broader understanding of Nature.

A recent example, in 2014, is a group of scientists <opensciences.org>, including Mario Beauregard, Rupert Sheldrake, Charles Tart, and others, who created a movement aimed at opening the landscape of Science. Their purpose is to discuss the impact of the materialist ideology on science and the emergence of a post-materialist paradigm for science, spirituality, and society. Their manifesto clearly defines their philosophy:

- ◆ 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.

- ◆ Minds are apparently unbounded and may unite in ways suggesting a unitary, One Mind that includes all.

Another example is the Institute of Noetic Sciences <noetic.org> which sponsors ESP experiments, using scientific methods. Among their recent achievements is the reporting of scientific demonstration of the existence of precognition and telepathy: “The results of the experi-

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ments indicate that the likelihood that telepathy exists is as close to proven as contemporary science can establish.”

Another one is <ivscience.org> the Institute for Venture Science, whose aim is “to incubate and nurture venture science in order to foster the kind of scientific innovation that shows potential for leading to scientific break-throughs or even scientific revolution”.

The scientific world is starting to open up. It is an opportunity for the building of bridges. There is a strong need for theosophists to regain interest and knowledge acquisition in Science. To this need, a new initiative was launched last winter, during the 142nd International

Theosophical Convention in 2018, in Adyar. Realizing that there is a staggering quantity of researches being published every week from all over the world in the various academic disciplines, a project was proposed, aiming at collecting research papers, articles, conferences, books, and so on, which are relevant to Theosophy, to analyze and summarize them, and to publish them on the Internet in realtime. A quarterly publication made its first release on 1 April 2018. This will give the Theosophical communities access to a knowledge database, and could trigger new interests and focus towards modern science as one of the pillars of the Theosophical Teachings. ✧

A total view of relativity will include a consideration of not only worlds of higher number of dimensions but also of that State which is above the realm of time and space. Such a view is, of course, possible only for those whose consciousness can transcend the world of manifestation and can function in the world of Reality.

I. K. Taimni
Science and Occultism

The Future of the Theosophical Society

H. P. BLAVATSKY

ENQUIRER (E). Tell me, what do you expect for [the Theosophical Society] in the future? . . .

THEOSOPHIST (T). Its future will depend almost entirely upon the degree of selflessness, earnestness, devotion, and last, but not least, on the amount of knowledge and wisdom possessed by those members, on whom it will fall to carry on the work, and to direct the Society after the death of the Founders.

E. I quite see the importance of their being selfless and devoted, but . . . [as for] *knowledge* . . . Surely the literature which already exists, and to which constant additions are still being made, ought to be sufficient?

T. I do not refer to technical knowledge of the esoteric doctrine, though that is most important; I [speak] rather of the great need which our successors in the guidance of the Society will have of unbiased and clear judgment. Every such attempt as the TS has hitherto [made has] ended in failure, because, sooner or later, it has degenerated into a sect, set up hard-and-fast dogmas of its own, and so lost

by imperceptible degrees that vitality which living truth alone can impart. You must remember that all our members have been bred and born in some creed or religion, that all are more or less of their generation, both physically and mentally, and consequently that their judgment is but too likely to be warped and unconsciously biased by some or all of these influences. If, then, they cannot be freed from such inherent bias, or at least taught to recognize it instantly and so avoid being led away by it, the result can only be that the Society will drift off on to some sandbank of thought or another, and there remain a stranded carcass to moulder and die.

E. But if this danger be averted?

T. Then the Society will live on into and through the twentieth century. It will gradually leaven and permeate the great mass of thinking and intelligent people with its large-minded and noble ideas of Religion, Duty, and Philanthropy. Slowly but surely it will burst asunder the iron fetters of creeds and dogmas, of social and caste prejudices; it will break down racial

Madame H. P. Blavatsky (1831–91) was co-founder of the TS along with Col. H. S. Olcott and others in New York City in 1875. Excerpt from the “Conclusion” of *The Key to Theosophy*, written in 1891.

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and national antipathies and barriers, and will open the way to the practical realization of the Brotherhood of all men. Through its teaching, through the philosophy which it has rendered accessible and intelligible to the modern mind, the West will learn to understand and appreciate the East at its true value. Further, the development of the psychic powers and faculties, the premonitory symptoms of which are already visible in America, will proceed healthily and normally. Humankind will be saved from the terrible dangers, both mental and bodily, which are inevitable when that unfolding takes place, as it threatens to do, in a hotbed of selfishness and all evil passions. Man's mental and psychic growth will proceed in harmony with his moral improvement, while his material surroundings will reflect the peace and fraternal goodwill which will reign in his mind, instead of the discord and strife which is everywhere apparent around us today.

E. . . . do you really expect all this to be accomplished in one short century?

T. Scarcely. But I must tell you that during the last quarter of every hundred years an attempt is made by those "Masters", of whom I have spoken, to help on the spiritual progress of Humanity in a marked and definite way. Towards the close of each century you will invariably find that an outpouring or upheaval of spirituality — or call it mysticism if you prefer — has taken place. Some one or more persons have appeared in the world as their agents, and a greater or less amount of occult knowledge and teaching has been given out. If you care to do so,

you can trace these movements back, century by century, as far as our detailed historical records extend.

E. But how does this bear on the future of the TS?

T. If the present attempt, in the form of our Society, succeeds better than its predecessors have done, then it will be in existence as an organized, living, and healthy body when the time comes for the effort of the 20th century. The general condition of men's minds and hearts will have been improved and purified by the spread of its teachings, and, as I have said, their prejudices and dogmatic illusions will have been, to some extent at least, removed. Not only so, but besides a large and accessible literature ready to men's hands, the next impulse will find a numerous and *united* body of people ready to welcome the new torchbearer of Truth. He will find the minds of men prepared for his message, a language ready for him in which to clothe the new truths he brings, an organization awaiting his arrival, which will remove the merely mechanical, material obstacles and difficulties from his path. Think how much one, to whom such an opportunity is given, could accomplish. Measure it by comparison with what the TS actually *has* achieved in the last fourteen years, without *any* of these advantages and surrounded by hosts of hindrances which would not hamper the new leader. . . . [I]f the TS survives and lives true to its mission, to its original impulses through the next hundred years . . . Earth will be a heaven in the twenty-first century in comparison with what it is now!

Glimpses on the Jnāna Yoga Path

RICHARD SELL

ALONG my personal journey of discovery, I have been led to the door of Jnāna Yoga. It is a practice based on Vedic knowledge where reality is unveiled through knowledge, insight and experiential learning. I had some preconceived ideas about what was meant by knowledge, thinking it was the knowing of facts and figures acquired through study and experience. In our culture we are used to thinking in terms of having our heads full of interesting and useful things, that generally fall under the category of book learning. What I learned in my exploration of Jnāna Yoga however was that terminology can lead us astray and colour our perceptions on what is being said or meant by a word. The term “knowledge” in Jnāna Yoga is seen through a different lens; one where we speak of direct perception of awareness or a direct way of knowing. The objective in this yoga is to educate the mind to inquire into its own nature and to transcend the identification with its thoughts and small ego.

In the 19th century, Swami Vivekananda, a key figure to introducing Vedanta and yoga to the West spoke of this when he

wrote on Jnāna Yoga and self-discovery.

Now this knowledge, again, is inherent in man. No knowledge comes from outside; it is all inside. What we say a man “knows”, should, in strict psychological language, be what he “discovers” or “unveils”; what a man “learns” is really what he “discovers”, by taking the cover off his own soul, which is a mine of infinite knowledge.

The early Vedic philosophers knew this well; they understood that a person could not know everything there was to know. The cosmos is so complex and vast: a million, million incarnations could not understand the extent of its wonders and our place in the grand scheme. After much enquiry they discovered a fundamental truth. They saw that to know the nature of clay, one could know the nature of everything made of clay. To understand the nature of gold or iron, one could understand the nature of everything made of gold or iron. Therefore, is there not likewise they asked, something that is the basic material of the universe, by the knowing of which, everything in the universe will be known? The answer of course is “Self”

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— *Know thy Self*, as the oracles of ancient Greece used to expound. This timeless maxim is written on the very walls of the Sanctuary.

The practice of Jnāna Yoga therefore helps us gain insight into truths about who we are and what we are experiencing. The full realization of this truth brings enlightenment. But how do we recognize truth?

When we want to know the truth about something, we don't want to be fooled by appearances, by that which only appears and then disappears. Knowing truth cannot mean to know something one minute and then to see it change the next depending on differing circumstances. We may discover truth in many forms which may present itself as only relative, temporary or partial truth.

Geoffrey Hodson tells us that travelling the path of Jnāna Yoga “includes understanding and penetrative perception with ever-increasing, interior comprehension, whether in flashes or during prolonged deliberations”. It leads to the direct use of intuition (our *buddhic* faculty). Einstein touches on this when he said:

The intellect has little to do on this road to discovery. There comes a leap in consciousness, call it intuition or what you will, and the solution comes to you and you don't know how or why. All great discoveries are made this way.

This “direct perception” may come in a flash or over time, but it must be experienced first-hand. We comprehend that Real Truth is that which lies beyond

appearance and illusion and thus is never changing. What is unchanging? The divine Self, is a spark of the Universal One — our goal is to realize we are the dewdrop that “slips into the shining Sea”.

Jnāna Yoga utilizes four principles or disciplines. These have also been called the Pathway to Discipleship and all yogic paths lean on them to a greater or lesser extent. Their purpose is to remove ignorance, the barrier to self-knowledge. We could compare this to a wind that blows away a dark cloud hiding the radiance of the sun. The first two principles are of keen interest to the Jnāna Yogi.

I. Discrimination. This is to be gained by thoughtfulness and practice. Here the student dwells mentally on the nature of the Real, the One Reality. As the Upanishads say — “Lead me from the Unreal to the Real”. A simple example of this comes from Thich Nhat Hanh in his book *Old Path, White Clouds*, where he tells the story of the Buddha. In it the Buddha says:

I must state clearly that my teaching is a method to experience reality and not reality itself, just as a finger pointing at the moon is not the moon itself. A thinking person makes use of the finger to see the moon. A person who only looks at the finger and mistakes it for the moon will never see the real moon.

Applied to our daily living, discrimination is much stimulated by the rapidly changing circumstances into which the practitioner is generally thrown, with a view to impressing on him or her the

impermanence of all things. The aspirant could try daily to strip away something of oneself that changes; a mood, a thought. A practical example of applied discrimination might be to see oneself as without anger: Anger is not Self. When we see an angry man, woman or child, see the person engulfed in passion while it is raging; treat it as being nothing, an illusion; see beyond to the Soul that animates that person.

II. Renunciation/Dispassion. From a recognition of the instability and unsatisfying nature of external things, indifference to them slowly becomes part of our personal worldview. The yogi becomes dispassionate about the things that come and go, and more and more fixes his gaze on the changeless Reality that is ever present. Letting go and not being tied to “outcomes” is not only necessary but is also an act of healing. It is only when the mind is absolutely free from worldly attachments that true knowledge begins to dawn.

The various principles and practices of Jnāna Yoga help us in our search for truth and wisdom, although the search is not without its own challenges. One of the problems we face today when talking about Jnāna Yoga is the not uncommon perception that it emphasises the purely intellectual side of the coin, diluting the contribution of wisdom and self-enquiry. When we view the world around us and what mess humanity has made of it, it is more than a valid concern that man’s intellect is outstripping his moral or spiritual growth.

Martin Luther King Jr said “Our scientific power has outrun our spiritual power. We have guided missiles and misguided men.” And Madame Blavatsky in *The Voice of the Silence* told us: “But even ignorance is better than head-learning with no Soul-Wisdom to illuminate and guide it.”

How can we therefore reconcile that humanity, developing to a high state its knowledge and intellect in modern times, can stoop to such misadventures? Some might say in light of our very troubled world that we need to stop travelling down the road of the mind, the intellect — that in fact we have gone far enough in this direction — and we need to use only the heart instead. Turning our back on the mind is not the answer. In fact, it is impossible to turn one’s back on the mind.

According to Theosophy, the mind is the soul. “The mind and the soul are one and the same thing.” It is also referred to as our “permanent individuality”, in contrast with our “present personality”, and as our Ego, using the term “Ego” in its original and literal sense of meaning the true “I” of our being. It is this Mind-Soul-Ego which incarnates and reincarnates, from life to life and body to body, on a long journey of progressive evolution and inner unfoldment.

A distinction here is also necessary — the mind and the brain are not one and the same thing. The brain is only an organ, a tool, used by the mind to function and operate on the physical plane. The brain only exists for the duration of one lifetime but the mind continues on. Madame

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Blavatsky tells us quite plainly a number of times in *The Secret Doctrine Dialogues*: “. . . the mind or the Ego . . . is still the soul. It is perfectly synonymous with soul. . . . If you believe in mind, mind is the soul or the Ego.”

This does not mean there should be a neglect of the “heart” quality, however, both need to be developed in perfect balance. The Masters say that intuition and intellect ought to be developed and cultivated side by side and at the same rate as one another.

Master KH sheds some light on this matter for us in the Mahatma Letters. He says:

If, throwing aside every preconceived idea, you could TRY and impress yourself with this profound truth that intellect is not all powerful by itself; that to become “a mover of mountains” it has first to receive life and light from its higher principle — Spirit, and then would fix your eyes upon everything occult, spiritually trying to develop the faculty according to the rules, then you would soon read the mystery right. [Emphases added.]

We see therefore that soul-mind is the nexus between higher and lower, linking the light of the Monad to the incarnated mortal being. It is critical to our evolution because the future state and karmic destiny of the Ego depends on whether *manas* (Mind) gravitates downwards towards its animal nature, or upwards towards *buddhi*, the Spiritual Soul.

. . . the mind alone — the sole link and

medium between the man of earth and the Higher Self.

H. P. Blavatsky

Through these glimpses we can see that Jñāna Yoga is a path of Self-discovery and a gradual unfolding of truths which draws the seeker closer to the goal of liberation. It is a path that has helped me in my quest to understand who I am and make sense of my experiences in the world.

The Mind is a critical element of this wondrous journey and pitfalls aside for one who perseveres, we are told it leads to a place of wonderful transcendence. This fascinating journey of new discovery and surprise is described by Robert Bowen in *Madame Blavatsky on How to Study Theosophy*. Here he relates what Madame Blavatsky said to her students on raising consciousness by means of this yoga.

As one progresses in Jñāna Yoga one finds conceptions arising which, though one is conscious of them, one cannot express nor yet formulate into any sort of mental picture. As time goes on these conceptions will form into mental pictures.

This is a time to be on guard and refuse to be deluded with the idea that the new-found and wonderful picture must represent reality. *It does not*. As one works on, one finds the once admired picture growing *dull* and *unsatisfying* and finally fading out or being thrown away.

This is another danger point, because for the moment one is left in a *void* without any conception to support one, and one may

Glimpses on the Jnāna Yoga Path

be tempted to revive the cast-off picture for want of a better one to cling to. The true student will, however, work on unconcerned, and presently further formless gleams come, which again in time give rise to a larger and more beautiful picture than the last. But the learner will now know that no picture will ever represent the TRUTH.

This last splendid picture will grow dull and fade like the others. And so the process goes on, until at last the mind and its pictures are transcended and the learner enters and dwells in the world of NO FORM, but of which all forms are narrowed reflections. [Emphases added.]

This concept of an infinite universe, forever unveiling greater and more profound truths is beautifully put in the poetical *Light of Asia*, by Sir Edwin Arnold.

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

The yogi ascends to new heights as he or she acquires a deeper realization of what Self truly is, and a more intimate identification with the divine Mind is established. This is accompanied by greater awareness of who we are and the light of the Soul shines ever more brightly through the personality. The journey to the heart is a natural accompaniment as the aspirant flowers like a lotus before the sun, the dark clouds having been removed forever through our own effort. The goal of Jnāna Yoga is magnificent indeed and Swami Nikhilananda provides an inspiring vision of the yogi's quest:

When the aspirant cultivates knowledge of the Self, of Brahma with love, humility, faith and devotion, he is freed from the round of birth and death in the relative world. Purity of mind, humility of spirit and unshakeable self-control are required for the seeker after *Brahmavidyā*. ✧

Order can come about only through the awareness of disorder. You cannot create order, you can only be aware of disorder, outwardly as well as inwardly. A disordered mind cannot create order because it doesn't know what it means.

J. Krishnamurti
The Little Book on Living

The Great Awakening — II

DOROTHY BELL

Background

In Part I of *The Great Awakening* we looked at Annie Besant as a spiritual warrior, with her vision for a New Civilisation of humanity, the ground of which was to be prepared in the work of the Society. We looked more closely at this New Civilisation in terms of expansion of consciousness into the “Great Awakening” of the illumined Heart-Mind, and the full and complete realization of the Oneness of all things, all beings, all life.

Part II of *The Great Awakening* will focus on self-education strategies for learning to see with the eyes of spirit: learning ways for gradually breaking through the illusions of separateness and form and a materialistic worldview; challenging the control of the programmed mind, and preparing the ground for a New Civilisation.

The Importance of Spiritual Perception

The theme of “learning to see” beyond the physical world is present in many religious texts and hymns. Removing “scales from the eyes” and learning to see the invisible by “opening the eyes

wide on the visible”, represent some ways of expressing this.

In the context of the Theosophical worldview, similar references relate to “learning to see” in the context of liberating the individual from spiritual blindness — and transforming book knowledge into true perception and direct experience.

The article on Karma in *Light on the Path* advises:

Learn now that there is no cure for desire, no cure for the love of reward, no cure for the misery of longing, save in the fixing of the sight and hearing upon that which is invisible and soundless. Begin even now to practise it, and so a thousand serpents will be kept from your path. Live in the eternal.

In *The Golden Stairs*, HPB identifies “an open mind” and “an unveiled spiritual perception” as two of the necessary steps for the student to climb up to the Temple of Divine Wisdom. An open mind is a liberated mind freed from illusion, freed from conditioned beliefs and emotions, as in *The Voice of the Silence*,

Having become indifferent to objects of perception, the pupil must seek out the

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The Great Awakening — II

Rājā of the senses, the thought-producer, he who awakes illusion.

The mind is the great slayer of the Real. Let the disciple slay the slayer.

It follows that the programmed beliefs and emotions of the socially conditioned mind that take us away from a clear perception of our spiritual identity and reality, are obstacles to be removed before *true* perception — seeing the Reality beyond appearances — can unfold naturally.

More guidance from *The Voice of the Silence* continues the theme and its *preconditions*:

Before the Soul can see, the Harmony within must be attained, and fleshly eyes rendered blind to all illusions.

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

And the introductory section of *Light on the Path*, echoes:

Before the eyes can see they must be incapable of tears. Before the ear can hear it must have lost its sensitiveness. . . .

Annie Besant said many times that we are “blinded by form”, while actively reinforcing HPB’s advice to learn to see with the eyes of spirit. In *The Law of Duty* she expanded on this yogic skill and outlined a strategy — a fundamental principle from which we could experiment and work:

We must separate, in our thought, the form

in which consciousness is embodied and the Consciousness itself . . .

She continues,

The spiritual and the Eternal is not of the life of form. What then is the Spiritual? It is alone the life of the Consciousness which recognises Unity, which sees one Self in everything and everything in the Self. The spiritual life is the life which, looking into the infinite number of phenomena, pierces through the veil of Maya and sees the One and the Eternal within each changing form.¹

While the theory is illuminating and appears simple, the yogic skill of *spiritual perception* remains a huge challenge on the road to awakening to, and expressing fully and completely the inner One True Self — like the lover in the Persian poem. However, if the quest is to truly see the invisible through the visible, it would be useful to learn about the psychological process of Perception — remembering that HPB indicated that the next developmental stage in our evolution “*would have more to do . . . with psychology than with physics*”.²

Visual Perception and Mind Control

Glossary sections in reference books on psychology generally describe the process of perception as made up of two sequential parts.

The first is *receiving information* from the senses — what is seen, heard etc. — followed by *the interpretation of that information* so as to construct meaningfulness about one’s world and experience.

Some descriptions of the process simply restate these elements where perception is seen as *physical sensation interpreted in the light of experience*, and we may add a functional element to perception as the interpretation of sensory input that serves as a basis for understanding, knowing *AND for motivating a particular action or reaction*.

Now, the second part of the process — *interpreting the information* — is of utmost interest to those who want to work the power of Ancient Wisdom as the truth in their lives, to learn to see the invisible by “opening the eyes wide on the visible” while still residing in the physical vehicle on Earth.

Given the scenario that as “false and artificial” personalities or egos we do not actually see the meaning of what is happening in our world through our physical eyes; we see through the mind’s eye, which makes sense of — or interprets — all sensory input.

Given that the once clear, pure mirror of the mind gathers dust, is clogged, and tainted by socially programmed beliefs since childhood — including the beliefs of separateness, death and form, and emotional attachments to them — the mind’s worldview is formed. This is its hard-wiring, its “truth” and its controlling editorship interprets all sensory input. In this way it automatically controls the responses of the personality-ego.

Given this scenario, we may realize that, technically, we express “The Program” like a computer response; we do not express who we truly are; we are controlled by the mind.

And as Krishnamurti asserted, “We are second-hand people.”

Towards True Perception

Nevertheless, in the above scenario, there lies the opportunity and challenge to learn to truly see — to change our perceptions by actively *intervening* in the second part of the process of “interpreting the data” from what is heard, seen. . . .

Theoretically, if the theosophical worldview resonates deeply as our truth, we can insert relevant elements of this way of seeing the world into a situation — to override the old computer program and adjust “interpretation” to represent our true reality. We can learn to change the meaning that programmed minds are giving to our experience, and eventually change our reactions and responses — to harmonize them with “right viewing, right thinking, right action”.

While the clinical term is “reprogramming” the mind, the proposition that *we are trueing ourselves* is preferable. We will be working towards seeing with our spiritualized minds; we will be removing the obstacles, the modifications of mind, that block the natural unfolding and expression of who we really are; and, we will be creating new “brain paths” in the process, as HPB indicated around 130 years ago, reminding us of the neuroplasticity of the brain.

We can use the mind to change the mind and we will be preparing the ground for the next step in our evolution of consciousness, the Great Awakening. In this state of being, we will go beyond the

mind to directly apprehend spiritual truths, and to “be” from the Oneness — from the Heart centre and Heart-Mind of true perception and compassionate understanding.

The Sparrow Connection

A time ago, an unexpected garden encounter jolted the writer temporarily into believing in the possibility of this Reality while still in the body on Earth.

One spring day, a commotion in my back garden summoned my attention. Sparrows were chirping frantically as the cat had decided to prowl the garden with serious intent. The birds were silenced by my appearance and retreated to the trees.

Eventually, I found the other source of commotion — a young, fluffed-up sparrow, stranded and grounded in a garden bed. Its flight training had obviously been interrupted.

In my cupped hands, the fledgling was safe, its tiny frame so fragile and warm. It was a feisty little thing, still loudly and indignantly chirping its truth, with its heart pumping very, very strongly against my hand.

This went on for a few seconds until I became aware of my own heart pumping strongly, almost loudly, and I realized that it was in unison with the little sparrow. I couldn't differentiate between the two heartbeats. . . .

Then, an overwhelming thought flooded in, “One Heart, the Universal Heart”.

A timeless moment.

Inevitably, when wonder and disbelief lessened, with cat secured and the fledg-

ling returned to the classroom, the mind scrambled for intellectual reference points.

Remembering Annie Besant's suggestion that we must separate in our thought, the form in which consciousness is embodied and the Consciousness itself, I looked at the little bird in a new light. *Was this really God manifesting? Was this the One Life or the One True Self camouflaged in sparrow form?* The computer mind “did not compute”.

Also remembering N. Sri Ram's observation that “Life is nothing but consciousness completely conditioned by the organism it uses”, I realized at the intellectual level, that this cheeky, little bird and I were separated only by my programmed thoughts and the illusion of form, created by the physical senses. I could not “see” the invisible.

But in terms of theosophical propositions, we were the ONE consciousness energy — both conditioned uniquely by our temporary forms. And in truth, in that garden, everything was the One Life, the One True Self or Universal Consciousness energy, cloaked or veiled in different forms — human, plant, bird, animal, insect, water, rock, crystal. . . . There is no separation in spirit, in consciousness. Only thought separates.

And could I really see — or even grasp intellectually — that we were all an aspect of each other? At least, just for a moment, a taste of Oneness was experienced in the garden. . . .

Just Experiment

Theoretically, one can seize every

opportunity throughout the day to experiment, to do a double take, to change the way we see things with the eyes of spirit, and it will eventually have an effect — perhaps like drops of water wearing away a stone. As many seers and sages have echoed, “What we think, we become.”

Being in Nature and sensing the Oneness and Reality beyond form, always bolsters the spirit — “sensing” the invisible by opening the eyes wide on the visible. Whether looking at a mosquito, eagle, politician, homeless person or gum tree, we can look at everything in terms of the theosophical worldview — in terms of Spirit-Matter, Consciousness-Form — and the One Life consciousness will surely strengthen; the Divine Plan of evolution of consciousness will become clearer.

We can look at politicians on TV world news, or fellow passengers in a bus, with no judgment. Just seeing through the lens of Ancient Wisdom, seeing them “how they are” — with their unique soul histories; with their genetic and social conditioning; all players on the Shakespearean world stage and players in the Divine Plan of evolution of consciousness, all operating in the great universal Law.

And here we are again, having yet another experience on schoolhouse Earth in accord with our Life Plans and the unique agendas of our souls — to experience and learn the lessons of life and love, just like the lover in the Persian poem.

And with free will operating on this planet, and everything that happens being accurate or perfect in terms of the work-

ing of the great universal law, there is no such thing as “injustice” — and no victims or perpetrators.

Can we feel our mind program recoiling at this proposition, as we cast our eyes over the planet and reflect on our own experiences?

Our freedom is in our hands and small steps can bring small liberating moments that accumulate over time. It may begin with a new way of looking at our cat or dog — or a feisty sparrow.

Conclusion

In the beginning we focused on Annie Besant’s vision as it related to the “Great Awakening” — the new step in the evolution of humanity. Related to this, her vision of working towards the emergence of a New Civilisation is an inspiring one.

Moved by her work, one wonders how her vision might apply in today’s world.

She was planning towards a New Civilisation, an awakened and enlightened culture, and she implemented a strategy to work towards achieving her vision — theosophical communities living and training together *physically* in the spirit of brotherhood as a miniature model for the future, preparing and seeding the ground towards it.

However, what if her vision was already in the process of manifesting with individuals *at the inner level*?

What if an inner *network*, a kind of collective was being formed, subconsciously, and was slowly growing as a spiritual force, beyond the visible physical world of appearances?

The Great Awakening — II

What if this had been occurring naturally, and beyond any need for physical membership, names, dues to be paid, hierarchical structures or conditions of membership?

What if they were not known physically to one another and not necessarily in organizations — they were inwardly connected but physically scattered all over the planet?

And what if this operational network of like-minded people was actually linked at the *inner level* by the vibrational frequency of their energy, generated by their inner and outer work, and that this frequency was their automatic or natural entrée to the invisible network?

It would be an anonymous, spiritual

force undivided, naturally formed — like the cells of a beehive — scattered, but with intuitive linkage.

Their hallmark would be altruism, and moving towards Oneness — their work as world servers, would come from a great love of humanity and their vibration would reflect a purity of heart and intention.

And what if this collective formed an inner nucleus of Cosmic Kinship with all realms and dimensions of consciousness and existence — even beyond the Earth, in other solar systems, galaxies, worlds and universes — all existing in the One Life and the One Life existing in all . . . all part of the One Reality?

What if all things are possible and possibly all things are? ✧

Endnotes

1. Annie Besant, *The Laws of the Higher Life*, TPH, Adyar, Chennai, India, 1997, pp. 29–30.
2. Joy Mills, *The Human Journey*, Adyar Pamphlet New Series #4, TPH, Adyar, Chennai, India, 2002.

**As we are sowing, so shall we reap; as we are spinning,
so shall be destiny's cord in the future. Man is the
creator of his future; man is the maker of his destiny;
man is his own Fate.**

Annie Besant
The Riddle of Life

THE 143RD INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Theme: *Truth and Beauty: A Field Beyond*

The 143rd International Convention of the Theosophical Society will be held at the International Headquarters, Adyar, **from 31 December 2018 to 5 January 2019**. All members of the Society in good standing are welcome to attend as delegates. **Non-members** may send **requests** for permission to attend, together with a recommendation from an officer of a Federation or a Section, **to the Convention Officer (CO) before 25 November**.

Package rates from 29 Dec. 2018 to 6 Jan. 2019, inclusive. One-day rates not available.

Note: Half rate for children from 3–10 years.

LEADBEATER CHAMBERS (LBC)

Overseas delegates

Indian and Less Developed Countries' delegates

- Includes registration fee, shared room, mosquito nets, bedsheets, no blankets, all meals at LBC dining hall. No reimbursement, if one eats at the Canteen.

Registration with full board

US\$ 360 / EUR 310 / AUD 490

Rs 9,300

INDIAN STYLE

Indian and Less Developed Countries' delegates

- Includes registration fee, mat/cot or mattress, bedsheets, all meals at the Canteen

Registration with full board

Rs 2,000

CANTEEN

Canteen from 30 Dec. (dinner) to 5 Jan. (lunch)

- Includes breakfast, lunch, snacks, dinner (run by the Karnataka Theosophical Federation)

Only Meals

Rs 1,200

ACCOMMODATION

All Indian style accommodation is dormitory type — i.e., shared accommodation, multiple beds within the same room or hall; no attached bathrooms/toilets; and, no kitchen. No special facilities can be provided for members who are ill or for women with babies. Ordinary medical attention will be available for minor complaints and there are no facilities to treat serious illness. Since accommodation is limited, especially ground floors, preference will be given for very elderly delegates who register early. Accommodation availability will be confirmed by the Convention Officer by email. Specific building / room allotment requests cannot be entertained.

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENTS

Last date for registration: 1 December 2018

Cancellation: last date 15 December 2018; payment will be refunded, except the Registration fee of Rs 300 or USD 70. After 15 December there will be no refund of any amount.

Delegates from India: Send the Registration Form with the details (available at <www.ts-adyar.org>), along with the package charges, to the Convention Officer before 1 December 2018. Remittance by crossed **cheques or bank drafts** should be **payable to The Theosophical Society**.

Delegates from other countries: Make sure you take travel insurance. Send the Registration Form (available at <www.ts-adyar.org>) by email. Payment on arrival in foreign currency is accepted. Master Card and Visa credit cards are also accepted. If payment is being made by online bank transfer, then make sure that the purpose of payment is marked "Donations".

All: If making online transfers, it is essential to communicate by email to CO, the following details: delegate(s) name, bank name, amount, date of transfer and transfer reference number.

Contact Convention Officer by email: tsadyarconvention@gmail.com or

By Post: The Convention Officer, The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India

Marja Artamaa, *International Secretary*

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India

International Convention 2018-19

REGISTRATION & ACCOMMODATION FORM

(To be filled in **Block Capitals** and sent to the Convention Officer, preferably by email at <tsadyarconvention@gmail.com>)

Main applicant details to be entered below; the application should be completely filled up in all the fields

Name: Nationality: Email:

Address (in home country): Phone/Mobile:

Section/Federation/Lodge: Special Request:

PACKAGE RATES:

- A. LBC: Overseas delegates USD 360* Includes registration fee, meals at LBC Dining Hall, accommodation sharing, sheets and mosquito nets
- B. LBC: Indian delegates Rs 9,300 Includes registration fee, meals at LBC Dining Hall, accommodation sharing, sheets and mosquito nets
- C. Indian Style: Rs 2,000 Includes registration fee, meals at Canteen, accommodation - sharing/dormitory, mat/cot/mattress, sheet

*Note: half rate for children of 3-10 years For customizing board and lodging, contact the Convention Officer by email * or EUR 310 or AUD 490*

No.	Name (including the main applicant)	Age	Gender F/M	Member Y/N	Package A / B / C	Payment mode	Amount	Remarks (Mention family group, medical condition if any)

Date of Arrival: morning/afternoon Date of Departure: morning/afternoon

Signature of applicant: Date:

Overseas delegates: Please make sure you are covered under overseas travel insurance

For all delegates:

Completing this Registration Form with all particulars is important – please do not send or submit incomplete forms

Last date for registration: 1 December 2018. Last date for cancellation: 15 December 2018 (by email or by post received at TS Adyar)

For online payments and any clarifications, contact Convention Officer at email to tsadyarconvention@gmail.com or visit www.ts-adyar.org for details.

Fragments of the Ageless Wisdom

How You Are with Me

God spoke to Moses,
You are the one I have chosen,
and I love you.

Moses replies, I feel the generosity,
but say what it is in me
that causes your love.

God explains, You have seen
a little child with its mother.
It does not know anyone else exists.

The mother praises or scolds,
a little slap perhaps,
but still the child reaches
to be held by her.

Disappointment, elation,
there is only one direction
that the child turns.

That is how
you are with me.

A Year With Rumi
Coleman Barks

Theosophical Work around the World

The Joy Mills Collection at the Krotona Institute of Theosophy

The unique Joy Mills Collection is available to scholars, writers, researchers, and students at the Library and Research Center of the Krotona Institute of Theosophy, Ojai, California. The Collection was made possible by a generous grant from the Kern Foundation. It is an extensive compilation of documents and materials by this distinguished theosophical leader, scholar, teacher, and author, as detailed below.

Joy Mills (1920 - 2015) was respected and admired worldwide for her deep study and understanding of the Ageless Wisdom. She had a long and remarkable life of service to the Theosophical Society (TS) in a number of capacities, including President of the American and Australian Sections, international Vice-President, and Director of the Krotona Institute School of Theosophy, expanding its educational and training programs. She also established Quest Books at the TS in America. In 2011 she was awarded the Subba Row Medal by the TS General Council in recognition of her outstanding contributions to theosophical literature and understanding.

Her books include *100 Years of Theosophy*, a history of the American Section; *The One True Adventure: Theosophy and the Quest for Meaning*; and *Reflections on an Ageless Wisdom: A Commentary on the Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, her

last major work. During 75 years of membership in the TS, she also lectured in over 50 countries and TS Lodges, and wrote numerous articles on Theosophy and related topics for *The Theosophist* and *Quest* journals, and other theosophical journals around the world.

Summary of the Collection and Archives

When Joy Mills left her extraordinary life's work to the Krotona Institute, a plan was devised to carefully preserve it so that others could benefit from her many years of study and scholarship. A team of dedicated workers assembled Joy's 12 boxes of lectures, essays, articles, research papers, reports, TS correspondence, personal letters, teaching files and numerous photographs; and over 500 books with margin notes and underlined passages were included into a comprehensive and catalogued collection of Joy's work. She also left boxes of Virginia Hanson's papers, who was Joy's longtime mentor, and who devoted many years to study and research *The Mahatma Letters*.

Joy's teaching files may be of special interest to scholars and researchers because they contain comprehensive reference materials, notebooks, and class lectures. Her highly regarded work on H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* are included. For those interested in these and other topics, Joy's teaching files are

Theosophical Work around the World

valuable resources. Her book annotations may also be useful for gaining insight into how she incorporated research materials into her work.

Partial List of Teaching Files

H. P. Blavatsky & the Buddhist Path
Studies in the Secret Doctrine
The Mahatma Letters
Karma & Nirvana
The Bodhisattva Way
Pilgrimage of the Soul

Discovering Feminine Values in Our Life
From Inner to Outer Transformation
The Holy Grail & King Arthur
A Path to Human Freedom
What Does It Mean to Be Human?
Theosophy: Who Can Say What It Is?

Partial List of Research Files

Creation & Creative Forces
Death & Dying
Free Will & Necessity
Krishnamurti
The Myth of Man
Mysticism
Plato
Root Races & Nations
Symbolism
Theosophy Study Courses
Upanishads

Postscript

Joy Mills was not known as a poet, but after her passing, an old book of poetry written in her own handwriting was found in her home. It was labeled "Poems", and inscribed: "These are the things I would put together for Reverence, for Beauty, Love, Truth, and for Their

Service." The subjects include Nature, animals, love, beauty, and her sensitivity and spiritual aspirations are evident throughout. Most of the poems (167), spanning from 1939 to the mid-1990s, were compiled by Mrs Nelda Samarel, former Director of Krotona School, and were published by Quest Books last year with the title *For a Wayfarer*. A poem from the book, with the same title, is below:

Cross no bridge unless you know
What lies shimmering below,
What awaits the heart beyond.
Leave no valley fair and fond,

For a road that is not kind;
Burn no friendly bridge behind
Till you know the land that lies
Underneath your seeking eyes.

Heed a traveller's advice
Who has blundered once or twice,
Cross no bridge that does not lead
To the country of your need.

Krotona is a residential community of Theosophical Society members in the Ojai Valley on over 100 acres of scenic beauty. It includes the Krotona Library and Research Center, Quest Bookshop, and School of Theosophy. It is surrounded by rolling hills, woodlands, abundant wildlife, and spacious gardens for quiet reflection. It welcomes inquirers and students from around the world. An application form to access Joy Mills' or Virginia Hanson's Archival Collections is available by writing to:

<residenthead@krotonainstitute.org>.

Theosophical Work around the World



Joy Mills as a twenty-year-old college student, while holidaying along the shore of Lake Michigan in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, in 1940



Ms Trần-Thi-Kim-Diêu, Chairman of the European Federation (sitting next to writing board), holding a seminar at the Neve Shalom village, with Mr Abraham Oron (standing), Chairman of the TS in Israel



General Council Planning Meeting held from 30 June to 5 July 2018 at the International Theosophical Centre (ITC) Naarden, the Netherlands (see p. 5 of this issue for more details).
 Front row, l. to r.: Vicente Hao Chin, Jr, former General Secretary, TS in the Philippines; Marja Artamaa, international Secretary; Nancy Secrest, international Treasurer; Tim Boyd, international President; Deepa Padhi, international Vice-President; Arend Heijbroek, Director, ITC Naarden; Jenny Baker, General Secretary, TS in England

Theosophical Work around the World

Ukraine

A four-day program on “Theosophy and Science — Encouraging Bridges” was organized by the TS in Ukraine (TSU) Theosophy-Science Group, with the help of scientist Jacques Mahnich, international lecturer and member of the French Section, who visited Ukraine with his wife from 1 to 10 May 2018.

The program, held from 5 to 8 May, started in the Kiev city library, with a round-table discussion, “Timeless Wisdom and Science — Encouraging Bridges”, with 40 participants. Five lecturers, members of the TSU Theosophy-Science Group, took part in the program. Jacques Mahnich’s talk, “Theosophy and Science: Past and Present”, was well received by the audience, and all talks were followed by fruitful discussions.

On 6 May a 4-hour program in memory of H. P. Blavatsky’s (HPB) 127th anniversary of her passing took place at the TSU headquarters, in Kiev, with more than 50 participants. Mr Mahnich gave two talks: “The Essence of HPB’s Timeless Message” and “Science and Theosophy: Searching for Bridges”.

On 7 May, the TSU Theosophy-Science group held philosophical dialogues, meeting with Mr Mahnich, employees of the National Technical University, and the public of Dnipro city.

The 7-hour traditional meeting on 8 May, White Lotus Day, was held in the HPB and Her Family Museum Center in Dnipro. This was followed by a scientific-practical conference, “HPB and Modernity: Spiritual Aspects with a Modern

Outlook”, with members of the TSU Theosophy-Science Group and Ukraine scientists taking part. Mr Mahnich gave two talks, one devoted to HPB’s heritage, and the other on “Science and Theosophy, Searching for Bridges”, with 80 attendees. TSU heartily looks forward to another visit by the Mahnichs.

Israel

Mr Abraham Oron reports from the TS in Israel that around 20 persons participated in a three-day seminar given by Ms Trân-Thi-Kim-Diêu from 14 to 16 June, with the theme “Living in Wisdom”. It was held in the Neve Shalom (Oasis of Peace), a cooperative village jointly founded by Israeli Jews and Arabs in an attempt to show that the two peoples can live side by side peacefully. During the seminar Ms Diêu shared her insights on “The Doctrine of the Heart — The Way to Enlightenment and Compassion”, and on “Spiritual Powers and the Mystical Nature of a Human Being”. She also gave a well-attended public talk on “Discovering the Sacred”. They are grateful to her for the effort and time invested, and the profound teachings from Buddhism and Theosophy she shared with them. They look forward to a retreat with her in 2019.

Recent Changes

Mrs Ligia Montiel was appointed as Presidential Representative of the TS in Costa Rica in July 2018, succeeding Ms Maria Orlich, who served in that capacity for many years. ✧

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