

Freedom of Thought

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

Freedom of the Society

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

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



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Cover: Dandelion (*taraxacum officinale*) seeds have feathery bristles and can be carried long distances by the wind. They are one of the most vital early spring nectar sources for a wide host of pollinators.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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

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

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

On Paradox

TIM BOYD

WHENEVER someone earnestly embraces a spiritual path, in addition to the clarity that periodically reveals itself, always there are times of confusion and lack of understanding that we encounter. At various stages along the way we will be blessed or afflicted by these opposing conditions.

Anyone who takes a step in the direction of self-transformation finds themselves having to grapple with paradox. In the spiritual life we are continually confronted with contradictory ideas, statements, “truths”. The basis for these seeming conflicts is expressed in Christian scripture as, “the things of God (spirit) are foolishness to man”.

Some of the familiar paradoxes of the spiritual life are: “We receive by giving”; “It is by dying that we are born”; in H. P. Blavatsky’s (HPB) words, it is by “paralyzing the personality” that the spiritual dimension is experienced. In the Tao we are told that “to be empty is to be full”. In HPB’s *The Voice of the Silence* there is a phrase that says: “We must feel ourselves as all thought, yet exile all thoughts from your soul” — a paradox if there ever was one! To a normal material way of thinking these are profoundly conflicting ideas. However, in terms of the spiritual life these

are foundational truths that define this path on which we find ourselves. These apparent conflicts are resolved when the opposites can be seen as part of one whole.

If we limit ourselves to an intellectual or analytical approach to understanding, we will be continually frustrated. The presentation of these paradoxes is framed in such a way that in order to experience the truths which stand behind them we are forced to go beyond the intellect and call upon the light of the intuition.

There are three paradoxical ideas that I would like to examine: fullness/emptiness, light/darkness, and sound/silence, which are completely interwoven into the experiences of a genuine spiritual life. In terms of the paradox, “fullness” is experienced through emptiness. In Buddhist thinking our understanding of wisdom, the perception of what is real, is said to have two dimensions. The first is that *everything* that exists arises dependent on everything else. There is no unit that exists in and of itself. The body is composed of cells, the cells are composed of atoms, and on and on and on; and yet we call it “me”, or a world, or a universe — one thing. In the Wisdom Teachings that “one thing” does exist, but not in the way that we are used to see it.

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The second dimension required for an understanding of wisdom is described as “emptiness”; it is the basis for the Prajñā Pāramitā Sutra, the “Perfection of Wisdom”, or a perfected way of seeing the nature of reality — that nothing exists in and of itself, everything is empty of inherent existence; any and every thing is completely dependent on *all* other things.

This idea has been beautifully expressed by the Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh. He said “the tears that I cried yesterday, today have become rain”. In other words, the tear that fell from my eye yesterday, has fallen into the earth, has evaporated into the sky, has mixed itself with other waters, and returned into this interdependent cycle as sustenance to countless other living things. Everything is interconnected, “interbeing” in Thich Nhat Hanh’s language, empty of its own independent existence. Emptiness, for many, is a frightening thought, something that we shy away from. Yet, if we are to enter into this fullness of wisdom, then its opposite must also be encountered and understood.

Light is one of the symbols of the spiritual life, and “understanding” is not called “enlightenment” by accident. The eye and the sense of vision is the primary way in which we encounter the world, and it is the life of the sun that illumines things for us and allows us to see clearly. The opposite of light is darkness. In the spiritual literatures of the world, and in our own lives, everyone necessarily encounters darkness, whether it is momentary, or whether it is something that

seems to last for an endless time. We encounter and we find our way through darkness. Just as there are various types of light, there are varying degrees of darkness.

There are many types of light we can think of; there is the light of the sun that allows us to see through the eye, the organ of vision. There is the light projected by the fires of desire within us — *that* is a light! There is the light of the intellect — a cold light — that stands apart and shines itself upon things analytically. There is the light described in *The Voice of the Silence* as that which shines in the Hall of Ignorance, an illusive radiance, a deceptive light.

If we put our hands over our eyes, we experience a type of darkness — the sense of sight becomes dark. So at the physical level there is darkness, but we know there are other darkneses. There is the one that comes from the clouding of the mind, which takes place when we engage in a life from the perspective of selfishness or desire. The characteristic ignorance which is the hallmark of human life is another darkness.

In terms of the spiritual path there are other more profound and revealing aspects to darkness. There is a word in English that applies to certain experiences we all encounter at times in our lives. When people we thought were friends betray us, when organizations turn out to be different than we had imagined, when ideas that we had about the nature of the world or our relationships with others turn out to be incorrect, it is com-

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mon to say that we have become “disillusioned”, and it is generally a painful experience. As parents it is particularly difficult watching one’s child pass through these moments. We do not wish for them to suffer. At the same time we *do* wish for ourselves and for others to be free from illusions. It is our clinging to the false friend, the wayward organization, the broken relationship, our attachment to the unreal, that causes the pain.

The word “disillusioned” speaks about a necessary process that we undergo. We have to become distanced from our need for illusion. In HPB’s “Diagram of Meditation” she describes a process of Acquisitions and Deprivations. In the Deprivations, she focuses on a state of mind that we must cultivate in which we are continually refuting the reality of certain things. Among those things are the apparent opposites of “separations and meetings”, “the distinction of friend and foe”, “association with places, times, and forms”. Our consciousness has to be deprived of any sense of the reality of these seeming opposites.

Normal experiences in life demonstrate the unreality of these states. As children we had people we fought with in the playground, who went on to become our best friends as life progressed. Nations have fought long and bloody wars, yet become supportive allies. There is no such thing as an inherent friend or foe. To take an extreme example, it is not uncommon for religiously devout people who experience a profound, unexpected loss in their life, to question, to criticize,

to become angry and distanced from the Divine, from God, for unjustly taking away their loved one. The deepest, most profound friend that anyone ever attests to, can equally be seen as the foe who imposes the karmic retributions that are encountered during the course of any life. There is no permanency to either friends or foes. This, too, is a type of darkness.

In Christian literature there is a profound poetic text written by St John of the Cross, a 16th-century monk, called *The Dark Night of the Soul*. This “dark night of the soul” has been variously interpreted. Often it has been applied to those extreme moments of loss that we experience in our lives. Although that was not the intention of its writing, probably it also applies.

However, the “dark night of the soul” in John of the Cross’ poem is a darkness that is entered into willingly. In the poem he leaves his house in the depth of the night, while everyone is at rest. He leaves out of the desire to meet with his Beloved, the Divine. He describes how he walks in the darkness with nothing to guide him except the light shining from his heart — the light of the soul. It lights the way although there is no visible light. It is in this darkness that he meets the Beloved and the profound union takes place. In this case the darkness is filled with the potential for the beauty of union — for enlightenment. This is another darkness that at times engulfs us in this process of spiritual self-transformation.

One of the great occult axioms is that we must “know, dare, will, and be silent”.

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Even in darkness there is the potential for sound. That we do not see does not mean that we cannot hear. In the process of withdrawing from this Earth, the process of dying, we are told that one by one the senses fade away, but that the last of the senses to leave is the sense of hearing. When we are with someone who is in the process of passing on, we are advised: “Speak to them.”

In the Yoga tradition of Patañjali there are eight “limbs” of Yoga. The fifth of those limbs is supremely important. It is called *pratyāhāra*, “the withdrawing of the senses”. It is a practice of self-induced darkening and silence that we learn how to consciously induce. Daily in our meditation we might withdraw the senses from their attachment to the sounds and sights that continually surround us. We may do it in various ways, and perhaps we do it incompletely, but we withdraw, to the extent of our capacity, the senses from their attachment to the outer world.

In *The Voice of the Silence* HPB talks about this process. One of the things that is said is that when the voices of the many cease, then one hears the voice of the One. When the voices of the many — the birds, the sounds in the street, the thoughts in

our minds — cease, then we have the possibility to actually hear what is described as “the voice of the Silence”, which she said would be better described as “the voice of the spiritual sound”. All of these ideas are paradoxical, all of them in a normal sense do not fit together. But in this process of spiritual transformation we are not talking about the normal sense.

The Theosophical Society (TS) was brought into this world as an alternative, as an antidote, to certain ills that were perceived as gaining a deepening hold on human consciousness. The TS from the beginning has been focused on serving humanity by a clear presentation of the possibility for self-transformation. Much of what we encounter in terms of the life and conditions of the world today were not spoken of directly in any of our theosophical literature.

These paradoxes that we encounter and engage are purposeful in the sense that the TS exists for the world, for humanity, and paradoxically it equally exists for the individual who must do the work of self-transformation. In the absence of individuals who are transformed, the TS is just another shell with excellent concepts, valuable information, but not true to its purpose. ✧

**Life is a preparation for the future;
and the best preparation for the future
is to live as if there were none.**

Albert Einstein

Castes in India

DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR

I . . . AM called upon to make my statement of personal belief. It is due to my family and caste-fellows that they should know why I have deliberately abandoned my caste and other worldly considerations. If, henceforth, there is to be a chasm between them and myself, I owe it to myself to declare that this alienation is of my own choosing, and I am not cut off for bad conduct. I would be glad to take with me, if possible, into my new career, the affectionate good wishes of my kinsmen. But, if this cannot be done, I must bear their displeasure, as I may, for I am obeying a paramount conviction of duty.

I was born in the family of the Karhāda Mahārāshtra caste of Brahmins, as my surname will indicate. My father carefully educated me in the tenets of our religion, and, in addition, gave me every facility for acquiring an English education. From the age of ten until I was about fourteen, I was very much exercised in mind upon the subject of religion and devoted myself with great ardour to our orthodox religious practices. Then my ritualistic

observances were crowded aside by my scholastic studies, but until about nine months ago, my religious thoughts and aspirations were entirely unchanged. At this time, I had the inestimable good fortune to read *Isis Unveiled; a Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Religion and Science*, and to join the Theosophical Society (TS) [on 3 August 1879].

It is no exaggeration to say that I have been a really living man only these few months; for between life as it appears to me now and life as I comprehended it before, there is an unfathomable abyss. I feel that now for the first time I have a glimpse of what man and life are — the nature and powers of the one, the possibilities, duties, and joys of the other. Before, though ardently ritualistic, I was not really enjoying happiness and peace of mind. I simply practised my religion without understanding it. The world bore just as hard upon me as upon others, and I could get no clear view of the future. The only real thing to me seemed the day's routine; at best the horizon before me extended only to the rounding of a

Damodar K. Mavalankar (born September 1857 in Ahmedabad, went to Tibet in 1885), a chela (disciple) of Mahatma Koot Hoomi, was international Secretary of the TS Adyar and managing editor of *The Theosophist*, founded by HPB in 1879. Reprinted from *The Theosophist*, May 1880.

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busy life with the burning of my body and the obsequial ceremonies rendered to me by friends. My aspirations were only for more Zamindāries [aristocratic landholdings], social position, and the gratification of whims and appetites. But my later reading and things have shown me that all these are but the vapours of a dream and that he only is worthy of being called man, who has made caprice his slave and the perfection of his spiritual Self a grand object of his efforts. As I could not enjoy these convictions and my freedom of action within my caste, I am stepping outside it.

In making this profession, let it be understood that I have taken this step, not because I am a Theosophist, but because in studying Theosophy I have learnt and heard of the ancient splendour and glory of my country — the highly esteemed land of Āryāvarta. Joining the Theosophical Society does not interfere with the social, political, or religious relations of any person. All have an equal right in the Society to hold their opinions. So, far from persuading me to do what I have done, Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott [founders of the TS] have strongly urged me to wait until some future time, when I might have had ampler time to reflect. But the glimpse I have got into the former greatness of my country makes me feel sadly for her degeneration. I feel it, therefore, my bounden duty to devote all my humble powers to her restoration.

Besides, histories of various nations furnish to us many examples of young persons having given up everything for

the sake of their country, and having ultimately succeeded in gaining their aims. Without patriots, no country can rise. This feeling of patriotism by degrees grew so strong in me that it has now prepared my mind to stamp every personal consideration under my feet for the sake of my Motherland. In this, I am neither a revolutionist nor a politician, but simply an advocate of good morals and principles as practised in ancient times.

The study of Theosophy has thrown a light over me in regard to my country, my religion, my duty. I have become a better Aryan than I ever was. I have similarly heard my Parsi brothers say that they have been better Zoroastrians since they joined the Theosophical Society. I have also seen the Buddhists write often to the Society that the study of Theosophy has enabled them to appreciate their religion more. And thus this study makes every man respect his religion the more. It furnishes him a sight that can pierce through the dead letter and see clearly the spirit. He can read all his religious books between the lines.

If we view all the religions in their popular sense, they appear strongly antagonistic to each other in various details. None agrees with the other. And yet the representatives of those faiths say that the study of Theosophy explains to them all that has been said in their religion and makes them feel a greater respect for it. There must, therefore, be one common ground on which all the religious systems are built. And this ground which lies at the bottom of all, is Truth. There can be

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but one absolute truth, but different people have different perceptions of that truth. And this truth is morality. If we separate the dogmas that cling to the principles set forth in any religion, we shall find that morality is preached in every one of them. By religion I do not mean all the minor sects that prevail to an innumerable extent all over the world, but the principal ones from which have sprung up these different sects. It is, therefore, proper for every person to abide by the principles of morality. And, according to them, I consider it every man's duty to do what he can to make the world better and happier. This can proceed from a love for humanity.

But how can a man love the whole of humanity if he has no love for his countrymen? Can he love the whole, who does not love a part? If I, therefore, wish to place my humble services at the disposal of the world, I must first begin by working for my country. And this I could not do by remaining in my caste. I found that instead of a love for his countrymen, the observance of caste distinction leads one to hate even his neighbour, because he happens to be of another caste. I could not bear this injustice. What fault is it of anyone that he is born in a particular caste? I respect a man for his qualities and not for his birth. That is to say, that man is superior in my eyes, whose *inner* man has been developed or is in the state of development. This body, wealth, friends, relations and all other worldly enjoyments that men hold near and dear to their hearts, are to pass away sooner or

later. But the record of our actions is ever to remain to be handed down from generation to generation. Our actions must, therefore, be such as will make us worthy of our existence in this world, as long as we are here as well as after death. I could not do this by observing the customs of caste. It made me selfish and unmindful of the requirements of my fellow-brothers.

I weighed all these circumstances in my mind, and found that I believed in caste as a religious necessity no more than in the palm-tree yielding mangoes. I saw that if it were not for this distinction, India would not have been so degraded, for this distinction engendered hatred among her sons. It made them hate and quarrel with one another. The peace of the land was disturbed. People could not unite with one another for good purposes. They waged war with one another, instead of devoting all their combined energies to the cause of ameliorating the condition of the country. The foundation of immorality was thus laid, until it has reached now so low a point that unless this mischief is stopped, the tottering pillars of India will soon give way.

I do not by this mean to blame my ancestors who originally instituted this system. To me their object seems to be quite a different one. It was based in my opinion on the qualities of every person. The caste was not then hereditary as it is now. This will be seen from the various ancient sacred books which are full of instances in which Kshatriyas and even Māhārs and Chāmbhārs who are now considered the lowest of all, were not

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only made and regarded as Brahmins, but almost worshipped as demigods simply for their qualities. If such is the case, why should we still stick to that custom which we now find not only impracticable but injurious?

I again saw that if I were to observe outwardly what I did not really believe inwardly, I was practising hypocrisy. I found that I was thus making myself a slave, by not enjoying the freedom of conscience: I was thus acting immorally. But Theosophy has taught me that to enjoy peace of mind and self-respect, I must be honest, candid, peaceful, and regard all men as equally my brothers, irrespective of caste, colour, race, or creed. This, I see, is an essential part of religion. I must try to put these theoretical problems into practice. These are the convictions that finally hurried me out of my caste.

I would at the same time ask my fellow countrymen who are of my opinion, to come out boldly for their country. I understand the apparent sacrifices one is required to make in adopting such a course, for I myself had to make them, but these are sacrifices only in the eyes of one who has regard for this world of matter. When a man has once extricated himself from this regard and when the sense of the duty he owes to his country and to himself reigns paramount in his heart, these are no sacrifices at all for him. Let us, therefore, leave off this distinction which separates us from one another, join in one common accord, and combine all our

energies for the good of our country.

Let us feel that we are Aryans, and prove ourselves worthy of our ancestors. I may be told that I am making a foolish and useless sacrifice; that I cut myself off from all social intercourse and even risk losing the decent disposal of my body by those upon whom our customs impose that duty; and that none but a visionary would imagine that he, even though chiefest among Brahmins, could restore his country's greatness and the enlightenment of a whole nation, so great as ours. But these are the arguments of selfishness and moral cowardice. Single men have saved nations before, and though my vanity does not make me even dream that so glorious a result is within my humble grasp, yet a good example is never valueless, and it can be set even by the most insignificant. Certain it is that without examples and self-sacrifices there can be no reform. The world, as I see it, imposes on me a duty, and I think the most powerful and the only permanent cause of happiness is the consciousness that I am trying to do that duty.

I wish it understood, in case what has preceded has not made this perfectly clear — that I have neither become a Materialist nor a Christian. I am an Aryan in religion as in all else, follow the Veda, and believe it to be the parent of all religions among men. As Theosophy explains the secondary human religions, so does it make plain the meaning of the Veda. The teachings of the Rishis acquire a new splendour and majesty, and I revere them a hundred times more than ever before. ✧

Revering Nature: Towards a Theosophical Ecology — I

JONATHAN COLBERT

I GREW up in a small cabin a mile's hike up a pristine canyon near Mount Baldy Village in the San Gabriel Mountains. One could not drive a car of any kind to the tiny hovel in which the seven of us lived. The dirt-and-rock pathway was too steep and narrow; the log-hewn bridges traversing the year-round stream, too rickety and unreliable. Instead, weekly groceries and daily schoolbooks had to be backpacked in and out, including whatever trash could not be burned in the fireplace.

Bear Canyon Creek, as the stream was called, supplied the village below with ample drinking water. It also furnished, in the canyon itself, enough moisture to create a canopied forest of very tall, large-trunked red cedar trees, vibrant sycamores, pungent oaks, and perfumed bay trees. Great, rounded boulders lined the canyon floor, with imposing, jagged ones clinging to the steep canyon walls. Blue jays warned of a rare passing hiker and the trees commonly rustled in the sweet-smelling breeze.

At that elevation of 5,000 feet, the

wind moving through the trees above makes the same sighing, breathing sounds as do ocean waves crashing on a distant beach. Always in the canyon, there was the ambiance of the soothing sound of the stream, constantly cascading, bubbling, flowing, pooling — always beckoning you to bend down, bring your hands together to make a cup and have a sip of its cool, fresh waters, and in doing so, to bow down before great Nature.

The topic of revering Nature and its timing is in honor of the annual worldwide celebration of Earth Day on 22 April, this year's theme being "Saving Our Species". As we know, every year, every day, our world's plant and animal species are either threatened with extinction or are literally going extinct. One of the most threatened groups of species are the insects, which play a foundational role in food webs and ecosystems, all the way from the bees that pollinate the flowers of food crops to the termites that recycle dead trees in forests.

There are estimates that the sheer biomass of the world's insects is declining

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at a rate of 2.5% per year and that 40% of *all* insect species will be endangered over the next few decades. Human beings' activities, that is, the way we live, farm, eat, our modes of transportation and manufacturing, what we wear, build, and make — all of these are having a severe impact to the detriment of our world's entire ecosystem.

So what are we going to do? Get rid of all of the people in this world? Is a radical population control program somehow the answer? What does Theosophy say about these questions? Theosophy has some very profound postulates about the fundamental relation of humanity and Nature. These go to the root of what both humanity and Nature are in their essence. It goes to the very roots of life and of the deepest aspects of what we mean by "environment". Ecology itself is a systems study. It is a branch of biology that studies the interrelationships of organisms to their environment and to other organisms. But students of Theosophy are tuned into a deeper ecology and sense of the environment.

The Swedish philosopher, Arne Naess, in the 1970s, had pioneered "deep ecology", the philosophy of the inherent worth of all living beings. Deep ecologists affirm that Nature itself, specifically the entire web of interrelationships as a whole, has an inherent worth, regardless of its instrumental utility to human needs. Shallow ecology, on the other hand, is the study of the interrelatedness of species within a narrowly anthropocentric and utilitarian

value structure; therefore, it is selfish.

Deep ecology, emerging from the pioneering works of such environmental stewards as Rachel Carson, David Brower and Paul R. Ehrlich, is saying that man has no right to exploit Nature for selfish gain. Equally instrumental in this birth of the deep ecology movement is humanity's collective awakening, in very visual terms, of our Earth being a lonely, fragile gem of a planet, apparently floating in space. Certainly the astronaut Edgar D. Mitchell had this realization when, during his return mission of Apollo 14, seeing through the window of the spacecraft our little earth ball surrounded by the emptiness of space, he had the epiphany that what is needed to solve the eco crises on earth is "a transformation of consciousness".

Although Naess inspired the Deep Ecology movement and was said to have been a compassionate man and a proponent of Gandhian nonviolence, not all of his followers have been such. This has resulted from a failure to comprehend that the ends never justify the means. For example, some of the "Earth First!" folks, while professing to love Nature, have appeared to hate people.

As a corrective to this excess, emerged the birth of something very small but potent, like a seed, the Institute of Reverential Ecology. Prominent ecologists have supported this Institute, such as Satish Kumar (past editor of *Resurgence* magazine), Vandana Shiva (an important ecologist and passionate activist preserving seed diversity in India), Andy Lipkis (founder of TreePeople in Los Angeles) and Adam

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Wolpert (co-founder of the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center), as well as some associates of the Santa Barbara United Lodge of Theosophists. These thinkers have tried to restore the original impulse and impetus of the Deep Ecology movement.

As Satish Kumar has written, “Without respect there can be no ecology. Therefore Reverential Ecology restores the original meaning of Deep Ecology.” Furthermore, concurring with James Hillman, who said, “The environmental crisis is a crisis of aesthetics”, Kumar adds that, “Beauty is the first casualty of consumerist culture.” He continues:

We are so obsessed with speed, quantity, and progress that the place of quality, beauty, ethics, and aesthetics has been much ignored. The Arts have become confined to professions rather than in everyday life. In order to restore aesthetics we need to slow down. We need to develop appreciation, respect, and, above all, reverence for material objects. We need to treat them with care and consideration.

“An Overview of Reverential Ecology”
<<https://reverentialecology.org>>

In 1891, Madame Blavatsky wrote similarly:

Owing to the triumphant march and the invasion of civilization, Nature, as well as man and ethics, is sacrificed, and is fast becoming artificial. Climates are changing, and the face of the whole world will soon be altered. Under the murderous hand of the pioneers of civilization, the destruction

of whole primeval forests is leading to the drying up of rivers, and the opening of the Canal of Suez has changed the climate of Egypt as that of Panama will divert the course of the Gulf Stream. Almost tropical countries are now becoming cold and rainy, and fertile lands threaten to be soon transformed into sandy deserts. A few years more, and there will not remain within a radius of fifty miles around our large cities one single rural spot inviolate from vulgar speculation.

In scenery, the picturesque and the natural are daily replaced by the grotesque and the artificial. Scarce a landscape in England but the fair body of Nature is desecrated by the advertisements of “Pears’ Soap” and “Beecham’s Pills”. The pure air of the country is polluted with smoke, the smells of greasy railway-engines, and the sickening odours of gin, whiskey, and beer. And once that every natural spot in the surrounding scenery is gone, and the eye of the painter finds but the artificial and hideous products of modern speculation to rest upon, artistic taste will have to follow suit and disappear along with them.

“Civilization, The Death of Art and Beauty”
Lucifer, May 1891

H. P. Blavatsky was a deep ecologist in the best sense, and a reverential ecologist in the deepest sense. She was an occultist, that is, one who reveres both the visible and the invisible — the hidden side of Nature. She was also a pioneering feminist. These two — the deeper dimensions of feminism and revering Nature — I would submit, are connected, and we will touch

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on that connection towards the end of our discussion. Now I would like to explore with you what might be called a theosophical environmentalism, or a deep, compassionate ecology, based on the wisdom of the ages. And in doing so we may unveil together a deep reverence for what might be called meta-Nature.

Theosophical metaphysics forms the foundation for seeing into the heart of, and having a deep reverence for meta-Nature. *The Secret Doctrine* of antiquity asserts that there is a radical unity pervading all of manifestation and non-manifestation. It is the rootless root of all manifested life, entirely beyond the range or reach of human thought, and for that reason, it transcends all human expression. And yet this abstract, universal unity is the basis of the heartfelt, deep solidarity with all of life that we can sense in deepest mystical reverie:

. . . In the *Catechism*, the Master is made to ask the pupil:

“Lift thy head, O Lanoo; dost thou see one, or countless lights above thee, burning in the dark midnight sky?”

“I sense one Flame, O Gurudeva, I see countless undetached sparks shining in it.”

“Thou sayest well. And now look around and into thyself. That light which burns inside thee, dost thou feel it different in anywise from the light that shines in thy Brother-men?”

“It is in no way different, though the prisoner is held in bondage by Karma, and though its outer garments delude the

ignorant into saying, ‘Thy Soul and My Soul.’”

The radical unity of the ultimate essence of each constituent part of compounds in Nature — from Star to mineral Atom, from the highest Dhyāni-Chohan to the smallest infusoria, in the fullest acceptance of the term, and whether applied to the spiritual, intellectual, or physical worlds — this is the one fundamental law in Occult Science.

The Secret Doctrine, vol. 1, p. 120

This radical unity is not an amorphous, static, inert “something”. It is LIFE itself. There is no point in the entire system of great Nature that is not embodied consciousness in some form or another. Nor are all these points of light unconnected in any way, nor is their consciousness. All are participating in a living monadic mirroring, each in its own way, reflecting the whole — and all other points in the whole. All the stars that we see at night are knots of *Fohat*. The universe is not empty. It is full. It is a teeming ocean of energy, light, life and electricity. *Fohat*, (a term borrowed from Tibetan) is the mystical and metaphysical basis of electricity and magnetism. Existing throughout the universe, *Fohat* is given direction by thought: “Fohat is the steed and thought is the rider.” (*The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, p. 107–108)

An example of the living dynamism of the universe is seen in the growing science of black holes. Einstein’s theory of relativity led to a new conception of the cosmos, in which time and space are not

fixed quantities, but instead could change and “bend”, could quiver and expand — or even swirl and disappear into a black hole. This occurs when a critical mass of matter and energy concentrates in one place to the extent that everything in its proximity is pulled in, thus capturing all surrounding matter. The theory is that as gases condense and particles collapse, as they swirl inwards towards the center of a black hole like water going down a drain — intense pressures create dynamic energy fields, which in turn cause immense energy to jet out of these massive, invisible energy centers.

Since the 1950s, astronomers have known from information obtainable by the use of early radio telescopes, that galaxies are emitting enormous quantities of radio energy from their cores. It is now thought that it is black holes that are doing this. Paradoxically, as matter is pulled into these invisible magnets, energy is emitted out of them. It is estimated that the black hole in the center of our Milky Way Galaxy has a mass of 4.1 billion times that of our Sun. The general consensus now among many astronomers is that the universe has millions of black holes and that they are not only generating terrific amounts of energy, but also that they are powering the swirling motion of many of the galaxies. Some scientists are now wondering if black holes provide the cohesive integrity of what a galaxy even is, at least in their formative beginnings.

Recently, a digital image has been constructed of a black hole, using data simultaneously collected from several

radio telescopes and interpreted by mathematical algorithms. The technique is known as Long-range Baseline Interferometry. We all know that the power of the lens of a telescope is increased by its size. Well, what if you could make a lens the size of the earth itself? Astronomers have figured out that by mathematically connecting the data that is simultaneously collected from strategically located telescopes around the world — you can do just that.

Astronomers can, with radio telescopes, and using this technique, “see” light years of distances into the far reaches of space. Or, a more appropriate human sense by which to think of this is to say that we can “hear” into incredible distances, as radio waves are more likened to sound than to light. Just last week scientists using algorithms and computers have created what amounts to a digital photo-graph of a giant black hole in the galaxy they are calling M87, some 55 million light years away from our earth. It is estimated to be several billion times more massive than our sun and, in fact, scientists say it is unleashing an enormous jet of energy some 5,000 light years into space.

The more science knows from the exploration of deep space by means of the famous Hubble telescope, Long-range Baseline Interferometry, and other means, the more the scientists are humbled. As the perimeter of our expanding circle of knowledge increases, the more there is an interface between the known and the unknown, and the mind is confronted with the realization of how much

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indeed it does not know. And yet if we are honest and open-minded, as is the case with many great scientists, this can awaken a kind of agnostic reverence:

The greater the level of gnosis, the profounder the agnostic reverence for the Unknowable, the Unfathomable, the Inexhaustible and the Inexpressible. This has been appreciated by the profoundest thinkers in pure mathematics, theoretical astronomy, quantum physics and microbiology.

Raghavan Iyer,
“Kalahansa and Kalachakra”
Hermes, July 1989

Agnostic reverence is the reverence of wonder, which signifies that the world is profounder, more mysterious than we

had heretofore understood as possible. Agnosticism is not necessarily darkness, or a dead end, ending in doubt. Instead it is an awakening that there is always more to be learned. There is always the possibility of more light beyond.

Reverence before a mystery is when we have realized that what might be *darkness* from one point of view, or from one plane of perception, may ultimately be comprehended as *pure light and energy* from another point of view, from a higher plane of perception. Perhaps subtler senses might one day reveal to us that what we *thought* was a complete mystery is instead a *light* that is ever-flowing, unfathomable, and inexhaustible.

(To be continued)

As it is important to consider Nature from the point of view of science remembering nomenclature and system of men, and so, if possible, go a step further in that direction, so it is equally important often to ignore or forget all that men presume they know, and take an original and unprejudiced view of Nature, letting her make what impression she will on you, as the first men, and all children, and natural men still do.

Henry David Thoreau
Journal, 28 February 1860

The Yoga of Beauty: Developing Intuition — III

BERNARDINO DEL BOCA

Beauty is life when life unveils her holy face.

Kahlil Gibran

JUST as it is possible to use psychographics to enter paintings and sculptures, let music transport us to the timeless fifth dimension, and adore human beauty in order to make the snake of illusion eat *its own tail*, it is also possible to use artistic expressions as means for the development of comprehension of ourselves and others. People who do not develop comprehension will never be able to perceive the profound and creative beauty of fire.

Music is one of humankind's most wonderful mysteries. It was recently investigated using a philosophical method inspired by Husserlian phenomenology by Ernest Ansermet in his book *Les fondements de la musique dans la conscience humaine*. (La Baconnière, Neuchâtel, 1962) According to the author, the secret of music is that of humankind, THE SECRET OF GOD. With this and other books of this kind, human culture is preparing the "means" to climb to a broader consciousness and greater understanding of Beauty.

Books have been published in the field of visual arts that teach people not only to appreciate works of art but also — and most importantly — to wake up their consciousnesses to beauty and contemplate the issue of Beauty. Two that are particularly worth noting are *Visual Awareness* by Frederick Palmer (Batsford, London 1972) and *Psychology and Visual Aesthetics* by R. W. Pickford (Hutchinson, London 1972). While the majority of people are falling under the negative, destructive influences that are working to bring the world of the Age of Pisces to an end, there is a small minority who are attracted by the beauty, harmony, and spiritual values of life. Nature has made this minority sensitive to the idealization of things, which is the spontaneous way to push beyond the imagination (a process that is purely mental, because it is based on mental models that have already been experienced) and gain the creative power of dreams and fantasy. This minority

Bernardino del Boca (1919-2001) was president of the "Besant-Arundale" TS Group in Novara, Italy, for many years. He was a great writer, lecturer, artist, and scholar of cultural anthropology. Translation from the Italian introduction to Laurence J. Bendit's *The Yoga of Beauty*, Italian edition.

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responds to Nature with culture and unconsciously says with the poet: “I dreamed to let God know how to make my paradise.”

Just as until now physicists have only taken into consideration the two poles of magnets (positive and negative) while overlooking the importance of the central part which is the source of the magnetic phenomenon, when it comes to expressions of Beauty, so far people have only studied the object itself as well as those who perceive it but not the object in transition; the trans-narcissistic object, whose messages and concentrations of forces and forms cross immense unknown dimensions to reach, from ENERGY ONE, the people that deserve to get the messages. Contact with potential space, between the occult world and our sensitive world, is the ultimate aim of the Yoga of Beauty. Those who lay the foundations for Aquarian art will write about this in the future.

All things in life and all people are tied to each other by the threads of existential fabric. All things have a purpose and nothing happens by chance. Therefore, countless things both today and in the past have worked, existed and been created to facilitate the advent of the Yoga of Beauty, which is the ideal means for the new development of human consciousness. The clairvoyance of Besant and Leadbeater, Roerich’s contact with “High Roads”, Baháulláh’s visions, Hazrat Inayat Khan’s inspirations, practical applications such as *aikido* by Japanese Osensei Morihei Ueshiba, and many other expressions in the same area of research are simply win-

dows opened onto the other Reality to broaden the horizon of our consciousness.

In order to perceive a vision of archetypal, divine Beauty, it is necessary to neutralize the resistance of the conscious mind so that it can adapt to the universal dimension of imagination. According to the Sufi Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan, the door between the unconscious and the conscious must be kept open, so that the elusive weave of the collective unconscious can flow into the conscious, as the conscious will cannot take action beyond the threshold between the two. It is necessary to rely on unconscious will, which can be set in motion by autosuggesting to the conscious will. The conscious will then steps back refraining from any further action.

When the conscious will of a pianist has exercised his fingers, a sort of automation takes over and transfers control of the fingers that are playing to the unconscious will. At that point, if the pianist was to try to use his conscious will, he would disturb the action of his unconscious will. However, the consciousness of the pianist who does not worry about the movement of his fingers can act passively by watching and listening, adding colour and warmth to how he plays, and no longer concerning himself with technique, but instead focusing on the Beauty that he perceives and that he is able to convey.

When we hover on the threshold between the unconscious and the conscious, we keep the door to spiritual reality open. However, we must ensure

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that we preserve a state of balance, because if we push too far into the unconscious, the conscious becomes unconscious and everything is lost to our perception, because we fall asleep. Meanwhile, if we protrude too much towards the conscious side, which is what happens if we regain identification, we lose control of the weave of the unconscious.

Sufism teaches people to conquer Beauty by making its followers aware that they are Beings of Light. Followers of Tantrism are taught to seek out beauty in order to find ecstasy. In turn, ecstasy is the snake devouring itself; it is the *apāna* energy that dissolves the fire of *kundalini*.

In the chapter “Theosophy in Art” in *Practical Theosophy*, C. Jinarājadāsa wrote that “the beauty of a human face may lead us whither all the philosophies lead as they seek eternal verities”. Meanwhile, regarding the lack of beauty in our ecological environment, he wrote:

We little realize how the lines in the objects that surround us in the home and in the streets affect our astral bodies and so our emotional nature; discords of colour and sound, impurities of line and form, give a warp to our natures, which adds to our moral weaknesses and debilitates our mental strength. Men find it difficult to be virtuous largely because so much ugliness surrounds them; just as bacteria in the dust and the air, and parasites of various kinds, induce many a disease and diminish the physical vitality of men, so invisibly, but not the less harmfully, hosts of emotional bacteria, the ugly lines and forms and

colours and sounds, infect our feelings and induce in them a chronic moral ill-health which saps the vitality of the soul.

Our society has not yet realized how serious this hidden and ongoing but little-noticed infection can be, as people have “got used” to it, but it is not in the nature of the soul to “get used” to bad and ugly things. Inner constraint is made apparent by outer irritability. Bad moods in children are always caused by something affecting their bodies, such as an inappropriate diet or some object that is bothering them. Evil inclinations in adults are influenced in much the same way. Much more responsibility for crimes sometimes lies with visible and invisible ugliness than with the criminal tendencies of the people themselves.

Every object around us has an invisible influence on our capacity to feel, which can either be made less responsive and more coarse, or more sensitive and profound. Similarly, practical comprehension of the role of art in life entails a complete reconstruction of all of our environments. This is particularly important for children, whose astral bodies are much more sensitive than those of adults. From the time they are born, all items surrounding children should have a touch of beauty. The lines, the curves, the colours of the walls, the ceiling and the furniture should have a significant influence on their feelings. There are some horrible placards, nasty pieces of terrain and discordant sounds out there that should be banished from our towns and

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cities, if not for our sake then at least for that of children.

Today people make hygiene a top priority in order to protect their physical health. Why should they not place just as much importance on moral hygiene so as to safeguard the health and sensitivity of our subtler vehicles? Pure sentiments are among the factors of an honest feeling, as is sympathy. There can be no uprightness if the sentiment does not reflect the vast world of human joy and pain. All sentiments with the capacity to produce the superior sensation that generates art must contain — on a small scale — feelings like those that can be found throughout humankind.

If “art for art’s sake” is taken to mean that there can be a world of art and beauty that is totally unconnected from the world of humankind, then it simply does not exist. Consciously or unconsciously, the loftiest art has its roots in human hearts, no matter how high its upper branches may stretch their flowers towards the sky. Even the most abstract passage of music from a symphony by Beethoven is reflected in our human sentiments.

The more artists’ feelings expand through sympathy with the suffering, hopes, and aspirations of their fellow human beings, the broader their horizons will become and the more universally understood their artistic creations will be. Therefore, artists should cultivate their sympathy through observation, meditation, travel and practical service. Although they will be deliberately making use of their purified sentiments as tools of their art, they must always be supported

by a pure, broad, and open intellect. For artists, nothing could be more welcome than Theosophy, because it can teach them all about universal human feelings and “God’s plan for humankind”, contemplation of which is a perennial source of wisdom and purification.

While purely artistic development can only be achieved by the few people who have the right temperament, nobody is born without some degree of ability to feel or express themselves artistically. Therefore, everything possible should be done to awaken this latent capacity in children to appreciate beauty. As well as surrounding them with beautiful items, we must teach them to produce beautiful things. To this end, the energy of the physical body should be steered towards rhythm through dance; the eyes and the brain should be trained through drawing; they should be taught about the pure tones of sound in speaking and singing voices; and the imagination should be cultivated through abstract music and poetry. It is the duty of parents to ensure that the bodies of their children are healthy, but an even greater responsibility is to try to make their tastes refined.

Presenting the untarnished, sensitive emotional nature of children with only the best in terms of good taste and artistic sense favours the development of the Divine Spirit in humans enormously, for art is not so much a faculty of the soul, as an aspect of its most intimate structure.

The evolutionary process goes from the insensibility of stones to the sensibility of plants, from the vague feelings of

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plants to the raging passions of animals, and from the chaotic thinking of the latter to the coherent thoughts of humans. Similarly, the human faculty to comprehend through the mind must be subjected to the knowledge obtained through intuition. In the majority of people, this intuition is latent or barely perceptible. The subsequent stage of human evolution will be to comprehend life in the full light of intuition. Consequently, artistic education is strictly necessary for everyone. It makes it possible to do our jobs in life using the process of intuition, which is much faster and more comprehensive than the mental approach.

The loftiest thoughts, which are totally impersonal and driven by the desire to serve, verge on the realm of intuition. In particular, the great philosophers show the same clairvoyance about the problems in life that pure intuition reveals to us when it is reflected in art. However, it is much easier to make people have pure and sympathetic feelings than impersonal thoughts. Therefore, while science and philosophy play an essential part in human culture, the latter develops faster if people's artistic instincts are called upon.

Once humans are surrounded by beauty and accustomed to responding to it, the intuition is fully awakened and they will discover a higher and longer lasting truth than science can offer. The great advantage of this intuitive vision of truth is its being concise. Every truth in life that is discovered through intuition is connected with the whole truth. Humans can proceed further with their discoveries

along a road with no interruptions or divergences. In the intuitive process, the progress in things can be seen much more clearly and from a much more central point of view than by even the most elevated purely mental process.

Once you understand the inner force of art and use it consciously, it is hard to think of a more humanitarian influence in life than this. Every sentiment that is brought forth by art and beauty is like a segment in a universal circle in which all of the sentiments of others are similar segments.

All artistic creations — based not on imaginative fantasy but on real creation which opens a crack in the Divine World of Ideas — bind the creating artist to all people and put them in tune with the whole of humankind. In life, a soul that is capable of a single work of art, either in the world of thought or in the world of emotions, will bind to itself the whole of humankind to an extent that is in proportion with its artistic ability. A great poet, painter, sculptor or musician will become a sort of eternal priest of humankind who will always unite the man with God. This harmonizing and unifying function of art is still a little known force, but when civilization everywhere is instinctively artistic, enmity and the lack of charity will completely disappear because loving art and loving beauty means loving *Everything*, of which each of us is but an infinitesimal part.

Artistic development ultimately leads to a discovery that totally revolutionizes the lives of those that make it. As men-

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tioned above, true art is born where there are pure sentiments and sympathy. When it becomes creative, it brings about a higher impersonality. The results that scientists achieve by “getting rid of the self” can also be attained by creative artists. All of the great artists agree that when they are most inspired, all thoughts and all sense of their own little selves fade away. When the little selves of artists are banished, they are temporarily replaced in their lives by a larger Self; an indescribable Personality that is an absolute master of art with unerring wisdom. Discovery of it is the key event in the life of an artist. For him, it represents “Salvation”: the realization of the eternal salvation of humankind and its everlasting nature; a realization that religions try to provoke in us through ecstatic contemplation. There is a chance that the great discovery may only be made in a few moments of artists’ creative lives, but every moment of the discovery is like a milestone in their interminable artistic careers. Those who have encountered such a person, even if it only occurs once in their lives, see everything in life through “different eyes” than mere mortals from then on.

Rather than a single era, artists that have had this vision belong to all time. An Ideal World floats around them, illuminating with its multi-coloured rays even the most everyday events in this mortal world. Although only great artists are capable of telling us about its all-encompassing vastness, the world in question is always around us and we can all catch a glimpse

of it by training our feelings to be pure and steeped in understanding and sympathy. Due to their honest hearts and innocence, for an instant, even children can become real artists by seizing a flash of that world, of which we are gleams in the colour of the clouds, the light blue hue of the sea and the sound of the waves.

The mountain chains reflect the world in question and in every lake and pond, in the evening in the fields, the forest and the woods, it shows itself to our hearts and our minds. The faces of friends and loved ones are reflections of it, while musical harmonies tell us of it with an almost haunting insistence. The great Reality, in which our immortal natures’ roots lie, is not that far from being realized. Perhaps it may only occur after death. Who knows? It is here, now; the source of all forms of solace, and at the same time, the cause of all pain and death itself. Art holds the key to opening the door for all those who seek it.

We have transcribed in full a conference by Jinarājadāsa, held in Chicago in 1910, as an example of what the Theosophical Society has done to prepare for the advent of this new plane of consciousness. The conference was translated into Italian in 1915 by Mario Ingaramo, an engineer from Turin. He did it in Thailand, where he was working at the time. The Turinese theosophist, who was close to the spiritual expressions of Siamese art, was made aware of the mysterious issue of Beauty by the monks of Wat Arun, the Temple of the Dawn, of the new humankind.

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When the Age of Aquarius reaches its height, experimentation with beauty will reach its mystical aspect. Even now, there are individuals among us who experience beauty in a different way from what is common in this time. They cannot say what they perceive because there are not yet the right words to express something that only a few people apprehend. They are the ones who were born of the dreams of those who lived creating, and they have taken bodily form to guide those who are climbing to the new plane of consciousness. They are the “sun-eyed children” of whom Sri Aurobindo speaks in his poem, “Savitri”:

I saw the Omnipotent’s flaming pioneers
Over the heavenly verge which turns
towards life
Come crowding down the amber stairs
of birth;
Forerunners of a divine multitude,
Out of the paths of the morning star
they came
Into the little room of mortal life.
I saw them cross the twilight of an age,
The sun-eyed children of a marvelous dawn,
The great creators with wide brows
of calm,
The massive barrier-breakers of the world

And wrestlers with destiny in her lists
of will,
The labourers in the quarries of the gods,
The messengers of the Incommunicable,
The architects of immortality.
Into the fallen human sphere they came,
Faces that wore the Immortal’s glory still,
Voices that communed still with the
thoughts of God,
Bodies made beautiful by the spirit’s light,
Carrying the magic word, the mystic fire,
Carrying the Dionysian cup of joy,
Approaching eyes of a diviner man,
Lips chanting an unknown anthem of
the soul,
Feet echoing in the corridors of Time.
High priests of wisdom, sweetness, might
and bliss,
Discoverers of beauty’s sunlit ways
And swimmers of Love’s laughing fiery
floods
And dancers within rapture’s golden doors,
Their tread one day shall change the suffering earth,
And justify the light on Nature’s face.

Reading the lines of Laurence J. Bendit in his *The Yoga of Beauty* should lead to intuition of the energies of Beauty that have always guided men towards and beyond new boundaries of consciousness. *(Concluded)*

The search for beauty is universal in human experience. Its innumerable forms have sprung from the play of the creative imagination and fantasy, and afford some of the deepest satisfactions known to man.

Melville J. Herskovits

At Peace with Oneself: In Peace with Others

P. RAJA

EACH of us is either a peacemaker or a peace-breaker. We are not of the same mould. Each of us leads a different life and belongs to a different culture. We have different food habits and our sleeping schedule too varies. Above all, each of us thinks differently.

The most dangerous part of our anatomy is the mind. It is the one thing that can rarely be brought under control, in spite of meditation, yoga, and all the other exercises meant for the purpose. Perhaps that is the reason why Milton wrote in his epic poem, *Paradise Lost*: “The mind is its own place, and in itself / Can make a Heav’n of Hell, a Hell of Heav’n.” Shakespeare had said the same before him in different words: “There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.” Edmund Spenser too had such an idea in mind when he wrote: “It is the mind that maketh good or ill, / That maketh wretch or happy, rich or poor.”

Where exactly is the mind in our own body? To put it differently, where do we think from? A search for the mind in the body would prove as futile as searching

for the soul in the body. The tireless quest has to continue forever.

Carl Jung, an eminent disciple of Sigmund Freud, once was sent to East Africa to speak to a select audience on the importance of thinking. He knew not the Swahili language and the audience’s knowledge of German was next to nothing. A translator came to his rescue and, with great confidence in his message reaching the audience, Jung began: “We must think . . . we must think . . . we must think”, slapping his forehead incessantly, every time he uttered those three words for the sake of driving home his point.

Now it was the translator’s turn. He repeated Jung’s words in Swahili but shifted the target of the slapping to his stomach. Jung was taken aback, looking daggers at the translator for misrepresenting his idea. But the sensible translator replied, “Sir! we the poor surely think from our stomach, and not from our head, as you do.”

This anecdote serves as ample proof to the fact that the mind does not operate from one station. Needless to say, when

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we decide to do good to the needy on compassionate grounds, we think from our heart. The head, the heart, the stomach, only the great Creator knows from what other parts of our body we think.

Man, the thinking animal / reed, has to think differently perhaps to escape from life's monotony. Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus Christ for just 30 silver pieces when he thought from his stomach. But when he thought from his heart, he felt that he had committed a grave sin, for which salvation was impossible. And when he thought from his head about the next step he had to take, he hanged himself. Why did Iscariot not stick to his stand? Because his mind had shifted places.

The mind operates from different places under different circumstances in the process of life. No wonder that great men, from creative thinkers to creative liars, compared the mind with a monkey. We know what our tailed ancestor is capable of. Imagine its plight when it goes mad. Then imagine how funny or gruesome a scene it would create when it is drunk as well: a drunken, mad monkey — that would be an appropriate comparison for the mind, which goes on changing places in the body. Had the Vetāla asked, "What is never seen but often changed?" I am sure the great king Vikramāditya would have answered, "Your mind."

Great minds think alike, they say; not necessarily, I say. You do not have to disagree with me. I have two anecdotes to substantiate my view. The wise and virtuous Sir Philip Sidney, of the sonnet

cycle *Astrophel and Stella* fame, revealed himself godly in the battlefield, where he received a wound that proved fatal. His throat had gone dry and his flagon had only a few sips of water; but his eyes fell upon a suffering soldier. In spite of his rank, he stooped to help him. Sacrificing the few precious drops, he said to the dying man: "Thy need is greater than mine." Had Sidney thought from his head, or worse still, from his parched throat, things would have been different.

It is said of Chānakya, the Indian counterpart of Machiavelli, that he watered a thorny plant that made a tear in his dhoti when he happened to pass by. Onlookers were really impressed by his noble deed. But an army of sweet-loving ants killed that plant, for what Chānakya poured was water mixed with jaggery. The plant had to die in the flame of Chānakya's revenge.

To spend a night out in the open would not only be a pleasant experience, but also do us a world of good. Maybe that was what I had been intending to do, but my body had a row with itself. The head said it wanted to go for a swim, but the trunk insisted upon a walk on the promenade. The tug of war went on. Ultimately who won? who lost? Well! that does not matter. If one fights a winning battle, the other has to fight a losing battle.

Who is not aware of the terrible battle between Lord Rāma and King Rāvana that went on for a long time on the battlefield of Lanka! When the Rākshasa's end was approaching, Rāma used his final and hence the most powerful weapon,

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Brahma-astra, and made Rāvana into a veritable fountain of blood. Describing the scene, Tamil poet Kamban, in his *Ramayanam*, wrote:

The all-powerful dart entered Rāvana, travelling from head to foot and thereby made his body sieve-like, so that it could not hold even a sesame seed. This he did with the great purpose of draining the covetous king's body of the very thought of Sita.

This lovely passage only proves that people think from all parts of their anatomy.

A smart woman, it is said, always asks her husband's opinion after she has made her own decisions. And the clever husband replies: "I don't know what to do. My heart says yes, my head says no, and I haven't heard from my liver yet."

Different people . . . Different minds . . . Different thoughts . . . Different actions.

Hundreds are torn to pieces in a bomb blast. Hundreds get torched and scorched in a manipulated fire accident. Hundreds are taken as hostages to some undiscovered country from whose bourn no hostage returns. But the living continue to live, muttering that this is all in the game. Usually we all become sad, mourning the thousands dead; we pray; we stand and observe silence for a couple of minutes. We offer sympathy to the many more wounded, bereaved and disoriented in life. The Buddha says that during our existence we have shed more tears than the water contained in the four oceans. We then seek reasons behind the motivation of the perpetrators of the

disaster. We seek answers to questions like: Is it a feeling of injustice, oppression, repression, exclusion, or even racist behaviour? Or are the reasons political, economic, or cultural? Or are there unhealed historical memories?

At the waiting room of the dentist, seated beside my wife awaiting root-canal treatment, I began browsing through an old issue of *Natural History Magazine*. A two-strip cartoon lured my eyes. I could not make out the name of the cartoonist who had scribbled his name, which very much looked like a miniature cartoon itself. But that does not matter. The cartoonist had done his work so beautifully well that any eye that takes even a cursory glance at it will carry the message to the grave.

The first strip pictures a man standing knee-deep in water and looking pathetically at an island. Facing him stand a few animals like tortoise, seal, kangaroo and a snake too — all island dwellers, holding a placard that reads: "Welcome to our island. Please treat it as your own home."

The second strip shows the man with an "I am the master of all I survey and my rights there are none to dispute" attitude, standing at the centre of the fenced island, his placard tom-tomming: "Private. Trespassers will be shot." And the aboriginal animals that gave the man a warm welcome in the first strip, now stand out of the fence, their faces betraying their broken hearts. You cannot find fault with the man. He is only representing the masses. Unpredictable are the ways of human beings.

At Peace with Oneself: In Peace with Others

We know that a dog barks and sometimes bites too. It is wrong to say that barking dogs do not bite. My mother was bitten by one of them. We know that a scorpion stings, and its sting is fatal if not attended to at the right time. We know that a cobra bites and its venom is deadly. But we never know what man is capable of. He barks, bites, stings, roars, growls, hoots; and that is man. He is a zoo of animals.

After creating the universe, the great Creator would have made different moulds for manufacturing animals, birds, insects, trees, plants, creepers, and so on. But when He thought of a mould for human beings, perhaps nothing was left out of the heavenly clay. He had no choice but to scrape off a bit of clay from each of the moulds he had already made and to use the scrapings for the human mould. All other reasons would sound unfair, and that is why man is God's first mistake, not to mention his second mistake!

Most children are nurtured with tender care by their parents, who sacrifice a lot in their endeavour to bring them up. But why do many of those children, when they grow up, turn ungrateful to their parents? Why are old-age homes prospering?

Why do friends turn enemies? Why do enemies turn friends? Why do husbands jump over fences and break marital ties? Why do wives turn unfaithful? Why are orphanages established? A hundred such questions would keep coming up from the depth of every thinker's disturbed heart. A hundred answers, each

different from the rest in its own way, may be given. But no answer can be convincing. It all happens because it has to happen. Who can understand the vagaries of the human mind? Who can measure its depth?

Islamic tradition has it that once someone asked Muhammad: "O Prophet, give me a masterly piece of advice that will enable me to manage all the affairs of my life." He got the reply: "Don't be angry." If this is not healthy advice for peace, what is?

Hinduism sets high value on peace. The Sanskrit word often used for "peace" is *śānti*. Almost all Hindu texts open with the sacred syllable *om*, followed by a threefold repetition of *śānti* for invocation and meditation. The peace invoked in the texts refers to tranquility, quiet, calmness of mind, absence of passion, aversion to causing pain, and indifference to objects of pleasure and pain.

A Chinese emperor, once making progress through his dominions was accidentally entertained in a house in which the head of the family with his several wives, sons, daughters-in-law, grandchildren and servants all lived together in perfect peace and harmony. Struck with admiration at the spectacle, the emperor expressed his desire to know what means the master employed to preserve quiet among such a vast number and variety of persons. Patience, patience — that was the answer he got.

Patience is a whip with which one can, like the ringmaster in a zoo, control beastly anger. Patience is a sea that gulps down

At Peace with Oneself: In Peace with Others

all malignant and revengeful thoughts, for who can be a greater self-tormentor than a malicious and revengeful man! Are not the merciful the blessed beings?

The peace we are talking about, therefore, has such components as freedom, truth, and stability. It includes the integral development of the human person, of the whole person and of all persons. It implies interdependence between people, an interdependence that is not just tolerated but is freely accepted and generously lived.

Records speak of the famous Indian ruler, Emperor Aśoka, who after seeing thousands of dead soldiers in his war against the Kalingas, felt remorse, renounced war, sought reconciliation, and wished that all beings should be unharmed, self-controlled, calm in mind, and gentle. Fighting was forbidden. So was all killing of animals for food or sacrifice.

All the religions of the world, including African traditional religion, Asian tribal religion, Australian aboriginal religion, also Native American religion, and any other religion that humanity has known, speak explicitly about peace. They extol it. They inculcate it. They stress its importance.

A fundamental requirement for peace is respect for human rights. It must be borne in mind that peace is not just a job to be done. More than a finished product, peace is a process always in the making. Peacemaking never ends. That is why peace remains a constant challenge. He who desires peace must learn to love, and he who loves generates peace. It is needless to say that interpersonal conflicts stop only when intrapersonal conflicts cease

for disturbed persons. He who is at peace with himself in turn learns to live in peace with others.

Jesus in his “Sermon on the Mount” said: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.” In fact, true peace rests upon mutual love and benevolence between people, and supposes a serene society in which these people live. Peace therefore is an active commitment to establishing an order that will be a source of tranquility. This attitude is greatly helped by the recognition that all human beings belong to one family, that they have one Creator and single origin, that human nature is the same in *all* people.

Peace is the desire of the human heart. All peoples, regardless of languages, cultures, and religions understand peace and have a special word for it. They appreciate the meaning of wholeness, health, safety, security, well-being, justice, order, calm, and the fulfilment of desire. They do not want disturbance, disorder, insecurity, and instability in society, abnormal conditions, tension, violence, or war. Moreover, they do not want to labour under oppression, injustice, or violation of rights, or to suffer from underdevelopment.

No matter how much the human heart desires peace, it would seem that peace is a rare commodity in the market of human history, especially in our times. The 20th century has been called “history’s bloodiest century”. Sadly, media reports confirm that the present century is in no way different from the previous one, though we are still at its beginning. Between 1950

At Peace with Oneself: In Peace with Others

and 1990, it is estimated that fifteen million people died in war or as a result of war. In the year 1993 alone, there were sixty wars going on in the world, with some of them having religious colouring. Most of these wars were to be found south of the Equator, with Africa claiming twenty-five of them, Asia twenty-four, and Latin America five.

It is not that we do not know how much these wars provoked violence and destruction. We do understand that these wars also retarded the development of whole peoples and regions. It is calculated that since the end of the Second World War, humanity has not known even a hundred continuous days of effective peace. Most of the time, in some part of the world, there has been a war going on, whether a clash between nations, or a civil war. Or there are racial conflicts, violent clashes, terrorist activities, assassinations, massacres, or murders in some part of the globe. Hardly does a day pass by without human blood being shed by someone in the world.

Not only are there many bitter conflicts raging in parts of the earth, but also societies are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain solidarity and harmony among people of different cultural backgrounds who for various reasons now live and work together. Fanatics and funda-

mentalists have no doubt given religion a bad name. Politicians, having their own hidden agendas, at times exploit religion to fan the flames of intolerance and hatred. Who can deny the inevitable and inseparable link between religion and culture? There exists between these two realities a healthy symbiosis when they are combined and harnessed; they make up a formidable force for peace.

And so the only religion worthy of the name is the religion that leads to peace, and that “true” religion is mocked when it is tied to conflict and violence. Human life is sacred. It must be protected by all means. No one has the right to kill either oneself or others.

Every human being ought to be concerned about peace promotion. It has therefore to be on the top of the agenda of humanity, in every age, and more so in our times, when communication among peoples has reached a level never attained before.

Tolstoy tells the story of a man who stopped to give alms to a beggar. To his dismay he found that he had left his purse at home. Stammering his explanation, he said: “I am sorry, brother, but I have nothing to give you.” “Never mind, brother”, was the beggar’s response, “that too was a gift”. That one word, “brother”, meant more to the beggar than money. ✧

One of the secrets of inner peace is the practice of compassion.

H. H. the 14th Dalai Lama

Beauty in Its Essence

MARGARET BOVE STURMAN

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness . . .

John Keats, “Endymion”, Book 1

THE loveliness that increases and does not fade into nothingness can be golden memories of the past, retaining a quiet place for us when we are still, breathing softly and in company with our Inner Self, because somewhere within the Soul there is a place of Silence, a thing of Beauty, a Pearl of great price. Beauty is innate in every human being and all Nature. It is our true heritage, being the Universal Matrix on which the Creator has built the Cosmos. The very word Cosmos means order and beauty. It shines inwardly and outwardly emanating a golden glow and showering blessings on humanity of sheer loveliness — radiant rainbows, perfumed flowers, sparkling waterfalls — Mother Earth in all her splendour embracing all in Oneness in true unconditional Love.

The ideal prerequisite of Beauty recognized by the great philosophers is a state of harmony, manifesting its own intrinsic nature in the world of form. Where there is harmony there is beauty because beauty

is harmony in its finest form, and the Unmanifest when projecting creates the same likeness. The Divine Plan is perfect and, although often through test and trial, the Ultimate Realization for all Creation is Bliss and Beauty. Harmony is also the ideal of beauty as loving kindness and harmlessness. A Tibetan lama once said, “One can be trusted when one is harmless”, meaning harmless in every sense; those who have forsaken the killing of all, who forgive their enemies, are helpmates to all, and are sanctuary to all.

For family and friends it is easy to be harmless, but when affronted with extreme hostility, it becomes more difficult. On a soul level, all souls are endeavouring, if not consciously, sub-consciously, to fulfil the Divine Plan chosen for this lifetime. The victory of this endeavour will be manifest at the close of their Earth life, enabling the soul to make a leap of consciousness and confront other tests in a future incarnation, eventually reaching

Mrs Margaret Bove Sturman, born in London, resides in Naples, Italy. She is a member of the Theosophical Society since 1986, and practices alternative medicine.

Beauty in Its Essence

total illumination and ready to collaborate directly with the Divine Plan. This is the true reason for incarnation in a physical body.

A thing of beauty is the aura of a newborn baby — radiant, innocent, and full of Light. Along the pilgrimage of our daily life on planet Earth we may have the joy of meeting a soul that has not lost the innocence and beauty of the childlike state. Quoting from the Gospel: “Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven” (Matthew, 18:3). We may find this virtue with the mentally deranged living in their own little world. Saintliness and insanity have something in common — they are innocent. The Beauty of maintaining harmlessness along the razor-edged path is difficult and sometimes one goes astray. Have we not ourselves gone astray many times in previous lifetimes — if not also in this one?

The Divine at a certain point is not interested if we are so-called good or not. It just wants us to grow and become Whole. Did not the great saints make mistakes before reaching sainthood? The mistakes of the past were necessary in order to grow and learn, to feel the pain inflicted, to understand and to enter eventually into the sphere of harmlessness, becoming a beautiful ray of sunshine to all. The Master Koot Hoomi says “TRY” — try to live up to an ideal of good deeds, emotions, and thoughts; try to live the beautiful; try to be in harmony with Life and Nature.

Harmony needs forgiveness — firstly

to forgive ourselves, and then have the Wisdom and Compassion to forgive those who may have hurt us. As we forgive, so we ascend the mountain to the sanctum sanctorum. To forget is human, to forgive is divine. We are all divine sparks emanating from the one great supernal Flame and, as we progress along the spiritual path, it is inevitable that, sooner or later, we will KNOW we are ONE with every atom; and *that* atom also includes the instigators of unkindly deeds who have gone astray. It is said that old souls (souls with experience of many lifetimes) can help the younger souls still stumbling on the difficult ascent up the mountain of Beatitude. Younger souls also need encouragement — to know that, although the ascent up the mountain is difficult, the view improves and becomes more illuminating as the ascent is made.

The soul eventually reaches perfection and spontaneous goodness, leading to Wholeness, which encompasses everything, and the stage of personality goals, and the effort to become good, is transcended. Wholeness is a state of internal integrity that exists as the very nature of any organic system, from a cell to a tissue to a whole person. The parts of any whole are each of them also whole in themselves. They can cooperate and make up larger wholes because of their Wholeness. The Hebrew greeting “Shalom” means: “May you have the Peace that comes with Wholeness — the Peace that passeth understanding.”

Beauty is the sacred in us; also the

Beauty in Its Essence

Greeks in the 5th century celebrated beauty as moral perfection. If there is a strong link between lovers, such as an idealistic pursuit of beauty and perfection, physical relationship is not necessary, because one is uplifted in a union of deep friendship and affection superseding other experiences in its transparent beauty.

Where there is beauty, there is no distinction between race, creed, sex, caste or color. Nicholas Roerich (the great Russian spiritual painter), together with President Roosevelt, realized that Culture and Beauty can unite people throughout the world in mutual appreciation. Roerich painted the Banner of Peace depicting the Madonna Oriflamma, being a symbol of World Peace. From age to age, the vision of a perfect civilization based on the Good, the True, and the Beautiful is preserved as the ideal for humankind, and that a mighty university might stand where both sacred and secular sciences concerning the mysteries of Life are taught freely to all. This was Annie Besant's dream. Plotinus describes the refining effect of beauty upon the unfolding human consciousness and soul.

The mysteries suggested that environment is also important, and that being surrounded by beauty evokes the highest and noblest sentiments — beauty of architecture, music, art, poetry. Noble, beautiful thoughts emanate from minds of mental nobility. The presence of inner beauty irradiates like a ray of sunshine and immediately creates an aura of feeling safe and protected without personality barriers — an oasis of Peace and a sincere reassur-

ance of being accepted for one's True Self, without time, without words — a gift of the Infinite. This inner beauty is preeminent with the great Saviours and Avatars of humanity — the Buddha, the Christ, Mohammed, Krishna, who encompass all that is beautiful in its essence.

When spiritual persons speak, the radiance of their soul presents itself to the view, like the rising of the sun at dawn in all its splendour, a soothing balm of compassion, courage, and understanding. So let us live every day with beauty and try to see the positive side of every circumstance — to think positively, even though the situation may seem difficult.

Let us appreciate the benefits we have in our lives. To begin with, we have the great privilege of incarnating in a physical body and being alive; most have a roof over our heads and a bed to sleep in; we have food, even if only a sandwich, and also water to drink; we have clothes to cover our bodies and do not live in an igloo near the Arctic Circle or in the middle of a war; most of us have at least one affection; we have the possibility to study and, if we are diligent, this is a cultural opportunity lasting a lifetime; if necessary, we have the availability of painkillers and medical treatment. Certainly, today we live better than a king in the Middle Ages.

Having so many advantages and with the gift and revelation of Theosophy, let us associate Life with Beauty and together become creators of a beautiful world, anticipating the 6th Root Race to NOW, a world of Harmony and Peace, the Golden Age, NOW — Beauty in its Essence. ✧

**HEADQUARTERS OF THE INDIAN SECTION, THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
THE 144TH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AT VARANASI**

Theme: Nurturing the Divine Seed

The 144th International Convention of the Theosophical Society will be held at the National Headquarters, of the Indian Section, Kamachha, Varanasi, **from 31 December 2019 to 5 January 2020**. All members of the Society in good standing are welcome to attend as delegates. **Non-members** may send **requests** for permission to attend, together with a recommendation from an officer of the Federation or the Section, **to the Convention Officer (CO) before 25 November**. Mr Shikhar Agnihotri (**Cell Phones: 91-8840926268 & 9839912070**) will be the CO.

Package rates apply from 29 December 2019 dinner to 5 January 2020 dinner. Please pay in package rates only.

A. HARMONY BUILDING (Only for GC Members and Overseas Members) — **Registration with full board**

Basis: US\$ (1 \$ = Rs 70),		EURO (1 € = Rs 77),	AUD (1 AUD = Rs 47)
<u>Western Food</u>	<u>Registration</u>	<u>Accommodation</u>	<u>Total Package</u>
\$60 (Rs 4,200)	\$70 (Rs 4,900)	\$230 (Rs 16,100)	\$360 (Rs 25,200)
€55	€64	€209	€328
AUD89	AUD104	AUD343	AUD536

B. MEHTA HOSTEL — Registration with full board

Overseas delegates:

<u>Food</u>	<u>Registration</u>	<u>Accommodation</u>	<u>Total Package</u>
\$25 (Rs 1,750)	\$70 (Rs 4,900)	\$85 (Rs 5,950)	\$180 (Rs 12,600)

Indian and Less Developed Countries' delegates:

<u>Food</u>	<u>Registration</u>	<u>Accommodation</u>	<u>Total Package</u>
Rs 1,750	Rs 500	Rs 5,950	Rs 8,200

Includes registration fee, sharing room, mattress, cot, sheets, blankets, all meals etc.

C. INDIAN STYLE ACCOMMODATION — Registration with full board

Indian and Less Developed Countries' delegates

<u>Food</u>	<u>Registration</u>	<u>Accommodation</u>	<u>Total Package</u>
Rs 1,750	Rs 500	Rs 950	Rs 3,200

Includes registration fee, mat/cot or mattress, sheets, blankets, all meals at the Canteen.

Note: half rate for children of 3–10 years.

D. PEOPLE NOT REQUIRING ACCOMMODATION — Only meals
(Canteen from 29 Dec. 2019 to 5 Jan. 2020)

<u>Food</u>	<u>Registration</u>	<u>Total Package</u>
Rs 1,750	Rs 500	Rs 2,250

E. BREAKFAST, LUNCH, SNACKS, DINNER FOR ONE DAY IS Rs 600, in addition to a one-time registration charge of Rs 500.

Note: half rate for children of 3–10 years.

Convention Rates

ACCOMMODATION

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

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENTS

Last date for Registration: 1 December 2019

Last date for Cancellation: 10 December 2019; payment will be refunded, except the registration fee of Rs 500 or USD 70. After 10 December there will be no refund of any amount. Cancellation requests must reach the Indian Section, Varanasi, by 10 December for refund consideration.

Delegates from India: Send the Registration form with the details (available at www.theosophy-india.org) and www.ts-adyar.org, along with the package charges, to the CO before 1 December 2019. Remittance by **crossed cheques or bank drafts** should be made **payable to Indian Section, The Theosophical Society**. If making online transfers, it is essential to communicate by email to CO the following details: Delegate(s) Name, Bank Name and Branch, Amount, Date of Transfer and Transfer Reference Number. The online transfer can be made to Bank of Baroda (formerly Vijaya Bank), Kamachha Branch, Varanasi. **Account No. 718301010005045; IFSC Code No. VIJB0007183**; in the name of Indian Section, The Theosophical Society.

Delegates from other countries: Make sure you take travel insurance. Send the Registration Form (available at www.theosophy-india.org) and www.ts-adyar.org by email. Payment on arrival in foreign currency is accepted. If payment is being made by online bank transfer in Rs at above mentioned account no., then make sure that it is in Indian Rupees and purpose of payment is marked "donations", and an email is sent to CO with the following details: Delegate(s) name, Bank name, Amount, Date of Transfer and Transfer reference number.

Contact Convention Officer by email: tsvnsconvention@gmail.com or by post: The Convention Officer, Indian Section, The Theosophical Society, Gurubagh, Kamachha, Varanasi - 221 010, India

Marja Artamaa, *International Secretary*

HEADQUARTERS OF INDIAN SECTION, THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, Kamachha, Varanasi 221 010, India

International Convention 2019-20

REGISTRATION & ACCOMMODATION FORM

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

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

Name: Nationality: Email:

Address (in home country): Phone/Mobile:

Section/Federation/Lodge: Special Request:

PACKAGE RATES:

A. HARMONY: Overseas delegates — USD 360* or Rs 25,200 — includes registration fee, 'Western' meals, double occupancy accommodation with attached bathrooms, cots, mattresses, sheets and blankets.

B. MEHTA Hostel: Overseas delegates — USD 180 (Rs.12,600), delegates from India and less developed countries Rs.8,200 — includes registration fee, Indian meals, double occupancy accommodation, cots, mattresses, sheets and blankets.

C. Indian Style: Delegates from India and less developed countries — Rs.3,200 — includes registration fee, meals, sharing/dormitory type accommodation, cots, mattresses, sheets and blankets.

D. PEOPLE NOT REQUIRING ACCOMMODATION: Rs.2,250 — includes registration fee and Indian meals.

Note: half rate for children of 3–10 years.

** or EUR 328 or AUD 536*

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

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

Signature of applicant: Date:

For all delegates: Completing this Registration Form with all particulars is important — please do not send or submit incomplete forms.

Last date for registration: 1 December 2019. Last date for cancellation: 10 December 2019 (by email or by post).

For online payments and any clarifications, contact Convention Officer by email at <tsvnsconvention@gmail.com> or visit <www.ts-adyar.org>.

Theosophical Work Around the World

Ukraine

The Theosophical Society (TS) in Ukraine was visited by international lecturer, former General Secretary of the TS in the Philippines, and active TOS co-worker Mr Vicente Hao Chin, Jr, and his wife Teresita from 1 to 10 May 2019. First, the seminar “Self-transformation process: research of our higher potential for an effective life” took place in Kyiv from 1 to 6 May. Mr Hao Chin offered time-proven approaches for eliminating fear, aggression, anxiety, depression, and the pressure of daily life to deepen spiritual practice, offering both theoretical and practical guidance.

On 7 May, Mr and Mrs Hao Chin travelled to Dnipro, HPB’s birthplace, where they visited the Museum Centre of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (HPB) and her family, and he took part in the Round Table presentations, “Ways of spiritual self-determination”, at the National Technical University. He gave a talk and participated in a discussion with students, teachers, and the public.

On 8 May the solemn meeting of White Lotus Day took place in the house where HPB was born, and Mr Hao Chin gave a short talk in HPB’s memory. Later in the day, at the National Technical University of Dnipro, the Annual Interdisciplinary Scientific Conference took place on “Spiritual aspects of modern attitudes”, traditionally held in memory of Madame

Blavatsky. The theme of the conference was “Dialogue of cultures as the call of the time”, with participants from different cities of Ukraine and abroad. The Keynote Lecture was presented by Mr Hao Chin on “Self-transformation and dialogue”.

Organizing Secretary of the TS in Ukraine Svitlana Gavrylenko reports that all participants expressed their gratitude for the teamwork involved in this visit.

Australia

International President Tim Boyd, along with his wife Lily, toured the Australian Section of the TS from 2 to 29 May. He conducted a public workshop at Melbourne Lodge on 5 May on “The Solution to All Problems”. In Sydney, on 8 May, White Lotus Day, he gave two public talks: “The Four Minds” and “Healing the Healer”. Both presentations were followed by questions and answers. The next day they visited The Manor, one of the oldest spiritual communities in Australia, established in 1922.

After flying to Tasmania on 10 May, Mr Boyd gave an interview to ABC Radio (Australian Broadcasting Commission). The next day he led a day-long seminar organized by Launceston Lodge on the theme “The Solution to All Problems”. He addressed the members in a separate meeting on “The Power and Problem of Habit”. From Launceston he and

Theosophical Work around the World



Visit of Mr Vic Hao Chin, Jr, former General Secretary of the TS in the Philippines, to the TS in Ukraine from 1 to 8 May 2019. *From l. to r., front row, 2nd from left:* Organizing Secretary Mrs Svitlana Gavrylenko, Mrs Teresita Hao Chin, Mr Hao Chin, and President of the Inter-American Federation Mrs Isis M. B. Resende



International President Mr Tim Boyd visits the headquarters of the Australian Section of the TS in Surry Hills, Sydney, on 7 May. *From l. to r.:* Executive Committee member Cassandra Au, Membership Secretary Richard Larkin, National Secretary Dara Tatray, Mr Boyd, Mrs Lily Boyd, National President Mrs Linda Oliveira, Executive Committee member Dianne Kynaston, and staff member Rosanna Sheridan

Theosophical Work around the World



Participants of a Workers' Training Camp at the international headquarters of the TS, Adyar, Chennai, from 12 to 26 May. Sitting *from l. to r.*: International Secretary Marja Artamaa, Director of the Camp Dr N. C. Ramanujachary, international Treasurer Mrs Nancy Secrest, and National Lecturer Professor C. A. Shinde



Participants of the Italian Section's National Congress in the Venetian Lagoon from 30 May to 2 June, with the theme "Consciousness and Awareness in the Light of Theosophy"

Theosophical Work around the World

Mrs Boyd flew to Brisbane, where on 14 May he gave a public talk at Brisbane Lodge on “Overcoming Fear”. They then flew to Adelaide, in South Australia, the next day. His presentations at Adelaide Lodge on 16 May included a public talk on “Overcoming Fear” and an address to the members on “The Theosophical Attempt”. On 19 May, they flew to Perth, in Western Australia. There he gave two public talks on 20 and 21 May, on “Overcoming Fear” and “The Habit of Dying” respectively.

National President of the TS in Australia Mrs Linda Oliveira reports that this visit was much appreciated by all present.

Adyar — India

A Theosophical Workers’ Training Camp was held at the international headquarters of the Theosophical Society at Adyar (TS), Chennai, from 12 to 26 May. It was inaugurated by Ms Marja Artamaa, international Secretary. Dr N. C. Ramanujachary, Camp Director, mentioned that the camp was made possible by the Fund created in 1959 by the late Dr C. R. Kamath, of Chennai, a long-standing member of the TS.

The topics included the purpose of the TS, its basic principles and policies, lives and work of its Founders, Presidents and leaders, the working system of Lodges, responsibilities of members, constitution of the human bodies, and so on. Special attention was paid to the TS Mission Statement and the latest 2019 resolution of its General Council on Freedom and Responsibility of Lodges and Branches.

There were 25 participants from the states of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and so on. International Treasurer, Ms Nancy Secrest, Mr S. M. Umakanth Rao, National Lecturer Prof. C. A. Shinde, Dr R. Revathy, Head of the Adyar Archives Ms K. Jaishree, and Mr R. Mathurnath also gave lectures and presentations. The Camp closed with Ms Secrest speaking on “The Never-ending Search for the Truth”.

Italy

The 105th National Congress of the Italian Section of the TS took place successfully in Cavallino-Treporti (in the Venetian Lagoon), from 30 May to 2 June, with the theme “Consciousness and Awareness in the Light of Theosophy”. The event was enhanced by the lectures of scientist and inventor Federico Faggin on “The Nature of Awareness”, and of Professor Gian Giorgio Pasqualotto, who spoke on “Consciousness and Awareness in Ancient Buddhism”.

The National Congress is the most important event for both members and sympathizers of the Italian TS. It is an opportunity to investigate important topics of study, and to share rights and obligations connected with related activities of the Italian Section in the Members’ Assembly, the international General Council meetings, and so on. During this National Congress the election procedure for General Secretary of the Section for the period July 2019 to July 2022 was completed, resulting in Mr Antonio Girardi being reelected. ✧

INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORY

Date	Section	General Secretary, etc.	Address	Magazine	Email address
1947	Africa, East and Central	... Mr Narendra M. Shah	... PO Box 14525. 00800, Westlands, Nairobi, Kenya	... <i>The Theosophical Light</i>	narendrashahi999@gmail.com
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