

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.



THE THEOSOPHIST

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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

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

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

“Small Acts with Great Love”

TIM BOYD

IT is an understatement to say that we find ourselves living in challenging times. Right now any direction we look, there seems to be some looming crisis. In H. P. Blavatsky’s “The Golden Stairs” the person who aspires to wisdom is charged with “a valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked”. But where do we begin with those who are unjustly attacked? Certainly there are human conditions of unjust attacks, person to person, nation against nation, but there is also the natural world, which is under an unrelenting and unjustifiable attack from humanity as a whole.

In these moments, not just within the Theosophical Society (TS), but in the world, it seems that many people are reaching out for some spiritual grounding — a sense of something more real than the turmoil they are experiencing. While there is such a thing as genuine spirituality, from my point of view an untested spirituality is somehow not real.

On a sunny day, with good health and a pocket full of money, spirituality is not a difficult thing to proclaim. However, the course of every life is filled with challenges. One of life’s great challenges is to discover and exhibit what is in fact real. The great saint Kabir made the statement: “What Kabir talks of is only what he has

lived through. If you have not lived through something, it is not true.”

For some years I worked in hospice, caring for the dying. When people would die, it was often unsettling and confusing to the people they knew in life. Friends and acquaintances, when speaking to the loved ones who remained, did not know what to say. Very often people would say things like “he/she is in a better place”, “it’s God’s will”, or “at least you had 10 good years together (or 15, 20, and so on, years)”. These kind of remarks are more a sign of people’s personal discomfort, unfamiliarity, and perhaps fear of this moment. But it is something that comes from this category of un-lived truths. To someone who is grieving, they need companionship, not pronouncements. Too often, people fail in that regard. Until we have lived it, it is not true for us. Without having had the experience within our heart, spiritual sounding words can flow too easily from our lips.

When we talk about a human life, all of us are experienced in it. Each of us is here for a very short period of time — if we are lucky, 100 years — but it is short, and filled with crises and joys. During that time many things happen, and we try to make sense of them. Very often the deepest meaning we find is in some

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outlook related to spirituality. An American humorist once made the point that “Life is full of miserableness, loneliness, and suffering, and it’s all over too quickly.” Crises and loss seem to be the main ways that we deepen, as well as joy. Every life has its share of them. So when we think about what life is, it is many things. It is growth and creation, also it is destruction and decline. The great spiritual Masters throughout the ages have repeatedly tried to draw our attention to the fact that it is *all* of these things at once. Try to ignore any part of it, and we limit our access to truth.

Periodically I reread the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and always I find new insights. It is a source of great enjoyment and instruction whenever I get to the chapter where Arjuna recognizes that Krishna is not merely a friend, or a knowledgeable charioteer, but that he is, in fact, the supreme Lord. Arjuna asks him for the boon of seeing him in his true form. Krishna obliges, and when Arjuna sees all that, his hair stands on end. It is much more than what he could have expected.

What is described as being seen within this “true form” are *all* of the devas (angels) and gods, innumerable eyes seeing in every direction, fires coming from his body “burning up universes”. The *Gītā* is the conversation that results from Arjuna’s indecision on the cusp of the battle between two warrior families, his family, the Pandavas, and his opponents, the Kauravas. Arjuna sees all the warriors of the Kaurava family, flowing into the infinite mouths of Krishna,

and being crushed in his teeth, but also all of humanity is flowing into the mouths of Krishna. As much as life is creation, it is equally destruction.

When we talk about Oneness and Brotherhood, often we limit our consideration to Light and enlightenment. Oneness is a solidarity, a shared, mutual experience of life. But life is a sharing in both its lightened and dark aspects — in enlightenment and in ignorance, equally so. There is no such thing as one without the other. It is an immature approach to the spiritual life to want the icing on the cake and not the cake.

In spiritual traditions around the world there is a term that comes up again and again — emptiness. It is a term which is equated with wisdom or enlightenment. You find emptiness in the Sufi tradition, in Buddhism and Christianity as well. The idea expressed is that the deepest wisdom, or connection with the Divine, is related to this experience of emptiness. Saint Paul talked about the experience of communion with the Divine, saying: “To be absent from the body is to be present with God.” To be absent (empty) from all of the senses, from all the experience with desires that we treasure is to be present with the Divine.

In Buddhism emptiness is highly emphasized in the six *pāramitas* (perfections, or virtues). HPB’s *The Voice of the Silence* lists seven. In all of the approaches to the perfections, the final one is *prajñā* — wisdom. A great emphasis is placed on that in the sense that patience, perseverance, morality, and all

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the other perfections, even meditation, or *dhyāna*, are deepening, and each one is regarded as an antidote to different conditions of the human mind. But they would say: “When in doubt, look to wisdom.” When in doubt try to connect with whatever your experience of emptiness, or wisdom, might be. So what is this emptiness?

I spent a good deal of time during my life actively involved in a Buddhist approach to spirituality. This whole consideration of emptiness is central in Buddhism, but it breaks your head when you first encounter it. It is hard to get a handle on it, necessarily so. One of the great presentations of this Wisdom Tradition is called the Heart Sutra, or the *Prajñā Pāramita Sutra*, in which the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara gives the teaching to a disciple of the Buddha. In it, his sole focus is on wisdom and emptiness. To me it is revealing, because the entire discussion is about what wisdom is *not*, not what it is. From beginning to end it is a negation of everything that we might think wisdom could be.

The Bodhisattva tells the disciple that emptiness is the original character of *everything*: It is not born, not annihilated, not tainted, not pure, it does not increase or decrease. Then he goes on to talk about how with emptiness there is no eye, no ear, no nose, no body, no mind. And he goes on layer after layer of what it is *not*. This emptiness the sutra attempts to convey is not a void. In a sense it is a Space-like understanding, and Space contains *everything*.

As individuals we move and function within space; nations, houses, ideas, all are within space. It is probably our closest metaphor for God, or the Divine, something that is present everywhere, that participates in everything, out of which everything comes into being, yet it is completely unaffected by anything created or destroyed, by ignorance or enlightenment. Understanding this is described as the pathway to enlightenment. Enlightenment does not arise because we sit in meditation, or from the things we do for others, or ourselves. All of these things need to take place, but wisdom only makes itself known to us when every category in which we attempt to contain it drops away. That is the difficulty.

Very often the statement is made: “With age comes wisdom.” As someone who has entered the category of “old”, this is a statement that I have to disagree with. A more correct statement would be: “With age comes the possibility of a deepening wisdom.” One of the things that aging does is that it strips many things away from us. All of us who in our youth were active, perhaps even vain, proud of our good looks, our hair, our smile, find that with time the hair thins and disappears, that youthful vibrancy diminishes. With time our attachments to many superficial things can lessen. This can have the effect of allowing us to see something that is more real, that was always present, but hidden by our youthful involvement in a range of activity that has faded away.

Many of us find ourselves drawn to some form of spirituality because we feel

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it will benefit us, that in some way peace and tranquility, are possibilities for us *if* we follow this avenue. While this is certainly true, when we think in terms of the enlightened beings such as Krishna, the Buddha, and we study the way that they had to interact with the world, it might not fit with our normal ideas. For example, Krishna, in the Mahabharata, is not only fully engaged in a war, but he has chosen a side in the war. He is not merely an all-seeing witness of the violence, he is on the side of Arjuna and his family, and assists them in the battle. So, there is this war, where he seems to be favoring one side, but in the end he claims everybody in the universal experience of death. *All* is completely equal.

There is a well-known story about one of the people that the Buddha had to deal with. There was a great murderer called Angulimāla. He was given the name because when he murdered his victims he would cut one of their fingers (*anguli*) and place it on his necklace (*māla*). He was famed and feared for this. On one occasion the Buddha was near the forest where the murderer was staying, and he decided he would walk there alone. His disciples warned him of the danger, yet he went alone into those woods where Angulimāla lived. As the Buddha was walking, Angulimāla spotted him and told himself: “I have another victim!”

As the Buddha was meditatively walking through the forest, Angulimāla started to run after him. The Buddha continued walking slowly, never increasing his pace, but somehow the murderer could

never catch up. He ran faster, but he could never bridge the distance. Finally, he shouted: “Stop! What are you doing?” The Buddha kept walking and said, “I have stopped!”, to which Angulimāla responded, “No, you haven’t!” This dialogue repeated itself until the Buddha said: “I have stopped from violence, from killing, from the pursuit of desires that harm others. You have not.” At that moment this dialogue sank in, and the murderer went on to become one of the great disciples sitting at the feet of the Buddha.

These are stories about the vision and effects of a genuine spirituality, but it always comes back to us: How do we behave? What do we do based on the situations we are facing in our world? Recently the news around the world is about a new war that has broken out between Ukraine and Russia. How do we help? What do we do? Often the thinking and conversation runs to who is right and who is wrong. Based on our judgment we decide and then often take the next step of creating an enemy. Within us we identify and create an enemy, and in so doing we become participants in the process of war-making. Nothing good comes out of war, except what it generates as an enlightened response among people.

One of our TS members who periodically comes to Adyar to visit with us, is from Russia. In talking with him the other day, he said he has to return now, because his visa is expiring. He is not involved in the war, but when he returns home he will find that, as a consequence of war, his life savings will have been reduced

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by sixty percent. More than half of the value of his lifetime earnings has vanished almost overnight. The job he worked for many years is also gone. Why? because he works for Google, who, as a party to sanctions against Russia, is no longer operating in his country. He also is “unjustly attacked”.

I received a letter from one of the representatives of the TS in Russia. It was not addressed to me, but to his “Ukrainian brothers and sisters in the TS”. It was a very brave thing for him to do, because that letter could land him in jail. It was a letter of open support for the Ukrainian people and a statement of the fact that the *people* of Russia are not an enemy to them. He wrote it knowing that already thousands of Russians have been imprisoned for writing or saying similar things.

Many of the millions of Ukrainians who have left their homes in war-torn areas have arrived in Hungary, a neighboring country to Ukraine. In that country the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) and other groups are inviting refugees, people they have never met, into their homes. People in America are putting together homeopathic medicine packages, food, clothing, toys for children to send to them. Globally there is the question “what can I do for *all* who are affected by senseless and unnecessary violence?” And there is a response.

These are some of the things that fill our attention in these times, and every time there are issues like this. The difference now is the growing awareness that we are globally interconnected. If it was not clear already when the pandemic rose up and a small virus brought every country and economic class to their knees, we become aware that this is one life that we share. It comes back again to “what do we do?” There is no prescription for that.

Mother Theresa is well known for having said: “We can do no great things.” Most of us want to do the great thing that will change the world, that will end war, poverty, hunger, and unloving behavior. All of this we would do if it was within our capacity, which, as individuals, it is not. But her full statement was: “We can do no great things; we can only do small things with great love.”

We can care for the people within the circle which we inhabit. We can think of the people beyond our reach. We can devise ways to support those things that support others. It spreads. You do not throw a rock in a pond and the ripples stop; they spread. This is worth remembering if we ever feel powerlessness in the face of very challenging times.

Wherever we are, small acts with great love invariably reach beyond the boundaries of our locale. ✧

**Our prime purpose in this life is to help others.
And if you can't help them at least don't hurt them.**

The Dalai Lama

What Does It Mean to Be Human?

RAVI RAVINDRA AND DAVID LORIMER

Ravi Ravindra: You have been very concerned about what it means to be a real human, so please share with us your understanding of that.

David Lorimer: Well, this is indeed a central concern of mine. I think there is a multi-level answer to this. If you speak in a metaphysical sense, a human has these different levels of identity, different levels of being in terms of the spirit, the soul, and multiple subtle bodies. This is the esoteric understanding of what a human is. Epistemologically, I would say a human is capable of Gnosis, which is the knowledge by identity and realization that the metaphysical essence of the universe is Love and Light.

But I think what is important in the current context is the human as humane and as humanitarian. I have been very influenced by Albert Schweitzer in this respect, who argued for humanitarianism. He also argued for us becoming what he called, and I love this phrase, “more finely and deeply human”, by

which I think he meant a component of understanding and wisdom, but more centrally, a component of reverence for life, and compassion and care, and ethic of the heart. So I think someone who is truly human is someone who lives not just from the mind, but also from the heart.

RR: Yes. As we look around and look at all the political leaders running the whole world, controlling the economies and the armies, some of them could even start a nuclear war. Do you think any of them would correspond to what you define as a decent human being?

DL: In this sense of humaneness, by and large the people who run the political, economic, and financial systems are obsessed with power, money, and control. So their values are mostly selfish, or corporate. They are out for their own success, and that really does not correspond to the common good. There are a few exceptions to this because the problem goes back at least as far as Plato, who had this idea that dispassionate

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guardians should be the rulers, and there is a bit of patronizing paternalism here. But I think what he was getting at was how you reconcile power and goodness. And the philosopher, by definition, in that sense, is someone who is good, has the common good in mind.

There are of course, some remarkable political people, statesmen. I think if you are an inspired politician, you become a statesman, just as Gandhi, Mandela, Václav Havel, the recent president of Uruguay Luis Lacalle Pou, and someone like Dag Hammarskjold, who I think is a huge inspiration. He and Schweitzer were quite closely linked. Hammarskjold was scrupulous in maintaining a dispassionate and disinterested position in the various issues that he was trying to deal with, even under pressure from the great powers to bend to their will, and against accusations of partiality. So there are these inspirational models, but they are quite far and few between in terms of visionary political leaders.

RR: I would also like to ask a very similar question about all the people who would be highly regarded in the scientific, and even the theological and philosophical world, including many Nobel Prize winners, because you have met many of these people, and have had many interactions with them. Do you find some of them or all of them close to being good human beings, as you would understand?

DL: Well, you covered this in a recent course that you put on. Scientists, intellectuals, and theologians, are not specialists in “being”, like the sages. They are

specialists in knowledge and in some cases being very clever and mathematically brilliant. What I am talking about here is policy of the human being. That is what we are. We are not human doings or human havings. We are human beings, and that seems to me fundamental. I have met some very inspiring people. I think a lot of the people I have come across have this understanding, like yourself. They integrate science and spirituality, they are not one-sided, and they have concern for the larger whole. But I do not think that expertise in one area necessarily translates into being a good human, maybe a productive one, but not necessarily a good one.

RR: But of course, since you are very much connected with the Scientific and Medical Network, and if you are meeting some of these people in that context, there is already a selection made. Otherwise, they will not be interested in the Network unless they were also interested in trying to understand something other than just the materialistic science.

DL: Yes, this raises a very interesting point, because if we go back to the origins of the Mystics and Scientists Conference in 1978 (and Fritjof Capra is the only speaker who is still with us), there was a sense in those days of having the mystics on the one hand, and the scientists on the other. I think what has happened in recent years is that the scientists who I invite (and you would be among those people) have themselves a mystical side. And so they are not purely scientific, but they try to integrate their science with their spirituality.

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RR: So you see, consequently, your example of the scientists is naturally restricted. It is not that you have *all* the scientists, because, unfortunately, at least in my experience, even when I was at the Institute of Advanced Study, where they obviously end up getting highly creative scientists, I was really quite saddened, because I am sure I would not wish to invite many of them for tea at my home. But it is also true that there are exceptions, some extraordinary people. To mention merely one example, Freeman Dyson was very human. In fact, on one occasion visiting us, he ended up even washing the diapers of my daughter, in some context.

DL: He is someone I knew a little bit, not nearly as well as you. But I agree, he is a very good example. Well, I think if you have a family and you have children and grandchildren, you are also a family person as well as being a scientist.

RR: But now the question which is really relevant to our life in society now. Do you feel that there is enhancement of good human beings in society? Are they decreasing in their numbers? Or are they increasing? What is your impression?

DL: Well, of course, this is an impossible question to answer. Any answer is going to be to some extent subjective. But I would like to frame it within the work of David Hawkins, who produced a classic book, *Power vs Force*. This is a central diagnosis, because what he means by power is, in fact, spiritual power. And what he means by force is violence, which produces its opposite reaction, and

that is non-violence, the Gandhian idea, something which represents spiritual power, or the power of love, or power of truth. According to his analysis, by a kind of rating scale of emotions and spiritual development, the key part on the scale is 200. Anything below 200 is predominantly negative, and anything above 200 is moving into the positive. He reckoned that in the last few years of his life we have just gone from about 194 to 207. So this would be, on his scale, something encouraging.

The other point I want to make, is really that the news that we are fed and the propaganda that is spread by the news is mostly bad. It highlights the awful things that are going on: deaths, corruption, and so forth. As Satish Kumar has said in a lecture he gave: We might be misled into thinking that the world is a much worse place than it in fact is, because 99% of people are just going about their own business, and they are helping their neighbors, their families, are supporting the community, and so on. It is only a small number who are on the extreme.

I was talking to my wife about this just yesterday. There is some sort of groundswell going on, which is a self-organizing system, to bring a new kind of relationship with each other, which involves mutual solidarity and care, and is a horizontal form of organization, rather than being a vertical top down, which is our usual kind of administrative arrangement. There is a sense in which people are waking up.

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But when I look at the big picture, I am struck by a phrase from my friend Lawrence Freeman. He sent a letter from Glasgow, which talked about a pessimism of the intellect, and an optimism of the will. That was a very interesting phrase, because I cannot say I am hugely optimistic about human prospects, but it is incumbent on me to do what I can to move things in a positive direction.

RR: We very much appreciate that. This is in fact, one of the reasons for inviting you for this interview, because of your interest in promoting goodwill and good actions in the world. But there is increasing apprehension that more and more enhancement of artificial intelligence is really going to interfere with human beings' freedom to actually even choose to do good or bad, for that matter, but that they will all be treated like machines by the artificial intelligence. Do you have some remarks about that you would like to share?

DL: Yes, indeed. And I initially am reminded of a sentence from *Ends and Means* by Aldous Huxley, where he said that technological progress has merely provided us with a more efficient means of going backwards. And Schweitzer distinguishes quite carefully between technological progress, social progress, and spiritual progress. He always insisted that spiritual progress was the most important. So I think that we are really back to this initial premise about what is a human being. For the transhumanists and technocrats in Silicon Valley, entrepreneurs, most of them, except Federico Faggin, think we are just biological machines. It is so sad that the machine

metaphor is so much taken for granted.

It does not occur to people to make the obvious distinction between a machine and an organism, almost obvious to any biologist. And so we are regarded as biological machines in need of an upgraded operating system. I think the spiritual traditions also feel we need an upgrade, but that is not quite the same thing. I think the agenda has moved forward sharply in the last 18 months. It is towards this technocracy, transhumanism, surveillance, and control through electronic means. This is already appearing on the horizon, in my view, with the "track and trace" vaccine health passes, or vaccine passports.

Another aspect of this, which many people do not appreciate, is the relationship between technocracy, the control through technology, and the sustainable development goals, because a central plank of these is what we call smart cities. And a smart city is one with a lot of "5G" and "6G", which enables the internet of things and bodies. And with the internet of bodies, our vital functions, and even our thoughts and feelings, may eventually be enabled to be read out of a device or an implant, if we go that far. Then everything will be uploaded into the cloud and used for commercial purposes. The mechanistic metaphor is in bad need of an overhaul. We need to go to a more living-systems view.

RR: Maybe I can take more or less really specific points from this mechanistic overhaul mechanism. Is truth to be discovered only by the mind and science? So music, sculpture, they can all go to hell, they cannot lead to any truth?

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How do we change that perspective?

DL: Well, the magnum opus of Iain McGilchrist, *The Matter With Things*, is just coming out, with 1,600 pages and 5,700 references. The means and ways to truth is his fundamental exploration. He explains that there are analytical ways to truth. He also talks about science, reason, imagination, and intuition as being paths to knowledge, and elaborates on the possibilities and potential of each of these paths. Obviously, the means to truth depends on the level at which you are operating and your state of awareness. So you cannot get to Gnosis, or spiritual truth, without using spiritual means and perception.

RR: But you see what has happened since the so-called age of enlightenment, which I regard to be a completely wrong label for this. I cannot recall any great poet who has been happy with this underlying assumption that only reason, or science, can lead to truth. For example, William Blake even regarded Newton, Francis Bacon, and Locke, the philosopher, as members of an infernal trinity. Similarly, whether you read Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, anybody, they are not really happy with this whole overlying idea that science is the only avenue to truth. So how do we actually encourage people to have some concern for whatever we mean by spiritual, because it can be a very large area? We need to begin from wherever one is.

DL: One very influential person in this respect is Goethe, who was a poet and a scientist. My understanding is that he developed what Brian Goodwin used to

call the science of qualities. So he complemented third-person objective, as it were, observation, with first-person contemplation and empathy, where we feel into the nature of what it is we are observing. We have a dynamic wish to understand the processes by which the plant develops — a seed develops into a plant, into a flower, and then back into a seed. His interest was in becoming. But the wider question then is the validation of spiritual insight and knowledge, which is also related to creativity, because of the insights that come.

I just was reading the piece by Iain McGilchrist on Poincaré, the father of modern chaos theory, for instance, as a parallel to Mozart, who was able to, as it were, download an entire symphony, and then just write it out. [**RR:** Yes]. I think it is a common source to creativity. What Iain insists on, is the key role of the right hemisphere in these processes and the fact that we live in a left hemisphere-dominated culture, which has created this sort of serious imbalances that we are talking about.

RR: My own impression is that at present, there is a very strong tendency that every kind of science, say even biology through biophysics, chemistry through physical chemistry, geology through geophysics, or even psychology, all ultimately have to become branches of physics. My personal impression is that sooner or later, maybe within one century, or even less, physics will become a branch of psychology. What is your impression about this?

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DL: That is a very interesting remark. You can see why. Well, theology was the queen of the sciences in the Middle Ages, then physics becomes the queen of the sciences. If you move in a direction of the primacy, or fundamental nature, as explained by Planck and Schrodinger, and another great physicist, Pauli, in his interaction with Jung, then you can see that everything actually branches out from consciousness and attention and *the way that we actually pay attention to things*. This is another of Iain's points, that the left hemisphere has a focused attention and the right hemisphere has a broader attention, and they obviously need to work together. That is a pretty good forecast. But I had hoped that it would be a transpersonal kind of psychology, rather than a reductionist one, if you are right.

RR: Well, the reductionist one becomes a branch of physics!

DL: That is true.

RR: Now, how do we encourage, particularly really young people, to take more and more interest in spiritual matters, because it is not that one needs to be in any sense against the scientific knowledge — that would be quite silly — but how to see the limitations or the underlying assumptions of scientific knowledge, and that there is something about their own life? After all, whatever I call myself, will die in a few decades, in my case really only a few more years. So how do we encourage our young students or young people generally?

DL: At an early stage in its development,

the Network had a week-long course for under-25s called Wider Horizons. And the intent of this course, which consisted of one person coming every 24 hours talking about their area of expertise and leading meditations, and then they also had some craft work, sculpting, dance, and movement. So the idea was to open them up, and to cover some of the areas that are not covered by the conventional curriculum. I myself try to do this in my inspiring purpose work, which is a character and values program for young people.

The way that this works is that I give them a template, the first part of which consists of thinking about themselves in terms of their qualities and what they need to develop and what they are good at — self-awareness and self-knowledge. Then it proceeds onto inspiration and then on to aspiration in terms of asking questions like, “what do you want to not just achieve, but also contribute in your life”, and “what are your ideas for a sustainable future”. So the purpose there is to enable young people to find out what is already implicit inside them to be drawn out, as education literally means. So they begin to develop a philosophy of life of their own.

But in terms of interesting young people in spirituality, quite a lot of them are interested in yoga. Fewer, I think, probably, in my experience, are interested in meditation, but they might come around to that. I think it is our life experience, essentially, which raises these questions for us. One of my colleagues,

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Oliver Robinson, is a specialist on what he calls the quarter-life crisis. So the mid-to late 20s is when, it seems, you first systematically start asking: “Well, what am I doing here?” and “Why am I here?” If you have not asked these questions already, then quite often these will arise around that phase of life.

RR: I would like to ask you a question that I also ask myself: Are we just from the very beginning of our life, mainly because of some previous lives or from birth, privileged to have certain kinds of interests, a certain kind of search, or is it something that one accidentally comes across? Or is it something that you are now suggesting we could actually install in our educational system to bring about a search for the quality of one’s being, not only the quality of one’s knowledge?

DL: From my own part, around the age of 30 or so, I kind of remembered who I was, at a deeper level. And this, of course, corresponds to the Gnostic idea that there is a fall into separation, into forgetfulness, into sleep, and then the job is to wake up and remember that you are more than just the physical body and personality. So I think that is intrinsic. But how to put it into the educational system? In England, for instance, what used to be called religious instruction, then became religious education. And now it seems to be evolving into comparative worldviews, which I find quite interesting.

But what is missing in the actual syllabus is any reference to practice, so that you are not introduced to practices,

which are the essence of the spiritual life. I think you would need to do that. I tried to do this, even when I was teaching 30 or 35 years ago. Now I introduce my pupils to basic meditation techniques, just to give them a little bit of space and silence inside. That is missing in young people at the moment. They give so much attention seeking technology, that they find it very difficult to go inside.

RR: One of the almost fundamental enunciations practically in all spiritual teachings, is that there are many levels of reality, subtler than the mind. For example, in the Bible, we have nine orders of angels, they are all spiritual, so there is a very large realm. How do we invite people to bring something other than their mind to relate with reality?

DL: That again, is a matter of practice, as we both know. It is difficult to envisage that kind of esoteric teaching being brought into the classroom, other than by very special teachers who happen to have developed that interest themselves. So what we are getting at here is how do we identify the limits of the mind, or limits of the left hemisphere, and the limits of what can be apprehended at different levels, and by implication, the limits of regarding ourselves as only a body, a body with consciousness, which is obviously the standard prevalent view?

RR: It will be good now for you to add whatever you wish. People would obviously be interested both in eternal wisdom, or Ageless Wisdom, if you like, and science. What would you like to say to them to encourage them to at least

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admire the fact that they are interested in both?

DL: Well, we need a complementary approach and to balance our inner and outer lives. And that is something that each of us has to address in our own way. I myself do this through my spiritual practice, which is partly meditation. I also do daily movements from my spiritual teacher, Peter Deunov, a Bulgarian sage. In these movements, we invoke the blessing of God, the divine love in our soul: “May divine love live in my soul, may divine justice grow within me.” These are affirmations that correspond to particular gestures.

When I am walking in Nature, I try to put my mind in neutral and be completely present. For instance, walking in the autumn rain and mist is incredibly beautiful in its own way. I try to allow myself to become absorbed in that. It makes enough space for silence, to slow down, because we are living in a speeded-up world. To have a sense of service, what can we actually do for each other?

In terms of what is important in expanding science we need to realize that there are these different interfaces, which the Network is very much concerned with. We are less concerned with the interface, specifically between science and Christian theology, and science and theology generally. But what we *are* concerned with is the interface

between science and mysticism, the mystics’ and scientists’ conference, science and spirituality, and science and esotericism. And I know that in the big magnum opus that Edi Bilimoria will be publishing next year, which I have been helping on the editing side, he makes a very good case for a new metaphysical basis for science being an esoteric framework. I very much sympathize with that. I agree with a great deal of what he says.

This means, for instance, expanding the notion of the human being into a more traditional understanding, also expanding the number of bodies, that there is not just the physical body. One of the things that the Western philosophers always bring up in discussing the Cartesian mind-body problem is that they say: “Well, how can you have an interaction between something that is extended in something that is unextended?” This completely ignores the tradition that there is not only a physical body, but there are also subtle bodies which have been articulated in Western esotericism too.

So I think we are living in a time of integration. It is extremely important to integrate the inner and the outer science and spirituality, left and right hemispheres, masculine and feminine. We are living in a time of the arrival of, and the absolute necessity for, the sacred feminine to make itself felt. So integration, I suppose, would be a key word here. ✧

Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.

Albert Einstein

Where, Who, What is God? — I

ELTON A. HALL

Exploring the Question

Sir William Jones (1746–1794), despite his occasional dim view of Indian culture, virtually fell in love with Sanskrit writings. His interest in philology led him to propose the now accepted connection between Indian and European languages, reflected in the relationship between Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, and their descendants. We begin with one of his translations from the *Yoga Vāsishtha*:

Blue crystal vault, and elemental fires
That in th' ethereal fluid blaze and breathe;
 Thou, tossing main, whose snaky
 branches wreath
This pensive orb with intertwisted gyres;
 Mountains, whose radiant spires
 Presumptuous rear their summits
 to the skies,
And blend their em'rald hue with
 sapphire light;
Smooth meads and lawns, that glow
 with varying dyes
 Of dew-bespangled leaves and
 blossoms bright,
Hence! vanish from my sight:
Delusive Pictures! unsubstantial shows!
My soul absorb'd One only Being knows,
Of all perceptions One abundant source,

Whence ev'ry object ev'ry moment flows:
 Suns hence derive their force,
Hence planets learn their course;
 But suns and fading worlds
 I view no more:
GOD only I perceive; GOD only I adore.¹

This poem embraces the spirit of the question Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (HPB) asked, that is the title of this essay. Those familiar with Theosophy and the writings of HPB know that it is rewarding to pay close attention to every word. Though these words sometimes seem casually tossed out, or even wandering from the subject at hand, each word is carefully chosen. By reading with reflective attention, we may distinguish distinctive features of her approach:

1. HPB immediately gets to the heart of the matter at hand, even when she does not appear to do so.

2. She covers a topic repeatedly — as we see in *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* — but each time unveiling more profound levels of meaning. We are introduced to a subject in a way that encourages us to assimilate what we are told, only to find a new level, perspective, or dimension of the topic for further assimilation.

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The process, as she explained in her comments to Commander Robert Bowen, one of a small group of her students, helps refine the brain so that consciousness can expand and achieve more profound insights and deeper realization. Her teachings are not aimed to merely produce an intellectually organized system of thought but rather to transform consciousness itself. One could take *The Voice of the Silence* as the key to how she wrote her other works.

3. Yet because of the nature of the teachings, HPB sometimes uses what she calls “blinds”, or veils, for various reasons. One reason is to preserve teachings and ideas that could only be misunderstood by unprepared minds, and therefore could only be confusing and perhaps harmful if encountered without preparation. Another reason, which she clearly states often, is to preserve the sanctity of the most spiritual doctrines — not that they need protection in themselves but because of the karma incurred by those who might defile that sanctity. And most importantly, the teachings are set out in a way that allows the earnest student to develop mentally, morally, and spiritually, thus gaining ever deeper understanding.

4. HPB deals with every topic she addresses in ways that fulfil all three objects of the Theosophical Society (TS).

If we keep in mind her multifaceted approach to Theosophy, we will find much to ponder and appreciate.

Two years after the founding of the TS in 1875, HPB published *Isis Unveiled*

in 1877, and her methods are immediately evident. For those of us with the hindsight of having available *The Secret Doctrine* (1888), *The Key to Theosophy*, *The Voice of the Silence*, and her many articles can look back and see just how revelatory *Isis* is.

For example, the very first sentence of *Isis* (Preface, p. v) invokes the Mahatmas, which she calls “Eastern adepts” and their teachings. she said: “The work now submitted to public judgment is the fruit of somewhat intimate acquaintance with Eastern adepts and study of their science.” And in the second sentence, she qualifies that “public” by saying the book is for those “willing to accept truth wherever it may be found”. And she adds that it is offered to those willing to defend such truth and confront popular prejudice.

We would be wise to recall not only the rather gross prejudices prevalent in the 19th century, including the idea of superior and inferior races — using the term “race” quite differently from the way Theosophy uses that word — but also the subtler forms of prejudice that have surfaced in our own times in and through modern discourse. Right from the beginning, she has set down a fundamental reason for offering *theosophia* in its modern expression. Within two sentences, HPB has given the source of these teachings and the requirements for those who want to understand and who aspire to Truth.

The remainder of the page is equally significant, touching as it does indirectly on the three objects of the TS, but our

topic is “Where, who, what is God?”, so we turn to the second page of the Preface.

In language that later writings will show is modestly veiled, HPB wrote: “When, years ago, we first travelled over the East, exploring the penetralia of its deserted sanctuaries, two saddening and ever-recurring questions oppressed our thoughts: “*Where, WHO, WHAT is GOD? Who ever saw the immortal SPIRIT of man, so as to be able to assure himself of man’s immortality?*” (p. vi)²

Albert Einstein, among other 20th century scientists, remarked that the answers we get depend upon the questions we ask. An ill-formed question will lead to distorted answers, so we need to know exactly what we are asking, which requires reflection, clarity, and commitment. HPB already raised the subject of human evolution on the previous page, broadening its implication beyond physical evolution — biology and botany — to include consciousness itself, especially as found in the human being. She raised the issue of the nature of law and the law-like nature of magic, thereby suggesting potential human powers yet to be developed by humanity as a whole, though already manifest to a high degree in those “Eastern adepts” she invoked in her first sentence. Given all this, we need to look at her questions carefully.

In her second question, she asks who has *seen* the immortal Spirit of the human being. She is not asking for some abstruse reasoning that allegedly proves immortality; she is asking about direct perception — unrefutable realization, not logic

or indirect evidence. She has connected the two questions, because if one can “see” the immortal Spirit of the human being, one has seen God, at least the God in Man.

The first question — Where, who, what is God? — is the most fundamental question humans can ask, for it seeks the source of existence, which necessarily includes human existence. It has been asked since the beginning of recorded history and long before, as the archeological remains of ancient graves indicate, even those graves of individuals we call Neanderthals. The search for the Source of all persists not only in religion and philosophy but in science as well. Even the so-called atheist yearns to know the Source, whether it has a beginning in time or beyond time and even space. Hence the cosmological debate over whether the Big Bang — itself a contested theory in cosmology — is the absolute beginning or whether we can speak of what was somehow “before” the Big Bang.

In various ways, this desire to know the ultimate Source — God, however conceived — has always been tied to the issue of transcendence and immanence. Is God “up there”, ultimately separate from the cosmos, or “here”, suffused throughout existence, or perhaps both? Religious traditions have attempted to answer this question by moving back and forth between the poles of transcendence and immanence. Some have placed God quite beyond the cosmos, as Creator pre-existing and separate from the creation. Others have seen God descending in some

sense into cosmos. And yet others, including Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, have postulated intermediate beings — angels, for example — that bridge the seeming gulf between God and the human being. (For example, one might think of the Christian doctrine of God descending as Jesus into human form, or the Islamic belief that the Qu’ran — the Word of God — was given orally to Muhammad by the angel Gabriel.)

By linking the two questions together — God and the immortal Spirit of the human being — HPB has already suggested answers to the “where”, “who”, and “what”. Referring to Teachings she learned from these Eastern Adepts, she said: “Man-spirit proves God-spirit, as the one drop of water proves a source from which it must have come.” (p. vi) Here we have an intimation of the nature of all existence, if we reflect on the analogy. Pure water is one thing: H₂O. Whether it is the ocean or a drop, it is this one thing. What distinguishes the drop is its separation from other water. Place that drop in a body of water and it disappears by becoming one with the whole body. “Man-spirit” — the immortal aspect of the human being — is analogously related to “God-spirit”. From the standpoint of spirit, the separation is an illusion, though from the standpoint of differentiation, it is quite real. So if “Man-spirit proves God-spirit”, we will need to know what “Man-spirit” is.

HPB mentions belief on the first page, saying that Theosophists do not believe in miracles nor in any magic that “transcends the scope and capacity of the

human mind”, pointing out that the idea of evolution must include evolving powers of human perception, consciousness, and awareness. Since consciousness is consciousness of something in the evolving world, perception cannot be separated from consciousness. Here both consciousness and perception can be turned outward toward the world or inward toward the depths of subjectivity. Even this belief that there is no miracle can become knowledge, implying that all existence is governed by law, and those laws can be understood.

Faith in the human capacity of perception, then, is the first step toward knowledge. In applying the analogy of the drop with the ocean, she notes that if one accepts this much, blind faith is not necessary. Yet we do not know but wish to learn. What faith do we need? “Faith” is often confused with “belief”, as in “confessions of faith”. She certainly does not mean that. Given the analogy of the water, this faith is twofold: on the one hand it is faith that such knowledge exists because there are those who have it; on the other hand, it is first and foremost faith in oneself — that one can, indeed, learn and heighten perception.

As Damodar Mavalankar said in his brief indication of the method of study, one begins with universals, related to the first kind of faith, and traces them down into particulars, then moves up from particulars to those universals, related to the second kind of faith. What one learns is what to do; what one knows is what one discerns for oneself in this reflective and

Where, Who, What is God? — I

meditative process. Only in this way, can we discover the “Man-spirit” that proves “God-spirit”.

In recounting her encounter with these Eastern Adepts, HPB says that she found that they possessed mysterious powers and profound knowledge. And so she “lent a ready ear”. *The Voice of the Silence* says: “The ‘Doctrine of the Eye’ is for the crowd; the ‘Doctrine of the Heart’ for the elect. The first repeat in pride: ‘Behold, I know’; the last, they who in humbleness have garnered, low confess: ‘Thus have I heard.’”³ Here she gives the stance of one who truly aspires to know, and throughout her works she demonstrates this stance in two ways. One is her immense erudition, fulfilling the three objects of the Society, and the second is that she always says that her teaching is not her own but that which she had learned from those Eastern Adepts. We recall that the first words of *The Secret Doctrine* are “The Author — the writer, rather” echoing the timeless “Thus I have

heard”, indicating that all true Teachers of Theosophy are transmitters of ageless wisdom, not originators of doctrines; their brilliance lies in giving out as much of the *Gupta Vidya*, the secret doctrine, (1) as can be understood by serious aspirants in their time, and (2) in words available and accessible in the culture in which they teach. In other words, they teach what can be used by humanity at any given time.

So, for the Theosophist and the inquirer alike, HPB is preparing the way to answer the question “Where, who, what is God?” The question for all of us is: are we prepared to say “Thus, I have heard”, or do we, perhaps obviously declare, but even more importantly, deep down inside ourselves whisper, “Behold, I know”? Everything hangs on our answer. Given the rich complexity of human nature, it is a question we must answer again and again as we explore the teachings of the Masters given through HPB.

(To be continued)

Endnotes

1. *The New Oxford Book of Romantic Period Verse*, ed. Jerome J. McGann, Oxford University Press, 1993, pp. 4–5.
2. All references are to the photographic facsimile reproduction of the original ed. of *Isis*, The Theosophy Company, Los Angeles.
3. *The Voice of the Silence*, The Theosophy Company ed., pp. 29–30.

Only divine love bestows the keys of knowledge.

Arthur Rimbaud

Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge: How It Was Written — I

DANIEL H. CALDWELL AND DOSS McDAVID

A SET of eight notebooks in HPB's handwriting has been preserved in the Archives of the Theosophical Society (Adyar, Chennai, India).¹ Notebook No. 1 contains the following cryptic passages:

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1. Universal Mind in its general, abstract meaning means Absolute Mind. Therefore, it only implies that as there are no finite, differentiated minds even of the Ah-hi to reflect or contain an ideation of this Absolute Mind, the latter is not. Every thing outside of the Absolute & immutable Sat, Be-ness — is necessarily finite & conditioned since it has a

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beginning and end. Imagine Vacuum, if you can, in its highest, Parabrahmic sense. Produce Vacuum in an empty glass ball & then break these Vessels, where will be your vacuum? And yet it still is, though we neither know nor

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sense it, anywhere, simply because we

cannot locate it. The Ah-hi are vehicles or vessels. Your third para gives the answer.

1. I have just done so.

2. No "Powers" but the one Periodical Law.

3. To the 1st, 2d, & 3d.

4. No; but in the next Manvantaras, they will

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when from the Highest Arupa they evolve gradually into the Manasaputras & Pitris.

5. No; a man has free will and individual Will. The Ah-hi have only a Collective one will among them, the original impulse of the Law that emanates from the Causeless Cause, periodically —

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6. The reasoning higher mind of the physical man is not; his front brain or cerebrum sleeps; but his back brains, or the cerebellum, is wide awake. This human mind passes in sleep from the plane

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of the objective and illusionary Universe, to the astral & still more illusionary plane I say, still more because it is so full of these terrestrial emanations. Unless the Higher Ego helps it, it becomes more confused than ever.

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7. Cosmic Buddhi is certainly the vehicle of the Universal Mahat, for in this sense Buddhi is Prakriti nature, in all its seven stages from Akasa down to Bhumi, Earth, or Malkuth, as it is called in the Kabala. But the human Buddhi derives its essence only from Akasa, the 2d principle which

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is Mulaprakriti, the place of Atman being taken by Parabrahman. In man, it is Divine, as man is in the higher triad, the post type of the Higher never manifested Triad as Father Mother and Son (Manas).

8. Consciousness is only a faculty of the mind the quality of self perception in the rational Ego. What is mind — in our understanding

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it is the Soul. Then you may just as well ask if a conscious Soul exists . . . which survives. To doubt that Consciousness can exist without mind is the same as saying that there is no Soul, no individual self conscious soul, at any rate.

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Sloka 4.

1. Practical faculty of which you may learn hereafter.

2. Almost the same.

Read them.

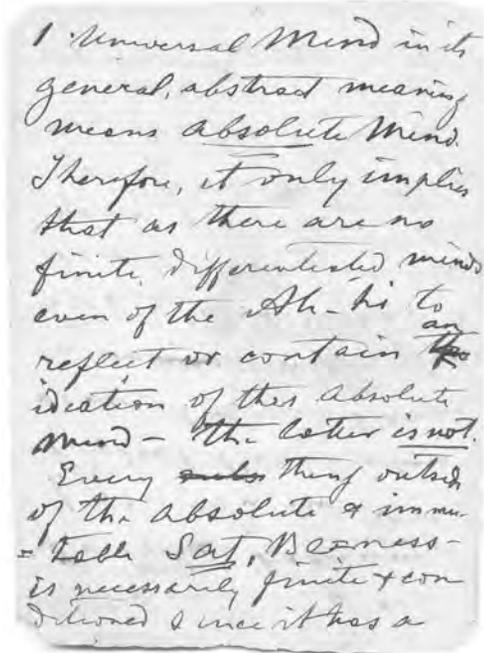
3. All these are either theological dogmas or mysteries of the ways of the unfolding Soul which belong to the highest Esoteric Teaching.

4. They are the manifestation of the One Law, which acts

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universally.

5. Nidana is the cause producing effect, the concatenation of causes and effects, & Maya is simply illusion. If you call the Universe an illusion then of course it is Maya with everything else like Nirvana, etc.



* * *

Before the discovery, transcription, and publication of the records of the discussions on which *Transactions of*

the Blavatsky Lodge was based, the significance of HPB's notes reproduced above was not obvious to anyone. Even Boris de Zirkoff did not seem to realize their significance or comment on them in any way. In the light of the now-published transcriptions^{2,3} we can now see that these notes were apparently jotted down by HPB in response to questions that had been submitted by students in the [London] Blavatsky Lodge as they worked through the successive stanzas of the book of Dzyan and the commentaries given by HPB in *The Secret Doctrine*. What seems to have happened is this:

1. Students submitted questions that were presented to HPB in preparation for each upcoming meeting of the Blavatsky Lodge.

2. HPB made brief notes to herself for reference in the discussions to follow.

3. During the lodge meetings, HPB engaged in back-and-forth discussions with her students using her notebook as a starting point. The discussions were recorded and compiled. After spending twelve decades in the hands of private students, this material has now been transcribed by modern students and published by the Point Loma Society in the Netherlands and the United Lodge of Theosophists in Los Angeles. (For further information see <blavatskyarchives.com/24folios.pdf>.)

4. At some point toward the end of HPB's lifetime it was decided to create a series of "transactions" in which *some* of the discussions held at the Blavatsky

Lodge could be made available to the public. This was done under the supervision of HPB and published while she was still living. The *Transactions* have remained in print up to the present time⁴ and were included in the 10th volume of HPB's *Collected Writings* along with some helpful introductory comments by Boris de Zirkoff.⁵

By extracting the relevant portions and grouping them together (HPB's handwritten notes, transcription of the meeting, and published *Transactions*), we have reconstructed twelve examples of the three stages through which the *Transactions* passed for the meeting of 17 January 1889. It is instructive to see the gradual evolution of HPB's cryptic notes into the polished philosophical explanation that appears in the published *Transactions*. Unfortunately, HPB's original notes seem to exist for only one of the many meetings that were held.

Example 1. HPB's Notebook:

Universal Mind in its general, abstract meaning means Absolute Mind. Therefore, it only implies that as there are no finite, differentiated minds even of the Ah-hi to reflect or contain an ideation of this Absolute Mind — the latter is not. Everything outside of the Absolute and immutable Sat, (Be-ness) — is necessarily finite and conditioned since it has a beginning and end. Imagine Vacuum, if you can, in its highest, *parabrahmic* sense. Produce Vacuum in an empty glass ball and then break these Vessels, where will be your vacuum? And yet it still is, though we neither know nor

sense it, anywhere, simply because we cannot locate it. The Ah-hi are vehicles or vessels. Your third para gives the answer.

Transcription of the meeting:

Mme Blavatsky: Universal mind and absolute mind are one. Are they not? Very well, that only implies that as there are no finite differentiated minds during Pralaya therefore it is just as though there were no mind at all, if there is nothing to contain it, or to perceive it. That is the meaning. There is nothing to reflect or contain the ideation of the absolute mind, therefore it is not, because everything outside of the absolute and immutable Sat, or the Be-ness, is necessarily finite and conditioned since it has a beginning and end, and here is something with no beginning and no end. Therefore since the Ah-hi were not, there was no universal mind, because you must make a distinction between the absolute mind which is ever present, and its reflections in the Ah-hi at the first flutter of Manvantara. The Ah-hi are on the highest plane; they are those who reflect the universal mind collectively, and begin the work of evolution of all the lower forces until they come, throughout the seven planes, down to our lowest plane. Mr A. Keightley: Then the Ah-hi and the universal mind are necessary complements of one another?

Mme Blavatsky: Not at all. Universal mind, or absolute mind, always *is*, whether during Manvantara or during Pralaya; it is immutably one. But since the term Ah-hi means the highest Dhyani

— the Logoi perhaps — those which begin, which are the creation — or evolution, not creation, because everything is an emanation; since the Ah-hi were not, there was no universal mind, because it was the absolute dormant, latent mind, and it was not differentiated in the collectivity of these Dhyanis. The President: It was rather absolute consciousness.

Mme Blavatsky: It was absolute consciousness which is not consciousness. What is consciousness? Further on you make a question: “Can consciousness exist without any mind?” But it will come in time. You had better proceed, unless you have some other questions to ask. For instance, let us represent to ourselves, if you can do such a thing, that universal mind is a vacuum, but vacuum with latent consciousness in it. You just suppose you pump out all the air you can from some vessel, there is a vacuum. You cannot represent yourselves in that particular vessel as a vehicle: there is the vacuum; but break these vessels that contain this soi-disant vacuum; where shall you look for it? It has disappeared, it is everywhere and nowhere. It is something, yet it is the absence of something. It is entirely a homogeneous thing. . . . You break those vessels and nothing exists, therefore universal mind is not, because there are no vehicles to contain it.

Published Transactions:

Q. This sloka seems to imply that the Universal Mind has no existence apart from the Ah-hi; but in the Commentary it is stated that:

“During Pralaya the Universal Mind remains as a permanent possibility of mental action, or as that abstract absolute thought of which mind is the concrete relative manifestation, and that the Ah-hi are the vehicle for divine universal thought and will. They are the intelligent forces which give to Nature her laws, while they themselves act according to laws imposed upon them by still higher powers, and are the hierarchy of spiritual beings through which the universal mind comes into action.”

The Commentary suggests that the Ah-hi are not themselves the Universal Mind, but only the vehicle for its manifestation.

A. The meaning of this sloka is, I think, very clear; it means that, as there are no finite differentiated minds during Pralaya, it is just as though there were no mind at all, because there is nothing *to contain or perceive it*. There is nothing to receive and reflect the ideation of the Absolute Mind; therefore, *it is not*. Everything outside of the Absolute and immutable Sat (Be-ness), is necessarily finite and conditioned, since it has beginning and end. Therefore, since the “Ah-hi were not”, there was no Universal Mind as a manifestation. A distinction had to be made between the Absolute Mind, which is ever present, and its reflection and manifestation in the Ah-hi, who, being on the highest plane, reflect the universal mind collectively at the first flutter of Manvantara. After which they begin the work of evolution of all the lower forces throughout the seven planes, down to the lowest — our own. The Ah-hi are the

primordial seven rays, or *Logoi*, emanated from the first Logos, *triple*, yet one in its essence.

Q. *Then the Ah-hi and Universal Mind are necessary complements of one another?*

A. Not at all: Universal or Absolute Mind always *is* during Pralaya as well as Manvantara; it is immutable. The Ah-hi are the highest Dhyanis, the Logoi as just said, those who begin the downward evolution, or emanation. During Pralaya there are no Ah-hi, because they come into being only with the first *radiation* of the Universal Mind, which, *per se*, cannot be differentiated, and the radiation from which is the first *dawn* of Manvantara. The Absolute is dormant, latent mind, and cannot be otherwise in true metaphysical perception; it is only Its shadow which becomes differentiated in the collectivity of these Dhyanis.

Q. *Does this mean that it was absolute consciousness, but is so no longer?*

A. It is *absolute consciousness* eternally, which consciousness becomes *relative consciousness* periodically, at every “Manvantaric dawn”. Let us picture to ourselves this latent or potential consciousness as a kind of vacuum in a vessel. Break the vessel, and what becomes of the vacuum; where shall we look for it? It has disappeared; it is everywhere and nowhere. It is something, yet *nothing*: a *vacuum*, yet a *plenum*. But what in reality is a vacuum as understood by Modern Science — a homogeneous something, or what? Is not absolute Vacuum a figment of our fancy? A pure negation, a supposed Space where

nothing exists? This being so, destroy the vessel, and — to our perceptions at any rate — nothing exists. Therefore, the Stanza puts it very correctly; “Universal Mind was not” because there was no vehicle to contain it.

Example 2. HPB’s Notebook:

Apparently responding to: “1. CAN YOU GIVE US A DEFINITION OF THE UNIVERSAL MIND?”

1. I have just done so.

Transcription of the meeting:

Mr A. Keightley: The first question is, can you give us a definition of the universal mind, which will solve the difficulty?

Mme. Blavatsky: Well, I think I have just done so.

Example 3. HPB’s Notebook:

Responding to “2. WHAT ARE THE HIGHER POWERS WHICH CONDITION THE AH-HI?”

2. No “Powers” but the one Periodical Law.

Transcription of the meeting:

Mr A. Keightley: Quite so. Then number 2. “What are the higher powers which condition the Ah-hi?”

Mme Blavatsky: Well I don’t call them powers at all; it is simply a manifestation of the periodical law, the universal law, which becomes by turns active or inactive. Thus that law of periodical manifestation which creates them, which emanates them. I always use the word create, which is a very bad and wrong word to use, for there is no creation.

Mr A. Keightley: Then the power which is higher than the Ah-hi is the law which necessitates manifestation.

Mme Blavatsky: Just so; periodically, when the hour strikes, it comes, and they appear into manifestation. They are on the first rung of manifestation, after which it goes on gradually shaping itself more and more.

Mr B. Keightley: It should really be THE law, and not A law.

Mme. Blavatsky: The law, and not a law. I give it [to] you from the standpoint of esoteric, or Eastern teaching. If physical science objects, just say so, and I will try to repent. . . .

Published Transactions:

Q. What are the higher powers which condition the Ah-hi?

A. They cannot be called powers; *power* or perhaps Potentiality would be better. The Ah-hi are conditioned by the awakening into manifestation of the periodical, universal LAW, which becomes successively active and inactive. It is by this law that they are conditioned or formed, not created. “Created” is an impossible term to use in Philosophy.

Q. Then the power or Potentiality which precedes and is higher than the Ah-hi, is the law which necessitates manifestation?

A. Just so; periodical manifestation. When the hour strikes, the law comes into action, and the Ah-hi appear on the first rung of the ladder of manifestation.

Q. But surely this is THE law and not A law?

A. Precisely, since it is absolute and “Secondless” — therefore it is not an attribute, but that Absoluteness itself.

Example 4. HPB’s Notebook:

Responding to “3. WHAT COSMIC

PLANE DO THE AH-HI HERE SPOKEN OF BELONG?”

3. To the 1st, 2d, and 3d.

Transcription of the meeting:

Mr A. Keightley: “To what cosmic plane do the Ah-hi here spoken of belong?”

Mme Blavatsky: To the first the second and the third. Because it is a triad, a manifested triad, a reflection of the non-manifested. Taking the triad in the sense that Pythagoras gives it, it disappears in the darkness and the silence. Taken in this sense it is the only thing, as there is Atma, Buddhi, Manas — well all, the first, second, and third planes — the Ah-hi belong to these planes.

Mr A. Keightley: That is to say the Ah-hi belong to the cosmic planes which correspond to Atma, Buddhi, Manas.

Mme Blavatsky: Just so, they correspond.

Mr B. Keightley: They are successive emanations; you get the Atma, Buddhi in man, before Manas makes its appearance.

Mme Blavatsky: But we do not speak of man now, if you please, we speak in general that these correspond. Don't you go and mix up man with it now. We speak of the macrocosm simply, at the beginning when there was the first flutter of the manvantaric dawn, and then evolution begins.

Mr B. Keightley: The question I want to put exactly is this: are those three planes simultaneous emanations or do they emanate one from the other?

Mme Blavatsky: I suppose one from another, but I could not tell you that. Don't ask me questions I cannot answer.

Published Transactions:

Q. To what cosmic plane do the Ah-hi, here spoken of, belong?

A. They belong to the first, second, and third planes — the last plane being really the starting point of the primordial manifestation — the objective reflection of the unmanifested. Like the Pythagorean *Monas*, the first Logos, having emanated the first triad, disappears into silence and darkness.

Q. Does this mean that the three Logoi emanated from the primordial Radiation in Macrocosm correspond to Atma, Buddhi, and Manas, in the Microcosm?

A. Just so; they correspond, but must not be confounded with them. We are now speaking of the Macrocosm at the first flutter of Manvantaric dawn, when evolution begins, and not of Microcosm or Man.

Q. Are the three planes to which the three Logoi belong simultaneous emanations, or do they evolve one from another?

A. It is most misleading to apply mechanical laws to the higher metaphysics of cosmogony, or to space and time, as we know them for neither existed then. The reflection of the triad in space and time or the objective universe comes later.

Example 5. HPB's Notebook:

Responding to “4. HAVE THESE AH-HI BEEN MEN IN PREVIOUS MANVANTARAS OR WILL THEY BECOME SO?”

5. No; but in the next Manvantaras, they will. When from the Highest Arupa they evolve gradually into the Manasaputras and Pitris.

Transcription of the meeting:

Mr A. Keightley: Question 4. “Have these Ah-hi been men in previous Manvantaras or will they become so?”

Mme Blavatsky: They will become men in a subsequent Manvantara.

Mr A. Keightley: Do they remain permanently on this very exalted plane during the whole period of the Manvantara?

Mme Blavatsky: Of the 15 figures? No, they pass through all the planes until they become on the third plane Manasaputra, the sons of Manas or mind. They are arupa. On the higher planes these Ah-hi are arupa, that is to say formless, bodies, without any substance, without anything, they are breaths. On the second plane they approach to rupa or to form. On the third they become Manasarupa, those who become incarnated in men.

Mr A. Keightley: Then the Ah-hi of this manvantara —

Mme Blavatsky: They do not exist any more, if you please. They have become long ago. . . Read *The Secret Doctrine*, you will see the thing there.

Mr A. Keightley: I understood you to say they did not become men in this Manvantara.

Mme. Blavatsky: The 15 figures apply to the solar system. The first answers relate to the beginning of the whole objective universe, but after that, when you begin to speak about Father-Mother, then it relates to our objective universe and to the solar system only because our teaching does not busy itself at all with things outside. At least those things that I have selected. I could not go and select the

whole thing. I have only taken that which relates to our solar system. I have just taken two or three just to show the general idea, and then skipped over whole stanzas and came to the point. I have said there are some 60 stanzas passed over.

Mr. B. Keightley: Then on the reawakening will the men of one Manvantara have to pass through a similar stage to the Ah-hi stage in the next Manvantara?

Mme. Blavatsky: In many, many Manvantaras at the end of the tail of the serpent; when the tail will be in the mouth of the serpent, I might say. What have you got the ambition of becoming? An Ah-hi, or what? You will have time, my dear fellow, to do many things before you become an Ah-hi.

Published Transactions:

Q. Have the Ah-hi been men in previous Manvantaras, or will they become so?

A. Every living creature, of whatever description, was, is, or will become a human being in one or another Manvantara.

Q. But do they in this Manvantara remain permanently on the same very exalted plane during the whole period of the life-cycle?

A. If you mean by “life cycle” a duration of time which extends over fifteen figures, then my answer is most decidedly — no. The “Ah-hi” pass through all the planes, beginning to manifest on the third. Like all other Hierarchies, on the highest plane they are *arupa*, *i.e.*, formless, bodiless, without any substance, mere breaths. On the second plane, they first approach to Rupa, or form. On the third, they became Manasaputras, those who became incarnated in men. With

every plane they reach they are called by different names . . . Later, they become Rupa — ethereal forms.

Q. *Then the Ah-hi of this Manvantara . . . ?*

A. Exist no longer; they have long ago become Planetary, Solar, Lunar, and lastly, incarnating Egos, for, as said, “they are the collective hosts of spiritual beings.”

Q. *But it was stated above that the Ah-hi did not become men in this Manvantara.*

A. Nor do they as the formless “Ah-hi”. But they do as their own transformations. The Manvantaras should not be confounded. The fifteen-figure Manvantaric cycle applies to the solar system; but there

is a Manvantara which relates to the whole of the objective universe, the Mother-Father, and many minor Manvantaras. The slokas relating to the former have been generally selected, and only two or three relating to the latter given. Many slokas, therefore, have been omitted because of their difficult nature.

Q. *Then, on reawakening, will the men of one Manvantara have to pass through a stage corresponding to the Ah-hi stage in the next Manvantara?*

A. In some of the Manvantaras, the tail is in the mouth of the serpent. Think over this Symbolism. *(To be continued)*

Endnotes

1. H. P. Blavatsky, *Collected Writings* (1966), Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House (TPH), vol. 1, p. 25.
2. _____, *The Secret Doctrine Commentaries* (2010), The Hague: I.S.I.S. Foundation.
3. _____, *The Secret Doctrine Dialogues* (2014), Los Angeles: The Theosophy Company.
4. _____, *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* (1923), Los Angeles: The Theosophy Company.
5. _____, *Collected Writings* (1964), Adyar: TPH, vol X, pp. 298–406.

Acknowledgment: Thanks to Michele Sender for transcribing HPB’s notes.

**Human life is the allegory of the spirit,
a drama of the unfoldment of consciousness;
and the emancipation of woman in the world
corresponds to and symbolizes the emergence
of the intuition in the consciousness.**

Claude Bragdon
Delphic Woman

Conscience and Intuition

G. DE PURUCKER

I DO not know — and yet I am glad to see that the fact I speak of is so — why people are so much interested in knowing what conscience is and where it is located in the human constitution and how you can make it function. We know that while man is a stream of consciousness, he is a septenary stream, and each aspect of the septenate again has its divisions, which is one reason why men differ amongst themselves so greatly and so widely; and it is a pity that this is not better understood. Men would differ more but quarrel less. Quarrels are stupid; kindly “scraps” make firm friends — if they are kindly!

Now, as I understand the matter, our conscience to which we all too infrequently pay heed, to our loss, is that friendly, warm-hearted whispering from above, which we feel as showing us the right and the wrong, and it comes from the stored up ethical wisdom in our being. It is not in the disputatious brain-mind: it is in the heart. It is the highest part of the human ego, the treasury of ethical experience, the accumulated wisdom of past lives, garnered and treasured in our higher parts; and as far as it goes its voice is infallible and powerful; but it does not go far enough to make its voice in our soul an infallible guide, because we have

not had past human lives throughout eternity and we are not infinite beings, humanly speaking.

One man’s conscience is strong; another man’s conscience is weaker. Two reasons why: the one may be more evolved and may have learned to listen more attentively to the inner monitor. Therefore its voice is familiar, strong, and steady, and as we say, warm and sweet. We love that, and one reason why we love it is because it is so personal to ourselves. It is the highest part of each one of us as a human being, whispering to us admonitions of right, and denying to us the ways of wrong-doing. It is the *buddhi-manas* [higher self] part of the human being, garnering experience of past ages of births and rebirths, the echo of past sufferings and heartaches from which we have gleaned wisdom and treasured it on the tablets of the Self. That is the conscience.

But higher than conscience is intuition: Intuition is infallible. Its voice is immeasurably infallible, because it is the whispering within us, as it were, of the truths of the Cosmic Spirit. It is a ray direct from the Divine Spirit in our hearts. Our conscience will not tell us the truth about a fact of Nature, nor whisper into

G. de Purucker (1874–1942), was a widely and greatly admired leader of the Theosophical Society based in Point Loma from 1929 to 1942. Reprinted from his book, *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, p. 212.

Conscience and Intuition

our minds guidance along the paths of scientific or religious or philosophical discovery, because it is the garnered ethical wisdom familiar to the soul of each one of us. But the intuition will tell us instantly, it has instant vision of truth. Its voice is neither familiar nor unfamiliar. It is utterly impersonal. Its atmosphere is neither “hot” nor “cold”. It is neutral in this respect; and it is the voice of the *ātma-buddhi-manas* within us, the Monad, as H. P. Blavatsky called it.

Do you get the distinction? The conscience is our own treasury of spiritual-ethical wisdom. It is infallible as far as it goes, as far as we can hear its voice; and we can hear it ever more by practice, training, listening to it, by just recognising it and following it. But because it is only our own gathered treasury, it is not infinite, and therefore not in the true sense always infallible.

But so far as concerns each one of us as individuals, when our conscience whispers to us, we need to follow it, because it will whisper only when we are in danger or seeking to do aright: whereas the voice of the intuition is the voice of the Spirit within us, and it is infallible. It has no frontiers. It *is*, so to speak, a ray direct from the *mahā-buddhi* of the Universe; and we can allow intuition to become ever stronger within us, enlightening our minds and opening our hearts, by not being afraid of it, or of having hunches, of following our conscience and our intuitions when they come to us. They are coming to us all the time.

Most men are ashamed to act intuitively. They do not want to make mis-

takes. Prudential, yes! But it is only prudence, and uncommendable, cowardly and weak, and small, if it is merely because you do not want to begin to make a fool of yourself until you have learned more. The strong man is not afraid of making a fool of himself occasionally, because he knows that that very fact will stimulate him, awaken him, make him think; and after awhile he will not make a fool of himself. He will learn to trust his inner powers. That is the way to cultivate the intuition, by cultivating it; not being afraid of what is within you. Suppose you do make mistakes — what of it? By practice in its exercise the mistakes will grow fewer and fewer.

Make a companion of your conscience. The man or woman who has not heard the voice of conscience whispering in his soul, who has never felt its presence, is not truly human. You know what I mean by that companionship: we call it a voice which whispers to us. It is a light which lives within you always and which tells you what is right — and to follow it; what is wrong — and to abandon it. Make a companion of your conscience, stimulate it, open your hearts and your minds to it. Your lives will be beautified, strengthened, made happier than they are now, because you will be following the voice within which is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages.

Furthermore, just in proportion as you learn to know your conscience, which is your own self, the higher part of you, and trust it and follow it, the more will intuition brighten your lives, bringing you knowledge direct, knowledge infallible. ✧

Choiceless Awareness

K. DINAKARAN

HUMANITY is passing through a very difficult time. Fragmentation of minds and its results such as war, ethnic cleansing, religious and communal conflicts, ideological differences, all these divide man from man. Man-made divisions like casteism, nationalism, regionalism, discrimination based on colour, race, and so on are the order of the day. Humanity is divided into various compartments based on religion and nationality. In this context the teachings of Theosophy and J. Krishnamurti (Krishnaji or K.) are more relevant than ever. He never claimed that he was a teacher or guru, and identified himself as just a passerby. The generation that was able to listen to him personally is really blessed, because his words in person had a deeper meaning than we find in books or audio and video tapes.

Krishnaji raises some pertinent points. What can one do, as a human being, in a world that is torn apart, where there is so much despair and sorrow? What value does individual change have? How will it affect the whole mass of human existence? Krishnaji says these are wrong questions, because one does not live and act rightly

for the sake of somebody else, or for the benefit of society. It is we ourselves that have to change, not society. Krishnaji presented Ancient Wisdom or Theosophy in a unique way. One may find his teachings similar to the teachings of Lord Buddha, Krishna, and Christ. But the terms he used to express his philosophy is quite new to the modern world. He made statements like “Truth is a pathless land”, “You are the world”, “conditioning of the mind”, and so forth. He pointed out the fallacy of clinging to a particular system or method, aiming to achieve something.

Krishnaji questioned the traditional approach to meditation, religion, the religious mind, cultivated virtues, self-knowledge, education, charity, awareness, and love. His teachings are centred on understanding oneself in the light of wisdom. He used the term “choiceless awareness” to describe it. It is easy for one to understand the verbal meaning of this expression but not easy to follow it in daily life. This is because we are conditioned by our own surroundings, and the cultural, social, and political circumstances which molded us. But it is not an impossible task.

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The moment one becomes aware of one's own limitations one is free from their clutches. Krishnaji's mission during his lifetime was to "set man absolutely, unconditionally free" which was declared by him in his famous talk while dissolving the "Order of the Star in the East", the organization set up for him by the Theosophical Society (TS).

By "choiceless awareness" Krishnaji means to be aware without any prior choice, desire, or memory. This will enable us to see the extraordinary beauty of Nature. We should be aware of the world inside us and the world outside us. There is no difference between inner and outer world. On the other hand, when one tries to concentrate, effort and control are necessary and the controller and the controlled will always be conflicting leading to division. According to him, for beauty to come into being, the mind must be choicelessly aware of its own pettiness, there must be an awareness in which comparison has wholly ceased. Choiceless awareness means attention that is not cultivated. When the observer is absent there is choiceless awareness. This condition is only present when the everlasting struggle of conditioning ends.

Krishnamurti asks: "Is it possible to observe, watch, and listen whether there is already a conclusion, a formula, based on which I am watching, a memory which dictates my watching, or a previous experience through which I am watching?" When there is already a conclusion, a judgment, when we have already formed

an opinion about that which we are going to watch, it is based on memory, from which thought arises.

K. says: "Does a free mind choose? A mind that sees very clearly does not choose, there is only action." So when there is watching with thought, there is no watching at all. We must note that these are very practical things we have to apply in our daily living.

Limitation of Thought

Human beings are violent because there is conflict in thinking, saying, and acting. Krishnaji says: "Can you think clearly if you have a prejudice, a particular belief — that is, if you think as a Hindu, a communist, or a Christian? You can think very clearly only when your mind is not tethered to a belief, as a monkey might be tethered to a stake." Our minds are caught up in the idea of achievement, climbing higher and higher, that is, in the idea of choosing between the essential and the non-essential. We try to fill our emptiness with actions born of choice, like trying to fill a pot without any bottom. He concludes: "Thinking cannot solve our problems." He adds: "Thought has not created Nature, the tiger, the wolf, and the marvelous trees and flowers. . . It has created division between man and woman. Society is what we have made of it, with our greed, ambitions, corruption, competition, and all the rest of it."

Self-knowledge

To K. life is relationship. He asks: "If you can look into the mirror of relationship

exactly the way you look into the ordinary mirror, then there is no end to self-knowledge. It is like entering a fathomless ocean which has no shore. But most of us want to reach an end and to achieve something.” He requests us to look at ourselves without condemning what we see, without comparing ourselves with somebody else, without wishing to be more beautiful or more virtuous; if we can just observe what we are and move with it, then we will find that it is possible to go infinitely far. There is no end to that journey, and that is the mystery and beauty of it. He adds: “Without self-knowledge there is no release from confusion, without self-knowledge confusion is like a wave eternally swallowing you up. The moment you understand confusion, you are free of it.”

Krishnaji’s statement, “The guru destroys the disciples and the disciples destroy the guru”, was shocking to many who believed in “gurudom” and guidance on religious life. He was a vehement critic of religious hierarchies. He stressed the need of self-enquiry rather than clinging to someone or some philosophy to show the Path. In the modern world we can see many examples of this mutual destruction, which fully agree with K’s statement. The “key” is with us, but we search for it everywhere else.

The TS endorses K’s view by giving complete “Freedom of Thought” to its members. The text of the resolutions passed by the General Council of the TS printed on the inner page of its monthly journal, *The Theosophist* states: “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.” The entire theosophical literature is presented before us for *consideration and examination*. Everyone is free to *accept or reject* it.

True Religion

What is Religion? H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) in her essay “Is Theosophy a Religion?” says: “A religion, in the true and only correct sense, is a bond uniting men together — not a particular set of dogmas and beliefs. Religion, per se, in its widest meaning is that which binds not only all MEN but also all BEINGS and all things in the entire Universe into one grand whole.” HPB’s definition of religion is not different from Krishnaji’s approach to the same.

God Concept

In *The Mahatma Letters* it is said: “The God of the theologians is simply an imaginary power. . . . Our chief aim is to deliver humanity of this nightmare, to teach man virtue for its own sake, and to walk in life relying on himself, instead of leaning on a theological crutch that for countless ages was the direct cause of nearly all human misery.” Krishnaji, in his simple statement, said: “God is confusion.”

For him there is no “right” leader — all leaders are wrong, what we have to do is to clear our own confusion. And confusion is set aside only when we under-

stand ourselves; with the beginning of self-knowledge, there comes clarity.

Krishnaji cites the example of a painter and says: “You know, most of us want to acquire wisdom or truth through another, through some outside agency. No one else can make you an artist; only you yourself can do that. That is what I want to say. I can give you paint, brushes, and canvas but you yourself have to become the artist, the painter. I cannot make you into one.” Theosophy also proclaims the value of self-knowledge rather than ready-made answers to questions. Every theosophist is only a student of Wisdom. In *The Idyll of the White Lotus* by Mabel Collins, it is stated in the Three Truths: “Each man is his own absolute law-giver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.”

Meditation

Choiceless awareness is the core theme of Krishnaji in every aspect of life, whether it is meditation, freedom, inward revolution, and so on. As the mind caught in the web of thought is never free, it is looking through a coloured glass which distorts the true vision. For K, meditation is a way of life; it is part of daily existence; and the fullness and beauty of life can be understood through meditation. Meditation of the heart is the understanding of daily problems, and not an escape from them. He states: “You cannot go very far if you don’t begin very near.”

According to Krishnaji, meditation

itself is timeless; it is not a way of arriving at a timeless state. It is, without a beginning and without an ending. He always reminds us to have sensitivity. If we have this extraordinary sensitivity going in our life, then it is everything, then we become the teacher, the disciple, the neighbour, the beauty of the cloud, we are all that, and that is love. Being sensitive means sensitive to everything around us, to the plants, the animals, the trees, the skies, the waters of the river, the bird on the wing; and also to the moods of the people around us, and to the stranger who passes by.

This sensitivity brings about the quality of uncalculated, unselfish, response, which is true morality and conduct. If we do not know the meaning and the beauty of meditation we do not know anything in life. If our meditation is only a personal matter, a thing which we personally enjoy, then it is not meditation. Meditation implies a complete radical change of the mind and the heart. This is only possible when there is this extraordinary sense of inward silence, and that alone brings about the religious mind. That mind knows what is sacred.

Krishnaji often asks: “Have you ever paid any attention to the ringing of the temple bells?” We rarely pay real attention to anything, and K. says it is important to find out what it means to pay attention. If our mind has space, then in that space there is silence, and from that silence everything else comes, for then we can listen, we can pay attention without resistance. That is why it is very

important to have space in the mind. Then we will know what *is* meditation.

Be a lamp unto yourself

Echoing the message of Lord Buddha, Krishnaji says: “If you are inwardly a light unto yourself, you will never follow anyone. You follow out of your confusion, and what you follow must also be confused . . . therefore, first clear up your own confusion, become a light unto yourself, and then the problem will cease.” In theosophical literature also we can find the same message. *Light on the Path* says: “For within you is the light of the world — the only light that can be shed upon the Path. If you are unable to perceive it within you, it is useless to look for it elsewhere.” We cannot achieve or attain it. Krishnaji always points out our desire to achieve a goal, position, or result. But Truth or Light is beyond us, as *Light on the Path* states: “It is beyond you, because when you reach it you have lost yourself. It is unattainable, because it for ever recedes. You will enter the light, but you will never touch the Flame.”

Life is a challenge

Human beings throughout history have faced challenges from the groove of habit. We always meet the new challenge with our old conditioned mind. Krishnaji says: “If each one of us could understand the problem of struggle and conflict then I think we would be able to live effortlessly, happily, with a smile on our face. Ceaseless strife dissipates energy. The man who is joyous, really happy, is not caught up in effort. To be without effort

does not mean that you are stagnant, dull, stupid, on the contrary it is only the wise, the extraordinarily intelligent, who are really free of effort, of struggle.” Our envy, greed, ambition, our competitiveness, leading to ruthless efficiency — these are obviously the factors which cause us to struggle, whether in this world or in the world to come. So we do not want to study psychological books to know why we struggle; like the boat which moves with the wind, the mind can be without struggle. K. points out: If you love there is no need for discipline. Love brings its own creative understanding, therefore there is no resistance, no conflict, but to love with such complete integration is possible only when you feel deeply secure, completely at home, especially when you are young.

Struggling to achieve success

In *At the Feet of the Master* Krishnaji said: “Men who do not know, work to gain wealth and power, but these are at most for one life only, and therefore unreal.” He in later talks mentioned: “As long as we pursue success in any direction, we are bound to be in strife, in conflict. Even when we arrive at the point of success or goal we are not happy, but try to achieve higher and higher. Only to desire to be more — a mind craving for ‘more’ — is not a healthy, intelligent mind, because its demand for the ‘more’ implies a constant struggle in terms of the pattern which society has set for it. We are struggling after something, and we have never paused to inquire if the thing we are after is worth struggling for.”

Here is where the fundamental teaching of Theosophy and K's message to the world meet.

When we say we are seeking truth or seeking God — if we are religiously minded — or we are seeking a perfect life, and so on, we must already have in our minds an image or idea, which means that we have already known it, that all we have to do is to go after it and search it out.

Oneness of Life

Theosophy proclaims the Oneness of Life. Krishnaji through his talks reminds us of the unity of Life from a blade of grass to the mighty mountains. When he says observe Nature, the rain, the wind, the chirping of the birds, the gurgle of the river, he is trying to convince us of the oneness of life which we can realize through choiceless awareness. HPB in *The Secret Doctrine* says: "The radical unity of the ultimate essence of each constituent part of the compounds in Nature — from star to the mineral atom, from the highest *Dhyāni-Chohan* to the smallest infusoria, in the fullest acceptance of the term, and whether applied to the spiritual, intellectual, or physical worlds — this is the one fundamental law in Occult Science."

Theosophy teaches us the evolution of life through mineral, plant, animal, and human kingdoms and it also says the "growth and splendour of it has no limit".

Torchbearer of Truth

In the conclusion of *The Key to*

Theosophy, H. P. Blavatsky states: . . . "the spread of [theosophical] teachings . . . 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."

We can see that HPB's prophetic words proved perfectly suited to Krishnaji's life and message. He was the "torchbearer of Truth" of the 20th century. But many could not digest this idea. Dr Besant was the only one who sincerely believed that K. was the expected vehicle of the Great Teacher. She was ready to leave everything and sit at the foot of Krishnaji and listen to him. She even closed down the Esoteric Section and asked its members to listen to Krishnaji.

The modern world needs the message of K. more than ever. Human brains have been replaced by computers and robots, and man has become a slave to artificial intelligence and its multifaceted entertainments. He is slowly drifting to the position of a second-hand human being. Only choiceless awareness can save humanity from this mechanical, stereotyped living. We should be closer to Nature, the environment, and ultimately, life in every form. We have "no other path to go". ✧

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