

Theosophy

in Australia

ISSN No. 1038-1139

June 2013 volume 77, number 2

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Published quarterly by: *The Theosophical Society in Australia.*
The Theosophical Society is not responsible for any statement in this magazine unless made in an official document.

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Subscriptions: Within Australia - \$12p.a.
one issue - \$3/Overseas airmail - \$20p.a.

We invite articles or other items of no more than 2,500 words, sent to: pres@austheos.org.au

Freedom of Thought

As the Theosophical Society has spread far and wide over the world, and as members of all religions have become members of it without surrendering the special dogmas, teachings and beliefs of their respective faiths, it is thought desirable to emphasise the fact that there is no doctrine, no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none of which any member is not free to accept or reject. Approval of its three Objects is the sole condition of membership. No teacher, or writer, from H.P. Blavatsky onwards, has any authority to impose his or her teachings or opinions on members. Every member has an equal right to follow any school of thought, but has no right to force the choice on any other. Neither a candidate for any office nor any voter can be rendered ineligible to stand or to vote, because of any opinion held, or because of membership in any school of thought. Opinions or beliefs neither bestow privileges nor inflict penalties.

The Members of the General Council earnestly request every member of the Theosophical Society to maintain, defend and act upon these fundamental principles of the Society, and also fearlessly to exercise the right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof, within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.

*Resolution passed by the General Council
of the Theosophical Society (1924)*

Freedom of the Society

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

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

*Resolution passed by the General Council
of the Theosophical Society (1949)*

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The Theosophical Society welcomes students or seekers, belonging to any religion or to none, who are in sympathy with its Objects. The motto of the Society is 'There is no Religion higher than Truth'. The word Religion in this statement is a translation of the Sanskrit *dharma*, which among other things means practice; way; virtue; teaching; law; inherent nature; religion; and that which is steadfast or firm. The word Truth in the motto is a translation of the Sanskrit *satya*, meaning among other things, true, real and actual. It derives from the root *sat*, sometimes translated as boundless unconditioned existence.

Theosophy is not defined in the Constitution of the Theosophical Society, or in any official document. It literally means divine wisdom, *theosophia*, but members of the Society are left to discover what it is for themselves, taking as guides whatever religions or philosophies they wish.

The Three Objects of The Theosophical Society

To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity
without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

~
To encourage the study of Comparative Religion,
Philosophy and Science.

~
To investigate unexplained laws of Nature
and the powers latent in the human being.

From the National President



Linda Oliveira



Some of the offerings in this issue include two talks which were given at the Annual Convention in January, reflections on stillness, and a thoughtful archival article on politics and peace written in 1960 which has not dated with the passage of time. Some more presentations from the Convention will appear in later issues this year.

Many thanks to the almost two hundred members who took the trouble to complete the members' survey mailed out with the last issue of this magazine. A return rate of nearly 20% of the membership is very positive, demonstrating among other things a certain level of concern about, and commitment to, our organisation. It is most informative to know how members 'photograph' various aspects of our mutual work, and I will be looking at the surveys more closely with a view to presenting a summary to the National Council at its mid-year meeting in June. We are an evolving collectivity. Ultimately, no individual view prevails in the TS, although the general direction of this Section is determined by our Objects, Rules, policies and various resolutions. And of course, the elected leadership sounds a certain keynote for a period of time.

Along with his members' survey, one national member sent an excerpt of a talk by Dr Steven Muller from the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. The excerpt was titled 'a social diagnosis'. He was writing about students – even tertiary students – lacking a value structure and consequently lacking the confidence to make choices and take responsibility. In his view, the biggest failing in higher education is that we fall short when it comes to exposing students to values. The author mentioned that without a value system, it is difficult to

maintain high standards in society. Society is consequently dysfunctional, he asserted, and humanist or humanities disciplines have not been of sufficient help in devising a framework of values.

We may counter that intelligent people should know better, or it is the responsibility of parents to help inculcate values in the young. Yet global peer pressure and other social factors can be a bit like a tidal wave which – at least for a period of life – seems to consume many individuals with self-centred pursuits. Claims that humanity is morally bankrupt may hold a degree of truth. The modern English philosopher, A.C. Grayling, is a strong atheist with a negative view of religion. At the same time, ethics loom large in his writings. Ethics may seem dull and unappealing to many, but he possesses a gentle wit, with a palatable way of bringing kindness, goodness and moral values into the everyday domain. For example:

Behave in life as at a dinner party. Is anything brought around to you? Put out your hand and take your share with moderation. Does it pass by you? Do not stop it. Is it not yet come? Do not stretch your desire towards it, but wait till it reaches you. Do this with regard to children, to a spouse, to public post, to riches, and you will eventually be a worthy guest at the feast of life.

(<http://www.goodreads.com>)

This philosopher has also observed that mastery of the emotions is fundamental to a virtuous life. And incidentally, for those who are interested in taking a detailed journey into the emotions, *The Science of the Emotions* by Bhagavan Das makes a fascinating study.

Comment of up to around 200 words is invited on items in this issue:
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Theosophical Insights and Our Global Village: from Separatism to Holism

Linda Oliveira



Reference is made quite frequently to our global village – that is to the world, to all nations and individuals, who are living interdependently. With the sophistication of transport and the immediacy of communication today, we seem to have collapsed into a remarkably small space. Our very interdependence is a force. Combined with modern technology, it has the potential to demystify the differences between people of widely different cultural and religious persuasions. On the other hand, interdependence can seed conflict in various ways, as we witness all too regularly.

Two Essential World Views

Let us contrast two essential ways of looking at the world. We could call them ‘separative’ and ‘holistic’. Separation embraces fragmentation and alienation; whereas holism embraces solidarity and those good things which tend toward unity. The significance of our world view cannot be underestimated; it has a profound effect on how we respond to those around us, if we examine it more closely.

Taking a moment to consider how we view the world can be quite educative. What *is* our essential view of the world? Have we ever thought about it? It acts as a permanent background screen to *all* that we think, feel and do, and includes those concepts, values, perceptions and practices shared by the community of which we are a part. What factors inform this view? They include media, other cultural considerations,

our parents, peers, exposure to many different religion, atheism, et cetera. But there is another factor also – the tendencies or *skandha*-s which we bring with us from the past, which take up residence in this personality in this life, and which also colour how we view and function in the world. The world view of the theosophical student may be somewhat different from general societal norms – or not.

Our world view has a substantial effect on our sense of right and wrong. Think about it. An individual who perceives the world as negative, harsh, cruel and competitive is more likely to embrace values such as selfishness, greed, competition, laziness, insensitivity, power, achievement, excessive materialism, and exploitation. These can be thought of as negative values; and they markedly diminish the likelihood of cooperative and ethical behaviour. I would suggest that this usually goes hand in hand with intense selfishness, even perhaps a kind of narcissism.

Then again, if we view the world as a positive place, as an essentially good place, we are more likely to value things such as honesty, integrity, wisdom, compassion, unselfishness, cooperation and the dimension of the spiritual – qualities which are highly compatible with ethical behaviour, which have an inbuilt unifying element.

The first view is essentially separative; the second is synthesising and holistic. In philosophy, holism involves emphasis on the wholes being greater than the sum of their

Separatism is closely related to *asmitā* or egoism which is one of the *klesha-s* – human hindrances or afflictions – in Patanjali’s system of yoga. These hindrances are common to us all, in greater or lesser degree. *Asmitā* implies that I am a separate self; I am isolated from the whole by my own ego-centred projects. It is the child of *avidya*, ignorance or non-knowing. *Asmitā* separates the small self from Brahman, which literally means ‘the vastness’.

parts. A holistic view of the world is generally compatible with a theosophical approach.

Some thirty years ago, several members of the American Section came up with a brief statement which is still printed in their magazine and headed ‘The Theosophical World View’. While the Society does not hold to any official theosophical view of the world as such, this is certainly a theosophical world view. It is holistic in nature and reaffirms the three propositions in *The Secret Doctrine* using the following wording (summarised slightly here):

1. The universe and all within it are one interrelated and interdependent whole.
2. Every existent being – from atom to galaxy – is rooted in the same universal, life-creating Reality which reveals itself in natural processes and in the deepest recesses of mind and spirit.
3. The unique value of all living beings is expressed in reverence for life, compassion, sympathy and religious respect. The ways in which these ideals become realities in individual life are both the privileged choice and the responsible act of every human being.

This view of the world, which upholds our primal Unity and which values the sacred, is essentially optimistic. So with this background

on two essential ways of looking at the world, let us now consider a few theosophical insights in regard to our global village.

Some Theosophical Insights

Firstly, separatism is a fact. We see it everywhere.

Separatism is closely related to *asmitā* or egoism which is one of the *klesha-s* – human hindrances or afflictions – mentioned in Patanjali’s system of yoga. These hindrances are common to us all, in greater or lesser degree. *Asmitā* implies that I am a separate self; I am isolated from the whole by my own ego-centred projects. It is the child of *avidya*, ignorance or non-knowing. *Asmitā* separates the small self from Brahman, which literally means ‘the vastness’. There is a strong identification with my mind, my body, my emotions and so forth. But then, separate human units become part of larger units or groups, many of which are also separative and intolerant of differences. And so separatism is perpetuated.

The phenomenon of human separatism is also encapsulated so very well in Fragment I of *The Voice of the Silence*. Even the disciple, whose spiritual nature is awakening more steadily than most, has to grapple with this:

7. When he [the disciple] has ceased to hear the many, he may discern the ONE – the inner sound which kills the outer.
8. Then only, not till then, shall he forsake the region of *asat*, the false, to come unto the realm of *Sat*, the true.

‘Hearing the many’ implies fragmentation and, further than that, alienation from the whole. It can be construed as a statement about the general human condition, because we hear the ‘many’ constantly. The mind likes to enjoy all sorts of distractions, and tends to have many different interests in this world. Mostly, such interests relate back to our sense of self and may well inflate this self in some way. Our interests add to the sense of ‘me’; they strengthen our sense of being separate entities.

N. Sri Ram maintained that we are at variance with ourselves, broken in mind and emotions, and ‘pulling with the scattered parts in different directions, all for want of the single magnet which would hold them together’. Consider phenomena such as war, racial tensions, political unrest, et cetera.

Our world seems in many ways to be chaotic, with pockets of turmoil rising and falling in various locations on the planet. I would like to mention Anna Lemkow, who worked for the United Nations in the field of economic and social development. A speaker at the 1993 Parliament of World Religions, she has explored unitive or esoteric philosophy and its application to scientific and other knowledge, as well as to world affairs. Her book, *The Wholeness Principle*, is fundamentally theosophical in outlook. She maintains that the characteristics of globality and interconnectedness attest to an internal order which ‘embraces and interrelates the physical, the emotional, the mental and the moral or spiritual levels of societal existence’. To her, the karma doctrine implies that all phenomena are infinitely interconnected in consciousness; further, that ‘this moral and spiritual truth, heretofore known only by saints and sages through direct insight, is now revealed to all through actual global conditions – conditions that are *proof* of the dynamic wholeness of the world and of a meaningful inner order. So she observed karma being played out in the world arena. Isn’t this so? The interconnections, and consequences of certain types of actions, are abundantly clear, e.g the economic consequences of greed, the ecological consequences of plastic waste, and so forth.

Furthermore, Lemkow observed that on the global scene, every commission and omission of ours, in any domain (e.g. chemistry, ecology, human rights et cetera) and in any locality, sooner or later will impact on *all* domains and localities. She also quoted a Soviet scholar who put this more simply and said: ‘everyone is responsible for everything’. Isn’t that an interesting summation of karma?

Choice and responsible action were highlighted in ‘The Theosophical World View’ which has been mentioned. Mr N. Sri Ram also wrote

of an essential choice to be made by humanity between ‘that past which was identified with the dominance of desire, and the line of evolution or action represented by *Buddhi*’. He mentioned that the choice, in practical terms, ‘is between separatism, whatever form it may take, which moves round the centre of self-interest, seeking every kind of enjoyment for itself, and those ideals which are comprehensively summed up as Brotherhood and Freedom’. These are holistic ideals.



How do we Proceed?

So here we are, a multitude of selves, struggling with our individual and collective egoism, sharing this planet. Anna Lemkow observed that:

rich and poor countries alike are constrained to live together on this finite planet; we are presently carelessly and dangerously impairing our natural support system; population growth, especially in the poorest countries, is exponential; we possess weapons that could extinguish all life on this planet; and finally, but not least, we have all the means we need to resolve our self-made dilemma. The technology is available, and we also have the powers of reason and compassion needed to reverse our course. The question is mainly of mobilizing the will to change.

Any collective will to do something serious about global problems is fairly slow; action

tends to be taken mainly as a result of crises and not because of visionary planning. But where do *we* stand as individuals? What motivates negativity, cynicism? How do we project our motivations in the course of our general affairs in daily life? Do we need to change – but, more than this, are we *willing* to change? For the desire for separateness goes very deep, as the *Viveka-Chudamani* attests:

The truth of Brahman may be understood intellectually. But (even in those who so understand) the desire for personal separateness is deep-rooted and powerful, for it exists from beginningless time. ... This notion is the cause of bondage to conditional existence, birth and death. ... By the sages, the eradication of this notion and the craving for personal separateness is called Liberation.

Our ideal, wrote Sri Ram, must not be to obliterate the differences into which the original unity has broken, but to encourage and enable each type and species to ‘burst into its proper brilliance’. This is a rather scintillating turn of phrase.

Sri Ram wrote that the ‘conception of unity which is the foundation of all philosophy, the heart of every religion, the ultimate of all scientific analysis, and ... the root of every art-expression, needs to be breathed into the consciousness of every single member of our humanity.’ This is surely the antidote to separatism, an inspirational possibility. Can we create the space for unity to breathe into our consciousness?

So, to what extent are we motivated by a holistic view of the world? Is the interrelatedness of all life an idea, or else a deeply held *conviction* born of experience? Do we feel it deeply and frequently, or occasionally? One with a very pure holistic sensibility would reject violence in any form. There are degrees of violence. Is it possible to eliminate some form of violence in our thought, word or speech, just for one hour? Violence can be remarkably subtle. Even irritation may be thought of as a form of violence, for it means there is disharmony somewhere in the system. Has anyone *never* been irritated by another person?

The two essential views I have mentioned in this talk are extremes which are deliberately brought out here for the purposes of illustration. Many people probably move somewhere between a more separative and a more holistic view of the world, rather than falling exclusively into one of these categories. Our spiritual and material bipolarity plays out in many ways, taking on different hues from moment to moment.

Summary

We have briefly considered some differences between a holistic, theosophical view of the world on the one hand, and a separative view on the other, through a number of lenses onto our global community:

- the deep-rooted desire for separateness (*Viveka-Chudamani*) which is fuelled by egoism (*asmitā* being one of the *klesha*-s);
- the passage in *The Voice of the Silence* about the need to cease to hear the many; or, as Shankaracharya put it, the eradication of the craving for personal separateness;
- the revelation, through actual global conditions, of the karma doctrine that all are infinitely interconnected in consciousness (Lemkow); and, related to this, the statement that ‘everybody is responsible for everything’ (quoted in Lemkow). (I would suggest that the sense of interconnectedness does not run very deep, on the whole.)
- Sri Ram’s observation that an essential choice has to be made between the past which was identified with the dominance of desire, and the line of evolution or action represented by *Buddhi*, i.e. the choice between separatism on the one hand, and Brotherhood or Freedom on the other; and
- therefore, the need for the conception of unity to be breathed into the consciousness of every single member of our humanity. Related to this is the possibility of a radical transformation in the way in which we regard and treat others. For we are the sum total of our consciousness and what we allow to breathe into it, we become. It is up to us.

The enterprise in which we are ultimately engaged is the manifestation of a new unity of understanding, in which we can burst into our 'proper brilliance'. Cold, separative materialism must morph into the warm, holistic radiance of the Spirit. This is a prize not to be attained overnight, but nevertheless a prize well worth striving for. Professor Robert Ellwood writes:

Theosophy offers a worldview with two great complementary benefits for satisfactory daily living: it shows that on the one hand the time over which evolution toward the Good is taking place is immense [which should help us develop patience and tolerance], and on the other hand that nothing is trivial. ... everything we can do for good [or we could say, for the whole], however tiny, will not be lost, but will augment through its wholesome karma our own evolution and that of the world – towards unimaginable splendours to come.

This is the radiance of the spirit.

I remain inspired by all individuals who have been big enough to sacrifice something – anything – big or small, to serve in some way, to give back a little. This invariably stems from a greater or lesser sense of holism. Our one hundred and thirty-seven year old Society is replete with examples of members who have served the TS for many years, whether well-known or not. There are other individuals outside this organisation too with

'theosophist' invisibly emblazoned upon their hearts, world citizens who have helped to raise humanity's consciousness. With this in mind, it seems fitting to finish with an insight from Nelson Mandela after his time in prison, mentioned in his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*. He wrote: 'It was during those long and lonely years that my hunger for the freedom of my own people became a hunger for the freedom of all people, white and black.'

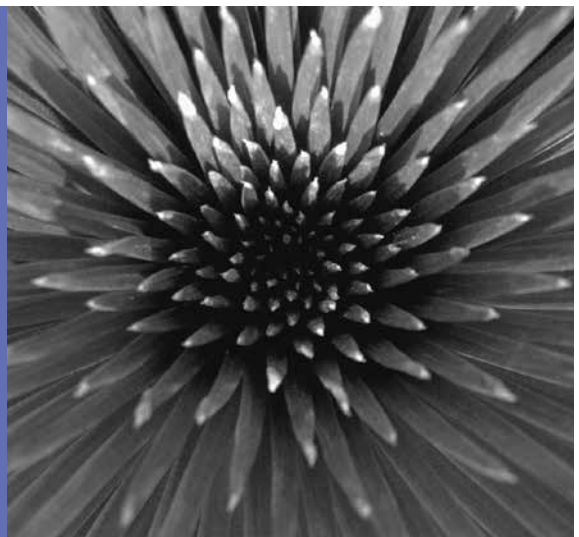
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This talk was given at the 2013 National Convention in Melbourne.

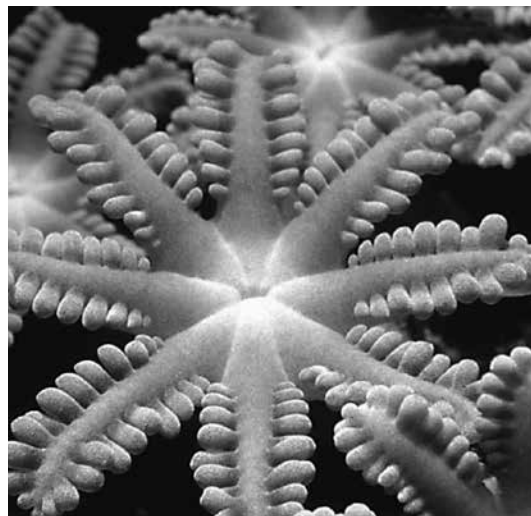
The truth of Brahman may be understood intellectually. But (even in those who so understand) the desire for personal separateness is deep-rooted and powerful, for it exists from beginningless time. This notion is the cause of bondage to conditional existence, birth and death. By the sages, the eradication of this notion and the craving for personal separateness is called Liberation.

Viveka-Chudamani



Let's Not Forget About Theosophy Itself

Dara Tatrav



One of the main purposes of a Convention is to discuss ways and means of implementing the Objects of the Society, and spreading the knowledge of Theosophy. I attempted to do that in my Convention talk, 'Theosophy and the Contemporary World', by presenting several different reasons for us in the TS, and certainly for me, to shift focus from teachings about Theosophy, to placing rather more attention onto Theosophy itself, thereby allowing it to shine forth and transform this organisation into what I believe it was always meant to be. Judging by several responses after that talk there will be a number of other members interested in pursuing the same goal. I take this opportunity therefore to re-think this matter, summarise the main argument, and end with a number of suggestions in response to the question: where do we go from here?

As the Convention was for members only I felt that I could speak frankly, as I do now. I believe that the TS is shrinking fast in all areas of its triple bottom-line: members, content, and money. So there is a problem. To this problem I propose a simple solution: that we focus directly on our core business, perhaps in a way that has never taken place, but which I believe would have a wide appeal among those who are serious about these matters in the contemporary world, and send to them a clear signal of our nature and our intent.

In order to explain what is meant by Theosophy itself I spent a little time on the etymology of the word Theosophy and on the motto of the Theosophical Society: *satyān nāsti paro dharmah*. This motto, borrowed at the time from the Maharaja of Benares, has been badly translated as 'There is no Religion Higher than Truth'. In order to translate it properly I believe that it is necessary to understand something of the tradition out of which it grew, in which the world of things and lives and minds that we inhabit and create is a superimposition on the non-dual Reality, known variously as the Self and *Brahman*. In this tradition, the world of things and lives and minds is perishable, transient and secondary: basically it is ultimately unreal, a figment of the imagination. The Real, which is Imperishable, is what is referred to by the phrase *satyān* in the motto.

One of the sentences with which Shankarāchārya summarised the teachings of Advaita Vedānta is this: *Brahma satyam jagat mithya*; only Brahman is Real, the world is unreal. Brahman is referred to as Real in the sense that it exists at all times, in all places, and in all the states of consciousness, without being the least affected. The world on the other hand is unreal in that it is always changing and will disappear. The metaphor of a cinema is often used to place things into perspective and convey this teaching. In the cinema we watch many things occurring before

our gaze, comedies, tragedies, horror stories; we are moved, titillated, frightened and amazed. But whatever is on the screen, when the projector is switched off it all disappears leaving only the screen in front of us. Like consciousness itself, the screen is the substratum on which all the images are projected. In Vedānta there is always this fundamental contrast between that which is real and that which is imagined or projected: a distinction that I believe informs the motto of the Theosophical Society at its deepest level.

As I understand it, therefore, and as I love it, Theosophy is not a teaching or a set of words and thoughts, it is the underlying substance or element in which all things and lives and minds float. It is awareness itself: contentless consciousness, which is divine.

So the motto of the TS might better be translated as ‘there is no *dharma* higher than the Real or the Imperishable’, which is not a product of the imagination projected onto the Real. All else is imaginary, partial, or merely apparent. And because there is no *dharma*, no way, no teaching, and no method higher than that which is beyond thought, that which alone is Real, this should be the North Star by which we navigate: as much as possible aligning all of our activities in the TS accordingly. That is my solution. That those who are interested in doing what the TS was founded for – to show the world that Theosophy exists – spend much of their efforts in Realising Theosophy and removing the veils hiding it from plain view: instead of just talking about it; or worse, talking about other people who talked about it. As the veils are constructed of our thoughts, mastery of thought then becomes paramount.

Far from being too abstract to work with, many sages have argued from their direct experience that this is the easiest, most beneficial and most

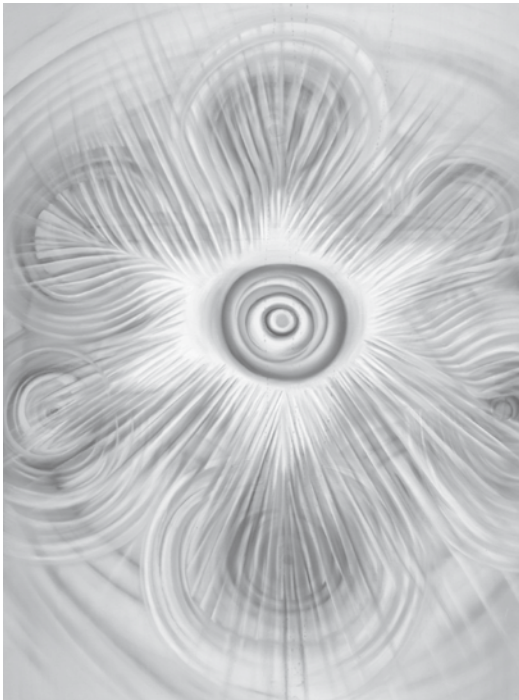
excellent basis on which to live one’s life. It would certainly be more consistent with the Society’s motto if we paid rather closer attention to Theosophy itself and the way to it rather than on any theories or teachings about it, each of which veils as much as it may point. This is exactly what the motto says: that the reality, the thing itself, is higher than thought. It comes from a tradition in which thought is regarded as dead (as the International President so often remarked in better days).

I propose that from the basic premise of our motto – that no formulation, no idea, no position, is higher than pure being, pure awareness – naturally flow a set of activities, subject matter, an approach to that subject matter, a way of living, and even a way of conducting meetings; all infused with a certain kind of watchfulness or attention to the main point. That process could be described as a shift in focus from the objects of perception to the perceiver and ultimately the Seer. If you try it you may find that it is easier than you imagine, and profoundly enlivening.

As I understand it, therefore, and as I love it, Theosophy is not a teaching or a set of words and thoughts, it is the underlying substance or element in which all things and lives and minds float. It is awareness itself: contentless consciousness, which is divine. Through identification with the objects of perception the mind moves away from its natural state of wisdom and gets bogged down in the content of thought. Its real nature however is pure awareness. And our association has as its brief to show the world that such a quality of perception/seeing/being exists, and to assist members and others to realise it. What else could possibly be meant by Divine Wisdom, *theosophia*, than a way of seeing, a way of being, that is ‘divine’?

There is a saying in Vedānta, it is one of the four great statements summing up the tradition: *Prajñānam Brahman*. *Prajñā*, the highest form of insight, a synonym of Divine Wisdom, is a form of witnessing, a form of seeing, that is identical with *Brahman*, the cause of the world, the Inner Ruler. That is what Vedānta teaches. A remarkable proposition that is fundamental to non-dualistic metaphysics. So if this is the

Theosophical Society it must be the Direct Intuitive Perception Society. Its stock in trade therefore would be a study and a promotion of all the cultural expressions of the possibility of seeing; together with the practice and promotion of all the different ways of overcoming the obstacles to that seeing; together with a defense of this basic position which would help convince the rest of the world that this is a useful basis on which to act. I believe that this would appeal to many people who are either dissatisfied with their present experience of life, or concerned about the fate of humanity at the present time. An association dedicated to exploring such matters, and to promoting and practising the various methods likely to free the mind so that the Self, or what is, shines forth, would be a beacon.



I believe that it is partly because the TS has very little to do with fostering spiritual or enlightening experience that people seeking that or even just interested in that go elsewhere. The elsewhere may cost them a bundle, and it may even mislead; but the point is that they are seeking not just lectures about new ways of seeing and new ways of living, they are seeking an experience, and they are seeking inspiration

and companionship from those who have practised and achieved. Perhaps this is what the physicist Wolfgang Pauli meant when he said: 'I consider the embracing of both rational understanding and the mystical experience of unity to be the mythos of our present day and age' [source of quotation lost]. There is a vast difference between the mystical or actual experience of unity and a lecture about it or a theory about it. And on that difference rests the transformation of the human being.

The prevalent view of the Society is that it exists to promote certain teachings found in the works of Madame Blavatsky, Annie Besant and other authors published by the Theosophical Publishing House; and that basically, therefore, it is a kind of sect grown up around a philosophy or religion it calls Theosophy. This view is not unjustified. The TS also has a reputation of being long on words and short on practice. That is easily confirmed by experience. I would like to make a lie out of both those statements by changing the way we go about our activities. Are we going to keep lecturing *about* Theosophy; or are we going to shift focus onto clearing the way for a lived experience of Theosophy? If this is the Theosophical Society then we are equally members of the Underlying Reality Society, or the Silent Witness Society, or the Getting One's Head Straight Society. I am not renaming the TS, just spelling out some of its implications, when looked at from the point of view of higher consciousness, which is Theosophy.

By way of conclusion, I would ask of you, my fellow members: what could be more potent or efficacious than paying attention to that, inside of you, which is projecting your experience onto the screen of life? Sustained observation of this, the actor, will lead to that which dwells in all beings and which all beings do not know, the innermost Self which is at one with the totality. Put in quite other words, what could be more useful than shifting focus in the TS towards actually unveiling the spiritual perception? In my heartfelt opinion, whatever is different from that ought not to be given too much attention by the Theosophical Society, which is supposed to show the world that such a thing as divine perception exists.

Practical Tips and a Call to Arms

I have been asked what to do with/about this. My initial response would be to do nothing. First see the problem. The answer will often present of its own accord. Contemplate it, place the mind's eye on this space and see what emerges. Like sleeping on a problem and allowing the unconscious to sort it out. Having said that, my preliminary suggestions are as follows:

- Those who feel there is really some truth in what has been said here could work on the problem together, both face to face and remotely. Instead of remote viewing we could try remote problem solving or remote recalibration!
- Having read the above and given it some consideration take from it what most resonates with you and spend some quiet time looking at it. Just place the mind's eye onto the idea, without trying to do anything about it, and see what comes up. Consider the format and conduct of our meetings, for example. These seed thoughts could be noted down for later reference. Who knows what several of us paying attention to these matters might design.
- Refocus, recalibrate and repackage our meetings, many of our publications and our events, to highlight the significance of a shift in consciousness. Spiritual enquiry is the door to Divine Wisdom, so let's not hide it under a bushel.
- Not only should we emphasise this in what we say about the TS but we should spend considerable time at the TS doing it. Let's

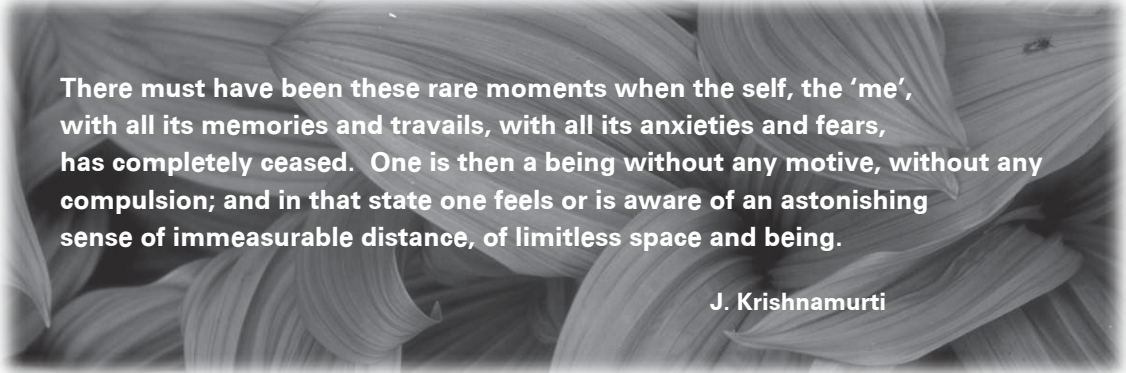
give time at all of our meetings to quiet reflection, to being present, to awareness: instead of bombarding ourselves and others with tons of thoughts. And see what other considered suggestions you may have.

- Spend quality time together at meetings, pay attention, be kind, and get over yourself.
- Don't *try* to be kind. It won't work and it's not a good look. Kindness is the perfume of awareness. But that is just my opinion.
- Focus on the quality of our perception and the quality of attention at our meetings. To those who enter them they would then be like a breath of fresh air. I'm certain of it.
- Give time and attention to the mastery of thought in all of our TS activities.

Finally, you have lent me your ears, now, if you care to, send me your views (natsec@austheos.org.au). If you wish to submit directly to the Editor any article-length pieces up to 2,500 words, or viewpoints of some 200 words, you may do so (pres@austheos.org.au). But incipient ideas, suggestions, vague notions, contrary views, could be sent to me, if you wish, and later compiled into something for further consideration or publication.

Dara Tatray holds a PhD in the History and Philosophy of Science. She is the National Secretary of The Theosophical Society in Australia.

The photograph on page 42 is from the Rona Scott collection inspired by the Stanzas of Dzyan and held at the National Headquarters.



There must have been these rare moments when the self, the 'me', with all its memories and travails, with all its anxieties and fears, has completely ceased. One is then a being without any motive, without any compulsion; and in that state one feels or is aware of an astonishing sense of immeasurable distance, of limitless space and being.

J. Krishnamurti

BE STILL AND KNOW

Helen Steven



In the midst of all activity and all noise, the Stillness is always there, every moment of every day, everywhere. If we just stop and allow ourselves to feel it, experience it, and just be in the Stillness, then we become aware. We see things differently, instead of looking without really seeing.

Krishnamurti expresses this so beautifully in one of his meditations:

That morning the sea was like a lake or an enormous river, without a ripple and so calm that you could see the reflections of the stars so early in the morning. The dawn had not yet come, and so the stars, and the reflection of the cliff, and the distant lights ... were there on the water. And as the sun came up over the horizon in a cloudless sky it made a golden path, and it was extraordinary to see that light ... filling the earth and every leaf and blade of grass. As you watched, a great stillness came into you. The brain itself became very quiet, without any reaction, without a movement, and it was strange to feel this immense stillness. Feel isn't the word; the quality of that silence, that stillness, is not felt by the brain; it is beyond the brain; beyond all imagination, beyond all desire. You are so still that your body becomes completely part of the earth, part of everything that is still.

And as the slight breeze came from the hills, stirring the leaves, this stillness, this extraordinary quality of silence, was not disturbed. As you watched the sea, so very still, you really became

part of everything. You were everything. You were the light, and the beauty of love. Again, to say 'you were a part of everything' is also wrong; the word you is not adequate, because you really weren't there. You didn't exist. There was only that stillness, the beauty, the extraordinary sense of love. The words you and I separate things. This division, in this strange silence and stillness, doesn't exist.

And as you watched ... space and time seemed to have come to an end, and the space that divides had no reality. That leaf and that tree and the blue shining water were not different from you. ¹

If we can live in a permanent state of meditation, as I think Krishnamurti did, we can have an amazing beautiful perception of everything. If we can just be in the Stillness, and be aware, we have clarity, and a deeper perception, an understanding.

A brief example was when I was at the School of Theosophy in Springbrook: I woke at 4.30am and went outside. I was struck by the incredible silence. So I stopped and listened to the silence. While I was standing there I saw the light reflect a speck in front of my eyes. It was so small I could hardly make out any shape but it seemed to be just floating there. At first it seemed not to be moving but as I watched in the silence I realised there was a slight movement. Then I realised it was a minute spider. But it seemed to be just floating. So I kept watching, and soon

I noticed that the light had caught a small part of the thread of the web it was on. If I hadn't stopped my activity and thoughts, if I hadn't listened to the silence, and watched with an open questioning mind, I wouldn't have seen the beauty of life right in front of my face. In fact, I would have walked through and broken the thread, without even being aware of it – not aware of the spider, or the beauty of it, or the experience of that moment, nor the effect of my actions ...

When we are involved with work and family and any kind of relationship we inevitably confront difficulties or challenges. Where there is action there is friction. Where there is movement there is an effect. It seems to come naturally for most people to use their mind to try to sort out how to deal with these effects of action and movement and constant change. If we learn to live in a constant state of meditation, to be in the Stillness, and come from the heart rather than using head-knowledge, our choices become clear. Our actions come from love, not from thought. And then it is right action. When we are in the Stillness we see and act from the heart.

In *Light on the Path* it is said, 'through your own heart comes the one light which can illuminate life and make it clear to your eyes.'²

When our mind is quiet, we allow Heart-Wisdom to direct our action. Then all action is right action. When we come from the heart we just *know* what is right, and we can't help but act accordingly. When the mind is still, our intuition comes through our *Buddhic* nature.

N. Sri Ram speaks of a condition, not subject to attraction and repulsion, where 'action is according to an innate law which, in an individual, is the law of his being. It is a law which ... always maintains a state of harmony'.

When we are still, and coming from the heart our vibrations are much finer. We are then able to tune in to the beauty and harmony of life. We see beauty where we walked past it, unaware, previously. Everything that is happening around us seems to make more sense. We see the harmony within every aspect of life, of nature.

When we are involved with work and family and any kind of relationship we inevitably confront difficulties or challenges. Where there is action there is friction. Where there is movement there is an effect. It seems to come naturally for most people to use their mind to try to sort out how to deal with these effects of action and movement and constant change. If we learn to live in a constant state of meditation, to be in the Stillness, and come from the heart rather than using head-knowledge, our choices become clear.

Sri Ram says this is living a life of Truth. In his book *Seeking Wisdom* he says, 'When one lives a life of Truth, he will begin to love the very feeling of being true, and his whole nature assumes a shape that is in harmony with the true nature of things.'³ And he mentions that 'Krishnaji speaks of a nature of mind and heart that is vulnerable, by which he means sensitive to the slightest touch and non-resistant. It is so beautifully tuned that it responds to every vibration and keeps out nothing.'⁴

When we vibrate at this level we attract, and are drawn to, people and things of a similar vibration, and this calmness and gentleness also affects everyone and everything with which we come into contact. This sensitivity, being so finely tuned, allows us to experience beyond mind.

And when we reach up, there is a corresponding reaction from above, and so we receive grace; we are infused with Spirit. Then there is a real expansion of consciousness. It is living in a state of meditation. This knowing, beyond mind, is Heart-Wisdom, and Wisdom is Love. Then there is creativity in our action, instead of

action based on conditioning, which is mind-stuff.

Krishnamurti says:

If the mind can be aware of all its own activities, both conscious and unconscious, then there is the possibility of going beyond. To go beyond, the mind must be still, but a still mind is not one that is disciplined. A mind that is held in control is not a still mind, it is a stale mind. The mind is still, tranquil, only when it understands the whole process of its own thinking, and there is a possibility of going beyond.

There is no need to ‘think’, just to ‘know’. We realise ‘it is what it is’. There is no judgment, no thought about it. When we see things in this way there is a total acceptance.

Krishnamurti’s central teaching is that, for us to be truly free, we must first be aware of the psychological conditioning which prevents us from seeing things as they really are.

This quality of attention is ‘what is’... In this attention the mind stops chattering and is still. There is only ‘what is’, and in this there is the quality of love, of beauty, of order.⁵

K says that living in this state of meditation is so very simple, but it escapes us, because our minds are so complicated. He says:

To be free of the self, the ‘me’, means you do not have to seek the Truth; then Truth will come to you because the field is there – a mind that is quiet, undisturbed by its own agitations. Such a mind is capable of receiving.

If we could just be in the Stillness, and see the beauty all around us, and be in an ‘ecstasy of solitude’, as he calls it, then we are not frightened to be alone and we don’t need to be attached to anything.

This state of being requires a surrender of ego. We just need to let go. Sri Ram says the inherent nature of life has to be released, not acquired. And when the mind is utterly quiet, having renounced everything of a personal nature, then that other nature manifests itself. And Life wells

up from within, from the pure nature and an expansion of consciousness, the very nature of which is sensitivity.

Then, like that dawn that came up this morning, it comes silently, and makes a golden path in the very stillness, which was at the beginning, which is now, and which will be always there.⁶

Endnotes:

1. Krishnamurti, J., *Freedom, Love and Action*, Shambhala Publications, Boston, 1994, pp.160-163.
2. *Light on the Path*, The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, 1982, Fragment II, Rule 12.
3. Sri Ram, N., *Seeking Wisdom*, The Theosophical Publishing House, Madras, 1969, p.24.
4. *ibid.*, p.39.
5. Smith, Ingram, *Truth is a Pathless Land—a Journey with Krishnamurti*, Quest Books, Wheaton, USA, 1989.
6. J. Krishnamurti, *op. cit.*



Helen Steven is the President of Hobart Branch.



From the Archives - Politics and World Peace

Peter Bowden



There are so many political parties in the world today that it is very hard to keep track of them. However, at the risk of oversimplification, we may say there are two extreme basic political theories diametrically opposed to each other, while the remaining parties represent various stages of compromise between these two. On the one hand we have capitalism, which believes in unlimited private enterprise; on the other we have socialism, which believes that property and finance should be controlled by the state.

The capitalist says that people should be given unlimited opportunity to exploit and capitalise on their natural abilities. If they are successful in accumulating much wealth and property, by legal means, then they have the right to use these acquisitions in any way they choose.

The socialist objects that such a course makes for an uneven society. Whereas one person may have an abundance far in excess of their needs, another may be on the verge of starvation. They point out that every human being has the right to live, and to live decently. Not all people have the physical, mental or moral ability to prosper in the society of ruthless competition advocated by capitalism. The socialist points out that too much power concentrated in the hands of a few business tycoons places the masses under a financial dictatorship which is not responsible to the people, as is a government. According to this viewpoint, the solution is to place all control of finance and property in the hands of

the government, which can then use these for the benefit of people as a whole.

But, the capitalist objects, governments which implement a policy of 'state ownership' often confuse their own political dogma with the 'good of the people'. In every country where this theory has been carried to the extreme, the people soon become the slaves of the government, instead of the government serving the people. Besides, socialism kills initiative, giving little incentive for attainment.

Which Viewpoint is Correct?

Which of these two viewpoints is the correct one? May it not be that both are, in so far as they go? Both attempt to grapple with and solve certain social problems, and both introduce into their sphere of influence problems which are peculiarly their own. However, the extremes presented by both schools fail to attract many people, who desire neither to eat in slavery nor to starve in freedom.

It would appear, then, that the ideal state would be one which combined the virtues of both systems, but eliminated the vices. Numerous attempts have been made to do this, and so we have a multitudinous variety of political parties, each offering a panacea for all ills, but each falling short of its self-appointed goal. The following analysis makes no attempt to re-evaluate political theory. In fact the ideas presented can just as readily be used by the

capitalist or the socialist or, for that matter, by any shade of political theory in between the two.

If every member of a society (or at least the vast majority of them) thought as much about the welfare of their brother as they do about themselves and their immediate family, all social inequalities would disappear. If they could consistently practice as well as they prattle about 'The Golden Rule', the presence of any repressive political ideology would be unnecessary. The purpose of a political party, in the first instance, is to protect and further the interest of the people it is supposed to represent. A group of people of like mind decide that more can be done by united effort; so they pool their resources, draw up a programme, and a new party is born. As time goes on the party grows in strength, new members are recruited; on the other hand, its dogma becomes more clearly defined, more inflexible – a definite and clear-cut political philosophy emerges. This is the danger point. When any organisation, be it political, religious or social, reaches the point where it thrusts on its prospective membership a long list of rules and conditions and says, 'Here, believe these or stay out', it becomes a detriment rather than an aid to evolution. Whenever an organisation tries to restrict its members from thinking for themselves, then the machine has become larger than the people it is supposed to serve. Any political party which refuses to listen to new ideas, which refuses to acknowledge the good points in another's philosophy, is doomed to stagnation and ultimate decay.

Our Basic Problems

Let us not despise the many ideologies which have been and are now. We can learn from them all. Each one has achieved a certain amount of good, and has assisted humanity in its evolution. However, the ultimate problems remain the same. We are still seeking a system which gives security to all people, and guarantees good living conditions to all people, whilst in no way restricting their initiative and creative powers.

May it be suggested that, at present, such a system just cannot be found? We are looking for the solution in the wrong direction. Are

not our basic problems ethical rather than political? Political systems are created in an attempt to protect society against certain moral shortcomings. In this regard they are trying to deal with effects rather than causes, with the symptoms rather than the disease. Is it not obvious that the cause of all social evils is ultimately traceable to the people who compose society? No society can be better than the sum total of the individuals who compose it. Therefore, it would seem, the logical approach is to work through individuals on a large scale, not by making them mere cogs in some mighty machine, but by helping them to understand themselves.

We are still seeking a system which gives security to all people, and guarantees good living conditions to all people, whilst in no way restricting their initiative and creative powers. May it be suggested that, at present, such a system just cannot be found? We are looking for the solution in the wrong direction. Are not our basic problems ethical rather than political? Political systems are created in an attempt to protect society against certain moral shortcomings. In this regard they are trying to deal with effects rather than causes, with the symptoms rather than the disease. Is it not obvious that the cause of all social evils is ultimately traceable to the people who compose society?

Political theory really puts the cart before the horse. It designs to create and maintain certain conditions from without, forcing individuals to conform to these. Laws are designed to prohibit acts which are considered anti-social, and to protect activities which are legitimate. But, can any person be made 'more moral' by subjecting

them to restrictions from without? True, they may conform for reasons of expediency, but is such an approach likely to cause any change in heart? Have these restrictions helped them to overcome the greed, the lust, the egotism and pride, the selfishness, which they find in themselves? The best that any ideology can do is to shut off or at least restrict the manifestation of these negative factors in certain directions. However, these negative factors usually find other avenues of expression. Thus a new political system may temporarily remove some social evils, but allow others to grow in their place. Communism, for example, has not overcome greed and lust for power, it has simply changed their avenue of expression from big business to government bureaucracy.

Humanity must Examine Itself

The only discipline that is truly worthwhile is self-discipline. Until this lesson is learnt we shall continue to be hurt both individually and as a social group. Humanity must learn to examine itself, to understand its own nature, to recognise its weaknesses and strengths, and to appreciate the necessity of doing something about it. It must come to realise its material insignificance and its potential spiritual greatness. It must inwardly know that there is more to existence than the making of money, the attaining of intellectual or social prestige, the gratification of physical appetites, although all of these have their rightful place. Above all, we as people must realise that we have been created for a purpose and that purpose will be revealed to us if we will but be still, let go, and allow the Supreme Intelligence in the universe to be expressed through us. When we are willing 'to come as a little child' into the sacred sanctuary of our higher Selves, renouncing the pull of earthly attachments, surrendering vanity and pride, and open up our whole being to the Infinite, then we will know true peace.

In this state humanity realises that, in the higher sense, there is no such thing as separate existence. The cosmos is an undivided unity, divine, perfect, and beyond mortal understanding. We appreciate ourselves as an inseparable part of this unity, our every thought and action having

some effect on all other aspects of this unity. As Francis Thompson expressed it:

All things by immortal power,
Near and far,
Hiddenly
To each other linked are,
That thou canst not stir a flower
Without troubling of a star.

Anyone who inwardly perceives this great truth cannot help but express true brotherhood. They realise life is a blessed privilege to be used in the service of others. They do not look for praise or recognition; they do not even look for results, for they realise that, in so far as they act according to the law, these must invariably come, even if not immediately discernible. Such a person cannot be proud, well realising that they are not accomplishing as an outer individuality, but as a humble and unselfish instrument of divine forces.



An Inward Law

If the great majority of people were to attain this consciousness, it would matter little whether outer society were organised on capitalistic or socialistic lines. The members of such a society could not help but do the right thing towards each other. There would be no need to be governed by outward restrictions, for all would be governed by the inward law of love. Those who are at peace with themselves have little trouble in adjusting to outward conditions. They have no need meticulously to learn a

system of ethics. They would automatically live them, it would be impossible to do otherwise.

Our social problems, then, cannot be solved by outer legislation, but by inner regeneration. When humanity learns to spend at least as much time investigating its own nature as it does its outer environment, it will be in a position to make some startling discoveries. When humanity can learn to control self, then will greed, lust, desire for power, hate, fear and jealousy, disappear. Until they disappear from the individual, humanity can obtain no permanent satisfaction from life; until they disappear from society we have no permanent social peace.

The writer of this article would like to make it clear that he is not advocating a new system of thought or philosophy to replace the present ones. Rather is he advocating a return to the very old approach to life; an approach which can be used just as effectively by the capitalist or the socialist, the Muslim, or the Buddhist, the

Catholic or the Protestant. He is not agitating for the overthrow of the laws which govern present societies, but he is trying to emphasise their limitations. These laws are necessary at our present stage of evolution, and any changes must develop naturally and logically from inner growth. Certainly no attempt should be made to replace any present system of dogma by a new one.

What is advocated is that all of us should start within and reorientate our lives. We – like the ancient Greek sages – should attempt to follow the dictum, ‘Man know thyself’. This is not new advice, it is as old as time itself, but unless it is heeded, there will be no deliverance, no breaking of the fetters of ignorance, superstition and fear, which bind the majority of humankind today.

This article is reprinted from *Theosophy in Australia*, April 1960. Terminology used has been updated slightly.

In the heart of humanity there is peace. It is the passion for material prosperity which blinds the people of the earth to the existence of the truth that they are the children of God, one of whose many names is Peace. And they will return to the reality only when they replace their passion for material prosperity by a passion for moral perfection.

How then is this aspiration to be aroused among the nations of the world? Not by disarmament, whether it be politics or economic, but by a disarmament of that disaffection between man and man, which, like a canker, has been eating into the very vitals of our world.

Annie Besant



Thoughts

How like a leaf a feather is!
How long the leaves of the bangalow
that laugh with the wind
when the lorikeets come in a frenzy
of chattering green and yellow fun.
They come for the nectar
when a hundred strands of tiny flowers
hang as one great cluster
like a decorative brooch at the neck of the palm.

When the flowers are done, the palm berries gone
and the spent inflorescence
has dropped to the ground
the sundried sculpture lying there
evokes thoughts of antlers, of soft-footed deer.
And sometimes I've seen where
the stiffened branchlets
have formed the semblance of a primitive hand.

So wistful is the roaming mind
that thoughts range far into flights of fancy
criss-crossing the present
into past and future
seeking timeless meaning
in dance and mudra.
There's satisfaction of a kind, yet
beyond there's that subtlety
elusive, profound.

Patricia Ossenberg

The Theosophical Society in Australia Minutes of the 2013 Annual Convention Business Meeting



The Convention Business Meeting of The Theosophical Society in Australia commenced at 9.37am on Saturday 20 January 2013 at St. Mary's College, University of Melbourne, 871 Swanston St, Parkville, Victoria.

CONVENTION CHAIR

The Meeting was chaired by the National President, Linda Oliveira.

OBSERVERS

A motion that Vicky Jerome and Linda Watts from New Zealand be admitted as observers was carried (Carolyn Harrod moved; Erica Patient seconded).

ROLL-CALL OF VOTING DELEGATES AND PROXIES

In accordance with Rule 15(2) of the National Rules, the named voting delegates and the votes of the Lodges/Branches certified on Form 4 of those Rules had to be received by the National Secretary by Sunday 6 January in order to be valid. No Form 4 was received from Atherton Lodge, Hobart Branch or Launceston Lodge. The National Secretary noted that each Lodge/Branch has one vote irrespective of the number of members it has. In addition, each Lodge/Branch is entitled to one vote for every fifty Members in Good Standing for two years as at 31 August 2012.

The roll call of the voting delegates for Lodges/Branches was then read out as follows: Adelaide Lodge - Sheryl Malone or failing her Travis James (2 votes); Blavatsky Lodge - Pamela Peterson or failing her Peter Brereton (5 votes); Brisbane Lodge - Phillipa Rooke or failing her Lynette Muller (2 votes); Canberra Branch - Peter Fokker or failing him Henny Fokker (1 vote); Melbourne Lodge - Kari Torgersen or failing her George Kalenyok (4 votes); Newcastle Lodge - Tony Buzek or failing

him Dianne Kynaston (1 vote); Perth Branch - Harry Bayens or failing him Franco Guazzelli (3 votes); Sunshine Coast Lodge - Carmen French or failing her Jean Carroll (2 votes).

The National Secretary pointed out that the majority decision of the members eligible to vote at the Lodge Convention Meeting should be taken as the vote/votes of that Lodge, for or against each item, and duly recorded on Form 4.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE 2012 CONVENTION BUSINESS MEETING

The Minutes of the 2012 Convention Business Meeting held at St John's College, University of Queensland on 21 January 2012 were published in the June 2012 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*. The National Secretary reported that all the voting Lodges voted **for** the Minutes of the 2012 Convention Business Meeting. There was no discussion on those Minutes. The National Secretary however added a word of explanation concerning voting on the Minutes. In any given year, only the eligible voting members present at the Lodge Convention Meeting, who were also present at the immediate past Australian Convention Business meeting, are asked to vote on the Minutes of that meeting. The majority decision of those would be taken as the vote of the Lodge either for or against. In future an explanation to this effect will be sent out to Lodges with their reminder to schedule a Convention meeting. This will hopefully end any concerns on the part of members who feel they are being asked to vote on Minutes of meetings at which they were not present; and there will be no need for abstentions.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2012

It was noted that the National President's Annual Report for the Year ended 31 August 2012 had been

published in the November 2012 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*. The National Secretary reported that all the voting Lodges voted **for** the Annual Report at their Convention Meeting. There was no discussion on the President's Report. The National Secretary thanked the National President for a comprehensive report. This was endorsed by Celia Novy.

NATIONAL TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2012

It was noted that the National Treasurer's Report for the Year ended 31 August 2012 had been published as a supplement to the November 2012 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*. The National Secretary reported that all the voting Lodges voted **for** the National Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31 August 2012. From the floor, Peter Brereton objected to the change in accounting procedure noted in the Treasurer's Report, from accounting for the Section's investments at cost to accounting at market. This decision had been made by the Assistant Treasurer and the National Secretary in consultation with the Section's accountants. The Assistant Treasurer and the National Secretary gave the reasons for the change. They pointed out that Maple-Brown Abbott always reported to us on our investments at market value; and the National Secretary had always reported to our investment partners (Brisbane Lodge, Adelaide Lodge, Melbourne Lodge and Perth Branch) at market value. From now on the Financial Statements will be consistent with this pattern of reporting, rather than report to one party at cost and the others at market (or current value). A lengthy discussion ensued with several members from the floor expressing confidence in the Section's long-time investment managers Maple-Brown Abbott and the Section's Finance Committee. The Assistant Treasurer and the National Secretary stood by their decision to report uniformly at market value and stressed that all concerned will continue to take a conservative approach to our investments.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2012, AND AUDITOR'S REPORT THEREON

The Financial Statements, Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 August 2012 and the Auditor's Report thereon had been published as a supplement to the November 2012 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*. The National Secretary reported that all the voting

Lodges had voted **for** the Financial Statements and Balance Sheet for the Year Ended 31 August 2012, and the Auditor's Report. There was no discussion on the financial statements in addition to what had taken place in connection with the previous item.

BUDGET FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2013

It was noted that the National Council previously approved the Budget at its meeting in July 2012, and had authorised the Executive Committee to approve any subsequent minor amendments after the completion of the annual accounts. A motion that the Budget for the current financial year be received at the present Meeting was carried (Sheryl Malone moved; Kari Torgersen seconded). The National Secretary reported that all the voting Lodges voted **for** the Budget with the exception of Canberra Branch, which voted **against**. There followed a discussion on the Budget. From the floor, Carolyn Harrod posed the question: how long will we be able to bear the cost of sending out hard copies of *Theosophy in Australia* given that the magazine seems to be sustaining a considerable loss? The National President and the National Secretary both spoke to this question pointing out that the matter had been discussed by the Council at its meeting on 17 January [see item f under Any Other Business].

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

The Chair reported that Storey Blackwood were reappointed as Auditors for 2013 as the result of a recommendation by the National Council at its meeting on 18 January.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEWLY APPOINTED OFFICERS

The Chair reported that the following appointments had been made by the National Council at its meeting on 17-18 January 2013, and by the national Executive at its meeting on 11 December 2012:

National Vice-President - Geoffrey Harrod (National Council appointment)

National Treasurer - position remains vacant

Assistant Treasurer - Beatrice Malka (national Executive Committee appointment)

Editor of *Theosophy in Australia* - Linda Oliveira (national Executive Committee appointment)

The Chair also noted that Dara Tatrav had been appointed as National Secretary by the National

Council at its meeting in July, after interviews with three candidates and subsequent recommendations by the interview panel. Furthermore, Pedro Oliveira had been appointed as Acting Education Coordinator at that meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BALLOT RESULTS State Representatives for NSW/ACT, Victoria and Western Australia:

The National Secretary reported that in accordance with Rules 17(1)(c) and 19, the terms of office of the State Representatives for NSW/ACT (Dianne K. Kynaston), Victoria (Kari Torgersen) and Western Australia (George Wester) had expired at the appointment of the new State Representatives towards the end of 2012. They were all eligible for re-election. The election was duly called on 1 June 2012, with nominations to reach the National Secretary no later than close of business 20 September 2012. There being only one nomination from NSW/ACT Dianne Kynaston was appointed for a second term. There being only one nomination from Victoria, Kari Torgersen was appointed for a second term.

As two valid nominations were received from Western Australia, that of George Wester and Franco Guazzelli, an election was called on 11 October 2012. All members in WA eligible to vote in this election were sent the voting slip and related documents. The results were declared on 9 November 2012 as follows: valid voting slips were received from 64 members; 39 votes were for Franco Guazzelli; 25 votes were for George Wester. Franco Guazzelli was accordingly appointed as the State Representative for Western Australia for a term of two years from the declaration of the result on 9 November 2012.

The National Secretary noted that the votes were counted by Pamela Peterson, Secretary of Blavatsky Lodge; and Dai Trandang, Director of The Australian Section Theosophical Trust. The State Representatives were congratulated.

VOTE ON NOTICES OF MOTION

No Notices of Motion had been received.

PLACE AND TIME OF NEXT CONVENTION

The Chair announced that the 2014 Convention will be held in Sydney at the Women's College, The

University of Sydney, from Tuesday 21 January to Tuesday 28 January. The next Convention Business Meeting will be held during that Convention.

RESOLUTIONS OF GOODWILL

The Chair stated that postcards addressed to absent friends and well-wishers had been prepared ready for Convention delegates to sign during the week.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a. From the floor, Carolyn Harrod asked whether there was any news regarding the payment of workers at the international headquarters at Adyar, a subject raised at the last Convention Business Meeting at which their low wages were discussed. In reply, the National President reported that she had been informed that all workers at the international Headquarters had received a Rs1000 per month raise. The National President undertook to follow up on this matter and place an item concerning wages on the agenda of the December 2013 General Council meeting. Tony Fearnside questioned the wisdom of continuing to make donations to Adyar in the present circumstances. The National Secretary replied that the Section does not always make donations to Adyar these days, partly because the funds from our donations over the years have not yet been utilised.

b. The National President announced the names of the Council-appointed national Executive Committee for 2014. The Committee will consist of the National President, the National Secretary, (ex officio); the Assistant Treasurer Beatrice Malka; Dianne Kynaston; Ken Edwards; Marlene Bell and Dai Trandang.

c. The Chair pointed out that a number of notices of motion for Rules changes will be formulated during the year and circulated, with explanatory notes, to Lodges/Branches for their Convention meetings.

d. The Chair read out a letter received a few months previously from an Adelaide member regarding programming and accommodation at Conventions, and whether the host Lodge could not have a greater say in the programme and in running the event. In response the Chair directed our attention to the relevant item in the Policies Document as follows:

'Programming for Convention and National TS Centres

The development of programmes organised by

The Theosophical Society in Australia for the National Convention and National TS Centres is the responsibility of the National President in conjunction with the Education Coordinator. Contributions may be obtained from other members of the Education Unit, the national Executive Committee or the National Council as appropriate’.

It was stressed that the Annual Convention is one of the chief functions of The Theosophical Society at a national level. Neither the National President nor any other national office-bearer has any say in the programming of Lodges/Branches, apart from offering talks by visiting speakers; nor in the running of any events or activities by Lodges/Branches. Nor are Lodges/Branches asked to make a financial contribution to the losses sustained by the Section for each Annual Convention.

e. The Chair addressed the issue of the ongoing costs of printing and posting *Theosophy in Australia*, a matter that was, at the time of the Convention Business Meeting, already under review. Ways of reducing the cost will be investigated, as will other options such as going online and offering print copies at a subscription rate aimed at cost recovery. A limited number of hard copies could also be made available to Lodges/Branches for their libraries.

f. The National Secretary reported briefly on the matter of Theosophy House not selling in 2012 and subsequent developments all of which had been fully reported in the Minutes of various national Executive and National Council meetings.

There being no further business the Chair closed the Meeting at 10.46am.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE ELECTION OF STATE REPRESENTATIVES FOR EACH OF THE ELECTORAL STATES OF QUEENSLAND, TASMANIA AND SOUTH AUSTRALIA

In accordance with Rules 17(1)(c) and 19, the current terms of office of the State Representatives for Queensland (Geoffrey Harrod), Tasmania (Denise Frost) and South Australia (Travis James) will expire at the appointment of new State Representatives towards the end of 2013. They are all eligible for re-election.

Nominations are invited for the election of one State Representative for each of Queensland, Tasmania and South Australia. Nominations may be made by a Lodge (Branch) in the relevant Electoral State, or by any two Members resident in the relevant Electoral State who have been Members in Good Standing for the last two years prior to the nomination.

To be eligible for election as State Representative, the candidate must be resident in the relevant Electoral State, must have been a Member in Good Standing for the last three years, and have served for at least one year on the Executive Committee of a Lodge (Branch) by the time of the election.

The State Representative elected in each State will represent the Lodges (Branches), Groups and Members in that State in all meetings and affairs of the National Council. They shall also liaise with all Lodges (Branches), Groups and National Members in their Electoral State and shall represent their views to the National Council and to the National Society Officers, as appropriate. As well, they shall receive and deal with representations from individual Members within their Electoral State, and shall refer the representations where requested or deemed necessary.

A photograph of the candidate, curriculum vitae, relevant biographical data, and a personal statement by the candidate, which may be edited as necessary for distribution in consultation with the candidate, must accompany all nominations. All nominations should be on Form 8, endorsed with the consent of the Nominee, and reach the National Secretary no later than close of business 19 September 2013.

Copies of Form 8 can be obtained from the National Secretary, The Theosophical Society in Australia, 4th Floor, 484 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000, or from your Lodge/Branch President or Secretary.

2013 Convention – a Personal Perspective

Janice Scarabottolo

Convention! Some personal views and reminiscences on ‘Theosophical Insights and the Contemporary World’.

Each of the yearly TS Conventions generates its own personality and the 2013 one in St Mary’s College, Melbourne, uplifted us in a way which involved a significant lightness of heart. The commonality in all Conventions is that at the end of the week, we, the participants, feel refreshed and recharged. If you have not yet experienced the collective energy of about one hundred theosophists, it is a recommended event in which to participate.

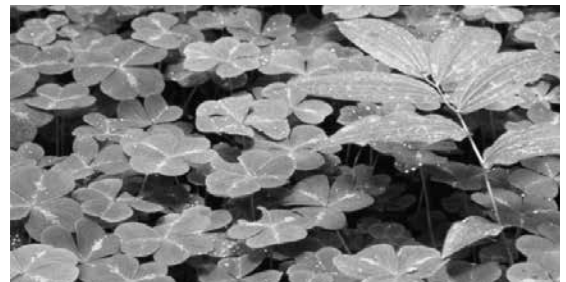
Dr Richard Silberstein started off the programme at a remarkable tone with his public lecture on intuition as seen from the neuroscience perspective. In his public talk to a packed conference hall, the founder of SST methodology – which observes and measures brain activity – took us on a journey of investigating intuition and how it does not involve conscious thought. One of his summing up phrases was that the universe is alive and conscious and that our sense of individual separation is a fundamental illusion; it is superfluous to point out the theosophical connection in his statement. Expertly chaired by TS National President, Linda Oliveira, this outstanding talk started the week well.

A competence which is much underrated, skillful chairing enhances even proficient presentations and Dianne Kynaston’s lively chairperson style interacted knowledgeably with Dr Jenny McFarlane’s exposé on her recent book, *Concerning the Spiritual*, which describes the influence the TS had on many notable Australian artists. A bonus to the audience was to hear the ‘work in progress’ paper Jenny is working on regarding Walter and Marion Burley Griffin. A presentation from an author is special, but to

be able to listen to an ongoing work is, frankly, exceptional.

There is an abundance of talent in the TS and this was evidenced by talks including Linda Oliveira’s view on separatism and holism and Dara Tatray’s imaginary letter, ‘Dear Member, This is what I want for the TS’. Sublime guidance and common sense were interspersed during the six days. A workshop on committees reminded us what we *should* be doing; the work of the TOS was explicitly presented; the intricacies of memes were explained; a Q and A session may provide the answers to your deep questions in a future edition of *T in A*; the efforts of the UK-based Theosophical Research Centre were clarified; a fantastic outing on a sunny day took us along the coast to Queenscliffe, and we enjoyed the best meals that I have experienced at a TS convention, as well as two first class concerts which sparkled at the end of the day.

A recurring insight throughout the week was: even in this contemporary world we still are all part of an integrated whole. But there is not enough space to describe each event and description can never express the experience, so let me conclude as in the spirit of Dara’s letter: ‘Dear Member, Won’t you come to the TS Convention in Sydney in 2014? ... It is most certain that you will experience a wonderful Convention.’



National Calendar of Events...



Springbrook Centre, 2184 Springbrook Road, Springbrook QLD

Next event to be announced.

Canyonleigh Centre, Bolitho House, Tugalong Road, Canyonleigh, NSW

Fri 30 Aug (arrivals) – Sun 1 Sep 2013 (departures)

Theme: ‘Gnosticism and Esoteric Christianity’

**Presenters: Pedro Oliveira (Acting Education Coordinator)
and Richard Larkin (National Lecturer)**



Cost \$130 members / \$145 non-members: includes accommodation, all sessions and meals and \$10 non-refundable registration fee

Overview: Both the Greek word *gnosis* and the Sanskrit *jñāna* point to a perception and understanding of life which is direct, profound and transformative. It is said to be an awakening of intuitional wisdom within our consciousness, a harmonious blending of mind and heart. This seminar will be an exploration of salient teachings in the Gnostic tradition, including the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Mary Magdalene and Valentinian Gnosticism. It will also consider the esoteric dimension within Christianity in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and Annie Besant, in particular their views on the teachings of St Paul, Origen and Clement of Alexandria. The programme will include morning meditative attunements, listening to some classical music pieces and a DVD presentation.

Further information see: www.austheos.org.au/events

2014 Annual Convention

Tues 21 January (arrivals) - Tues 28 January (departures)

Theme: ‘Theosophical Landscapes: History, Culture and the Arts’

Key Speakers:

Prof. Garry Trompf, Emeritus Professor,

Department of Studies in Religion, University of Sydney.

Fiona Fraser, Ph.D. Candidate in Music and History, Australian National University.

Full programme: will appear in the November 2013 issue of this magazine.

Earlybird Registration Fee (non-refundable): \$20 per person for day and live-in registrants if received no later than 31 August by the Convention Secretary.

Regular Registration Fee (non-refundable): \$40 per person for day and live-in registrants if received after 31 August by the Convention Secretary.

Registration Forms: At www.austheos.org.au/what's on. Also available from Lodges/Branches.

Cost: \$89 per night including all meals, as well as morning and afternoon teas

Edna Jenks Scholarships: Letters will be sent to the relevant Lodges/Branches soon.

Further Enquiries: Jennifer Hissey, Convention Secretary, TS National Headquarters Tel:02 9264 7056. (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 9.00am – 3.30pm) email: jennifer@austheos.org.au

Registration forms for Springbrook and Canyonleigh events: available from the National Headquarters (02 9264 7056) and on the national TS website: www.austheos.org.au/what's on



Snapshots - 2013 Annual Convention



Group photo



*Above:
workshop in progress*



*Beverley Champion
former National Pres-
ident (Adelaide Lodge)*



*Professor Richard
Silberstein
(Melbourne Lodge)*

*Left to right: Professor Victor Gostin,
Dr Olga Gostin, Travis James and
Rosanne de Bats (Adelaide Lodge)*





Group photo



Left to right: Carmen French (Sunshine Coast) and Carolyn Murdoch (Blavatsky Lodge, Sydney) on the day outing



Left to right: Linda Oliveira (National President), Dr Jenny McFarlane, Dianne Kynaston (Newcastle Lodge)



Left to right: Heather Fisher (Blavatsky Lodge, Sydney) and Wýverne Smith (National Member)



Left to right: Ken Edwards (Melbourne Lodge) and Carolyn Harrod (National Member)



Left to right: Beverley Parker (National Member) and Celia Novy (Blavatsky Lodge, Sydney)

Q and A: On Violence and Social Issues

Below are some responses from the Q and A panel during the January 2013 Annual Convention:

What forms does violence take and how can we end it?

Beverley Champion, Adelaide:

We see violence on television, in the games that the young are playing and in the film world. It seems to be the flavour of the month. You do not make a film unless there is some violence in it. We do know that violence is always there. It just becomes more apparent when we see it in front of us. There is no silence in between such moments. We can talk about silence and talk about not being so affected by violence because we can just turn it off. If we react immediately to somebody then we are in trouble, buying into the other's aggression. There is a lovely saying in yoga circles: 'Never react.' Take a deep breath. Just taking the breath stops the reaction. Step back for a moment and act from the centre, rather than the lower mind.

Harry Bayens, Perth:

One of the things we can do is look at our own behaviour and, as far as possible, eliminate all of the germs of violence or anger in ourselves and present a more peaceful, harmonious way in everything we do in life. In my Health and Safety job, I have to go out to serious injuries and fatalities and meet people with a broad range of responses. Some become very angry, especially against authority. One approach we have is to disarm the person by first acknowledging where they are coming from and explaining where you are coming from. This is done in a gentle and assertive way, not in a combative or aggressive way. I do not know whether violence is becoming worse or better; it has always been there and for many reasons. I suppose looking at ourselves is something positive we can do and I support all actions of the community to try and stem or stamp out violent forms of behaviour.

Ken Edwards, Melbourne:

Violence is around us so much that sometimes we do not know that we are part of that violence. If we are on a committee or in a group and start yelling, that is a form of violence. Many of us may have taken part in violence even subliminally, not realising that we have done so. Several years ago I was involved with a few programmes in jail relating to some forms of sport. A number of the inmates had been jailed for murder and other forms of violence. Some were trying to change their lives and realise what they had done wrong; they were trying to rehabilitate their soul. We were using sport and some discussions as another outlet to get rid of violence.

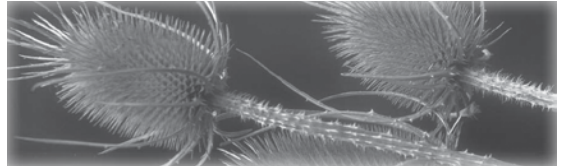
The Theosophical Society is in urgent need of exposure beyond the walls of its institutions. Why isn't the Society publicly standing up for specific causes and social issues related to theosophical principles – for example, the live export trade from Australia?

The panel invited the facilitator of the session, Carolyn Harrod – immediate past National Director of the Theosophical Order of Service in Australia – to reply.

Carolyn Harrod:

Members of The Theosophical Society are entitled to their own individual views. [See the Freedom of Thought resolution, contents page – Ed.] It is advised that the TS not take official positions on social issues because this could divide the organisation. Individual views are not the views of the Society and that is one of the reasons why the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) was formed. According to its charter, the TOS can stand for particular issues that are related to theosophical principles. We have members who go to rallies, members who are active with petitions and who write regularly to government offices, both in this country and other countries.

Education



National Headquarters Media Library - New DVDs

We are happy to announce the arrival of eight DVD presentations by Dr Pablo Sender, from the Theosophical Society in America, on ***The Secret Doctrine: Esoteric Insights and Spiritual Practice***. They formed the main programme at the 2013 School of Theosophy at the Springbrook Centre. The DVDs were kindly sent by the Audiovisual Department of the TS in America, for which we are grateful.

In this series of presentations Pablo Sender examines the basic concepts found in the 'Three Fundamental Propositions' of *The Secret Doctrine* and explores how they can nurture our spiritual practice. The series of DVDs are as follows:

How to Study *The Secret Doctrine*

The Purpose of its Study

The First Fundamental Proposition – Theory

The First Fundamental Proposition – Practice

The Second Fundamental Proposition – Theory

The Second Fundamental Proposition – Practice

The Third Fundamental Proposition – Theory

The Third Fundamental Proposition – Practice

Other DVDs with similar content in our Media Library:

Foundations of the Ageless Wisdom by Ed Abdill (132 minutes)

This course, which is in five parts, is presented by Ed Abdill of the American Section, being a clear and insightful exposition of the Three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine*.

HPB's Diagramme of Meditation by Dr John Algeo (60 minutes)

This presentation provides some background information on HPB's Diagramme of Meditation. Dr Algeo sees a close connection between the diagramme and HPB's classic work, *The Secret Doctrine*.

DVDs can be borrowed by Lodges, Branches, Certified Groups and National Members for a period of thirty days. For borrowing, please email edcoord@austheos.org.au, or call (02) 9264 7056.

Note: all audiovisual resources belonging to the National Headquarters are governed by its Copyright Policy, which states that borrowers are requested to adhere strictly to the relevant copyright provisions, and that copying of audiovisual resources is not permitted.

Viewpoint

Re: Relationship (p. 3, March 2013 issue):

This subject is close to my heart and my humble response is:

Life is a relationship. It needs to be nurtured and cultivated mindfully, joyfully, selflessly, perfectly, with beneficent intentions without any expectations in return. Relationships are like seeds and expectations are like weeds. Our problem is growing expectations in stagnant relationships. As with a bank account, we can withdraw only to the extent we have built up reserves. The building of the emotional reserve calls for constant mindful endeavour. Each fresh contact should give energy to the relationship to avoid stagnation and to enhance the reserve. When enough of this is built, mistakes will be forgiven and communication will be understood even when it is inadequate. No damage is done.

The challenge is not too difficult. Actually it is simple if we know how to care. We need to be very sensitive, humble and proactive. Let me narrate an experience:

I visited my medical dispensary for the last time in March 2012 before moving to Adyar. The dispenser was Mrs Suman. Her son Yash, aged about ten, asked innocently from behind the window: 'Uncle, can I be your friend?' He said this so innocently, that I spontaneously responded, 'Why not?'. I left them, promising to attend Yash's birthday. As I was travelling on his birthday I failed to keep my promise, but went to see him soon after on a Sunday morning. Suman was astonished and asked, 'Have you come to meet Yash?' I nodded, was led into a living room, apologised for not attending the birthday, gave a packet of chocolates to Yash and left after a brief conversation with him and Suman. From then until now, I visit them every time we are in Delhi and enquire about their welfare; mindfully giving fresh energy, adding to the emotional reserve. I have never drawn from this reserve, which is growing as time passes.

It was the innocence of Yash that drew me close to him. I just carry goodwill and love for Yash every time I meet him in Delhi.

Is this difficult? To me, not at all. Just give and give and give.

Mahendra P. Singhal
International Vice-President
The Theosophical Society
Adyar, India

Re: 'Can a Theosophist be a Christian?' (p.11, March 2013 issue)

With specific regard to Pedro Oliveira's thoughtful and sensitive article, 'Can a Theosophist be a Christian?', may I say from the outset that I agree entirely with what he wrote and a number of his observations are similar to my own.

I hold an interdisciplinary academic background, but I have to confess that from the very beginning of my TS association, I have experienced considerable difficulty in getting my fellow members to look seriously at the Christian religion, let alone give serious thought to the real historical life, work and death of Jesus, later to be called The Christ.

To me, initially, this was a great disappointment, but as Pedro Oliveira correctly points out, such an attitude had its genesis very early in the days of the Theosophical Society movement.

Incidentally, may I be so bold as to say that a number of those 'parley' ideas held by some of the TS founders have long since been found not to be necessarily so.

When I first joined the Theosophical Society I thought that due to its well published stance on

being 'open' to different religious philosophies, the TS might indirectly provide me with a wider and deeper appreciation of my own personal Christian experience; and indeed it has. Basically, the Society challenged me to plumb my own psycho-spiritual depths, so that I might discover for myself where I might stand religion-wise.

All in all, I have come to appreciate (but by no means immediately), what my membership of the Theosophical Society has provided: an

opportunity to 'openly' explore the world as spiritually understood, but in particular, to come to terms with the fact that I am very much a 'theosophically' oriented Christian. However, in no way (and I say this respectfully) could I honestly call myself a theosophist.

Rev. Dr. Arthur Mowle
Calingiri, Western Australia

News & Notes

School of the Wisdom, Adyar

At the time of printing news was not yet to hand about sessions of the School of the Wisdom which are due to be held at our International Headquarters in late 2013 and early 2014. It is suggested that interested members watch the international website for any information: <http://www.ts-adyar.org/>

Intending applicants for the School need to contact the National President for a form and a letter of recommendation, prior to contacting the International Headquarters. Please email: pres@austheos.org.au

Indo-Pacific Conference, Bali, 1-6 November 2013

Theme: Practising Theosophy

Guest Speakers:

**Prof. Ravi Ravindra, Canada, and
Vicente Hao Chin., Jr, the Philippines**

Cost: approx. US \$400.00

Registration Deadline: 1 September

Members are encouraged to attend the next Indo-Pacific Conference, to be held in Bali, Indonesia. These gatherings are an excellent way of sharing insights as well as meeting old and new friends from countries around our Indo-Pacific region. Additional information appeared on page 27

of the March issue of *Theosophy in Australia*.

Further details and registrations:

<http://ifp-ts.org>

Optional post Conference Bali temple tour:
contact Jean Carroll - tos.australia@gmail.com

International Theosophical Centre, Naarden, the Netherlands

The International Theosophical Centre (ITC), Naarden, is a gracious wooded property outside of Amsterdam. The latest newsletter from the Centre mentions a number of programmes coming up. Some of these are:

14-20 June 2013: Seminar on *The Bhagavad Gita* with Prof. Ravi Ravindra from Canada

8-12 October 2013: Silent retreat with Tr n-Thi-Kim-Di u on the *Viveka-Chudamani*

June 2014: Seminar on *Anthropogenesis* with Martin Leiderman from the USA

October 2014: Retreat with Bhupendra Vora from England.

Further Information: www.itc-naarden.org

Cancellation of Tour

The unexpected cancellation of the planned visit to the Australian Section by Dr Pablo Sender during April is regretted. Unfortunately personal reasons prevented him from leaving the USA at this time.

Adelaide Lodge Retreat

After its first very successful annual retreat last year, Adelaide Lodge will hold another retreat later in 2013.

Theme: Into *The Voice of the Silence*: an Experiential Journey of Discovery.

Dates: 5pm Friday 6 September - registration
2pm Sunday 8 September - closing

Accommodation: The Old House, Woodhouse Activity Centre, 37 Spring Gully Road, Piccadilly.

Cost for members:

Early bird payment by 31 July, \$125.

Payment from 1-24 August, \$150.

A bus will leave Adelaide Lodge at 3.30pm on Friday and return by 3.30 pm on Sunday.

Further enquiries:

secretary@tsadelaide.org.au

or tel. 08 8223 1129

Springbrook Caretaker Retires

A person well-known to many members who have visited the Section's Springbrook Centre in Queensland is Barry Hora, who until recently was the resident Caretaker. Barry agreed to live in a caravan during the first two years of this fourteen year period, until a Caretaker's Cottage was built. He has now left this position and moved south for family reasons. We are very grateful for the many years of service which Barry has given at the Centre. He visited

Springbrook again during the recent School of Theosophy. On the final night of the School, his dedicated work for the Section over fourteen years was acknowledged before those present by the National President, on behalf of the members of the Section. We wish Barry all the best for the next phase of his life.

One of the longest library loans in TS history?

A few months ago several books were returned to the library of one of our smaller Lodges by an ex-member. The person concerned actually left the Lodge in the 1960s. It has been reported that he was most apologetic about the time lapse of some fifty years – and gave a donation of \$50 to assuage his conscience!

Transitions

News as come to hand of the passing of two long-time members:

5 May: Athol Hookway (Hobart Branch, joined 1964)

9 May: Maree Parry (Melbourne Lodge, joined 1956)

They are remembered with affection.

The use of one gender to cover both genders is avoided as far as possible in this magazine. However, quotations from writings in which one gender is used in this way are printed as originally written. This applies both to older writings and some contemporary ones.



2013 School of Theosophy, Springbrook
students and staff

Section Directory

Australian Section National Headquarters

4th Floor, 484 Kent Street,
Sydney NSW 2000
Ph: 02 9264 7056 / 9264 0163 / 9264 6404
Fax: 02 9264 5857
www.austheos.org.au
Campbell Theosophical Research Library:
campbell@austheos.org.au

Australian Capital Territory

Canberra Branch, Chartered 17/7/1971:
Postal Address: PO Box 7418,
Fisher ACT 2611
Meet: Friends Meeting House, cnr Bent &
Condamine Streets, Turner ACT 2612
7.30pm 1st Monday of month
(Please confirm by email or telephone)
President: Peter Fokker
Tel: 02 6236 3170
Email: fokkerbakker@gmail.com
Secretary: Tony Fearnside
Telephone: 02 62887656
Email: janton@netspeed.com.au

New South Wales

Blavatsky Lodge, Chartered 22/5/1922:
2nd & 3rd Floors, 484 Kent Street,
Sydney NSW 2000
Telephone: 02 9267 6955 Fax: 02 9283 3772
Email: contact@tssydney.org.au
www.tssydney.org.au
Meet: 2.00pm Wednesdays
President: Stephen McDonald
Secretary: Pamela Peterson

Newcastle Lodge, Chartered 3/12/1941:

Meet: Morrison Room, 29 Highfield Street,
Mayfield NSW 2304
8.00pm 2nd Friday each month
(excluding January)
Study group (members) confirm dates
with Lodge
President: Tony Buzek
Tel: 02 4933 1326, 0452 633 132

Blue Mountains Group:

Meet: 1st Floor, 122 Katoomba Street,
Katoomba NSW
2.00pm 1st Monday each month
Coordinator: Donald Fern
Tel: 02 4757 1910

Gosford Group:

Meet: The Neighbour Centre,
Pandala Road, Narara NSW 2250
8.00pm 2nd Tuesday each month
Coordinator: Marianne Fraser
Tel: (02) 4339 7118, 0400 713 273

E-mail: marifraser256@gmail.com

Secretary: Roni Ostergaard

Telephone: 02 4358 1413

Northern Beaches Group:

Postal address: c/ Patricia Witts,
22 Laitoki Street,
Terrey Hills, NSW 2084
Meet: c/- above address
8.00 pm 3rd Friday each month
Coordinator: Patricia Witts
Tel: 02 9450 1362

Queensland

Atherton Lodge, Chartered 27/4/1950:

Postal Address: 14 Herberton Rd,
Atherton QLD 4883
Meet: Meeting Room, Community Services
Tablelands, 38 Mabel St, Atherton
2.00pm 2nd Saturday of month except Jan.
President: Max Brandenberger
Secretary: Chris Pang Way
Tel: 07 4091 5156

Brisbane Lodge, Chartered 21/1/1895:

355 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane QLD 4000
Tel: 07 3839 1453
Email: brisbanelodge@theosophyqld.org.au
President: Phillipa Rooke
Secretary: Angela Read

Sunshine Coast Lodge, Chartered 1/4/2004

Meet: Buderim Croquet Club,
Syd Lingard Drive, Buderim QLD 4556
7.00pm Thursday
President: vacant
Tel: 07 5441 7658
Email: joyglynn@bigpond.com.au
Secretary: Joyce Thompson

Toowoomba Group:

Meet: 49 Lindsay Street, Toowoomba
1st Wed at 7pm and 3rd Sunday at 2:30pm
of each month
(Meditation 1pm & Study Group at 1:30pm)
Annual Springbrook Retreat each winter
Coordinator: Barry Bowden
Secretary: Julie Murphy
Tel: 0427 751 464
Email: murphyj@usq.edu.au

South Australia

Adelaide Lodge, Chartered 26/5/1891:

310 South Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000
Tel: 08 8223 1129
Email: president@tsadelaide.org.au
http://www.austheos.org.au/adelaide
Meet: Members Meeting 10.00am 4th Friday
of every month. Please contact Lodge for
additional meeting dates.
President: Sheryl Malone
Secretary: Marlene Bell

Tasmania

Hobart Branch, Chartered 7/6/1889:

13 Goulburn Street, Hobart TAS 7000

www.theosophicaltas.websyte.com.au

Meet: 8.00pm Monday

Acting President: Helen Steven

Tel: (03) 6228 3048

Launceston Lodge, Chartered 12/1/1901:

54 Elizabeth Street, Launceston, TAS 7250
Postal address: 66 Flinders Street,
Beauty Point, TAS 7270
email: rmholt@gmail.com
www.austheos.org.au/launceston
Meetings: Wednesdays commencing
7.00 pm for meditation, followed
by meeting at 7.30 pm
President: Tony Harrison
Secretary: Ruth Holt
Tel: 0448 397 246

Victoria

Melbourne Lodge, Chartered 9/12/1890:

126 Russell Street, Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel: 03 9650 2315 Fax: 03 9650 7624
email: meltheos@netspace.net.au
Meet: 2nd, 3rd and 4th Tuesdays, 6.00pm
President: Kari Torgersen
Secretary: Ken Edwards

Mornington Peninsula Group:

Meet: Mt. Eliza Neighbourhood Centre,
Canadian Bay Road, 1st Sunday
of the month 11am - 3.30pm
(meditation - lunch - Theosophy)
Coordinator: Daphne Standish
Tel: 03 9589 5439
www.austheos.org.au/centres/mpg

Wodonga-Albury Group:

Meet: Shop 6, Tower Place, High Street,
Wodonga VIC 3690
1st Tuesday each month
Library hours Mon-Fri 10.00am-2.00pm
Coordinator/Secretary: Denis Kovacs
Tel: 02 6024 2905

Western Australia

Perth Branch, Chartered 10/6/1897:

21 Glendower Street, Perth WA 6000
Tel/Fax: 08 9328 8104
Email: tsp Perth@iinet.net.au
http://tsp Perth.iinet.net.au
Meet: 7.30pm Tuesday
President: Harry Bayens
Secretary: Deborah Weymouth

Mount Helena Retreat Centre:

1540 Bunning Road, Mt Helena WA 6082
Currently Closed
All enquiries to Perth Branch
Tel: 08 9328 8104

Theosophical Education and Retreat Centre, Springbrook, Qld

2184 Springbrook Road,
Springbrook QLD 4213
Tel: Office/Hall 07 5533 5211
email: info@tsretreat.com.au
Acting Caretaker: Kay Schiefelbein
Administrator: Dara Tatray
Tel: 02 9264 6404

