# THE THEOSOPHIST

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Editor: *Mr Tim Boyd*

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# THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

*Founded 17 November 1875*

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*Secretary:* **Ms Marja Artamaa** *Treasurer:* **Ms Nancy Secrest**

Headquarters: ADYAR, CHENNAI (MADRAS) 600 020, INDIA
Vice-President: ivp.hq@ts-adyar.org
Secretary: secy.hq@ts-adyar.org
Treasurer: treasury.hq@ts-adyar.org
Adyar Library and Research Centre: alrc.hq@ts-adyar.org
Theosophical Publishing House: tphindia@gmail.com // www.adyarbooks.com
Editorial Office: editorialoffice@gmail.com, Website: http://www.ts-adyar.org

**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.

# Functional Unity — II

TIM BOYD

WHEN we are sick our default reaction is to seek relief from the malady — something to lower the fever, stop the headache, ease the pain. No one wants to suffer. An observation shared by wise people across the generations is that the initial condition that drives us to engage in a spiritual path is our own suffering and our desire to escape it. The questions we ask ourselves are, "What can I do? What will work to alleviate the condition?" A few years ago a particle got into my eye. It was causing me great pain, so much that it was difficult for me to concentrate on anything else. I tried all the usual remedies with no success. Finally I went to an eye doctor. He sat me down in the chair; turned on the lamp; folded back the eyelid and a few seconds later had removed the offending object. A wave of relief washed over me. When the doctor showed me the particle I was amazed at how small it was. Literally it was smaller than the period at the end of this sentence. With closure to my ordeal, what impressed me most was the way that something so seemingly insignificant could command my attention, driving all else to the background.

As pain-producing issues arise we know what they are. Normally we can point to them and name them. The sore neck from sleeping in a bad position, an aching back from lifting something improperly, a sore throat and cough from exposure to some virus grab our attention and move us to search for remedies. For bodily issues a range of practitioners are available, from medical doctors to herbalists to massage therapists to energy healers. If physical pain was the full extent of our suffering, it would be challenging, but more easily managed. Pills, diet, exercise, massage, surgery, could all be called on, maybe not to solve, but at least address, our distresses. However, we all know from experience that there are deeper, more internal issues causing us to be "ill at ease", even "diseased". The symptoms that appear are often difficult to correlate with a specific condition. Mental and emotional stress can appear as both physical and psychological ailments.

A short while ago I had a conversation with a mental health practitioner. He had been in practice for many years and had been responsible for setting up numerous programs and treatment centres in New York City. Over the years he added training in massage and other body-based therapies to his psych and social science background. When I asked him about his experiences with the effects of bodily therapies for emotional and psychological conditions he gave some fascinating examples. Because much of his practice involved working with people who had experienced various forms of abuse, he had seen countless cases where the psychological aftermath of trauma lodged in various areas of the body. Often while engaging with patients through massage

or movement, an upwelling and release of strong, often painful, emotions were common. He related a recent case where a physical disorder of the jaw was completely and permanently corrected without physical interventions, but solely by addressing the patient's anxiety. From the Ageless Wisdom perspective this makes perfect sense. We are multidimensional beings and all our aspects continually interact and affect the whole.

The difficulty we face in our attempts at wholeness is distinguishing between our symptoms and their causes. A healer/storyteller/poet that I knew made the point that for each of us there are three things we have to deal with in life:

**1. Problems:** These are the many small issues that we confront daily — the bus that's late, the bill that has to be paid, and so on. He made the point that even the language we use shows that problems are small things. Just like we say we have a dollar, or a car, or a chair, we say: "I have a problem".

**2. Trouble:** This is more far-reaching and systemic. There are the "troubles of the world", family troubles, economic trouble, and so forth. When we talk about them the language changes to "I am *in* trouble". Even in our language we acknowledge that it is bigger than us. Then there is the realm of healing.

**3. Mystery:** This relates to the all-encompassing, all-containing, all-pervading realm that lies beyond our capacity to fully understand. It is a mystery to us, but one within which we live and move. Depending on one's background and upbringing it might be named Spirit; some call it God; for others Universal Consciousness, Source, Ground of Being, are the names given to this infinite, incomprehensible, ineffable Mystery. This is the realm of **causes**, and the realm to which the Ageless Wisdom tradition directs our attention, not as an escape, but as a curative to both problems and troubles.

So, what might be a list of symptoms that we are dealing with, our pains and gross suffering are the most obvious; and we have already briefly discussed the effects of emotional wounding, but, for all of us there is a more existential, less easy-to-define sphere within which we suffer. It is one of the facts of our time that globally we are experiencing an epidemic of depression and isolation. Paradoxically this is especially true in urban centers, those places with the densest population where some level of contact with others is unavoidable. A host of fears also has the tendency to circulate in our minds — fears of different things we might lose, our health, wealth, relationships, security, even our life. The realization that propelled Prince Siddhartha to become the Buddha began with his recognition of the fact of sickness, old age, and death, and the corrosive fear this stimulates in the human mind. Our search for happiness is another cause of suffering. It is not so much the search as the fact that if and when we experience happiness, we can't make it last. Unhappiness, just like happiness, is not a cause, but a symptom of something deeper.

Our journey toward unity is a gradual one — until it is not. In the *Mundaka Upanishad* the statement appears, "As rivers lose name and form when they disappear into the sea, the sage leaves behind all traces when he disappears into the light. Perceiving the truth, he becomes the truth." The long, sometimes slow, sometimes rapid, flowing of the river is the

gradual path we find ourselves pursuing, but all rivers ultimately end in the sea. Along the way it passes through the changing conditions of all the places it touches — arid lands, lush plains, rocky river beds, and forests. Within the river's waters it carries substances from all the places it has been; some of them dissolved to become a part of its flowing waters; some of them suspended, unable to alter in form. Everywhere the river finds itself it must conform to the terrain; it is channeled, limited, sometimes shallow, sometimes deep, always required to not exceed its banks. And then it reaches the sea. Suddenly its long history, its name, its form, its "river-ness" all disappear in the unity of its source and goal — water into water; light into light. The long journey ended; all accumulations released. Again from the *Mundaka Upanishad*, "All the knots of his (the sage's) heart are loosed." The gradual journey is the part we can talk about. The realization of Oneness, though not entirely foreign to our experience, seems to require the poetry of the sages to give some suggestion of its fullness.

A great deal of time and effort can be spent trying to adjust symptoms. Like the novice gardener who breaks off the leaves of the sprouting weed, leaving the roots intact, it is an unending process. The garden may look good, but beneath the surface the weed gets stronger. At the initial stages of our unfoldment, selflessness and complete purity of motive are unreachable standards. However, becoming less selfish is attainable. Initially quieting the mind and its torrent of thoughts is asking too much, but the increasingly calming effect of attention and awareness can be learned and applied. The unity of a complete absorption in the One Life, moving and present in all things, seems like a distant ideal, but the day-to-day expansion that comes from our compassionate interaction with others becomes a path to higher states. With this in mind healers and sages try to focus on the most effective cure, looking to causes more than effects. One of the things we know even from infancy is that darkness is unaffected by our thoughts, desires, by all of our actions. The only "cure" for darkness is light. In its presence, effortlessly, all darkness disappears.

In *Light on the Path* the statement is made: "There is no cure for desire, no cure for the love of reward, no cure for the misery of longing, save in the fixing of the sight and hearing upon that which is invisible and soundless." In H. P. Blavatsky's "Diagram of Meditation" the first words are: "First Conceive of Unity . . ." Annie Besant made the statement: "Spirituality is the realization of unity, the seeing of the oneness of all things." In the Bible it is said: "In all your ways acknowledge him, and He will direct your path." Whether or not "Spirituality" or "Divinity" align with one's way of seeing the world, it is impossible not to recognize that we are participants within some ordered process whose grandeur exceeds our understanding. The advice is that we turn toward it as the cure for what ails us. But how? Oneness is big; we are small. It is infinite; we are local. It is whole; we are fragmented. To "conceive" of Unity gives us a concept, an intellectual creation that begins and ends in the mind. It is functional, but it is not Unity itself.

The sages know something we do not yet know — that Oneness is our origin, the basis, goal, direction, and culmination of all our search. They know that even

the smallest attention in that direction starts a process that brings remarkable results. In the *Gitā* Krishna says: "By whatever path men approach me, on that same path do I meet them." The importance for us is the approach. It is the part over which we have some control. The meeting with Krishna, the transformative universal consciousness, is not for us to determine, but if we persevere in our approach, the promised meeting is assured. In the *Gitā* Krishna announces his status as Avatar, the bodily incarnation of the Godhead, and shares the depths of his nature with Arjuna. Whether one's attraction is to Krishna, Christ, Buddha, or the attempt to "conceive of Unity", our intentional turning in the direction of the soul and universal consciousness, initially leads us to partial measures, suited to our partial understanding. In our exuberance we cling to, promote, and make sacred the scraps of knowledge which we encounter. But from those initial scraps we are fed, and we do grow. A knowledge of Theosophy can grow toward the wisdom that is Theosophy.

Toward the end of J. Krishnamurti's life he stated that during his long life of teaching not one person fully got what he came to give. At the end of Jesus' life, in his moment of deepest inner crisis his disciples fell asleep. Right before his crucifixion, all of his disciples left him out of fear for their own safety. Arjuna heard and acted on what he could grasp of Krishna's teaching by returning to fight the battle at Kurukshetra, but the fullness of the message eluded him. The fact that none attained the measure of any of the great ones' teachings is to be expected. Our training ground and the place where we live and function, what we describe as "the world", though contained within the all-embracing vision of the Avatars, is isolated and self-contained by the sheerest film of self, like a bubble in water. The role of the Avatar and their teachings is to thin that film, and to make known the possibility and the path toward removing it completely.

Ours is a world of facts — small, relative truths. Like Arjuna and Christ's disciples we are fearful of the implications of stepping fully into another world. While we can acknowledge an absolute reality, we demand something relative, something more gradual, doable, less all-consuming. At the initial stages of our unfoldment, selflessness and complete purity of motive are unreachable standards. However, becoming less selfish is attainable. Initially quieting the mind and its torrent of thoughts is asking too much, but the increasingly calming effect of attention and awareness can be learned and applied. The unity of a complete absorption in the One Life, moving and present in all things, is a distant ideal, but the day-to-day expansion that comes from our compassionate interaction with others is a path to higher states. The mountaintop is the goal, but we get there walking the path beneath our feet with all of its bumps, turns, and imperfections. There is the absolute and the relative — Krishna and Arjuna, the Ocean and the teacup, Unity and a functional unity suited to our unfoldment — that lead us ever closer to the Real — expanding as we grow, pointing to the heights from the ground on which we currently stand. (*Concluded*)

# Artificial Intelligence & Spiritual Research

ANTONIO GIRARDI

IT is important for spiritual researchers to investigate the relationship between artificial intelligence (AI) and spirituality, without expecting to be able to establish anything for certain. They simply observe and pay attention to a topic that has been influencing our lives for some time, attracting the attention of institutions within both the European Union (see the "AI Act") and national governments (see the Italian "Provisions and Government Authorization regarding Artificial Intelligence" bill).

Meanwhile, the State of Colorado in the USA, has passed legislation to protect privacy in the world of neurotechnology. It is a rapidly developing field that has huge potential in a positive sense (for example, in treatment for neurodegenerative diseases), but could also be used in disturbing initiatives, such as "artificial neuro-havens".

Big economic players and top names in intelligence are investing vast sums in AI research. It should also be noted that Meta (Mark Zuckerberg) has decided to develop artificial intelligence on an "open-source" basis.

**Using the Right Terminology**

When it comes to AI, it is important to be fully aware of what it means and how things stand. Artificial intelligence involves machines that can show human capabilities, such as reasoning, learning and planning. More specifically, AI today might be considered the basic technology that enables human intelligence processes to be mimicked through the creation and application of algorithms built into a dynamic computing environment. Meanwhile, generative artificial intelligence means using this technology to create new content, such as texts, pictures, music, audio, and videos.

While statistical data processing forms the foundation, human input can be found upstream from the digital side of things. It is worth remembering that discoveries regarding neural networks were made as long ago as the 1940s; the first practical applications came just over 10 years later.

This look at terminology would not be complete without a mention of the meaning of augmented reality (AR), which adds digital content to live views of real surroundings, often using a smartphone camera. In contrast, with virtual reality (VR) users experience a simulated environment instead of a real one.

Finally, according to the search engine,

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**Mr Antonio Girardi,** a former director of a foundation in the field of professional development, headed the TS Italian Section for three decades. Reprinted from *Theosophy Forward,* 14 May 2025.

Google, the term "spirituality" refers to a "search for a more profound meaning of life and a connection with something transcendent or superior".

From a theosophical point of view, it is essential to underline the difference between spirituality leading to personalization of the divine sphere, and spirituality that, instead, focuses on impersonal aspects associated with universal laws.

## Historical and Cultural References with a Few Reflections

For decades, human beings have contemplated the possibility of "autonomy", first in machines and now in digital systems.

In a paper published in the journal *Mind* of October 1950, scientist Alan Turing asked: "Can machines think?" Turing's automatic machines helped to break the cypher of the "Enigma" communication system used by the Nazis during the Second World War. This brilliant yet tragic figure (he committed suicide) was recently commemorated in an outstanding article by Massimo Sideri for the science and technological innovation newsletters of the *Corriere della Sera* website. It, too, ends by asking a question that sums up the most important aspect of the use of artificial intelligence: "Will humans be able to resist the temptation of getting machines to think?"

As long as the algorithms are controlled by human beings or based on statistical data processing, all considerations will revolve around the aims and goals of humans themselves, with ethical matters at the heart of it all. If machines become capable of independent thought, the matter will become much more significant.

Prof. Giuseppe Remuzzi masterfully discussed this topic in depth in an article published on 18 August 2024 in "La Lettura", a *Corriere della Sera* Sunday supplement. Remuzzi highlighted that — just like the workings of the human brain — much remains unknown about how neural networks work in AI. He then asked:

> Who will take responsibility for the consequences of the use of artificial intelligence? It will be important to establish who is responsible for what and for science that produces things, including when science creates tools to help science. It is a vicious circle and a tough nut to crack, but when innovation is so far-reaching that it has a substantial impact on many parts of our lives, someone must step up and take responsibility for it. In short, AI will transform science and perhaps also our way of life. It will bring enormous benefits, as long as we understand it well enough to avoid the risks associated with unrestrained development of these forms of expression.

Going back to historical and cultural references, the film world began contemplating these matters long ago. For example, take the 1968, Stanley Kubrick film, *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Kubrick wrote it with Arthur C. Clarke, who created the story and also wrote the novel of the same name. The latter was based on the film and published the same year.

At the heart of the film is the story and meaning of a "monolith", which appears from time to time and is the real protagonist. The fact that the motion picture was made 56 years ago shows just how important a role, culture, and research

play in properly framing a topic that we want to investigate. In the movie, an electronic brain develops a degree of autonomy associated with a sort of "delusion of omnipotence" and comes to want to replace human beings.

Another example from the film world is *Bicentennial Man*, which was released in 1999 and was directed by Chris Columbus. It was based on Isaac Asimov's story of the same name, and the novel *The Positronic Man*, which Asimov wrote with Robert Silverberg. The film tells the story of Andrew Martin, one of the first psychotropic robots. Thanks in part to the family environment in which he finds himself, there are a number of surprising developments as he acquires emotions, abilities, and skills.

Andrew Martin pleads for freedom, forges relationships, falls in love, and petitions the World Congress to recognize him as a human. After going through various experiences, he decides to become a mortal human and is finally recognized as such. He is able to marry his beloved Portia and die with her. The film tells a story of love inspiring anthropomorphic machines to evolve to become more like humans.

This roundup of movies fondly remembered by film buffs would not be complete without a mention of the famous *Blade Runner*, in which a replicant gives a lesson in humanity to the hunter tracking him. There have been various versions of Ridley Scott's film, which was originally released in 1982. The screenplay for the science-fiction film was written by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples. It is an adaptation of Philip K. Dick's 1968 novel, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*?

## Reflections and Theosophical "Bridges" That Can Connect Science and Spirituality

In the theosophical world, there have been two important recent reflections on AI that are worth noting. The first is Gaetano Mollo's article entitled, "L'intelligenza artificiale — pregi e limiti" ("Artificial intelligence — strengths and limitations"), which was published in the May-June 2024 issue of *Rivista Italiana di Teosofia*. He stated: "Artificial intelligence is a tool that can be used for collecting and processing data, but it cannot and must not replace the cognitive, emotional, and moral intelligence of human beings."

The second reflection is by Graziella Ricci in the article, "L' intelligenza artificiale e l'ecologia del pianeta" ("Artificial intelligence and the ecology of the planet", *Rivista Italiana di Teosofia*, July-August 2024). She highlights the dangers of AI and the imbalance it can bring on various fronts, including ecologically, environmentally and socially. She also invites everyone to reflect on what they can do as individuals to help the environment, in accordance with the principle of Universal Brotherhood without distinctions. Graziella concludes by encouraging people to use artificial intelligence tools in moderation.

Through the concept of *antahkarana*, Theosophy reminds us that human beings can become aware of the bridge between aspects relating to personality and the lower "ego" (the "lower quaternary") and those relating to the higher

mind, the world of archetypes, insight, and a spiritual principle that is ineffable, meaning it cannot be defined in words. Becoming aware of this bridge opens up the path to consciousness of the real dimension of human beings.

Another aspect to consider is the way in which we strive to compare the connections between spirituality and science, inspired by the Second Object of the Theosophical Society. We do this not to become fixed in one religion, ideology, or scientific school of thought, but to understand the dynamic contents of reality.

In a recent book entitled *Oltre l'invisibile — Dove scienza e spiritualità si uniscono* (*Beyond the Invisible — Where Science and Spirituality Meet*), the scientist and thinker Federico Faggin reminds us that "science and spirituality can produce something immeasurably more powerful than the sum of their parts, just like the combination of an electron and a proton creates a hydrogen atom".

On the theosophical front, remember how the One Life manifests itself. The concept of the Unity of Life is the key to interpreting reality, because it enables us to gain awareness of various things that are clearly indicated in the works of H. P. Blavatsky. These are:

- An unknowable Principle that cannot be defined with words (which is why we must always espouse the Socratic view of "knowing that we know nothing").
- *Pralaya* and *manvantara*, the breathing of the Universe (and the Universes).
- The identity of all individual souls with the universal soul — As above, so below.
- *Fohat*, the fiery energy that pervades and animates everything (both spirit and matter).
- The fact that life precedes form.
- Karma, reincarnation, and evolution.

Now let us take a quick look at a few scientific notions, mainly from the sphere of quantum physics, which can pave the way to significant connections with the theosophical ideas mentioned above:

**Quantum entanglement** is a term used to describe a fundamental connection between the particles in a quantum system. Once they are entangled, a change in the quantum state of one particle in a system will instantly influence all of the others. This connection is an inherent part of the system's wave function. It remains intact even when particles are extremely far apart and it has surprising, counter-intuitive consequences that have been verified by tests. Indeed, as a direct consequence of the principles of quantum mechanics, measurement (in the quantum sense) of the properties of a particle will also influence the properties of connected particles.

**Morphogenetic fields**: Rupert Sheldrake developed a theory about morphic resonance, according to which memory is inherent in Nature, and natural systems have a collective memory that they get from "all previous similar systems". Sheldrake claims that this memory is also behind telepathy-type interconnections between organisms. The theory has been rejected by the scientific community — of which Sheldrake was once a member, teaching at Cambridge and Harvard — and it is (now) considered pseudoscience.

**Panpsychism** (promoted by figures such as Roger Penrose) where everything has consciousness. The brain is in resonance with the cosmos and it can be demonstrated by applying the statistical

rules of quantum physics to the microscopic spaces between the neurons in the brain.

**Astrophysicist Bernard Haisch's theory** which states that the quantum fields that permeate empty space transmit consciousness through energy.

Also worth noting is the **FIRE research project** completed in 2017 at Northwestern University in Evanston (Illinois, USA), which developed the thesis that approximately 50% of the elements behind life on Earth have extraterrestrial origins. Just think of the possible connections with *The Stanzas of Dzyan*, a true "cornerstone" of theosophical literature.

## Dangers of Artificial Intelligence in the Present Day

Focusing more closely on AI once again, I believe it is important to define the critical issues. We can start by taking the concept of "technofeudalism", as described by Greek economist Yanis Varoufakis in the book of the same name. The author divides the transition taking place into four phases, with figures representing each of them:

- Don Draper (a character from the television series *Mad Men*) is an eccentric individual with a talent for making any product universally desirable to consumers.
- The Minotaur (which, according to classical myth, lived in the Labyrinth Minos had built in Crete) represents what has happened in the USA, where goods and services produced elsewhere hold growing appeal and Wall Street is increasingly fuelled by foreign capital. The amount invested in the stock market now adds up to an absolutely insane $750 trillion.
- Alexa (the faithful digital assistant) symbolizes the power of the cloud, search engines, and apps, which learn using algorithms that are constantly fed with information.
- The "cloudalists" are the owners of new cloud networks such as Amazon, Google, and Alibaba. According to Varoufakis, "like the old feudal lords, they have seized common land — the internet — and divided it into various virtual spaces (the new fiefs), from which they extract huge rents".

Other matters that should be considered include:

The standardization of reality (commonplaces become algorithms!).

The mantric effect of disinformation (we end up believing things which could easily not be true).

Twisted and manipulative use of neurotechnology.

The destruction (which has already occurred) of privacy, which is now little more than a pretence.

The use of AI with no respect for ethics or the freedom of human beings.

## Opportunities Currently Presented by Artificial Intelligence

As well as dangers, there are many opportunities that come with AI, such as:

- Rationalization of industrial processes and energy networks.
- Rationalization of logistics, transport, processes in the service industry, and more.
- Fast data processing.
- Scope for expanded "memories".
- Opportunities for targeted research.
- Breaking down language barriers.

## Experience-Based Theosophy as an Antidote for Manipulation

It is worth recalling the elements of the theosophical method that can play a part in experience-based Theosophy, especially if they are steeped in beauty, love, and creativity in interaction. They are:

- Neutral observation, which is open to reality and not conditioned by our projections.
- Studying, which aids the metabolism of knowledge, making it an intrinsic part of us.
- Maieutics [literally, teaching by question and answer], that is, being together and sharing.
- Meditation, not as a technique, but as a state of consciousness.
- Service, which enables us to go beyond the lower "ego" of personality and open up to action that benefits all beings.

## Along the Way of the Heart

In order to reach awareness of the ways of the heart, it is necessary to overcome thinking based on (1) a fragmented outlook and (2) discriminating choice.

Regarding the former, J. Krishnamurti (JK) stated: "A problem only arises when life is seen fragmentarily. Do see the beauty of that. When you see life as a whole then there is no problem whatsoever. It is only a mind and a heart that is broken up in fragments that creates problems. The centre of the fragment is the 'me'. The 'me' is brought about through thought; it has no reality by itself".

As for the latter: "Choice exists when there is confusion. A mind that sees clearly has no choice — it is doing. I think this is where we have got into rather trouble, when we say we are free to choose. Choice implies freedom. I say, on the contrary, choice implies a mind that is confused, and therefore not free."

Finally, JK reminds us that "beauty is not an abstract thing, but it goes with goodness — goodness in behaviour, goodness in conduct, goodness in action".

The ways of the heart lead us to the dreams that life has given us as unadulterated expressions of our being. The mind and emotions are used to develop reason and feelings, giving balance to the ways of the heart.

The ways are also open to the essential triumvirate of meditation, maieutics, and service. They enable you to move past a vision of the world based on opposition between the subject and the object, and realize that relationships with others play a crucial part in the process of gaining awareness and expanding consciousness, thanks to an existence that aims to benefit all beings.

Along the ways of the heart, artificial intelligence is cut down to size and founders in the ocean of Maya.

I would like to conclude with one last inspiring extract, taken from a book by Bernardino del Boca, opened at random:

> How much your virtues shine depends on the breadth of your love. The generosity of your love opens up all possibilities and takes you closer to the pure energy of the heaven in which you are immersed. Use all of your heart to respond to the love you receive, and the ethereal light that comes from the heart will illuminate your life.

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# The Moment of Choice Facing Humanity — I

KIRK GRADIN

IN 1978 I traveled overland from Western Europe on my first journey to India, seeking instruction from a renowned teacher of meditation. In completely unexpected ways, the trip had an earth-shaking effect upon me which I have never been able to adequately describe. It was something like returning to the homeland of spiritual birth. Such was its impact that I fell into a kind of culture shock upon returning to California. Most things seemed trivial, offering a cushioned unreality and false solace far from the travails of most of humanity. For many months, I was inwardly remote and a puzzle to both family and friends. Among other things, my travels made me aware of how little I knew about myself and the world.

Determined to begin correcting such a deficit, my first semester back at the University of California in Santa Barbara included a political science undergraduate course on Anarchist Thought. On that first day of classes in 1979, I sat near the back of a nearly packed 300-person auditorium when Professor Raghavan Iyer walked onto the teacher's platform. Much to my wonder, within minutes, through the power of his oration, I was back in India, walking in the dust of the teeming, poverty-stricken, but noble millions. The gracious devotion and humble generosity of countless city slum and village families, the omnipresent temples, silent sadhus, farmers, beggars, and road-side vendors were brought to life there in the lecture hall. And as Raghavan seamlessly moved from social and political realities to Hindu philosophy and mythology, another presence entered the mind's eye. Through his evocative speech, the radiant Mahā-Yogin, the divine Śiva, protector and spiritual benefactor of every living creature, came to life, his presence filling the hall, bidding us all to waken from our slumber. As the discourse finished, I spontaneously rose with all other students in standing ovation. Here, I thought, was a true teacher who not only understood but somehow could evoke the heart and soul of ancient Āryavarta.

Though I had been attending the United Lodge of Theosophists (ULT) in

**Mr Kirk Gradin** has been an Associate of the United Lodge of Theosophists in Santa Barbara since 1979, has written many articles for *VIDYA* magazine and other publications, given multimedia presentations in diverse theosophical venues, and co-founded *Studio Vach*, a series of podcasts and videos on core introductory themes of *Theosophia*.

Santa Barbara for months, somehow I had never seen or heard Raghavan speak until that day on campus. Soon after, in the fall of 1979, he began appearing often at Sunday-night Lodge meetings and also teaching Wednesday-night classes on *The Secret Doctrine*. Here again, I must say, I have never heard anyone, before or since then, speak with such explanatory clarity and comprehensive certainty regarding the most abstruse metaphysical, philosophical, and occult aspects of the esoteric wisdom. Besides the intellectual brilliance and precise, laser-like comprehension, he would bring the ideas to new life and practical relevance. He could both touch the heart and make clear to the mind, many a spiritual truth formerly distant. He was truly an alchemist wielding the logoic magic of the spoken word: *Brahma Vach*. In golden moments, time merged with eternity as the seemingly rigid barriers of separate selfhood dissolved. We collectively breathed and bathed in the radiant calm and transcendent luminosity of *ākāsa*, where cosmic and human spheres seamlessly interblend.[1]

Because of the superlative *theosophia* being freely offered, many professors of religion and philosophy as well as longer-time students of Theosophy had moved to Santa Barbara to be part of the theosophical work unfolding here. In 1979, the Santa Barbara ULT community had grown to over 200 people, most living in communes established on behalf of the Movement. The deeply abiding and overriding ethos was the certainty that all efforts were a continuation of the work initiated by Tsong-Kha-Pa in the 14th century as part of a Seven-Century Plan, a Mahatmic current of teaching which was brought to American soil in the 1875 cycle by H. P. Blavatsky (HPB). Everything done was dedicated to universal human enlightenment, justice and eventual felicity at the behest of the Masters. There was no doubt that we were attempting to purify and universalize our motive, to elevate and awaken the higher capacities of both mind and heart, to refocus and redirect our lifelong energies in order to aid the continuation of that noetic regenerative current. All this is to say: if there is truth or inspiration in my words or writing, it is without doubt due to this golden age atmosphere of altruistic learning and service in which our understanding of HPB's teaching was brought to birth and nourished over the course of decades.

Part one of this essay attempts to cast a broad net, primarily drawn from *The Secret Doctrine*, illustrating the crucial role of the human capacity for choice in the present historical moment within the context of cosmic and human evolution. Part two will examine how the moment of choice in the New Cycle as spoken of by HPB, is illustrated in the mythological and alchemical themes associated with the Aquarian Age.

## Whom Choose Ye This Day?

The power of choice, of discrimination, self-direction, and self-determination is the most precious though underappreciated of divine capacities we have as human beings. Karmically speaking, it is what has brought us to this current juncture. Along with the enormous latent

karma generated in past lives, our choices each moment determine our immediate future, as well as the circumstances we will experience both individually and collectively in future incarnations. We live in a time in which many are lost, desperate, and suffering. Through our choices today, tomorrow, this week and next week, we can make it easier for humanity to loosen its burden, to embrace a greater realization of human brotherhood and sisterhood, to begin unfolding its higher solar function and noetic divine heritage, or we can be a block, a hindrance, a shadowy confusion adding to the collective chaos and downward spiral. By choosing the latter, whether intentionally or not, we reinforce those chains which bind ourselves and others to false and ephemeral lights in the Platonic cave of ignorance, egotism, and self-obsession. Both God and the devil reside within, taught HPB. Humanity must either sink or soar. There is no neutral option. "Whom choose ye this day?" (Joshua 24:15)

In the last three years before her passing, H. P. Blavatsky wrote several journal articles that are among the most forceful moral indictments of modern civilization she ever penned, while also pointing to what she meant by the moment of choice facing humanity. These include "The New Cycle" (1889), "Our Cycle and the Next" (1889), "The Dual Aspect of Wisdom" (1890), "Psychic and Noetic Action" (1890), and "Civilization: the Death of Art and Beauty" (1891).[2] In the current historical moment, many passages in these articles are strikingly contemporary.

In the midst of the widespread economic growth of the second industrial revolution which included the first steam engines, continental railroads, and electrical grids, she wrote:

> All the progress and glittering innovations of modern civilization are skin-deep and due to selfishness and materialism, the greatest curses of all nations. . . . Materialism and indifference to all save the selfish realization of wealth and power, and the overfeeding of national and personal vanity, have gradually led nations and men to the almost entire oblivion of spiritual ideals, of the love of nature, to the correct appreciation of things.

She was uncompromising in labelling the use or manipulation of natural or human energies, for selfish profiteering rather than true universal benefit, as a form of black magic. She called Western civilization "a hideous leprosy . . . canting, deceitful, hypocritical and vain . . . from its diplomats down to its custodians of religion, from its political down to its social laws . . . greedy and brutal beyond expression in its grabbing characteristics". The virus of insatiable ambition and consumption was "rapidly eating its way through all the quarters of the globe and hardening the human heart". Owing to "the triumphant march and invasion of so-called civilization, Nature, as well as man and ethics, was being sacrificed".

Like H. D. Thoreau, she clearly saw how the lives of the poor were being trampled upon and consumed by innovations that were supposedly designed to serve. As the harvesting and burning of fossil fuels took root, she observed: "Climates are changing and the face of the whole world will soon

be altered." She pointed to the destruction of primeval forests and of animal species as another vivid display of the barbarous, shameful, and "murderous hand of the pioneers of civilization". [3]

Today, these practices have reached monstrous levels. While misleading the masses through media manipulation and "fake news", governments supposedly designed to serve the whole population, instead are controlled by unscrupulous multi-national corporate interests, oligarchs, and ridiculously wealthy entrepreneurs. In perpetual wars, common citizens and children are the most severely impacted but uncounted casualty, while munition corporations and fossil-fuel profiteers realize obscene profits. Worldwide, over 75 billion animals are slaughtered each year for food, 99% of which is on factory farms where livestock are treated in morally horrific ways.

Though ignored in most discussions of the food, water, and environmental crises we are now facing, livestock farming is the number one cause of habitat loss and of species extinction, of deforestation and soil degradation, of water overuse, pollution and scarcity, as well as greenhouse gas emission. Livestock farming now creates more greenhouse gases than all transport systems (airplanes, trains, trucks, and cars) combined. This is to say nothing of the epidemic levels of heart disease and cancers fomented by the consumption of animal fats and proteins.[4] The expanded human population is not the problem. The total worldwide human footprint known as urban sprawl only occupies 1% of the planet's surface while agricultural sprawl covers 38% of the earth's wildlands. At least 80% of this is used for grazing animals and grain crops used to feed animals for consumption.[5]

HPB saw how the violent mistreatment of both animal and human populations was becoming the accepted, legalized norm. "Social immorality (of every kind) is as rife as ever" and among so-called religious nations and governments, "the most hateful discrimination and horrible crimes are daily perpetrated." The genocide of the Red Indian and the enslavement of the Negro by so-called Christian nations, were glaring examples she gave. She clearly illustrated for us how the teaching of Jesus, whose real name was Joshua Ben Pendira, had been edited, inverted and co-opted by Churches and ruthless, criminal governments for power and wealth, to hypnotize, manipulate, and profit from the masses. Even today that sad story is continuing to unfold on the world stage.

Despite all this, and on the eve of two world wars, she wrote:

> We are now facing all the glorious possibilities of the future. Once again the hour has struck for the great periodical return of the rising tide of mystic thought. . . . We are surrounded on all sides by the ocean of universal science — the science of life eternal — bringing in its waters the buried and long-forgotten treasures of vanished generations, treasures still unknown to the modern civilized races. . . . Now is the time for action by all who see the sterility and foolishness of an existence blinded by materialism and so ferociously indifferent to the fate

of others. It is for them to devote their best energies, all their courage and all their efforts to bring about an intellectual reform. This reform cannot be accomplished except through Theosophy, and, let us say it, Occultism, or the Wisdom of the East.

It is useless to rely on chance, and to await the approaching intellectual and psychic crisis with indifference, if not with total incredulity, saying to oneself that if worse comes to worst, the tide will carry us quite naturally to the shore; for there is a strong likelihood of the tide stranding but a corpse! The battle will be fierce, in any case, between brutal materialism and blind fanaticism on the one hand, and on the other, philosophy and mysticism — that more or less thick veil of the Eternal Truth. . . . It is useless to blind oneself to this, useless to hope one will be able to remain neutral between these two warring forces; one can only be crushed, or has to choose between them. The man who thinks he has chosen freedom and who nevertheless remains submerged in this seething and foaming cauldron of filth called social life, utters the most terrible lie to his Divine Self; a lie that will blind this Self through its long series of incarnations. . . .

It is not materialism that will have the upper hand. Everyone fanatically clinging to an idea isolating him from the universal axiom — "There is no Religion higher than Truth" — will find himself separated like a rotten plank from the new ark called Humanity. Tossed by the waves, chased by the winds, buffeted by this element so terrible because unknown, he will soon find himself swallowed up.

(H. P. Blavatsky, "The New Cycle")

What, we may ask, are the root causes of materialism, religious fanaticism and moral indifference? And if modern civilization is one ultimately bent on its own destruction — as Shakespeare wrote, ". . . And appetite, an universal wolf/ So doubly seconded with will and power, / Must make perforce an universal prey, / And last eat up himself"[6] — what can be done? How can we align ourselves with the mystic current, rather than that which is dying? Theosophically, every crisis is a crisis of self-conception, hinging not just on the question, "Who am I?", but also on, "What does it mean to be human? What is the purpose and aim of human life?" The Masters and HPB forcefully pointed out, this is where true reform can take place at the very root:

> The gradual assimilation by mankind of great spiritual truths will alone revolutionize the face of civilization, and ultimately result in a far more effective panacea for evil, than the mere tinkering of superficial misery. Prevention is better than cure. (*Ibid.*)

This was, apparently, the aim of her incarnation. To leave for students who would sign up for the course, the bare outlines of a teaching hidden for millennia in the mystery temples of the East, though ever-present in the human heart.

The cosmological and anthropological sciences of *Theosophia*, are not based upon precise observations of visible Nature, by telescopes and microscopes, carbon dating and particle accelerators, nor through speculation or philosophical conjecture. Instead, Blavatsky explained, they are derived from an uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations

of Seers. Unimaginable to most of us, such Seers and Adepts have so perfected their moral, mental, and spiritual nature, that they are no longer hindered by the barriers of time and space to which most human consciousness is captive. Through the Bodhisattva Path of renunciation, this living lineage of Masters of Wisdom who brought us this teaching, have reawakened the "Eye of Dangma", the highest forms of spiritual vision possible in our cycle. All such Seers belong to a vast, hidden, and immortal Lodge, all known to one another and all constituting a single Tree of Noetic Wisdom. HPB referred to the imperishable sacred land where such beings reside by many names: *Arghya Varsha*: "the Land of Libations", "Shamballa", "the Isle of the Blessed", and "the White Island", to name a few examples.

For untold ages this Brotherhood has preserved and protected *theosophia* for the benefit of humanity. In *The Voice of the Silence* they are referred to as the "guardian wall", an immortal rampart which guards humanity from further and far greater sorrow. They are said to embody the wisdom they impart. They have lived in every age, but their most well-known representatives are revered as Krishna, Buddha, Pythagoras, Plato, and Jesus. Through them, aspects of this once universal science was conveyed in diverse languages, allegories and symbol systems, now reflected in the religions, mythologies, and philosophies of humanity. Each also gave both an exoteric teaching for the masses, and an esoteric teaching for the few.

At great sacrifice and risk to herself, Blavatsky conveyed for the first time in the English language, the outlines of what she called the Trans-Himalayan esoteric system, purified of the overgrowth of human fancy, ritualism, salaried priests, dogmatism, and sectarianism. In this way, she and the Masters with whom she acted in strict obedience, sought to rescue the Race mind from the otherwise strangling thought-forms of the age: dogmatic institutionalized religion and materialistic science. She sought to demonstrate that all great traditions had a common basis for universal ethics, derived from hidden Nature herself. If *theosophia,* properly understood and awakened on behalf of the whole, could begin to permeate the Race mind, it would lead to widespread reforms, she taught, to reconciliation, tolerance, and justice, harmony, mutual service, charity, and genuine brotherhood among all peoples, races, and nations; a complete non-violent revolution without one drop of blood spilt.

And such was the efficacy of the heritage she left, that anyone with true concern for suffering humanity, could begin to use the teaching to discover, awaken, and activate otherwise dormant capacities of mind and heart. As Raghavan pointed out, when the Stanzas of *The Secret Doctrine* and their commentaries along with *The Voice of the Silence* are used as a basis for philosophical thought, meditation, and self-reform, they provide luminous guidance for high-altitude mountain climbing, where each could begin aligning motive, feeling, thought, and daily dharma with the true spiritual geniuses of humanity. Anyone with an abiding love for humanity and a sense of the sacred, of gratitude, reverence, and devotion to the *guru-parampara* lineage which HPB

represented, could make a potent contribution to the future by developing the lungs to breathe in rarified atmospheres. In part, this means learning to think abstractly, universally, and impersonally. As challenging as this may be at first, in time it can become a joyous, therapeutic, and blissful practice, especially in the company of like-minded students, helping to free the mind from its habitual egotistic limitations, personal delusions and afflictions. Let us take a few paragraphs, then, to briefly review the outlines of her teaching.

As a beginning point, we are directed to establish a center of thought and ideation in that which is formless, unified, and unbounded. This requires not only withdrawing identity from individual name and form, from all the characteristics of one's personality, but from any manifestation whatsoever. In the first slokas of the Stanzas of Dzyan, we are asked to imagine a condition of utter peace, rest, and quiescence, in which all conditionalities, of whatever kind, are dissolved. In this universal pralaya of nonbeing, Time itself is at rest in the "INFINITE BOSOM OF DURATION."[7]

Beyond both pralaya and manvantara is the true SELF of All, the Absolute, TAT or "That". HPB affirms: That which is truly eternal, birthless, and deathless, cannot be reduced to language. "The Tao that can be named is not the eternal Tao." Any term or symbol used will have its limitation and therefore potentially distort the meaning. In the Gospels it is the "darkness on the face of the deep", in Northern Buddhism *śunyata*, and with the Kabbalists *Ain Soph*, meaning "no thing". In the Upanishads it is both *ātman* and *brahman*. What appears to us as utter darkness and absolute unconsciousness, she wrote, becomes for the awakened Seer, absolute light. *That thou art.*

Though this unity is the fundamental axiom and underlying assumption of all theosophical thought, the aspirant who would serve the whole, must also come to apprehend the logoic and compassionate manner by which the One seemingly becomes Many. HPB takes us through many abstract stages, but crucial to them all is the Tibetan term *fohat*. In one of its countless aspects *fohat* is the Great Breath itself, as Divine Eros, that inherent law of absolute compassion, universal empathy and sympathy, which propels the unmanifested logos to periodically initiate the Word.

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. . . . In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. . . . That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth. (John 1:1–14)

The Word of the Hebrew Bible is the Greek *Logos*, the Hindu *Vach*, and the Chinese Buddhist *Kwan-Yin*, and it is reflected in the most ancient of Vedic hymns, the pranava, the AUM of the Gayatri mantram. W. Q. Judge advised this *mantram* as a continual theme of meditation, even while carrying out our daily tasks, as it would lead to a knowledge of the Secret Doctrine. The triune

logos is said to contain, in potentia, everything that will arise over the course of the *manvantara*. In volume 2, p. 596, HPB correlates it with the higher triad in humanity, with *ātma*, *buddhi*, and Higher *manas*, the Deity within.

At the dawn of cosmic time, the formless three emanate the active potency of the manifesting seven. Seven is one of the central meanings of the interlaced triangles of the Theosophical Seal. The center point is the seventh and synthesis. The seven Dhyanis or Lords of Light, constitute the collective "aggregate of Divine Intelligence" following the plan laid out in the Divine Mind, the emanating agents of karmic and cosmic law. They differentiate into the hidden architecture of Nature, the Great Chain of Being, the seven cosmic elements, the seven kingdoms, and the seven principles of human nature, that is, all beings, matter, consciousness, and energy. Without the seven Dhyanis, wrote HPB, neither the cosmos nor human nature can be properly understood. Raghavan Iyer also repeatedly made this abundantly clear:

> For all human beings in the present period of evolution, spiritual growth consists in awakening noetic awareness of formless spiritual essences, a process of Manasic maturation which requires precise apprehension of the different sets of Dhyanis and ancestors involved in the complex karmic heredity of humanity. The ascent to Monadic awakening culminating in self-conscious divinity proceeds *pari passu* with an increasing participation in the sacrificial descent of the Light of the Logos into the human temple.

This sevenfold host is also the archetypal essence of all cyclic time. They correspond to the seven days of creation found in the Hebrew Bible, the seven Hindu Creations, the seven Globes, Rounds, and Races, as well as the seven days of the week. All cyclic activity is governed by the same celestial music of the spheres.

(*To be continued*)

Endnotes

1. For a more extensive biographical sketch of Shri Raghavan Iyer and audio recordings of his talks, see: https://maitreyaacademy.org/biography/. His writings, many based on lectures given at Crosbie Hall and elsewhere from 1975-1989, were edited and arranged by him into three volumes titled: *The Gupta Vidya*, Theosophy Trust publishers, 2020.

2. All of these articles by HPB can be found faithfully reproduced online at https://www.theosophytrust.org/HPB-article.

3. HPB, "Civilization: The Death of Art and Beauty".

4. See: *The China Study*, by T. Colin Campbell, PhD, Benbella Books, 2006. Also, https://NutritionFacts.org, a website produced by M. Greger MD, FACLM, an ongoing examination of the latest published, peer-reviewed, double-blind studies in human nutrition.

5. See: *Regenesis: Feeding the World Without Devouring the Planet*, by George Monbiot, Penguin Books, 2022.

6. *Troilus and Cressida*, (III, 1).

7. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, p. 36.

# HPB's Individuality: Sources of Transformational Potential

SVITLANA GAVRYLENKO

WHO but us, people involved in Theosophy, knows for sure what tectonic shift in the consciousness of humanity began to occur after Theosophy, Divine Wisdom, appeared on the arena of planetary thought in modern armor, which was presented to the world at the end of the 19th century through Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (HPB). All her contemporaries were unanimous in the fact that she exerted incredible, almost superhuman forces to fulfill her mission, and even the Mahatma Letters say that she resembled a courageous warrior who, in an unequal battle, made desperate efforts for victory, the victory of truth, the victory of primor-dial wisdom over the ignorance and materialistic worldview of the then educated society.

There is no doubt that for such an inner strength, the power of an icebreaker that breaks the path to truth through the icy thickness of prejudices and scientific dogmas, there must be certain prerequisites. That is why I would like to touch on the origins of this invincible transformational potential that our outstanding compatriot HPB brought into this world.

Undoubtedly, this is primarily the strength of her character. Each person brings into this world their previous achievements in the form of their character traits. Since childhood, Helena had the ability to learn easily and quickly various knowledge and skills; she seemed to grasp knowledge on the fly. She very quickly outgrew her teachers and tutors, whom her parents invited. Very early on, she began to demonstrate the independence of her views, the ability to understand people and the ability to make decisions independently. We will not now discuss different versions of HPB's previous incarnations, but it is important to note that the family in which she was born did everything necessary not to break her independence, but also to give her the opportunity for fully gaining the inner strength that she would later need so much to fulfill her life task. Important figures in her early development were her mother, father, and grandmother. Some biographers believe that her father had little influence on Helena, because he was a military man and constantly on duty. But it was her military father, Petrov

**Dr Svitlana Gavrylenko** is General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Ukraine.

Alekseyevich Hahn, who ensured a certain asceticism in her childhood, because Helena spent her childhood not in social salons, but in Nature, leading a simple life. Also important in her moral and mental formation was the influence of her grandmother Helena Pavlovna Fadeyeva, née Princess Dolgorukaya, a highly educated person, endowed by birth and aristocratic upbringing with a noble character and a sense of self-esteem. In my opinion, it was the influence of the grandmother that contributed to the moral framing, or diamond cutting, of that special rebellious spirit that was inherent in the one to whom we are indebted for bringing renewed theosophical knowledge to people and for the very existence of the Theosophical Society, which this year celebrates its 150th anniversary.

It should also be noted that Helena was under the supervision of her Master from an early age. I offer you my assumption that neither her family nor her place of birth were accidental. She was born on the territory of Ukraine, so we share a common homeland with her. Of course, I want to say that we are proud of this, but on the other hand, we understand well that there is no merit in this, and moreover, it obliges us to do more, imposes a greater responsibility on us, Ukrainian theosophists. Let us analyze certain features of this territory from the point of view of its potentials. First of all, this is the land of Shiva. Did you know that His Trishul (Trident) is depicted on the passport of every citizen of Ukraine? Yes, yes, this most ancient symbol has always been associated with this geographical place, as evidenced by numerous ancient artifacts and modern scientific researches. This is one of those places on our planet where the creative energy of transformation is especially active.

There are some other features of this territory, where Helena was born and raised; this is the lower Dnieper-river region, the city Yekaterinoslav, now Dnipro.

• **The Kursk magnetic anomaly (Fig. 1)** is a unique planetary phenomenon. The magnetic field voltage is 2–3 times higher than the planetary norm. According to research by experts, people with cosmic thinking are born here; almost half of the luminaries of the rocket and space school were born here. We can start with Konstantin Tsiolkovsky. There is a powerful closed scientific base of rocketry and space technology in the city Dnipro.

• **The Ukrainian crystalline shield (Fig. 2)** is a very ancient formation of the earth's crust of our planet, the main material of which is granite. Over the past three hundred million years, this territory has been constantly rising; this process affects not only the physical level, but also the mental and spiritual levels. The culture of the Dnieper-river region dates back to the Neolithic era; people lived here in the Archean period. Numerous artifacts of proto-Sumerian writing have been found here.

• **The Dnieper-river rapids. The Dnieper River (Fig. 3)** is the central artery of Ukraine and Europe. In a span of 70 kilometers, between the two cities of

Dnipro and Zaporizhzhia, there were 9 rapids. Thanks to them, a special, very powerful, transformational energy of this area was created for a long time. Each rapid had its own peculiarities of flora and fauna, its own spectrum of radiation.

This is the land that raised Helena, she spent her childhood here, and from here, she set out to transform the world.

However, who will be surprised with changes now? Today it is obvious to many that we live in a period of such global changes that are connected with all the plans of human and planetary existence. Now imagine how we can live in the era of changes in that place where the energy of transformation is already beating. I assure you that there is nothing left but to change ourselves, and to do it urgently.

Look at **the map (Fig. 5)** we have compiled. It shows at least 12 places connected with HPB's family and her childhood in our country. The places where the family's estates were located are marked here, these are numbers 1, 2, 6, 11, and 12. The places where the military regiment in which Helena's father served was located and the family followed him, are also shown. The memoirs say that soldiers were often Helena's educators, and this left its mark on her character and behavior in the future. The life of officer families is often associated with moving. On the map, these are numbers 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10. The places that she visited upon returning from her travels around the world are also marked. These are numbers 7, 11. For example, she visited Kyiv three times. HPB's good friend Agardi Mitrovich was a soloist of the Kyiv Opera. A tragic page of her life is connected with Kyiv. Her adopted son, whom she loved very much, died here. She was tenderly attached to this boy, who suffered from a serious congenital disease.

Among all these places connected with Blavatsky, the most significant are two, namely Katherynoslav, where she was born (number 1), and Odesa, where she returned many times after her travels (number 11). Today, the **house** that belonged to the family and i**n which HPB was born (Fig. 4)** remains in Dnipro. This house now is the State Museum Center of HPB and her family. In Pavlynka (number 12), near Odesa, there was an estate of her grandparents, the Fadeyevs, where she spent her summer months as a child. We are currently building a Cultural Center there for summer programs of the Theosophical Society. As soon as the war is over, we dream of inviting all interested Theosophists to visit places related to HPB in Ukraine. Some of our friends have already been here and can now remember these places forever. Some of them have returned here many times. We will be happy to see all of you in Ukraine,

What this woman managed to accomplish is grandiose. She gave a new direction to the development of the fith subrace's consciousness. Of course, other disciples of the Great Masters in the world were successfully working on this task simultaneously with her and after her, but she was the flagship, she was like an icebreaker cutting a new path of thinking among the icy crystalline massifs of

materialism. After the "Secret Doctrine" the world could not remain the same. Sometimes, in Medicine, especially in difficult cases, shock therapy is used. This was the case here. Mental shock contributed to overcoming and breaking free from established dogmas and stereotypes of materialistic thinking.

I would like to say a few more words about the transformational potential of Theosophy, about the current global evolutionary processes on our planet, and the role of Theosophy as a worldview reference point for current and future changes.

For now, I will simply try to list three main areas of those transformations in the consciousness of humanity that are associated with the appearance of the Sun of Theosophy on the horizon of humanity at the end of the 19th century. This is, so to speak, the social transformational potential:

1. The world picture has begun its stage of radical transformation.

2. The beginning of the formation of new human relations of Brotherhood has been laid.

3. "The Brotherhood of religions". Another important sphere in which the ideas of Theosophy are able to bring an impulse of transformation, leading to unification and mutual understanding. This is the sphere of religions. It is very painful for humanity today, because more than half of the military conflicts in the world occur on religious grounds. These issues are given attention in *Isis Unveiled* and other works of HPB.

Finally, Helena Petrovna outlined for Western seekers of Truth the individual features of those transformational potentials that Theosophy initiates. The fourth President of the Theosophical Society, Curuppumullage Jinarājadāsa, in his wonderful book, *Practical Theosophy*, very aptly defined them:

> There are three fundamental theosophical truths which transform our attitude to life when we begin to apply them. They are:
>
> 1. We are immortal souls that grow through the ages into an ideal of perfection.
>
> 2. The growth of the soul is by learning to cooperate with the Divine plan, which is Evolution.
>
> 3. We learn to cooperate with the Divine plan primarily by learning first how to help each other.

So, we are all standing on the threshold of great planetary processes of transformation. We should not try to avoid this. Let us approach this constructively and help each other find the right solutions. We have a wonderful tool, which is Theosophy. We are grateful to Helena Petrovna Blavatsky for the great example that was her life, and for the signposts she left us.

✧

**Love is like the blood of spiritual evolution.**

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

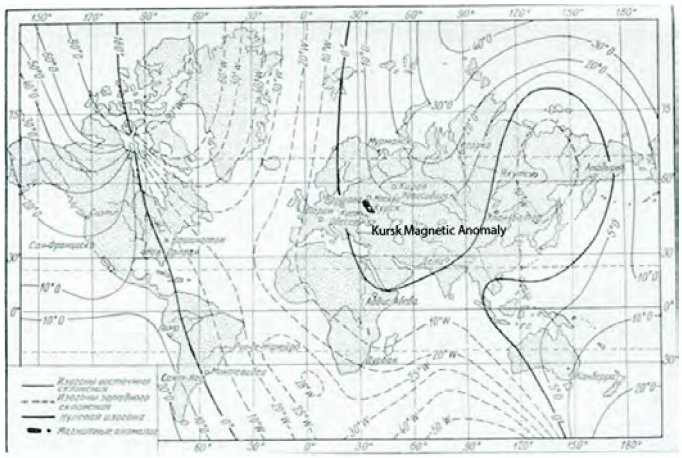



Fig. 1

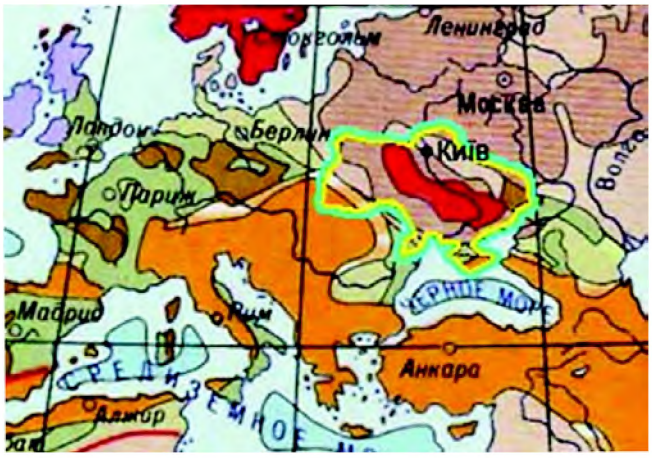



Fig. 2




Fig. 3




Fig. 4

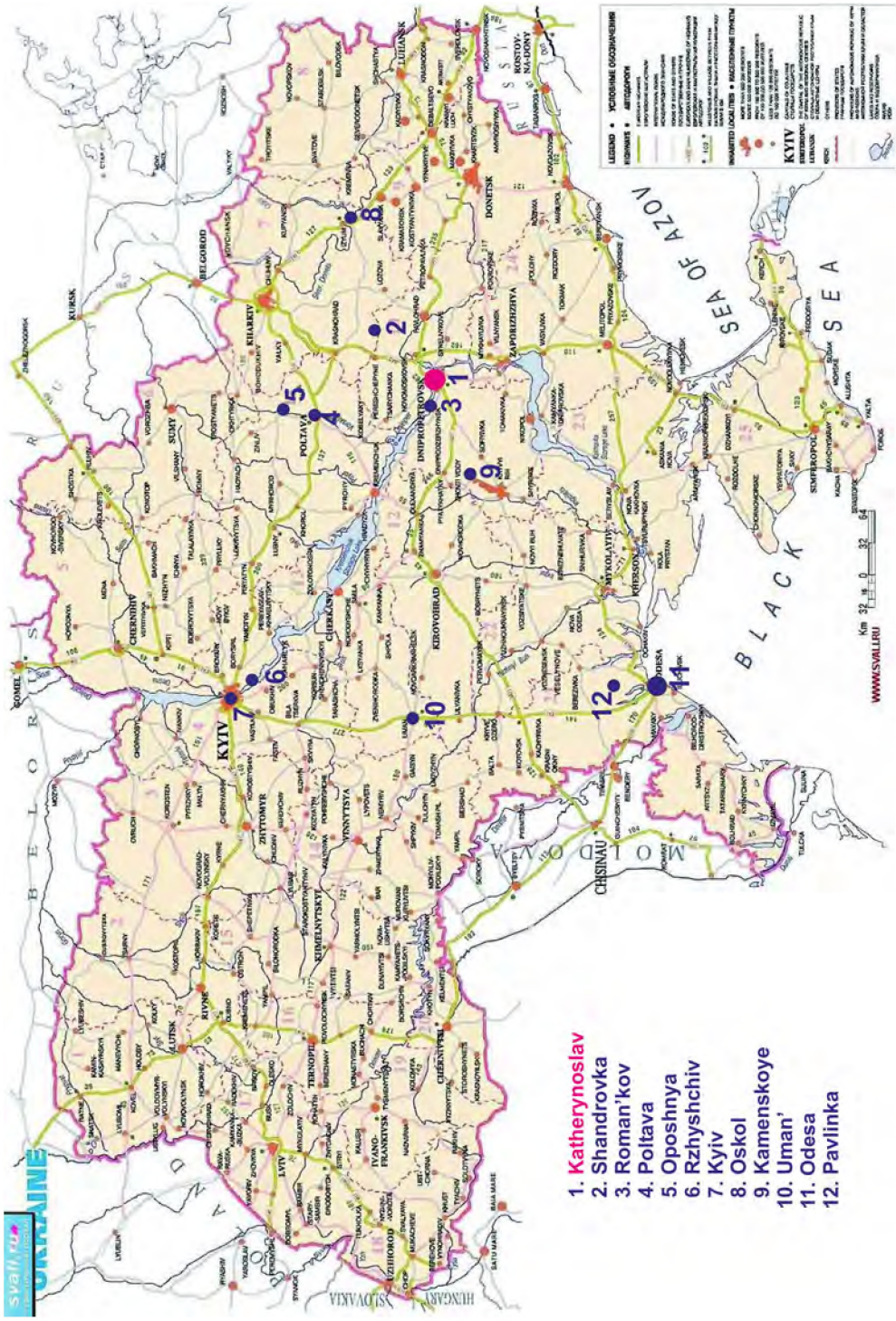

1. Katherynoslav
2. Shandrovka
3. Roman'kov
4. Poltava
5. Oposhnya
6. Rzhyshchiv
7. Kyiv
8. Oskol
9. Kamenskoye
10. Uman'
11. Odesa
12. Pavlinka
SEA OF AZOV
BLACK SEA
UKRAINE
KYIV
ODESA
DONETSK
DNIPROPETROVSK
KHARKIV
KHERSON
SIMFEROPOL
CHISINAU
WWW.SVALLRU

Fig. 5

# Whispers of War and the Teachings of Theosophy — I

RACHNA SHRIVASTAVA

"WHISPERS OF WAR" is a metaphor to describe the subtle and often hidden ways in which war impacts individuals and societies. It suggests the quieter stories and emotional tolls of war on people. The more the human race is advancing in science and technology, more loudly and clearly the greed and lust for power and control can be heard. We always thought that modernity will bring peace, but what we see today is far from that. Nations, it seems, are going back to the primitive age where brutal force was everything.

This article explores the relationship between warfare and theosophical teachings, analyzing how Theosophy views con-flict through the lenses of spiritual evolution and karmic law. By regarding wars not only as a sociopolitical event but also as a reflection of deeper spiritual processes, Theosophy provides a distinctive framework for understanding collective violence. This article contends that the theosophical perspective promotes a vision of global unity and spiritual renewal, even amidst the context of war.

## Introduction

The persistent occurrence of war throughout human history has led to numerous philosophical, religious, and political reactions. Although typical discussions often examine war from geopolitical, economic, or humanitarian perspectives, Theosophy provides a hidden and spiritual viewpoint. Originating from ancient wisdom and revived in the late 19th century by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society, Theosophy posits that conflict, including warfare, represents not just a failure of diplomacy but instead an event tied to karma and evolution[1] (Blavatsky, 1888/1977). This article investigates how Theosophy frames war within its broader cosmological and ethical structure and considers its implications for contemporary society.

Theosophy suggests that war stems from a lack of understanding of the interconnectedness of all beings and the consequences of our actions. It is seen as a manifestation of human ignorance, selfishness, and a failure to recognize the One Life. True peace, according to Theosophy, is not merely the absence of conflict but a state of inner harmony and interconnectedness. It requires a shift in

**Prof. Rachna Srivastava** is the Principal of Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya, a college affiliated to the Banaras Hindu University and run by the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society at Varanasi.

consciousness and a deep understanding of the laws of the universe. Theosophists emphasize the importance of individual effort in promoting peace. They believe that each person can contribute to the larger effort by cultivating inner peace, compassion, and wisdom.

Conflict has been a fundamental aspect of human history and continues to influence our lives in multifaceted and often tragic manners. While we usually view war as an outward clash — countries battling for dominance, beliefs, or resources — there exists a more subtle conflict occurring within individuals and societies. This internal struggle, though less apparent, is equally significant. The concept of "war within and without" encapsulates this duality, highlighting the close connection between external conflicts and internal battles. The two are not distinct; instead, they are intertwined, with each one nourishing and sustaining the other.

External conflict, the war without, has been present since the dawn of civilization. The rise and decline of empires, the alteration of borders, and the development of political ideologies have often been spurred by violent clashes. From the ancient confrontations between Rome and Carthage to the world wars of the 20th century, human history is marked by recurring military strife. These conflicts have transformed continents, overthrown regimes, and rewritten historical narratives. They have caused not just the physical destruction of land and infrastructure but also significant shifts in culture, economy, and interpersonal relationships. The vast scale of devastation caused by contemporary warfare — illustrated by the deployment of nuclear arms, drone strikes, and cyber-attacks — shows that war today transcends traditional battlefields.[2]

Civilians frequently suffer the most, and the consequences can affect generations to come. However, beneath every external conflict lies an internal struggle. Leaders who incite violence often act out of their own fears, insecurities, or ambitions for legacy and power. Nations experiencing internal turmoil — such as economic inequality, political unrest, or ethnic divisions — may resort to external conflict as a means to unite a fractured public or to divert attention from internal issues.[3] Internal disorder frequently precedes or serves as a justification for external aggression. For instance, the emergence of fascism in Europe during the early 20th century did not arise independently. It was a reaction to national humiliation, economic hardship, and the deep psychological scars left by World War I and its consequences. The internal battle for identity and self-worth resulted in external warfare on an unprecedented scale.

Theosophy, which emphasizes the interconnected nature of all life and the concept of spiritual evolution, offers a revealing insight into this cycle. According to theosophical teachings, both inner and outer warfare stem from humanity's collective spiritual immaturity.[4] The Masters of the Wisdom, as referenced in theosophical literature, propose that as

long as humans identify mainly with material wants, ego, and separation, they will remain ensnared in the karmic cycle of violence and suffering.[5] Seen from this perspective, external wars are not merely political events; they are karmic responses — visible expressions of inner conflict, experienced not just by individuals, but also by the collective spirit of humanity. The Law of Karma guarantees that every act of hostility and every breach of unity and brotherhood must be addressed — not as a punishment, but as a vital lesson in the spiritual journey of life.[6]

War transcends mere weaponry or tactics; it represents the release of unresolved emotional energy, often stemming from fear. Theosophy argues that fear arises directly from ignorance, and ignorance reflects a lack of genuine spiritual comprehension. Humanity struggles not due to intrinsic malevolence, but because it remains oblivious to its divine essence and purpose. The "internal conflict" signifies the battle between the higher self and the lower self, the spiritual essence versus the persona motivated by ambition, fear, and desire. In this context, the "external conflict" is an amplified version of this same struggle, enacted on the world stage through political, economic, and cultural confrontations.

The connection between internal and external conflict is also evident in the personal experiences of individuals involved in warfare. Soldiers come home transformed, often bearing psychological wounds that may never fully heal. The traumatic experiences of combat, along with the moral dilemmas associated with taking lives, and the conflict between military actions and personal beliefs, can lead to an ongoing internal battle. While post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a common outcome, the situation encompasses more than just identifiable conditions.[7] Veterans frequently experience a sense of alienation from a civilian populace that cannot grasp the extent of their experiences. Their internal battles continue long after the external conflicts have ceased.

Theosophy asserts that the true battleground lies within the individual's inner life. In an esoteric context, the authentic warrior is one who confronts and conquers their own self — dominating the lower nature for the sake of the Higher Self.[8] The "foe" is not another nation, ethnicity, or belief system; rather, it is the delusions and ignorance within one's own mind: arrogance, avarice, animosity, and the false sense of separateness. These are the true instigators of war. HPB, who established the modern Theosophical Movement, highlighted that peace will remain unattainable until individuals can control their lower instincts and align with divine principles. The pursuit of inner purification is a crucial spiritual duty, not merely a theoretical concept.[9]

Individuals who have never participated in battle are also affected by the turmoil of internal conflict. In today's society, internal struggles often manifest as anxiety, depression, identity dilemmas, and moral uncertainty. The demands of modern life

— intensified by technology, social media, consumerism, and political divisiveness — create a psychological battleground in the mind.[10] People grapple with the disparity between their ideals and the harsh realities, between being true to themselves and conforming, and between hope and despair. These hidden internal struggles are widespread, undermining mental well-being, straining personal connections, and affecting how individuals engage with their surroundings.

Theosophy presents a solution grounded in self-awareness and altruism. According to its teachings, the journey toward inner tranquillity starts with aligning one's thoughts with the soul. Meditation, studying sacred writings, engaging in compassionate humanitarian efforts, and exercising self-discipline are methods to quiet the lower nature and enable the soul's voice to direct the personality.[11]

By doing this, one partakes in what theosophists refer to as the "Great Work" the conscious advancement of humanity toward divine unity. By elevating our consciousness, we contribute to altering the collective awareness. Every act of compassion, each moment spent in mindfulness, and every decision to reject hatred serves as a small yet powerful element in the global struggle between peace and disorder.

The internal conflict reaches beyond individuals to encompass society as a whole. Contemporary societies are increasingly divided by cultural, racial, ideological, and economic splits. These divisions often lead to what some refer to as "culture wars", where conflicting worldviews clash within the realms of education, media, law, and politics. Social media has heightened these disputes, fostering echo chambers that reinforce biases and intensify divisions.[12]

The polarization evident in many democratic countries today represents a kind of societal civil war — not waged with weapons, but through rhetoric, misinformation, and a decline in civil discourse. This internal strife within societies can be as destructive as any armed conflict, progressively eroding trust, cooperation, and social unity.

One of the unfortunate outcomes of these social internal conflicts is that they can lay the groundwork for external conflict. An internally divided nation becomes susceptible to outside manipulation or aggression. Furthermore, leaders may exploit such internal rifts to justify external warfare, uniting a fractured populace against a common adversary. This strategy has been employed repeatedly throughout history — by autocrats seeking to consolidate power, by imperialists aiming for expansion, and by populists striving to deflect attention from domestic issues. The relationship between internal vulnerability and external hostility forms a perilous cycle that frequently culminates in disaster.[13]

From a theosophical viewpoint, humanity is engaged in a lengthy and arduous evolution, transitioning from lower levels of consciousness to higher planes of spiritual insight. This journey is neither straightforward nor assured. Times of

darkness, conflict, and turmoil are occasionally essential to spur growth and awaken the soul from its slumber. However, the teachings also caution that growth through suffering is not the sole path. Conscious and deliberate self-transformation — through education, service, meditation, and ethical living — can hasten development and lessen the necessity for damaging lessons.[14]

In essence, humanity is not doomed to perpetually repeat the same cycles of conflict. It has the option to evolve through wisdom rather than suffering. This decision, however, is not a collective one until it becomes an individual choice. Every individual represents a microcosm of humanity and possesses the ability to wage war or promote peace. Theosophy underscores the sacred duty of each soul to serve as a source of harmony. By altering our own consciousness, we contribute to transforming the collective consciousness. Each act of kindness, every moment of mindfulness, and every choice to refrain from engaging in hatred constitutes a small yet powerful force in the global struggle between harmony and chaos.[15]

*(To be continued)*

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# Ramana Maharshi and the Power of Silence — I

CLEMICE PETTER

RAMANA Maharshi (30/12/1879–14/04/1950) was an enlightened being born in southern India, near Tiruvannamalai. He was a normal child, with nothing that drew attention, nothing that could indicate that he would become the light guiding the lives of many. However, around the age of thirteen, a dramatic event changed his life. The death of his father was the trigger that brought to the surface a series of questions that led him to leave his mother's home in response to an internal call attracting him like a magnet to Tiruvannamalai, where he surrendered to the power of Arunachala hill.

Tiruvannamalai, which at that time was just a village, is the sacred ground where, according to Hindu tradition, Lord Shiva made his abode on Earth. "Aruna" means "red", "brilliant like fire", or "fire of wisdom (*jñānāgni*)". "Achala" means "hill". Therefore, Arunachala translates to "red mountain" or, more profoundly, "hill of wisdom" or "mountain of fire." This "fire" is not a common heat, but the purifying fire of divine knowledge. According to Hindu mythology (*Purana-s*), Arunachala is considered a physical manifestation of Lord Shiva himself.

The most relevant myth tells of a dispute between Brahma (the creator) and Vishnu (the preserver) over who was superior. To solve the argument, Shiva manifested himself as an infinite column of light, challenging them to find his beginning or end. Neither of them succeeded, recognizing Shiva's supremacy. This shining column of light later took the form of the hill Arunachala. Many saints and sages, including Sri Ramana Maharshi, regard Arunachala as the spiritual Heart of the world, a direct manifestation of the ultimate reality.

An old saying associated with Arunachala goes like this: "To see Chidambaram, to be born in Tiruvarur, to die in Banaras, or even to think of Arunachala is to be assured of Liberation." This highlights the unique power attributed solely to the thought of Arunachala. It is also one of the five main sacred places in southern India, each representing one of the five cosmic elements. Arunachala specifically represents the element of fire (*agni*). Essentially, Arunachala is not just a geographical location; it is considered to be a living manifestation of divine power, a

**Ms Clemice Petter,** member of theTheosophical Society, Adyar, and international speaker, lives at the foot of Arunachala, Tiruvannamalai, India. She is also the author of *Pathless Land* published in India and Brazil.

source of wisdom, and a profound spiritual magnet for those seeking liberation.

When the young Venkataraman Iyer, who later came to be known as Sri Ramana Maharshi, observed the motionless body of his father, hearing everyone saying that his father had departed and that only an inert body remained like an empty, lifeless shell, the boy could not stop thinking about the mystery that pervades the existence of all beings on this planet. How to explain the fact that what spoke, laughed, and was a source of love and respect was now just a motionless body to be discarded? Where had the true being he called "father" escaped to?

If the body is disposable, then what is this force that animates it, giving it grace and life? Where does this force come from? What is the true self, since it is clear that it is not the body? Countless were the questions that churned in his mind, and after a few months, the family moved to his paternal uncle's house, where the young Venkataraman had a mystical experience in which he felt certain that death was imminent.

Terrified and certain that he was dying, he lay down on the ground, remained still, and imagined the whole scene: his inert body being carried away for funeral rites, his family bidding farewell, and the total abandonment of any ties that bound him to what he knew as "his life". After that day, life went on normally, but inside something had changed; and one day while he was engaged in schoolwork, for which he had little talent, his older brother questioned him about what he was doing. When he said he was doing his English homework, his brother, in a mocking tone, said to him: "I don't know why you still waste your time studying; you can't learn anything." Taking his brother's remark seriously, he thought it made sense, and so, decided to leave home in search of Arunachala.

Using the money his mother gave him to pay his brother's school fees, Venkataraman got a train ticket, leaving a note stating that he needed to take part of the money and that he had left the balance in a place indicated in the note. He said that they should not look for him because he was going in search of his Father. He referred to the Heavenly Father, the father of all beings.

Upon arriving in the city, he went to the temple, but before entering, he threw away what was left of the money, the golden earrings he wore, and the sacred thread used by the men of the Brahmin caste to which he belonged. Upon entering, he said: "You called me, I am here." He lived in Tiruvannamalai at the foot of Arunachala, never leaving the vicinity of the mountain until the end of his days. His *samādhi* (the place where a saint's body is buried according to local customs) was built beside his mother's *samādhi* and is a place of pilgrimage to this day.

The family was unaware of the whereabouts of the young man for nearly two years, until one day a villager recognized him in Tiruvannamalai. Knowing that her son was living in a cave in Arunachala, his mother asked her brother-in-law to

go and bring him home. Venkataraman's uncle could not bring him back, so his mother decided to go herself and not return until she convinced him to come with her. For three days her plea went unanswered, until a disciple of the young Ramana Maharshi asked him to say something to the poor mother.

It is important to note that for ten years Ramana Maharshi did not speak. Everyone thought he had taken a vow of silence. At that time, he was known as Mouna Swami, where *mouna* means silence. When he was older, Ramana clarified that due to the intensity of some mystical experiences he had had, he had lost the ability to speak, and that he had never taken vows of any kind. Ramana did not encourage those who sought his advice or company to look for supernatural experiences; on the contrary, he said that such phenomena are not important and that the only thing worth seeking is the liberation of the mind from all limitations created by the mind itself.

Seeing that his mother needed an answer, he wrote on the wall of the cave where he lived: "What is destined not to happen will not happen, no matter how hard you try. What is destined to happen will happen, do whatever you can to prevent it. That is certain. The best path, therefore, is to remain silent." Understanding the depth of what her son was saying, she returned home. After a few years, after all her children were married and she was alone, she went back to Tiruvannamalai and lived in the cave with her son Ramana until the end of her days.

After recovering his capacity to speak, Ramana did not talk much; his teachings were conveyed in silence. After his mother's passing, Ramana moved from the cave, and an ashram was built around her *samādhi*. Ramana remained in a hall with only a sofa in it, where he spent his days and nights, with the door always open to the public. People gathered around the sofa where Ramana sat in silence most of the time, answering a few questions here and there. According to him, the highest form of spiritual teaching is conveyed in silence.

In fact, the teachings of Ramana Maharshi are to turn our attention inward. What does that mean? The vast majority of human beings have our attention projected outward, towards the senses: sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste. We spend most of our lives focused on what happens around us. We interact with the world through our five senses, in total ignorance of what lies behind those senses. Ramana's teachings draw our attention to this fact and show us that, in order to live a harmonious life, we must stop being controlled by our senses and establish an intimate relationship with what stimulates those senses. His teachings do not talk about suppressing, repressing, or living in a permissive way, but rather about intimately knowing what moves us.

According to Ramana's teachings, this deep understanding has the potential to bring about change, from a life of ignorance to a life of harmony and wisdom. It is an understanding that drives us, not superficially, but in a deeper sense, to

comprehend the mechanisms that lead us to feel anger, jealousy, envy, excitement, and so on. Usually, we don't pay much attention; we ignore the real reasons for our attitudes and behaviors. It is common for us to justify our behavior by pointing to the actions of other people or to an event. For example, when we feel anger, we say that this anger was caused by someone who did something, and by doing so, we are projecting outward.

When our attention is driven inward, we seek the reason for irritation within ourselves. We arrive at the understanding that the behavior of another is merely a trigger that touches something inside that has not been understood, something that is being neglected, something we do not want to acknowledge. It is as if we have a dustbin inside of us, a place where we dump all the garbage that we do not know how to recycle. We live as if this dustbin does not exist, as if by ignoring it, it ceases to exist. But the fact is that this unrecycled garbage is there, and when someone brings it to the surface through a look, behavior, or word, we blame the trigger for exposing what we are trying hard to hide.

When we turn inward, we are willing to face the trashcan and find ways to recycle, to resignify the events of our lives. We do not need to examine the old trash, but just to pay attention to how waste is produced; this understanding is transformative and will take care of all accumulated waste. This transformation requires a lot of energy and inner strength. It is not child's play.

Once, the famous yogi, Paramahansa Yogananda (1893-1952), along with some of his disciples, went to visit Sri Ramana Maharshi. During his visit, he asked Ramana why God, being omnipotent and omniscient, does not put an end to human suffering. Ramana replied that it is only through pain that man is able to find God. To live in peace, we need first to understand what leads to conflict.

Ramana says that it is necessary to find the root of thoughts, that thoughts are the cause of all human misery. He says: "Let go of all your thoughts; you do not need to give up anything else." According to him, the purpose of human life is to silence, to calm down, the mind. Many traditions point to the same; for example, in Psalms 46:10, Jesus tells us: "Be still, and know that I am God." Stillness is necessary to know God and live in his Presence.

Ramana tells us that the natural state of human beings is one of joy, of bliss. And that this state is present at all times, but we are not able to live in this state of bliss and joy because we follow every thought that arises in our mind. We get lost in the countless stories created by the mind; and according to him, we must strive to silence this storyteller called the mind. He also says that the role of the mind is not to tell stories or create solutions to problems created by the mind itself, but to remain silent. When the mind is silent, reality or truth is reflected upon it, and we are able to live a life completely different from the one we are used to, moving towards a life of peace and harmony.

Ramana stated that the mind is merely a bundle of thoughts, and these thoughts

are rooted in the idea of the ego. That when we turn the mind inward, God manifests as the inner consciousness. That the mind is a unique power where thoughts occur, and thoughts themselves are the mind.

Our true nature is peace and silence, so all agitation in the world we live in, which are our worries and problems, pleasures and wants, arise from the idea that we are separate from each other. This illusion of separation is what we call ego, the primordial illusion that is the mother of all human suffering. The central teaching of Ramana is to ask: "Who am I?" And, according to him, this questioning, when taken seriously and done with diligence, will culminate in the annihilation of this false "I", or the feeling of separateness, the ego.

Once a man who lived miles away from Tiruvannamalai traveled for many days to meet Ramana Maharshi. This man was overwhelmed with difficulties in his relationships with the people around him. Tired of a life of conflicts, he asked Ramana, "What is the right way to relate to others?" For three days he received no answer. On the fourth day, as he was preparing to leave, he pleaded, saying he could no longer bear it and that he had traveled for two days just to ask this question, as life had become unbearable. Ramana, with his gaze fixed on the horizon, simply said, "There are no others."

His answers were usually short and concise; he did not elaborate or explain what he said. Although his teachings come from his direct experience, they have often been compared to those of Advaita Vedanta, one of the most prominent and influential schools of Hindu philosophy, whose central teaching is non-duality, *advaita* meaning "not two"). Ramana states that there is only one, and that all diversity we see arises from the ignorance of our true nature, arising from the division created by the mind.

His advice is that the investigation into "who I am" should be done without the search for an answer. It is a question that must be asked with great intensity but must remain open. It is not the type of question that is satisfied with a conclusion. For example, concluding that we are gods. Because, the moment we conclude and name, we are limiting and separating that portion within a terminology. What we are cannot be measured by the mind, and therefore cannot be named.

The need to define comes from the mind, which created the idea of separation. But when we leave this question open, the mind understands that this answer is beyond its scope, so it quiets down and becomes silent. So, when Ramana speaks of silence, he is not talking about a silence that comes from not talking or speaking. He is pointing to a much deeper silence, the stillness of the mind itself. It is the silence of all desires, wants, yearnings, wishes, and aspirations. He says that only when all of this is silent does spiritual life truly begin. His teaching is very profound; it is not the kind of teaching that will lead us to acquire more and more.

(*To be continued*)

# 150th INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION INFORMATION

Theme: *One World, One Life: The Spirit of a New Humanity*

## Celebrating 150 years of the Theosophical Society

The 150th International Convention of the Theosophical Society will be held at the International Headquarters, Adyar, **from 31 December 2025 to 4 January 2026** (arrival 30 December and departure 5 January). All members of the Society in good standing are welcome to attend as delegates. Non-members are not eligible for accommodation but can register for the Convention and meals at the two canteens. The whole program can also be viewed live without any charge on the YouTube channel, **Theosophical Society Adyar**.

### ACCOMMODATION FOR MEMBERS ONLY

***Leadbeater Chambers (LBC)*:** LBC has rooms with two beds and an attached bathroom in each room. A third bed can be added in some of the larger rooms for a group of three. Hot water through solar water heater. Accommodation availability in limited numbers only.

***New Quadrangle (NQ)*:** NQ has rooms with two beds and an attached bathroom in each room. Hot water through solar water heater. Only limited number of rooms available.

***Basic Accommodation (BA)*:** The basic accommodations have been upgraded but the number of accommodations will be limited. Hence be early to register.

### ALLOTMENTS

Accommodations will be decided by the Convention Committee during December 2025 and the result will be informed by email. **Allotment will be on "first come first served" basis. No registrations with accommodation at TS Adyar will be accepted after the last date of registration. Registrations without stay will be open until the start of the Convention. Limited ground floor rooms are available. Register early to reserve the room of your choice.**

### PACKAGES

The rates are per person **from 30 December 2025 dinner to 5 January 2026 lunch.** Any meals outside the package dates are to be arranged

by the delegates themselves. **Local delegates can contact BCL* office in Bhojanasala (30 Dec 25 onwards)** to check the possibility of **"on-the-spot requests" for meals.** For any other requests, kindly write to the Convention Officer's email address before registering.

**Overseas delegates:**

**A.** LBC: US$ 420 — Registration fee, accommodation, and meals at LBC.

**B.** NQ: US$ 235 — Registration fee, NQ accommodation, and meals at BCL* canteen.

**C.** BA: US$ 175 — Registration fee, basic accommodation, and meals at BCL* canteen.

**D.** Registration only: US$ 70 — Without meals and accommodation.

**Indian delegates:**

**E.** LBC: Rs.17,500 — Registration fee, accommodation, and meals at LBC.

**F.** NQ: Rs.6,500 — Registration fee, NQ accommodation and meals at BCL* canteen.

**G.** BA: Rs.5,000 — Registration fee, basic accommodation and meals at BCL* canteen.

**H.** BCL Rs. 3,500 — Registration fee and meals at BCL* Canteen. No accommodation.

**I.** Registration only: Rs. 500 — Without meals and accommodation.

## PAYMENT

**Overseas delegates:** Register online and make the payment. If for some reason you cannot pay with the online form, kindly write to the Convention Officer and payments will be collected from you "on arrival". Then you may pay the applicable package rate by Master/Visa credit card. Please remember to take your travel insurance before arriving at Adyar.

**NO PAYMENT IN CASH WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

**Delegates from India:** Register online and make the payment in INR either (a) online with registration (preferred), or (b) by cheque / bank draft payable to The Theosophical Society couriered to the Convention Officer. (see bottom for address.)

It is mandatory that you send an **email** about the payment to the Convention Officer soon after completing the online payment process or after sending the cheque, mentioning the following: Delegate(s) name,

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*** BCL — Bengaluru City Lodge.**

Bank name, Date of transfer, and Transfer reference ID. **The date/ confirmation of registration for such cases will be the date of realization of the cheque/draft.**

## REGISTRATION

**Registration opens on 1 September 2025; 10am Indian time; GMT / UTC: +5.5 hours.**
**Registration with accommodation closes on 30 November 2025.** Online registration with instructions for paying will appear on the Convention website: <**convention.ts-adyar.org**> When accommodations become full, the status will be intimated on the website.

While filling up the form, kindly specify clearly if you want to stay with someone as part of a group/family or in a particular building etc. We will try to accommodate your requests, if the place is not already reserved by someone else. **Last minute requests will not be entertained**.

Delegates who are (or cannot be) allotted accommodation will be intimated by email by **15 December 2025.**

Delegates who cannot be allotted but have paid will have their payment returned after the Convention.

## CANCELLATION

For delegates wanting to cancel their registration and accommodation requests, **the last date is 10 December 2025**. After this date, no amount will be refunded. If the cancellation request is received before 10 December 2025, then the package amount minus the registration fee (Rs. 500 or US$ 70) will be refunded after the Convention.

## CONVENTION OFFICER DETAILS:

**Name:** Mr Shikhar Agnihotri

**Email:** <convention@ts-adyar.org>

**Whatsapp:** +91-884092628

**Postal Address:** The Convention Officer, The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Chennai — 600020, India.

**Convention website:** <convention.ts-adyar.org>.

| Date | Section | General Secretary, etc. | Address | Magazine | Email address |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1947 | Africa, East and Central | Mr Narendra M. Shah | PO Box 14525. 00800, Westlands, Nairobi, Kenya | *The Theosophical Light* | **narendrashahi999@gmail.com** |
| 1909 | Africa, South | Mr Desmond Chapman | 31 Streatley Ave, cnr.Lothbury Ave, Auckland Park, Johannesburg PO Box 91523 | *The South African Theosophist* | **tsinsa.gensec@telkomsa.net** |
| 1956 | Africa, West | Dr K. A. Tutu | PO Box 720, Accra, Ghana | *The West African Theosophist* | **katutu@gmail.com** |
| 1929 | America, Central * | Mrs Beatriz Elisena Martinez Pozas | Colonia Universitaria Norte, Calle Julio Mejia, Poligono, E-7 Mejicanos, San Salvador, El Salvador | | **bemapo03@hotmail.com** |
| 1920 | Argentina | Mr Leandro Cesano | Rivadavia 533, San Lorenzo, Provincia de Santa Fe | *Teosofía en Argentina* | **secretaria@sociedadteosofica.org.ar** |
| 1990 | Asia, East and Southeast † | Mr Chong Sanne | 24 New Industrial Road, #03-09 INSPACE Singapore 536210 | *Newsletter* | **sanne@theosophyasia.net** |
| 1895 | Australia | Mr Stephen Mcdonald | Level 2, 162 Goulburn St., Surry Hills, NSW 2010 | *Theosophy in Australia* | **pres@theosophicalsociety.org.au** |
| 1912 | Austria * | Mrs Karin Waltl | Berghäusl 28, 4160 Aigen-Schlägl | *Theosofie Adyar* | **info@theosophischegesellschaft.com** |
| 2013 | Bangladesh † | Mr Subrata Chowdhury | Urban Gardenia, Flat 5B, House 45A, Road 3A, Dhanmondi, R/A Dhaka 1209 | | **house_advocates@yahoo.com** |
| 1911 | Belgium | Mrs Sabine Van Osta | Place des Gueux 8, B1000 Brussels | *Le Lotus Bleu* | **info@ts-belgium.be** |
| 1965 | Bolivia † | Mrs Maria Luisa Cabrera | c/Valdivieso Nº 541 Cochabamba | *Revista Teosófica Boliviana* | **mlcp2@hotmail.com** |
| 1920 | Brazil | Mr Otávio Marhesini | SGAS Quadra 603, N. 20, CEP 70200-630 Brasilia (DF) | *Sophia* | **secretaria@sociedadeteosofica.org.br** |
| 1924 | Canada * | Mr Robert Béland | 1120 Chemin de la Rivière, Val David, . P.Q., Canada J0T 2N0 | The Light Bearer | **president.atcta@gmail.com** |
| 1920 | Chile * | Mr Eric Alejandro Muñoz Concha | 1761, 8370055 Santiago, Región Metropolitana | *Revista Teosófica Chilena* | **sociedadteosoficachile@gmail.com** |
| 1937 | Colombia † | Mr Armando Motta Zapata | Carrera 6, # 56-40, Bogotá (Chapinero Alto) | *Selección Teosófica* | **stsgamoz@gmail.com** |
| 1997 | Costa Rica † | Mrs Cecilia Calderón | San José, 1350, Costa Rica | | **cmaycalderon@gmail.com** |
| 2007 | Croatia ▲ | Mr Darko Majstorovic | Siget 11, 10000 Zagreb, Republic of Croatia | *Teozofija* | **teozofija@teozofija.net** |
| 1905 | Cuba | Mr Francisco Sánchez Fornaguera | Apartado de Correos 6365, La Habana 10600 | | **cubateosofica@gmail.com** |
| 1987 | Dominican Rep. † | Mrs Magaly Polanco | Calle Santa Agueda 1652 Les Chalet Col San Juan Puerto Rico Apartado 23 00926 | | **polancomagaly@yahoo.com** |
| 1888 | England & Wales | Mrs Jenny Baker | 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA | *Esoterica* | **president@theosoc.org.uk** |
| 1907 | Finland | Mr Janne Vuononvirta | Teosofinen Seura, Vironkatu 7 C 2, Fin 00170, Helsinki | *Teosofi* | **ylisihteeri@teosofinenseura.fi** |
| 1899 | France | Miss Trân-Thi-Kim-Diêu | 4 Square Rapp, 75007 Paris | *Le Lotus Bleu* | **tsfr.office@gmail.com** |
| 1902 | Germany | Mrs Manuela Kaulich | Hauptstr. 39, 93138 Lappersdorf | *Adyar* | **theosophie-adyar@gmx.de** |
| 1928 | Greece | Mrs Erica Georgiades | 25 Voukourestiou St., 106 71-Athens | *Ilisos* | **info@theosophicalsociety.gr** |
| 1907 | Hungary † | Mrs Adrienne Nagyiday | H-1085 Budapest, Horánszky u. 27. fsz. 10 | *Teozófia* | **info@teozofia.hu** |
| 1921 | Iceland | Mr Haraldur Erlendsson | PO Box 1257 Ingolfsstraeti 22, 121 Reykjavik | *Gangleri* | **iceland.ts@gmail.com** |
| 1891 | India | Mr Pradeep H. Gohil | The Theosophical Society, Kamachha, Varanasi 221 010 | *The Indian Theosophist* | **theosophyvns@gmail.com** |
| 1912 | Indonesia | Mr Widyatmoko Nekara | Dsn. Parelegi no. 21, RT 02/ RW 09, Desa Purwodadi, Kecamatan Purwodadi, 67163 Pasuruan, Jawa Timur | *Theosofi* | **indonesia.teosofi@gmail.com** |
| 1919 | Ireland * | Mrs Marie Harkness | 97 Mountsandel Road, Coleraine, UK BT52 1TA | | **marieharkness@yahoo.co.uk** |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1954 | Israel ▲ | ... Mr Abraham Oron | ... PO Box 9114, Ramat-Gan, Israel 5219002 | ... *Or* | **oravr@netvision.net.il** |
| 1902 | Italy | ... Mrs Patzia Moschin Calvi | ... Viale Quintino Sella, 83/E, 36100 Vicenza | ... *Rivista Italiana di Teosofia* | **sti@teosofica.org** |
| 1997 | Ivory Coast * | ... Mr Pierre-Magloire Kouahoh | ... Yopougon, 23 Rue Princesse B. P. 3924, Abidjan 23 | ... *Sophia* | **pm_kouahoh@hotmail.com** |
| 1919 | Mexico | ... Mrs Juana Leonor Maldonado Ruíz | ... Ignacio Mariscal 126, Col. Tabacalera Mexicana, Mexico, D.F. 06030 | | **teosofiaenmexico@gmail.com info@sociedadteosofica.mx** |
| 1897 | Netherlands, The | ... Mr Ingmar de Boer | ... Tolsraat 154, 1074 VM Amsterdam | ... *Theosofia* | **info@theosofie.nl** |
| 1896 | New Zealand | ... Mr Richard Sell | ... 18, Belvedere Street, Epsom, Auckland 1051 | ... *TheoSophia* | **np@theosophy.org.nz** |
| 1913 | Norway * | ... Mr Audun Solberg | ... Knapstadveien 8, 1823 Knapstad | | **organisasjonssekretaer@teosofisksamfunn.no** |
| 1935 | Orlando ▲ | ... Mr Carl Metzger | ... 1606 New York Ave. Orlando, Florida, 32803-1838, USA | | **TheosophicalSocietyCF@gmail.com** |
| 1948 | Pakistan † | ... Mushtaq Ali Jindani | ... Jamshed Memorial Hall, M. A. Jinnah Road, opp. Radio Pakistan, Karachi 74200 | ... *The Karachi Theosophist* | **mushtaqjindani@gmail.com** |
| 1925 | Paraguay ▲ | ... Sr. Blas Osvaldo Añazco López | ... Eligio Ayala Nro. 1.833 e/ Mayor Fleitas y Gral. Aquino Asunción | | **ramafraternidadSTparaguay@hotmail.com** |
| 1924 | Peru † | ... Mr Julio Pomar Calderón | ... Av Republica de Portugal 152, Breña, Lima 5 | ... *Búsqueda* | **sede-central@sociedadteosoficaenperu.pe** |
| 1933 | Philippines, The | ... Mr Charlton Romero | ... Corner P. Florentino and Iba Streets, Quezon City, Manila | ... *The Philippine Theosophist* | **philtheos@gmail.com** |
| 1921 | Portugal | ... Mr Carlos Guerra | ... Sociedade Teosófica de Portugal, Rua José Estêvão, 10 B, 1150-202 Lisboa | ... *Osiris* | **geral@sociedadeteosoficadeportugal.pt** |
| 1925 | Puerto Rico † | ... Mrs Magaly Polanco | ... Apartado 36-1766 Correo General. San Juan, Puerto Rico 00936-1766 | ... *Heraldo Teosófico* | **polancomagaly@yahoo.com** |
| 2012 | Qatar ▲ | ... Mr Lijo Joseph | . . . Crewing Officer, Teyseer Services Company P.O. Box 2431, Doha | | **qatarblavatskylodge@yahoo.com** |
| 2013 | Russia * | ... Mr Svyatoslav Lipsky | ... Apartment 131, House 1135, Zelenograd, Moscow | . . . *Teosoficheskoe Obozrenie* (The Theosophical Review) | **secretary@ts-russia.org** |
| 1910 | Scotland * | ... Mr Gary Kidgell | ... Christine Gear 32 Newmains Road Kirkliston Edinburgh EH29 9AL | ... *Circles* | **garykidgell@hotmail.com** |
| 1992 | Slovenia * | ... Mrs Irena Primc | ... Kajuhova UI 9, 3000 Celje | ... *Teozofska Misel* | **irenaprimc3@gmail.com** |
| 1921 | Spain | ... Mrs Angels Torra Buron | ... Av. Vall d'or, 85-87 08197 - Valldoreix(Spain) | ... *Sophia* | **presidencia@sociedadteosofica.es** |
| 1926 | Sri Lanka † | ... Mr D. A. L. Wanigasekera | ... 146 Anderson Rd, Dehiwala, | ... *The Sri Lanka Theosophist* | **dumindawanigasekera@gmail.com** |
| 1895 | Sweden | ... Mrs Birgitta Skarbo | ... Karla Plan 5 B, 11460 Stockholm | ... *Tidlös Visdom* | **teosofiska.samfundet.adyar@telia.com** |
| 1910 | Switzerland † | ... Mr Andrea Biasca-Caroni | ... Via Collina 19, 6612 Ascona, CH-6612 | ... *The Lotus* | **info@teosofia.ch** |
| 1997 | Togo * | ... Mr Kouma Dakey | ... S.O., A.R.T.T., BP 76, Adeta | | |
| 2013 | Ukraine | ... Mrs Svitlana Gavrylenko | ... Office 3, 7-A Zhylianska St., Kiev 01033 | ... *Svitoch* | **org@theosophy.in.ua** |
| 1886 | USA | ... Mr Douglas Keene | ... PO Box 270, Wheaton, IL 60187-0270 | ... *The Quest* | **info@theosophical.org** |
| 1925 | Uruguay * | ... Mr Ramón García | ... Javier Barrios Amorín 1085, Casilla de Correos 1553, Montevideo | | **st.uruguay@gmail.com** |
| 1925 | Venezuela † | ... Mrs Nelly Nouel | ... Romualda a Socarrás, Edif. de Oro Piso 12, Apto. 122 – Caracas | | **nellynouel5@gmail.com** |

***Date refers to the date of formation*** * *Regional Association* † *Presidential Agency* ▲ *Lodge attached to Adyar*

The Council of the European Federation of National Societies: *Chair:* Mrs Sabine Van Osta, Place des Gueux 8, B1000 Brussels. **sabinevanosta.be@gmail.com**
Inter-American Theosophical Federation: *President:* Mr Enrique Reig, And. Nte 17 Villa Las Americas, San Andres, Cholula, Puebla, Mexico. **enriquereig@hotmail.com, fti.secretary@gmail.com**
Indo-Pacific Theosophical Federation: *President:* Mr Gerard Brennan, 42 Melbourne Street, Concord, 2137, Sydney, Australia. **president@ipf-ts.org**
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