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Freedom of Thought

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

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

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

Freedom of the Society

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

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

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

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

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

The Three Objects of The Theosophical Society

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

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

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

On the Watch-Tower

Radha Burnier, International President



How does the Ego-Centre Arise?

The much-used word ‘my’ refers to a fictitious centre to which the mind draws every experience. It is actually non-existent. In Sanskrit there is the word *ahamkāra*: *aham* means ‘I’, *kāra* means ‘making’. So *ahamkāra* is that part of the mind which is the ‘I-maker’. The ‘I’ is constantly created by the process of labelling. If there is an experience, and if the mind did not say consciously or unconsciously, ‘It is my experience’, the experience would fade away.

Because there is memory, there is the repetition of it, and because it has had certain experiences it creates further categories. It has experienced pleasure, therefore it says, ‘I am the enjoyer’. It has organised certain things, so it says, ‘I am the organiser’. So it habitually grasps various things and labels them, thus creating the ‘I’.

Silence cannot come through another form of ambition. You cannot say, ‘I want my mind to be silent. I am going to put an end to the fluctuations of my mind’; that would be one more form of achievement. Wherever there is the desire for achievement or acquisition, there is this entity called the ‘I’ – the psychological fiction that wants to achieve. Through a long process we have created the notion that there is this entity which must reach somewhere, and we go on supporting that idea. It is difficult to imagine a life in which that ‘I’ is not getting somewhere or acquiring something.

So one cannot become silent by saying ‘I want to be silent’; for the simple reason that the ‘I’

is not capable of silence. It is the sole source of all the noise, the disturbance, the problems. We think that problems come from outside, but although there may be difficulties outside, the problem lies within. The difficulty may be that the body has some illness. If it is ill, you treat it. But the difficulty can be made into a problem. ‘I am ill. I have led a good life, so why should I suffer? When I am ill other people do not give me the kind of help I need.’ One can make innumerable problems out of that sickness. But we should see it not as a problem but as a fact – a difficult fact, perhaps, but one that can be dealt with – that is all.

It is the self which creates the problems. And the self can never bring about silence because it is all the time creating disturbance. The disturbance *is* the self! Jealousy is part of the self; so is attachment to ideas; so is intolerance. The self is built of all these things. From that point of view, such a phrase as ‘self-realisation’ is misleading because, if there is realisation of Truth, there cannot be self in it. So where there is achievement or acquisition there is the self – whether one is aware of it or not. In which case the mind is not empty; it is filled with the self.

Illumination Comes from Within

One of the Mahatmas reminds us that illumination must come from within. The means to illumination is not meditation alone; he speaks of chastity in thought, word and deed. There must be purity, government of the animal passions, and unselfishness of intention. Without these meditation is not serious; it becomes what Krishnamurti called an activity of isolation.

When we speak of the mind, does that include the conscious and the unconscious? What is the difference between the two?

The mind is, of course, the conscious as well as the unconscious or subconscious. There are various things in the mind which do not make themselves felt at a particular moment. That does not mean that they do not belong to it. In the subconscious mind there may be greed, for example, but it may lie dormant, because the opportunity to show itself is not present at that time. When it does show itself, it becomes part of the conscious mind. In the same way, within the mind there are many tendencies that we carry on from incarnation to incarnation and they come into the conscious mind according to circumstances and opportunity. It is the same with memory. There are many memories of which a person is not conscious. Sometimes they can be recalled fairly easily and sometimes only on special occasions.

Certain fundamental questions will always have to be examined with care. The one that has concerned us principally at this time is: 'What is the nature of the self?' We have seen that this requires great penetration and can be arrived at only through sustained use of energy.

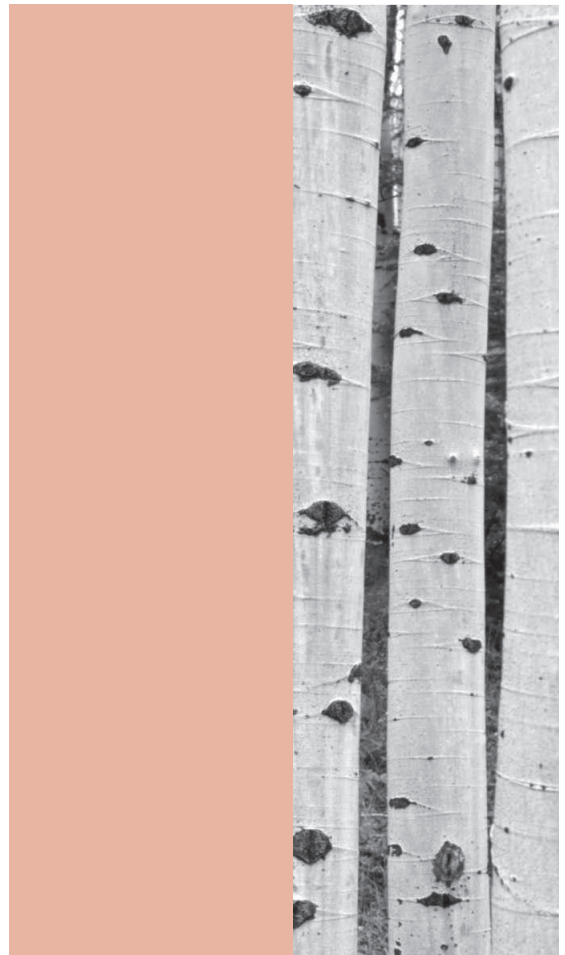
We have arrived at certain conclusions. The self appears to be myself, the 'I'. This 'I' is made up of impressions created largely by the body for we have a certain image of ourselves which is partly connected with the physical person. We have come to see that this physical person has little to do with the real self. The confusion between this and the Self is the cause of many problems and these are further complicated with identification with emotions and thoughts.

None of this can be understood in depth by a process of simple ratiocination, but only by what has been called 'clear sight'. But because the illusion of the self as self-existent, as having a separate individual identity has been accepted as reality for many years – indeed for many incarnations – it has taken on the appearance of reality. We are conditioned by everything around us to take its existence for granted. As children we were taught to promote its interests,

to think of all things in relation to it. All this cannot fail to exert an influence. So it is easy to fall into the belief in the existence of the self and one has to look very carefully – and inwardly – to discover the truth; to find out, if after all, it is just an imposition, a fiction created by thought.

It would be easy simply to say, 'Yes, the self is not real', or 'The sense of separation is an illusion'. But that would be just uttering words. If one really saw that fact, it would change one's life.

Meditation is work which is to be done in order to see. It is not just a cerebral activity; it is a probing deep to discover truth with regard to the nature of that self which has been leading us such a dance for untold incarnations.



From the National President

Linda Oliveira



The question about religious affiliation in the 2011 Australian national census produced interesting figures. 61.1% declared themselves Christians (a percentage which has been falling). The remainder included other religious traditions including Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism; 18.7% who declared themselves as having 'no religion'; and 9.4% who did not answer this question. It is possible that a number of those who declared themselves as having 'no religion', or who did not answer the question, included individuals who have no declared formal religious affiliation and yet have some sense of spirituality.

The term 'religion' has unpleasant connotations for many, perhaps because of previous experiences or else lack of sympathy with the religious expression of a different culture. Yet the word's etymology is quite broad and certainly transcends formalised religious structures. It has gone through various phases such as 'respect for what is sacred, reverence for the gods', from the Latin *religionem*. Then there is the popular etymology connecting it with *religare* 'to bind fast' or 'bond between humans and gods'. (*Oxford Online Dictionary of Etymology*)

According to Professor David Tacey, author of *The Spirituality Revolution*, there has been a breakdown of 'inherited faith' in this country, with children no longer accepting the faith of their parents, grandparents or natal tradition. Young people in the West are not responding to formalised religion. Instead, he maintains that individuals are searching for meaning and value. He asserts that once we have had an experience of the spirit then religion makes more sense. 'If religion could shift from imposing itself on

people to drawing out the spirit, we would have an immediate revolution in religious life.' To him, terms such as transformation and encounter are important – direct, real experience. 'To call for spirituality', he writes, 'is to call for healing and reconnection. It is to admit that we are divided and long to become whole'. Although he speaks of a divide today between spirituality and formalised religion, is the term 'reconnection' actually so different from the more common etymology of religion as a bond with the gods?

Unbridled materialism leads to spiritual toxicity. But when there is also attention to one's interior life, it is possible to be surprisingly energised even in the midst of a busy life.

Professor Ravi Ravindra speaks of spirituality as 'universal, non-sectarian, and not restricted to the East or the West' (*Science and the Sacred*). He maintains that it does not have much to do with a belief system or doctrine, with theological arguments or with evangelism. Rather:

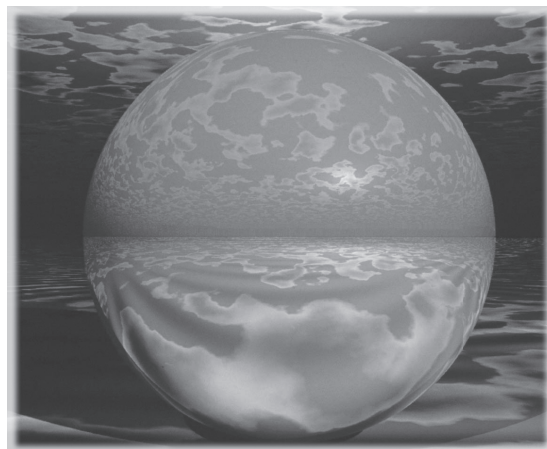
It is primarily a quality of being, reflected in bodily stillness, in emotional generosity and compassion, no less than in mental clarity and serenity ... [it] has to do with a new birth, transformation of consciousness, or a raising of the level of awareness – all this leading to a different person who is born into and manifests a new mode of being, almost a different species.

Spirituality is a loosely used term today, often merely denoting psychism. Yet I would suggest that it is ultimately much deeper and more profound, in fact, the mark of a religious person.

To share your thoughts about this subject or anything else raised in this issue (up to 200 words), email: pres@austheos.org.au

Hearing the Melody

Beverley Champion



Most of us can remember the Walt Disney film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*. If we consider that film from a theosophical perspective, we realise that the individual names of the seven dwarves represent the fluctuations of our human personalities which we experience on a daily basis. Can you recall their names? Happy, Grumpy, Sleepy, Sneezy, Bashful, Dopey and last, but certainly not least, Doc, the wise one who made decisions for the group.

We then come to the central character of the film, the sweet, innocent girl, Snow White; her very name implying purity and indicating a more spiritual state than the unpredictable personality. The film also contained many other elements which we face on the human journey, even the darker states such as temptation with the luscious red apple, the vanity and jealousy depicted in the character of the wicked queen, the planned treachery against Snow White, et cetera. However, as with all myths, the heroine and hero triumphed in the end as story telling has always been used to clarify and explain the human journey.

The interconnectedness of all life is a phrase which theosophists frequently use and this concept emphasises the obvious necessity for harmonious relationships between the seemingly separate forms of the One Life or the One Song of Life.

The Music of the Soul

In LBS-Appendix 1 of *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, in an article on Death by Eliphas Levi, we read, ‘Our souls are as it were a music, of which our bodies are the instruments ... but it cannot make itself heard without a material intermediary.’ We often hear the proposal that the soul is the singer, creating the music with which our several bodies resonate in this particular incarnation; furthermore, that the soul knows its needs and has therefore chosen the components of the personality which is its instrument, according to those needs.

In volume 3 of the *Collected Writings*, Madame Blavatsky writes that:

It is the EGO or SELF that serves as the fundamental base, determining the tone of the whole life of a man, that most capricious, uncertain and variable of all instruments, and which more than any other needs constant tuning; it is its human voice alone, which ... underlies the melody of his whole life – whether its tones are sweet or harsh, harmonious or wild.

The Instrument of the Soul

Hearing the melody which the soul is singing is but the initial part of the exercise. The task would seem to be learning to play the song on, or through, the personality – the instrument of the soul. To learn to play the music the soul

is singing is to hear its melody properly. This requires us to understand and truly comprehend the particular experience through which we are passing at any given moment, whether that be pleasant or otherwise. It is to be fully present in that moment, with heightened awareness, through observation and attention, allowing the experience, without judgement, to be absorbed. We would not then carry excess baggage of discord into the next experience.

The new moment brings its own circumstances, its own note for us to hear and, by intently listening for the message or melody, we are then guided to handle our daily experiences in a more noble, compassionate and, above all, harmonious way. In his essay on Spiritual Laws, Emerson suggests that ‘until we can manage to communicate ourself to others in our full stature and proportion, we have not yet found our vocation.’ In other words, we are not yet playing our unique song in the whole symphony of life.

It is often difficult for twenty-first century mortals to hear the melody while we remain so preoccupied with the lyrics. To really hear the resonance produced by our own thoughts, and subsequent speech and actions, is to understand that we are continually writing and re-writing the tone or quality of our life and our relationships. We need to be sure that this tone or note is in tune with the song of our soul because to truly hear that is to hear the voice of the silence.

Listening

If we are able to distinguish mentally between the sounds of civilisation continually crowding in upon us and the song of life that is forever being sung, we can be consciously in communion with Nature. This requires us to further develop the capacity to listen with full attention to the unique aria being offered by a single bird. To be able not only to feel the breeze on one’s face, but also to hear the movement of the cooling stream of air, reminds us that the acts of listening and hearing are interdependent.

Similarly, whenever we take the time to notice and examine the first tender green shoots, the tiny

first leaves which herald the beginning of new life, we are actually hearing the announcement by the tree that the time of dormancy is over and that once again the sap is rising, bringing new life. In this awareness we are at that moment actually hearing the song of life which Nature is continually singing.

Listening is, of course, an art. In a Quest book by Rebecca Shafir, entitled *The Zen of Listening*, the author tells us that listening is a healthy activity and that studies have shown that the heart rate slows and oxygen consumption and blood pressure are reduced. Listening therefore is actually good for us and it is one of the best gifts we can give to another human being. It is also a first step towards promoting understanding, respect and trust, and these in turn can lead to reconnection and reconciliation.



Mindful listening would seem to be one of our most undeveloped abilities and the author quotes statistics given by Albert Mehrabian in his book *Silent Messages* where he suggests that our spoken words only transmit about seven per cent of the message we are trying to communicate to another. Much higher proportions are conveyed by other means.

He proposes that fifty-five per cent of our meaning is transmitted through our gestures and facial expression, that thirty-eight per cent is conveyed through tone of voice, speech rate, rhythm and the emphasis we place on the words. He also states that when we speak to each other

we only have a one-in-seventeen chance of being understood. If that is so, it would seem to indicate a revision of how we communicate with each other!

The Effects of Music

The therapeutic advantages of listening to music and the effect on the human body of singing and chanting are well-known. In the book *Music – Physician for Times to Come*, author Don Campbell describes both Tibetan and Gregorian chants as ‘sacred sounds’ producing a profound feeling of peace and harmony as the ear collects spiralling energy from the cosmos.

Listening to ‘right music’ means listening to music which evokes a response welcomed by our soul and which strengthens our communion with Nature. Music of the Spheres could perhaps be described as the harmonious interaction of all vibration into one chord resonating in tune with the universal song. Living a harmonious life will be essential if all of the individual notes are ever to be heard as a whole symphony.

As human beings we can choose what we think about and it has been said that the gap between our thoughts is similar to the pause between the notes of a musical score. It is the pause which, if entered into and the silence is understood, enables us to hear the unique melody of the soul.

In that small treasure, *Light on the Path* by Mabel Collins, we are advised to listen to the Song of Life:

Look for it and listen to it first in your own heart. At first you may say: ‘It is not there; when I search I find only discord.’ Look deeper ... There is a natural melody, an obscure fount in every human heart. It may be hidden over and utterly concealed and silenced – but it is there ... Store in your memory the melody you hear [and] Learn from it the lesson of harmony.

Former President, Mr. N. Sri Ram, wrote in his book *Thoughts for Aspirants*:

When we melt and dissolve into an uttermost, holding-nothing-back surrender, when we have been moved to the depths by a phantasy of beauty,

when we have looked into the heart of a brother and lost ourselves in him, when divine compassion has transformed us into something other than what we normally are, then indeed is the Divine Melody breathed forth in us, which will be sounded in its fullness one perfect day.

As at the beginning of a new Life Wave, the One becomes the many, so at the end the many will again become the One, but as author Darrell Reanneey describes it in his book *Music of the Mind*:

The One [Life] of the end is not the One of the beginning, it is richer by far because it draws together into one song all the varied notes of the chorus of creation ... making a textured coat of many colours, playing a symphony where once there had been only a melody.

“ As human beings we can choose what we think about and it has been said that the gap between our thoughts is similar to the pause between the notes of a musical score. It is the pause which, if entered into and the silence is understood, enables us to hear the unique melody of the soul. ”

The discord in our world is of human making, but we are still students in the process of learning to be fully human. As members of the Theosophical Society we have been charged to attempt to widen humanity’s horizons, to encourage the understanding that the only way forward to a better world is through a practical and regenerating brotherhood with our prejudices being overcome, step by step.

To hear the melody, then, is to transform discord into harmony. We will then know that we are the Light in the Sound and the Sound in the Light.

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Beverley Champion is a past National President of The Theosophical Society in Australia and gives regular study classes on *The Secret Doctrine* at Adelaide Lodge. She will be the featured presenter at the forthcoming Springbrook event on ‘Soul Nourishment’. See also page 88.

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It is a well-known fact in Physical Science, as well as in Occultism, that the aggregate sound of Nature - such as heard in the roar of great rivers, the noise produced by the waving tops of trees in large forests, or that of a city heard at a distance - is a definite single tone of quite an appreciable pitch. This is shown by physicists and musicians. Thus Professor Rice (Chinese Music) shows that the Chinese recognised the fact thousands of years ago by saying that ‘the waters of the Hoang-ho rushing by, intoned the kung’ called ‘the great tone’ in Chinese music; and he shows this tone corresponding with the F, ‘considered by modern physicists to be the actual tonic of Nature.’

The Secret Doctrine

From the Concrete to the Abstract -

the Spiritual Path in Krishnamurti's
'Truth is a Pathless Land' Speech

Simon O'Rourke



Every major religion or spiritual philosophy draws its adherents to the ideal of the Spiritual Path or Way. It is the Tao, or Way, 'Strait is the Gate and narrow is the Way', and the 'Way, the truth and the life' of Christianity, the Path and Way of Hinduism and of Buddhism, the Way of Sufism, and so on. The same Path is described under many names, and like Nature is an aspect of life which cannot belong to any one Religion or Philosophy alone.

Many have explored the Path directly, and many are preparing. Although the same ideas permeate all the great religions and philosophies, the most succinct explanation of the Path may be found in the teaching of the Buddha's Four Noble Truths, the last of which contains the Noble Eightfold Path: Right Belief, Right Thought, Right Speech Right Action, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Exertion, Right Memory, Right Meditation. We could say much about each of these, and many insights are certainly found in the theosophical classics, *At the Feet of the Master*, *The Voice of the Silence*, *Light on the Path* and *The Masters and the Path*, which broadly describe the stages of preparation, the beginning of the Path, and beyond.

However, in discussions about the spiritual Path, an oft-quoted phrase from Jiddu Krishnamurti, or 'K', is that 'Truth is a pathless land', so I was intrigued to read the full speech (on the dissolution of the Order of the Star, 1929). I found, perhaps not surprisingly, that it contains many theosophical ideas which yet allude to the ideal of the one spiritual Path. His words are couched in quite strong phrases on first reading,

particularly the opening paragraph, though we may note that the statements of past religious reformers may be perceived as equally bold, unconditional and challenging. If we take some of the expressions attributed to Jesus, for instance, such as that he requires mercy – or love – and not sacrifice (Matt 9: 9-13), or to be perfect as the Father in Heaven is perfect (Matt 5:48), we find that each of these Truths is difficult to ignore, is not easily resolved; their meaning requires a much deeper understanding.

K stated:

I maintain that Truth is a pathless land, and you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion, by any sect.

Truth, being limitless, unconditioned, unapproachable by any path whatsoever, cannot be organised; nor should any organisation be formed to lead or to coerce people along any particular path.

From the Concrete to the Abstract, from the False to the True

Taken by itself, this quoted paragraph by K appears to condemn the very idea of the Path. However, the appearance is washed away in the wider context of the full speech. To begin with, K's speech as a whole makes a very definite distinction between the eternal, formless and timeless aspects of the One Life in which we live, and which is invisible to our mental, emotional and physical senses; and the temporal, formative and transient aspects of life perceptible to the personal senses and thought processes. The eternal aspect is beyond the

temporal world, yet is inseparable from it, and is within us and without us. Every partial truth, no matter how true in itself, is yet incomplete and bounded, and therefore belongs to the temporal world. The greater always naturally contains the lesser.

When K says that Truth is essentially a *pathless land*, he echoes Madame Blavatsky (HPB) in her work *The Key to Theosophy*, she in turn echoing the Ancient Wisdom, when she draws on Eastern comparisons to tell us; ‘Theosophy [Divine Wisdom] is the *shoreless ocean* [italics mine] of universal Truth’. Both of these metaphors, the *pathless land* and the *shoreless ocean*, point towards something which is formless, abstract – and without boundaries – like the breath of abstract Spirit.

“ *When K says that Truth is essentially a pathless land, he echoes HPB in her work The Key to Theosophy, she in turn echoing the Ancient Wisdom, when she draws on Eastern comparisons to tell us; ‘Theosophy [Divine Wisdom] is the shoreless ocean of universal Truth’.* ”

In saying that ‘you cannot approach it [Truth] by any path whatsoever’, there are two aspects to this: again, the eternal and the temporal. If we may deal with the temporal first, we live in an age in which the Path or Way has become very much a personal experience – many people speak in terms of ‘my path’ and ‘your path’, or ‘my journey’ and ‘your journey’. The idea of a personal journey may be important and meaningful, however it is also susceptible to change, which shows its transient nature. Similarly, every path that accentuates only one or a few qualities, though useful, is incomplete, and therefore belongs to the temporal world. Groups of people have pointed out the Way through particular shared or collective qualities, the most common being based on devotion or *bhakti* yoga, knowledge or *jnana* yoga and self-sacrifice or *karma* yoga. In another sense, these qualities form the practices and interests respectively of the Mystic and Martyr (Greek,

meaning ‘witness’), the theologian who seeks to understand, and those inspired towards service to others through the parable of the Good Samaritan.

All of these individual Paths or journeys are significant as they interweave through the greater evolutionary scheme of life, just as every step is important to those who are next to us, and the ones who follow. However, if we may draw a distinction between evolution and the Path, we may say that the flow of evolution distinguishes between the life that flows unconsciously, unknowingly, instinctively; and the life that flows consciously, knowingly and in harmony with Divine Law – intuitively, in the higher sense of that word, and insightfully. We could suggest that when the outer personality becomes aware of the urgent necessity to act largely in response to the inner life, rather than external circumstances, this comes close to marking the beginning of our journey on the one Spiritual Path. As *Light on the Path* further reminds us, we must gradually become the Path itself, the Way itself, free of the feeling of separation from every other life, and losing all sense of the duality between the material world and the spiritual world, so that every intention flows unhindered from the Spiritual.

The Inner Life

This Path may only be found by going within. As the Delphic Oracle once declared, ‘Oh Man, know thyself, and thou shalt know the universe and the gods’. ‘Man’ of course refers to the full human being, not simply the outer personality. We would not exclude the outer life, the counterpart to the inner, as the great Teachers all point to the fact that it is impossible to develop on the Path without universal Love. Love keeps no record of wrongs, although Divine justice, or the karma of our past actions, keeps an exact record, and our sympathy reaches out to those who suffer. Even in the worst of cases, where the suffering does not cease or death is inevitable, love, as healing, is always valuable because it gives two things which the sufferer cannot find for himself or herself: relief and strength in all its varieties – moral, ethical, psychological and physical. Yet one’s union with the Path begins

through the conscious awareness of the inner life, which is the real source of the power to love and heal.

K also makes the same distinction between the many external paths of human invention, which are personal, and the one true Path, which leads to the 'kingdom of the eternal'. At a talk he gave on 6 August 1949, he tells us:

Now, if you go into it very clearly and thoroughly, with intelligence, you see that to truth there can be no path; there is no path as yours and mine – the path of service, the path of knowledge, the path of devotion, and the other innumerable paths that philosophers have invented.

As *Light on the Path* (20) explains so well:

To each temperament there is one road which seems the most desirable. But the way is not found by devotion alone, by religious contemplation alone, by ardent progress, by self-sacrificing labour, by studious observation of life. None alone can take the disciple more than one step onwards. All steps are necessary to make up the ladder.

As the second of the three great truths, recorded in *Light on the Path*, tells us: 'The principle which gives life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard, or seen, or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.' This perception is 'God-knowledge', if we can use this term in its highest sense, or Theosophy. In the first fragment of *The Voice of the Silence* it is said that 'There is but one road to the Path; at its very end alone the Voice of the Silence can be heard. The ladder by which the candidate ascends is formed of rungs of suffering and pain; these can be silenced only by the voice of virtue.' If we look for the meaning of 'virtue', the dictionary describes its archaic or older meaning as 'an effective, active, or inherent power or force' – that is, strength. Perception, for the one who desires it, arises through self-development together with purification, once known as 'character building', in which we come to experience and know both our virtues and vices – and from the knowledge of these opposites, the building of our strength and the purification of our weaknesses, we derive our power and compassion.

Educating Ourselves

The last great Truth says that we are each our own absolute law-giver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to ourselves, the decreer of our own life, our own reward, our own punishment. In other words, each of us is our own authority, our own key, and responsible for working out our own salvation, our own perfection, or fullness.

K stated in his 1929 speech:

you have the idea that only certain people hold the key to the Kingdom of Happiness. No one holds it. No one has the authority to hold that key. That key is your own self, and in the development and the purification and in the incorruptibility of that self alone is the Kingdom of Eternity.

And this is the essential nature of the Path. This does not mean that we relinquish the help of the right teacher, rather, that we learn with their aid to draw on our own powers. After all, it would not be unreasonable to realise that as we attain to unity with the higher Self, we would also attain unity to some degree with those Masters and Teachers who have travelled the Path before us, who have experience of the Eternal. Whatever merit we gain can only come from our own efforts, however any rejection of the living and eternal Wisdom says more about one's own failure to discern the true from the false than about the Wisdom itself. Eventually there is union with all of the Great Masters, leading to the Word, or Logos, an expression of the formless and unmanifest Divine Voice – who collectively are the Elohim. When we first begin to meditate, Nirvana appears to be a place or destination, and as we continue we gradually realise that it is Life itself

According to the words attributed to St. Paul:

When the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.

(1 Corinthians 13:10-12)



For there to be a ‘Man’, the child must die, so to speak, so that the Man, the higher and Divine Self within each of us, may be fully realised in every action, feeling and thought. Similarly the personality must be outgrown, naturally, so that the Christ nature within may manifest, and become liberated. We may apply the word Christ, which means ‘the Anointed’, to any similar title such as Buddha, or Krishna, or any other representative name.

And as Rumi further explains, the ascension from the child to the adult, from the corruptible to the incorruptible, is not found in the physical and solid world, but in the spiritual and abstract, ‘not like the ascension of a mortal to the moon; nay, but like the ascension of a sugar-cane to sugar, ... not like the ascension of a vapour to the sky; nay, but like the ascension of an embryo to rationality’.

K does not appear to reject prior knowledge and books, which are necessary tools in life if every student is to benefit by the work of others, except in those instances when we allow our inner freedom to be constrained by partially remembered knowledge, opinions and books, held up to support outer authoritarianism, dogmatism and indoctrination. A dogma or doctrine is not good or bad in itself, and may actually be true and useful in preparation for one’s own investigations. The danger arises when we relinquish our right to question, explore

and validate. To teach is to share knowledge, and help, and sharing in its essence is a form of altruism and love.

When freely and willingly explored in the right spirit of self-education, dogmas and doctrines or teachings – by any name – can point us towards the rain of direct knowledge and blessings, and can help to clear our inner clouds of doubt, fear and confusion. K touched on this idea at one of his schools, Brockwood Park in England, on 1 September 1981:

The questioner says: are you not contradicting yourself when the teachers and the students in all these schools are trying to understand their own conditioning, educating themselves not only academically, but also educating themselves to understand their own whole conditioning, their whole nature, their whole psyche? One doesn’t quite see the contradiction. ... We are trying not only to educate academically to ‘O’ and ‘A’ levels, but also to cultivate an understanding, an inquiry into the whole psychological structure of human beings.

The Path to the Inner Life

HPB once wrote of the Path that:

There *is* a road, steep and thorny, beset with perils of every kind, but yet a road, and it leads to the very heart of the Universe: I can tell you how to find those who will show you the secret gateway that opens inward only, and closes fast behind the neophyte for evermore. There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer; there is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through; there is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount. For those who win onwards there is reward past all telling—the power to bless and save humanity; for those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come.

K further similarly tells us in his 1929 speech, in describing this Path or ascension to Truth, that it is possible to reach the eternal: ‘Truth cannot be brought down, rather the individual must make the effort to ascend to it. ... If you would attain to the mountain-top you must pass through the valley, climb the steeps, unafraid of the dangerous precipices.’ In climbing the

steeps – that road steep and thorny because our growth has made this choice a necessity – we learn that dauntless courage, along with spotless purity and strong intellect, are the qualities essential for success.

He goes on to say: ‘But those who really desire to understand, who are looking to find that which is eternal, ... they will become the flame, because they understand.’ Towards the end of the little book, *At the Feet of the Master*, it says, if I may paraphrase, that one who is on the Path exists not for the self, but for others; one has forgotten oneself, and become immersed in the great work in order that one may serve them. He or she is as a pen in the hand of the Divine, through which the Divine thought may flow and find for itself an expression down here, which could not occur without a pen, as it were. Yet at the same time one is also *a living plume of fire*, raying out upon the world the Divine Love which fills one’s heart. This is something to remind us that by finishing his 1929 speech in which he left the Society with the same ideal and hope with which he closed his first little book nearly twenty years earlier, that Theosophy – the Ancient Wisdom – is the key, the cornerstone and background to his teachings.

The message of the great Teachers is very clear—never to be satisfied with anything but the *essence* of the essence. K’s teachings are part of the Ancient Wisdom and, along with our theosophical literature, are united in their conflict (or ‘stance against’) authoritarianism, materialism and ignorance.

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The Three Objects as Action

Denise Frost



Like the threads of a garment, the three Objects are interwoven to form the fabric upon which the work of the Theosophical Society is founded. That work, to quote our current International President Radha Burnier, is ‘human regeneration’, a bringing into being of our Divine nature. Radha defines it as an inner rebirth arising from a state of awareness ‘without the accumulated burdens of the mind’, ‘a renewal in one’s way of looking at things, which will also be a renewal in relationships and in society’.

Human regeneration points to the need for self-understanding and indeed, Radha suggests that ‘if we truly understand what we are, all our relationships will change’. To effect change requires taking action and the three Objects point to the type of practice that will bring about that radical change. Each begins with a verb, a word of action that also suggests relationship: *To form* a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood without distinction ... ; *To encourage* the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science; *To investigate* the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in the human being. Although each Object could be taken to stand in isolation, they are in fact closely related to one another and could be regarded as a trinity of right action. Using the equilateral triangle as a symbolic representation, I suggest it is the third Object that forms the base upon which the other two rise to a fullness of expression.

To Investigate

So what is the third Object directing us to do? *To investigate* is to look or enquire into something in order to find out the facts or uncover the truth. In other words, the senses gather information and the mind works to recognise and make meaning of it; a process of comparison and naming takes place – it is not that, it is this. Naming implies recognition, ‘re-cognition’ or memory of past experiences which includes the prejudices that arise from the emotions such as likes, dislikes, fears and desires – ‘the accumulations of the mind’. What we think is a new idea is actually thought confined to the limits of what already exists in memory, but rearranged in such a way that it appears new. Clearly this approach does not lead to a ‘renewal in one’s way of looking at things’.

To investigate the unexplained and latent directs us to make meaning of something unknown and *unmanifest*, and therefore *unnamed*. It suggests

- a) a way of looking in which form is not considered, that is, going beyond form, as well as
- b) awareness without a conditioned response; a mind free from labelling because the instant something is named it is given form – it exists even if only as a thought, for thought is form.

To go beyond form requires the mind to be empty, to have ‘no thing’ in its content. This is problematic in two ways:

1) The human being is conditioned to giving attention to form – we ‘get lost in the matter of things’.

2) Mind is constantly busy moving between past events and projection into the future.

Can we look at nature and ourselves with an empty mind, that is, without activity and without the habit of naming?

“ When full attention is given to something, there is a surrendering to ‘what is’. For example, when we are fully engrossed in listening to a piece of music we give way to the present moment. In this act of self-abandonment awareness of a separated self dissolves, mental chatter stops and all that remains is a timeless space in which we resonate with the ‘song’, the innate essence. ”

To Listen

In *Light on the Path* a glimpse is given of a different approach. It directs us to: ‘Listen to the song of life.’ When full attention is given to something, there is a surrendering to ‘what is’. For example, when we are fully engrossed in listening to a piece of music we give way to the present moment. In this act of self-abandonment awareness of a separated self dissolves, mental chatter stops and all that remains is a timeless space in which we resonate with the ‘song’, the innate essence.

The same can happen when attention is focused on an object in nature (it may be a flower, a tree, a rock). As we look at it, taking in its form, there arises in consciousness a sense of something more, a mystical presence. Eckhart Tolle explains: ‘When you perceive nature only through the mind, through thinking, you cannot sense its aliveness, its beingness. You see the form only and are unaware of the life within the form – the sacred mystery ...’. He suggests that: ‘When you perceive nature, let there be spaces of no thought, no mind. When you approach nature in this way it will respond to you ...’.

When we listen to ‘the song of life’, giving full attention to an object in nature, we catch a glimpse of an essence beyond the form. We notice how silent that object is, how surrendered to life and deeply peaceful it is. We realise that the object is completely at one with what it is; unlike most human beings it is not trying to be something else, it just ‘is’. We observe how the object responds to whatever comes its way. It does not react or resist, but simply rests in a state of harmony and unity with its surroundings; it exists in a state of pure Being.

Stillness

We also perceive a profound stillness surrounding the object, a vast far-reaching space, calm, serene and silent. The object lives in a state of deep stillness. In the very moment that we become aware of the stillness, that stillness spontaneously arises in us. Our body calms, our noisy mind becomes silent – our whole being stills. As we resonate to the serenity of nature we come to a place of rest deep within ourself.

This is the meditative state in which the mind ceases to name or label. It is an emptiness that is rich with receptiveness in which the ineffable dimension of nature is felt. It spontaneously arises, or ‘is’, when we are fully aligned with the present moment; completely ‘here’, not lost in thought, not opposing or arguing with the ‘suchness’ of now, but giving our whole attention to ‘what is’. All form dissolves: there is no ‘me’ or ‘other’. In the resounding stillness we come to know that the same essence that is within the object and which surrounds it is also within ourselves. We sense one dynamic, unitary life everywhere, subtle, profound, sacred. There arises in consciousness the intrinsic sense of connectedness to every other being and with the Source of Life itself. In that moment we comprehend the truth of our being.

In other words, by saying ‘yes’ to what is we become aligned with the power and intelligence of Life itself. By transferring our attention from the form to the space around and within it, there is a shift from identification with the illusory sense of self (the mind-made who and what we think we are and the claim of a separate

identity), to seeing all life as a manifestation of the Absolute. We identify with the Divine power within. In so doing we come to know the infinite depth of what we are. We know ourselves to be 'I am'. 'I am' comes from the verb 'to be'. It means to be present, to live; to be fully alive is 'to become'.

In the stillness of no thought the silent voice is heard. It speaks of unity and harmony, connectedness, love and peace. We learn from Nature the lessons of Life: what it is 'to be' – to be still, to be our true self, to be where Life is, to be fully at one with the totality of Life. We realise that everything in nature has a purpose, value and meaning in itself, as opposed to what we attribute to it.

When we give attention to something and there is no mental noise around it, there is simply the perception of 'that' – the truth. 'Real knowing can only arise when the barriers within the mind fall away completely allowing direct contact between our inner being and the inner being of all else.' (source unknown) In the stillness of no thought there is a shift from thinking to awareness. When we bring stillness to our investigations of nature and the human being, to our study of comparative religion, philosophy and science, and to our relationships, a new dimension reveals itself.

Through investigating the unexplained and latent we experience the power of stillness. In its embrace we connect with the sacred essence, the 'hidden life vibrant in every atom', we feel the power of Life itself and know it to be our

Divine nature; we learn of the law of harmony, of 'being' and realise the underlying unity of all life. When stillness is brought to the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science, we come to know the 'hidden light shining in every creature' (i.e. form), the inherent truth behind the words. When we meet life's experiences in stillness, we bring serenity and humility to our relationships, we quite naturally radiate peace and harmony; we cannot help but become an agent of love 'embracing all in oneness'.

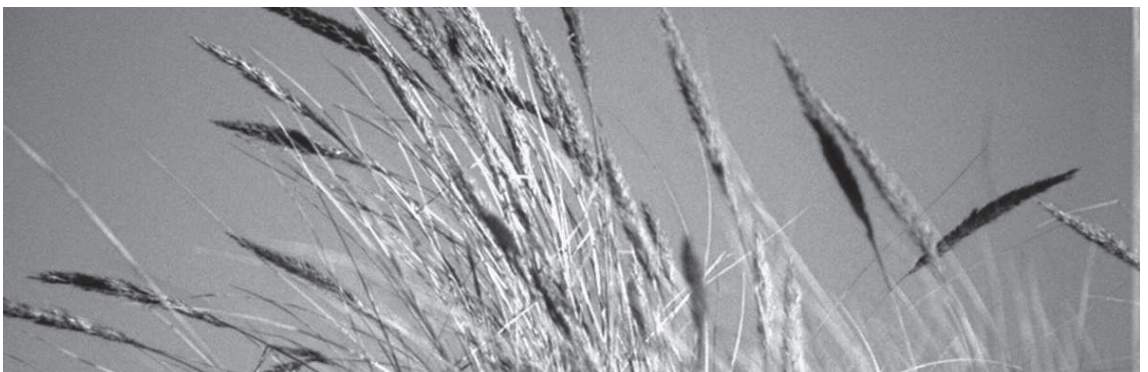
It is indeed a new way of looking at things. Deep within ourselves we discover a centre from which we can meet all of life's experiences with a freshness of outlook and clarity of perception. It is then that we can become an agent for positive change in the world. Radha Burnier sums it up this way: 'If we see truth in the ultimate sense of the term – which is the same as realising unity and knowing the nature of love – then all our actions and relationships are bound to change qualitatively.'

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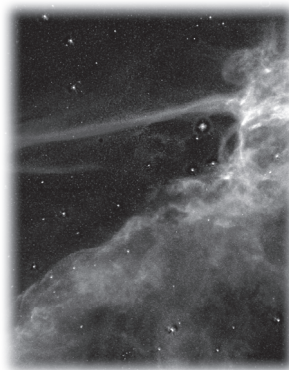
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Modern Science and the Ancient Wisdom: a View into the Ideas of Ervin László

Victor MacGill



The Evolution of Theosophy

While the Ancient Wisdom is itself eternal and unchanging, everything that exists in time and space evolves towards greater and greater levels of complexity and perfection. Theosophy itself is no exception. The expression of the Ancient Wisdom during the times of our earlier pioneers was clothed in the values and understandings of their age. The understandings of science, religion and philosophy in the time of Helena Blavatsky and the other theosophical pioneers are virtually unrecognisable compared to our present understandings. Many fields of science were in their infancy, such as evolution and psychology; and many other fields simply did not exist. There was no knowledge of the structure of the atom, DNA, quantum physics, relativity, and Complexity Theory to name a few. Technology has totally changed not only how we operate in our world, but also our values and beliefs. Not all that science and enterprise has brought us has been positive, but it has nevertheless had an enormous impact on all our lives. Theosophy needs to evolve to be relevant and meaningful to the people of this early 21st century.

Creatures that evolve successfully to remain fit for their environment have four characteristics that may help us see how we might adapt to a rapidly changing world. First, we must be aware of the environment in which we exist. We must be able to assess our level of fitness. Are we growing and thriving, or under threat? Secondly, we need to retain what works. We must identify and cherish the core essence of Theosophy as

handed down from the Masters. Thirdly, we need to be prepared to leave behind that which no longer increases fitness for the environment. Finally, there is the willingness to look at new forms and try new strategies.

The new developments of science, religion and philosophy are increasingly backing up the original message of Theosophy. So how can we use this to find new expressions of the Ancient Wisdom for the modern age?

Ervin László

Hungarian polymath, Ervin László, has some interesting ideas that may help bridge this gap. Now in his eighties, he has published over seventy books and worked at prestigious universities such as Yale and Princeton. Ervin László was an important pioneer in systems theory and general evolution theory and has even been a concert pianist. He is increasingly concerned about the looming environmental crisis as attested to by a number of his latest books.

Ervin László writes of the quantum vacuum, which is a standard part of quantum physics. It is a field, just like a magnetic, electromagnetic or gravitational field. It cannot be seen, but we can measure its effect on our world. The field is superdense and superfluid and extends to all time and all space. Everything in our world springs from the quantum vacuum and returns to it. Every point on the quantum vacuum holds information on its state.

Every action that takes place in our world leaves an imprint on the quantum vacuum. It is like a ship going through the ocean. As it sails on, it leaves a wake that holds information about the ship. We can gain information on the size, speed and direction of the ship from the shapes of the waves. Unlike the waves in the ocean, however, the messages in the quantum vacuum do not fade away over time. The quantum vacuum stores all information about all places in all times.

“ Every action that takes place in our world leaves an imprint on the quantum vacuum. It is like a ship going through the ocean. As it sails on, it leaves a wake that holds information about the ship. We can gain information on the size, speed and direction of the ship from the shapes of the waves. ”

The Quantum Vacuum - a Misnomer?

The name quantum vacuum is actually a misnomer. It came about because it was first discovered in a vacuum, but what they found, of course, was that particles appeared out of ‘nowhere’ into this supposed vacuum. Ervin László often prefers to call it the quantum plenum because it is so full (the Latin term for full is *plenus*).

Entanglement is a term coined by Erwin Schrödinger to describe the strange quality of sub-atomic particles such that once a pair of particles have interacted in some way, they are forever linked. From that moment on a change in one of the particles generates a corresponding change in the other regardless of how far apart they are. This ‘knowing’ of the state of another particle occurs instantaneously through the quantum vacuum, without any discernable message having moved between the two particles.

This all means there is an underlying fabric to the universe, from which the world we know emerges and the universe as we know it is interconnected through the quantum vacuum.

Everything I have written to this point is accepted by mainstream quantum physicists, but Ervin László makes one important assumption that mainstream scientists are generally not willing to accept which has enormous implications. He states that the quantum vacuum is itself conscious. He maintains that there is an intelligence within the structure of the vacuum, which, of course, reaches all time and all space. In order for entanglement to occur each particle within the vacuum must be ‘aware’ of its own state to be able to entangle with another particle. Could there be a link between this ‘awareness’ or ‘knowing’ and the idea that the quantum vacuum is inherently conscious?

Where do life and consciousness come from?

If we ask mainstream scientists how life came to be, they are unable to provide an answer. Organic compounds that do not have life, somehow just become alive. Scientists similarly struggle to explain what consciousness is or where it comes from.

Mainstream scientists maintain that mind is the product of the brain, and thus we each have our own individual mind. They say that in some unexplained way, the mind arises from the patterns of neurons firing within the brain. While they maintain that our minds and brains are separate, they recognise that our brains and minds are heavily linked through our interactions, especially through language and culture.

Life and consciousness seem to just magically appear. But could it be, rather, that life and consciousness appear in our world, because the underlying fabric of the universe is *itself* conscious and so it is only logical that life and consciousness should come to be expressed in the world of time and space?

Again mainstream scientists will tell us that at death all life ends and nothing survives. If consciousness always exists, then the dropping away of the body need not signal the end of consciousness. It may not continue to exist in the same form as previously, but if we accept

László's assertion that consciousness survives death, then life after death becomes a logical conclusion and reincarnation entirely possible.

Ervin László makes one further assertion that links his ideas even more strongly with theosophical ideas. He maintains that the quantum vacuum is in fact the same as the Hindu *Akashic* record, especially noting how it holds information of all events that have ever happened. This then makes the quantum vacuum a possible mechanism for such phenomena as ESP, clairvoyance and remote viewing.

Conclusions

We live in very uncertain and difficult times. People are looking for ideas that can help them make sense of all the chaos. Ervin László describes reality in terms of scientific concepts that are in harmony with the core essence of Theosophy and in ways that make sense to the people of our age.

For further information on Ervin László:

<http://www.ervinlaszlo.com>

Books by Ervin László include:

Science and the Reenchantment of the Cosmos
CosMos

Quantum Shift in the Global Brain

The Connectivity Hypothesis



Victor MacGill moved to Wagga Wagga eighteen months ago from New Zealand, where he was the President of the Dunedin Branch of the Theosophical Society.



Higgs Boson Breakthrough

On 4 July 2012 scientists of the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN), based in Geneva, Switzerland, claimed the discovery of a new particle which is consistent with the Higgs boson. Both of the Higgs boson search experiments at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) achieved a level of certainty in their data worthy of a 'discovery'. However, it was reported on the BBC News website that more work will be needed to be certain that what they see is a Higgs. The Higgs boson would help explain why particles have mass, and fills a glaring hole in the current best theory to describe how the Universe works. The Higgs mechanism proposes that there is a field permeating the Universe – the Higgs field – which allows particles to obtain their mass.

Students of *The Secret Doctrine* (published 1888) will be familiar with the statements contained in Stanza III, sloka 12 and its commentary:

Then Svābhavāt sends Fohat to harden the atoms. Each (*of these*) is a part of the Web (*Universe*). Reflecting the 'Self-Existent Lord' (*Primeval Light*) like a mirror, each becomes in turn a world ... 'Fohat hardens the atoms,' *i.e.*, by infusing energy into them; he scatters the atoms or primordial matter. 'He scatters himself while scattering matter into atoms.'

In Stanza V, sloka 2(c), we find the statement '... Fohat is transformed into that force which brings together the elemental atoms and makes them aggregate and combine.'

Some food for thought.

Viewpoint

**Ref: Theosophy in Australia, June 2012,
vol. 76, no.2.**

Dear Sister:

Many congratulations on a good compilation. I read with interest your lead article. You have hit the nail on the head by saying 'that our first and primary Object is worked out best in the company of others'. That is the way for direct communication in which we not only hear but visually absorb the emotions, the notes, the body language and so on. We can interact and clarify first hand what is obscure. The next mode is the phone call. The disadvantage is that it has to be short, though there is direct understanding. The next is a deliberately written message and with a definiteness of purpose. SMS and other casual messages are of no avail. I write more than one hundred and fifty letters a month in my own handwriting because it maintains flow of thought and is something personal, like a handcrafted gift.

Greetings from Adyar to all your members.

M.P. Singhal
International Vice-President
The Theosophical Society

A visit to South Africa in December 2010 with an unexpected outcome:

I was reading your editorial for this [June] issue of the journal. The subject was on the effect of modern technology on connecting people and on the effect of social media. With social media, people can have their say, whether the

world is listening or not. This brought to mind an experience I had when I visited South Africa at Christmas time in December 2010.

I was talking to a man who was prominent in his local Baptist church. At that stage in my thinking about the way the world works I had been pondering the view that the purpose of creation was to create consciousness. I put this idea to him, thinking that he might be interested in my insight. He was not at all enthusiastic about the idea.

A couple of days later I met him again and he had given the matter some thought. He said that in his view we were created to worship God. I, in turn, was not particularly enthusiastic about his view at the time.

However, some months later I was watching the *Big Ideas* programme on the ABC that comes on before the midday news on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. One of the speakers gave his talk on the idea that the one thing people wanted most in life was personal attention or to be acknowledged. In other words people like to be seen and heard and are disappointed if they are not. It then struck me why there should be a connection with the idea that God should wish to be worshipped. My friend had projected the idea of a desire to have personal attention to the idea that God would like to have peoples' attention and admiration and, because of His (or Her) status as creator, be worshipped.

The moral of the story was the realisation that this desire for personal attention accounts in a rather significant way for a large proportion of the ways in which people behave and interact.

David Warren-Smith, Adelaide Lodge

Review on *Christian Gnosis*, Richard Larkin:

May I make a brief comment on Richard Larkin's interesting review of C.W. Leadbeater's updated and re-edited book *Christian Gnosis*.

Much of what Richard Larkin says is correct, but I would caution any reader of *Theosophy in Australia* who might get the impression that such a work is a summing up of Liberal Catholic Church theology.

Apart from anything, Leadbeater's work and additional writings from here and there, were essentially his 'understanding' and in no way were meant to reflect Liberal Catholic Church

theology in its entirety. To do so would place the LCC into 'dogmatism'; a situation that it has always (and quite correctly so) distanced itself from. And anyway, let us face it, Leadbeater's thoughts in theological matters were already dated by the time they were published.

His work is indeed 'fascinating', but in no way is it meant to be an absolute statement of Liberal Catholic Church understanding.

Revd. Dr. Arthur Mowle, Calingiri, W.A.

“ On the 17th of November next the Septenary term of trial given the Society at its foundation in which to discreetly 'preach us' will expire. One or two of us hoped that the world had so far advanced intellectually, if not intuitionally, that the Occult doctrine might gain an intellectual acceptance, and the impulse given for a new cycle of occult research. Others – wiser as it would now seem – held differently, but consent was given for the trial. It was stipulated, however, that the experiment should be made independently of our personal management; that there should be no abnormal interference by ourselves. So casting about we found in America the man to stand as leader – a man of great moral courage, unselfish, and having other good qualities. He was far from being the best, but (as Mr. Hume speaks in H.P.B.'s case) – he was the best one available. With him we associated a woman of most exceptional and wonderful endowments. Combined with them she had strong personal defects, but just as she was, there was no second to her living fit for this work. We sent her to America, brought them together – and the trial began. From the first both she and he were given to clearly understand that the issue lay entirely with themselves. And both offered themselves for the trial for certain remuneration in the far distant future as – as K.H. would say – soldiers volunteer for a Forlorn Hope. ”

The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett, Letter 45, chronological edition, 1882

[The above quotation may throw some light on the question on the Mahatmas and the TS which appears on page 87. - Ed.]



Questions and Answers



We continue some responses from the panel during the question and answer session during the Annual Convention in January.

Question: *What is the theosophical position on evil? Does it exist as a discrete entity in the world? (Pamela Petersen, Sydney):*

Phoebe Williams, Brisbane:

If you look at the work of Carl Jung, he would tie this in with the collective unconscious. It comes back to a type of ignorance. There is plenty of evil around and it is just a lack of spirituality. Evil does exist – it is a very selfish desire to be destructive. There is no spirituality, which would be the case if you really thought through what your actions were and how they would manifest. The masses can create a lot of evil if they are striving for the same thing – to deny another person the right to life, a way of life, or whatever. These people are really suppressing natural evolution.

Harry Bayens, Perth:

This is not an easy question to answer. My job caused me to be in court a little while ago and I listened to a case which involved someone who had been involved in a very violent crime. The person concerned had been abused from a very early age which resulted in a whole range of behaviours which some might call evil. I do not think that evil, as such, intrinsically exists.

However, certain things that happen to people can result in them entering a mental condition with a display of outrageous behaviours. Look at the way ‘normal’ humans behave towards

each other, e.g. as a result of taking alcohol and drugs. In Perth there is a serious injury or death virtually every month due to this.

Simon O’Rourke, Sydney:

Evil is such an emotionally charged word. In Christian countries particularly, after 2,000 years, it is hard for some people to shake off the idea of some evil character and this makes them feel powerless. However, in all of the great philosophies it is not so much the case that evil exists. Perhaps a better term would be ‘growing pains’ because in the great field of life there is spirit and matter, with the progression from the spiritual into the material and then the return back to the spiritual. In order to become material there are forces in nature which are compressing, materialising out of raw materials – a little bit like the creation of diamonds, which are something pure and beautiful. Most of what we call evil really has to do with the ideas that arise within the human mind which sees things as evil if pain is involved. Theosophy teaches us not to look at things in the short term, but in the longer term; to realise that everything has a purpose. It is much better to simply say, ‘Well, I do not know what the outcome of this is going to be. It *appears* to be evil.’ This does not mean that we should necessarily stand back if we see people in pain but we should hang onto the concept lightly, philosophically, rather than fearfully.

Olga Gostin, Adelaide:

There are positives and negatives – we have these polarities within us. This is clearly evident in the depths to which we can sink, as in the case

of torturing others, for example. I do not know what the sages say but I would neither deny nor excuse that dark side. We are living in a world awash with political correctness in which it is unacceptable to say that doing a certain thing or engaging in some customs is neither good nor excusable – but morally wrong. If we do so, we may be accused of being elitist or racist. While we acknowledge goodness and spirituality at the personal level, we mostly fail to run society in a just and positive way. When it comes to society, I do think that lower common denominators become operative, ranging all the way to evil regimes. We delude ourselves if we engage in political correctness to excuse injustice. In relation to Aboriginal issues, there have been undeniable systemic failures as in the Stolen Generations for example. This is the history that we (white Australians) have to face. Historically, we did lace rations of flour with strychnine for distribution to Aborigines dispossessed of their land, giving rise to the Aboriginal reference to poison dampers. That was deliberate and it was evil. But even against this background, there are Aboriginal people who will not resort to history as an excuse for substance abuse or self-harm: Don't excuse us (on historical grounds). In the end we are responsible for our own choices and actions.

Question: *Have the Mahatmas and the Theosophical Society parted ways?*
(Peter Brereton, Sydney)

Phoebe Williams:

I think there is still a great spiritual intelligence behind the Theosophical Society and we are part of it. In my opinion if that were not so, the Society just would not continue. I feel that the Adepts on some level will always be there. I think of them as a great spiritual intelligence, encouraging and inspiring us, or vivifying us through our higher principles.

Harry Bayens:

I am going to take the Devil's Advocate position. The Society consists of every member and it will live or die depending upon what we do, how we behave, et cetera. In astrological

terms we are moving from the age of Pisces into the Age of Aquarius. The Age of Pisces is perhaps symbolised by the old hierarchical, patriarchal societies and the Age of Aquarius is going to be the New Age when things will be done differently. Will the TS be a part of the new way or will it hang on to some of the old ways? Many organisations are dying, things are changing rapidly in the world, and I think the Society needs to take a very long, hard look at itself.

Simon O'Rourke:

I would not disagree with what Harry has said. This question can also refer to whether the Masters or Adepts are connected with the Theosophical Society not only in an invisible manner, but also in a physical manner as well. Do they just walk in and give a lecture at a particular convention, for example? It really does depend on us – on our attitudes, what we feel in our hearts, not just what we say and do. These are the things that could actually draw spiritual life into the presence of very material people. The Mahatmas were driven away from the Society at the time of the Coulomb affair when Madame Blavatsky was treated quite badly because of the report that accused her of being a fraud. Many TS members believed the report and gave up their membership, or harboured very suspicious feelings. These kinds of feelings drive the Mahatmas away, at least as far as a physical presence is concerned. If we want to change that then we have to change our attitudes, not blindly but consciously, reasonably and with common sense. If the Society dies then obviously the connection has died, but until that happens the best thing, I think, is to keep working towards the ideal. This will gradually draw these spiritual powers to us.

Olga Gostin:

I do not know. In practice, the Society is well worth preserving and looking after, cherishing and working for. And so it behoves each one of us, irrespective of what the Adepts are doing, to focus on getting our own house in order, practically speaking. The less we worry about the Adepts the better – they will know when to come.

National Calendar of Events ...



Springbrook Centre, 2184 Springbrook Road, Springbrook, QLD Fri 26th October (arrivals) to Tuesday 30th October (departures)

FOR MEMBERS AND THE PUBLIC

Theme: 'Soul Nourishment'

Featured Presenter: Beverley Champion,
former National President, the Theosophical Society in Australia

Additional presenters: Linda Oliveira and Phoebe Williams, Brisbane Lodge. Phoebe Williams is a long-time TS member from Brisbane and a trained artist who has given many talks and workshops on psychology and art since the 1990s. She feels that the role of the artist as a psychotherapist helps people discover their own wisdom through creativity.

Cost incl. meals: \$210 members / \$260 non-members (includes non-refundable \$10 registration fee)

Overview: Sessions will include drawing on the right side of the brain; the myth you are living; creating mandalas; creative writing; walking meditation; and a workshop exploring the psyche, spirit, and surroundings through art, poetry, music and story-telling meditation; among others.



Canyonleigh Centre, Bolitho House, Tugalong Road, Canyonleigh, NSW Fri 23rd November (arrivals) to Sunday 25th November (mid-afternoon departure)

FOR MEMBERS

Theme: 'Theosophy in the Light of Truth and Love'

**Presenters: Supporting Lecturers Barry Bowden
and Simon O'Rourke**

Evening sessions will be presented by **Linda Oliveira and Pedro Oliveira**

Cost incl. meals: \$120 (includes non-refundable \$10 registration fee)

Overview: Sessions will include Love records no wrong; Truth in relation to life and natural law; Love as a dynamic force in the world; On meditation, its practice and use; Dharma as truth in practical living; and Discussion of cyclic law as it relates to daily life and eternal life.



2013 National Convention – St. Mary's College, University of Melbourne Saturday 19th January (arrivals) to Saturday 26th January (departures)

FOR MEMBERS

Theme: 'Theosophical Insights and the Contemporary World'

Key Speakers: Professor Richard Silberstein and Dr Jenny McFarlane

Some of the additional speakers will include:

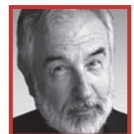
Victor Gostin, Linda Oliveira, Dara Tatray and Pedro Oliveira

Cost incl. meals: \$89 per night / \$623 for the full week

FULL PROGRAMME: will appear in the November 2012 issue

Early Deadline for Full Payment for Accommodation: 5th October.

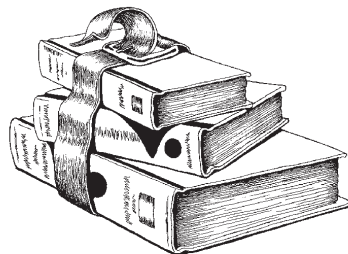
Please send in payments soon as places are filling up.



Registration forms for Springbrook and Canyonleigh events: available from the National Headquarters (pres@austheos.org.au / 02 9264 7065) and on the Section website: [www.austheos.org.au/ what's on](http://www.austheos.org.au/what's_on)

Registration forms for 2013 Convention: available from Lodges/Branches around the Section or on the Section website: [www.austheos.org.au/ what's on](http://www.austheos.org.au/what's_on)

Education



Exploring Theosophy: Study Courses available at the National Headquarters

1. Basic Course: A clear and accessible presentation of basic teachings. Includes a copy of the book *Life — Your Great Adventure*. Cost: **\$10**.

2. Intermediate Course: Based on the book *Ancient Wisdom — Modern Insight* (copy included), contrasts key ideas from *The Secret Doctrine* with the insights of modern eminent scientists. Cost: **\$30**.

3. Course on Meditation: Based on the book *Meditation — A Practical Study*, it presents the basics of meditation in a safe and accessible manner. Cost: **\$10**.

4. The Perennial Philosophy Past and Present: An intermediate course for individual study and group work, prepared by Dr Dara Tatray, presents the key ideas of the perennial philosophy. Cost: **\$20**.

5. Mysticism — Bridge to Nowhere: Written by Pedro Oliveira, it explores the mystical origins of Theosophy and the teachings of several well-known mystics. Cost: **\$10**.

6. Getting Acquainted with *The Secret Doctrine*: A comprehensive study course compiled by Dr John Algeo, intended as an introduction to the study of *The Secret Doctrine*. Cost: **\$10**.

7. An Introduction to Esoteric Principles: A good introduction to *The Secret Doctrine* and other writings of H. P. Blavatsky. Cost: **\$10**.

8. An Introduction to *The Mahatma Letters*: Designed to guide the student in the study of *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*. Cost: **\$10**.

9. Theosophy-An Introductory Study Course: A good introduction to Theosophy for beginners and enquirers. Cost: **\$10**.

10. Living the Wisdom - A Guide to Social Transformation: Designed as a series of workshops or discussion groups, it emphasises service and individual responsibility. Cost: **\$10**.

11. Myths of Our Lives — A Way to Personal Transformation: Compiled by Joy Mills, using Carol Pearson's book, *The Hero Within*, which discusses the six archetypes by which we live. Cost: **\$10**.

12. Paths to Wholeness: Encourages students to move toward a perspective and lifestyle of wholeness. Cost: **\$10**.

13. Personal Transformation in the Tradition of Annie Besant: Written for use by all interested in the Ancient Wisdom and also for those seeking personal unfoldment. Cost: **\$10**.

14. A Programme for Living the Spiritual Life: A study course on Study, Meditation, Self-improvement and Service. Cost: **\$10**.

Prices include postage.

For enquiries and orders please contact:

Acting Education Coordinator

edcoord@austheos.org.au

Tel.: (02) 9264 7056

The Theosophical Society in Australia, 4th Floor, 484 Kent St, Sydney NSW 2000.

www.austheos.org.au

*The Theosophical Society in Australia
Agenda - Convention
Business Meeting*



The 2013 Convention Business Meeting of The Theosophical Society in Australia will take place at 9.30a.m. on Sunday 20 January 2013 at St. Mary's College, University of Melbourne. This notification is provided in accordance with Rules 12 and 13 of the Rules of The Theosophical Society in Australia.

AGENDA

Roll-Call of Voting Delegates and Proxies
Confirmation of Minutes of 2012 Convention Business Meeting
National President's Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2012
National Treasurer's Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2012
Financial Statements and Balance Sheet for the Year Ended 31 August 2012, and Auditor's Report thereon
Budget for the Year Ending 31 August 2013
Appointment of Auditor
Announcement of Newly Appointed Officers
Announcement of Ballot Results:
- NSW/ACT, Victoria and Western Australia
Vote on Notices of Motion
Place and Time of Next Convention
Resolutions of Goodwill
Any Other Business

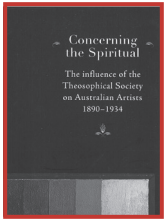


“ The Atman is that by which the universe is pervaded, but which nothing pervades; which causes all things to shine, but which all things cannot make to shine ... ”

“The wise man is one who understands that the essence of Brahman and of Atman is Pure Consciousness, and who realises their absolute identity. ”

Viveka-Chudamani

Reviews



Concerning the Spiritual
The influence of the
Theosophical Society on
Australian Artists 1890–1934
 Australian Scholarly Publishing
 North Melbourne, 2012.

A few years ago, on a visit to Perth Branch, I saw the striking portraits done by Florence Fuller of the founders of the Theosophical Society. This was my first conscious encounter with the work of that artist. It was also intriguing to learn that Jenny McFarlane had an article published on Fuller in *The Theosophist* in 2004 ('Florence Fuller in Adyar') and, as a hint perhaps of synchronicity, I rediscovered a copy of that article a few weeks before reading McFarlane's book *Concerning the Spiritual: the Influence of the Theosophical Society on Australian Artists 1890–1934*.

Canberra-based art historian and writer, Jenny McFarlane, has always been generous in sharing her knowledge and expertise with theosophists. She also acknowledges the support she has been given by many people associated with the Theosophical Society in its various locations world-wide, in the fulfilment of her project.

The resultant book will be read with much pleasure by theosophists and fellow-travellers, as well as those interested in the history of Australian art, and lovers of enquiry. It investigates the works of a selection of artists around the beginning of the last century who were either members of the Theosophical Society or closely associated with it – who 'sought to reconcile science with spirituality: the visible with the invisible and academic rationality with a concept of inner truth' – deeply theosophical concepts.

It is worth noting that at the beginning of the 20th century, theosophical thought was a point of lively discussion in artistic circles, and equated to the non-traditional – a part of the artist's vision. The TS appealed to intellectuals and, through the models of its early founders, offered women in particular the chance to enter the public domain.

The introduction to the theme is well thought out: the richly symbolic portrait of Annie Besant as orator, painted by Berthe Mouchette (1908–1910) is used as a starting point and, significantly, the oratorical skills of Besant were to be influential in enhancing interest in the TS in Australia after her successful lecture tours. Then, through a compilation of case studies, the author examines the relationship between art and the Theosophical Society in the early modern period.

The chapter dedicated to Jane Price (1860–1948) puts forward the argument that her artistic work is committed to the ideal of a spiritually charged Australia and, through a selection of colour plates of Price's paintings, we follow the author's proposition that Price was trying to communicate a spiritual rather than a material future for the country.

Portrait artist Florence Fuller's commitment to the Theosophical Society is examined – her desire to discover what she termed 'the hidden inner life' and the difficulty she had throughout her artistic life of expressing this on canvas with, perhaps the exception of the remarkable *Portrait of the Lord Buddha* (c1910). Well-known for her dedication to the TS in Perth, which she joined at the same time as Bessie Rischbieth, Fuller was invited to the TS Headquarters in Adyar, India, where she went in search of 'something deeper – something less easily expressed' and where she explored the works of contemporary

Indian artists. Her Buddha portrait dates from this period and was clearly influenced by her experiences in Adyar.

The concept of a country spiritualised through art, as conceived by Jane Price, was also taken up by Clarice Beckett, one of Max Meldrum's outstanding students. Beckett was a friend of the Hoile sisters, Beatrice and Marion, who – by their marriages into the Colquhoun and Ferdinando families respectively – were part of the influential Melbourne artistic community and were TS members. Beckett's work is strongly linked to, and influenced by, the TS experience in Melbourne and in her paintings of local places – which become very unordinary – she questioned the role of the artist's relations to the visible.

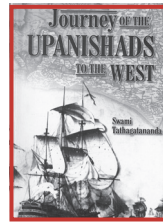
Ethel Carrick (1872–1952) came into contact with the TS in Paris where she did much of her early work. She had connections with various networks of theosophically-minded artists, such as Les Nabis and Les Tendances Nouvelles, at a time when there was an extremely fluid exchange of ideas permeating intellectual circles. In her art, Carrick was interested in finding the inner truth of the subject or, as in *Manly Beach* (1913) 'the living energy of vibrating forces within the universal organism'. As with the other artists, the author gives a clear descriptive account of the paintings in a way which is easy for the lay person to understand.

McFarlane also explores the influence of C.W. Leadbeater on artists, which is an aspect that is often overlooked. Leadbeater was in Sydney from 1914 to 1929 and his considerable influence on the work of three hitherto conservative artists is examined. Working within Leadbeater's vision photographer, Judith Fletcher; painter-etcher, Alfred Warner; and jeweller, Gustaf Köllerstrom, produced works which were quite extraordinary and 'were firmly attached to a reality only accessible to those with privileged sight'.

The case studies under examination – and this review gives only a sample – show indisputably the relationship between the TS and Australian art. Taking strands of the lives of various artists

the author skilfully weaves a rich tapestry of narrative and joins the intermingling threads of the contributions of a number of artists on the periphery of the theosophical connection to their relationship with the main protagonists. This deeply researched and annotated book does much to fill a lacuna in the artistic and cultural history of the Theosophical Society of the period.

Janice Scarabottolo



Journey of the Upanishads to the West

Swami Tathagatananda,
Advaita Ashrama Publication
Department, Kolkata, 2005

Before reading this book, it had seemed to me that Vedanta was a somewhat exotic, obscure and unknown philosophy from India. Perhaps this just reflected my own tortuous journey over the years, to a point where I'm now beginning to understand the nuances of this remarkable and original belief system. It certainly remains the case, though, that whenever a panel of religious experts is gathered on television to discuss social, spiritual or metaphysical questions, Vedanta is never represented, and even Buddhism is only occasionally included.

The great surprise then, after reading *Journey of the Upanishads to the West*, is how big an influence Vedanta, and Indian philosophy generally, have had on the world's intelligentsia down the ages. It is quite amazing to think that even as far back as Plato and Pythagoras, the Upanishads were being discussed, admired and absorbed by thinkers throughout the Mediterranean world; to such an extent that Plato's analogy of the shadows on the cave wall, for example, is considered by the author and others, to be a direct reference to Vedanta's belief in the illusory nature of the objective reality that our senses create.

This book by Swami Tathagatananda details clearly and precisely the impact that the

Upanishads have had through the centuries, from the tantalising influence they have had on Jesus and the gospels, right down to the twentieth century, in countries such as France, Germany, England, Russia and the United States. It describes in quite heroic terms, the men and women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who dedicated their lives to the task of making this wisdom available to the world. This included all kinds of people, from adventurers who travelled to India to discover an unknown land, to translators of Sanskrit and creators of dictionaries, which then allowed others to translate the sacred texts. Then, finally, it included philosophers in the West who wrote commentaries on these texts. These became an inspiration for many people who were searching for an alternative to Christianity; a Christianity that had drifted far from its original teaching and caused these people to become disillusioned with its demands and its excesses.

Swami Tathagatananda mentions a long list of thinkers and creative people who were directly inspired by the Upanishads, from poets such as Wordsworth, Coleridge and T.S. Eliott to

philosophers such as Kant, Schopenhauer and Deussen, as well as writers such as Tolstoy, Emerson, Thoreau, and Hermann Hesse. The book is well researched, clearly written and presents a fascinating insight into an aspect of history that has not been well documented until now.

Even though there is no real clue given as to why, despite this interest, Vedanta today is still largely unknown to most people, this book gives us the impression that it is only a matter of time before it leaves the chat rooms of the Internet and captures the imagination of the public at large. Such a rational alternative to both theism and atheism, an alternative that puts our own consciousness at the very centre of the universe and allows for true autonomy, growth and evolution to a previously undreamed of perfection, must eventually capture the public imagination, and in so doing, take its rightful place as one of humanity's major belief systems.

Bernard Michel

Sunday at the TS – Adelaide Lodge



Recent photo of some members of Adelaide Lodge who attended a workshop by the National President

During the past couple of years attendance at the hour long talks, previously offered on some Sunday afternoons at the TS, had slowly declined. This was a cause for concern, indicating that a change of direction in relation to what the TS could provide on Sundays was

obviously required. Lengthy discussions took place between the President, Sheryl Malone, and the members of the Programme Sub-Committee, resulting nearly two years ago in the introduction of 'Sundays at the TS'.

The Programme Subcommittee members meet regularly and brainstorm for content, availability of suitable speakers and the necessary publicity, to herald coming events. Decisions are a joint effort, made through consensus, and understandably meetings are lively and stimulating affairs for all concerned. Brochures, posters, the three monthly calendar inserts in *The Voice* magazine, announcements on the local radio station and word of mouth are the main sources of publicity. Individual Committee members assume responsibility for arranging the various speakers and in turn become the contact and support person for a particular speaker.

The aim of these all day events is to encourage a definite social aspect as well as having three speakers of interest throughout the day. A shared lunch and morning and afternoon tea give people the opportunity to interact with each other, discuss the talks, catch up with old friends and make new ones; in short, to create a sense of belonging to a community as opposed to merely turning up to listen to a talk.

There is no charge for admission (optional gold coin donation) and the meetings are open to the public, enabling non-members to come to the TS as visitors. This initial experience may possibly awaken an interest in them and a desire to find out more about the Society, leading to new membership. People are able to come for all or part of the day and the events have been quite well attended with an average of fifteen to twenty people on most of these Sundays. It

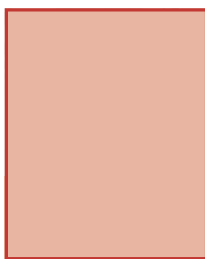
is particularly convenient for those who live some distance from the city venue as the full day (7.30am to 3.30pm) makes a trip up to town more worthwhile than making the effort for just one hour.

Since the commencement of the programme, many different topics have been covered. Most Sundays follow a specific theme with the three talks broadly relating to it as far as possible. The following topics have been among the chosen themes during the past two years.

- Sound
- Various Religions
- Earth Connections
- Different types of Yoga
- Various methods of Healing
- Goddess energies
- Soul's journey in Art, Music
- Festival of Light
- The Life of Food
- Animal Soul Mates
- The Future
- Dispelling the Fear of Death

Plans for the rest of 2012 are well under way and will include Reincarnation, Creating Energy and Harmony and Our Biological Future.

In conclusion, our resolve to try 'something different' has so far been a successful venture. As well as having had access to a great deal of inspiring information, a real sense of Fellowship has been generated at these monthly gatherings.



News & Notes

School of the Wisdom, International Headquarters

At the time of printing news was not yet to hand about the next session of the School of the Wisdom to be held at Adyar. It is suggested that interested members watch the international website for any information:

<http://www.ts-adyar.org/>

Lodges/Branches will also be notified when news is obtained.

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

Appointments by the National Council

At its mid-year meeting, the National Council appointed Dara Tatray as the National Secretary of the Australian Section. Dara was one of three applicants who were interviewed for the position. Due to her workload, Dara has relinquished the position of Education Coordinator but fortunately she will continue to develop educational courses and speak within the Section as time permits.

The National Council has now appointed Pedro Oliveira as the Acting Education Coordinator for the Section and has determined that the position of Education Coordinator will be advertised in the March 2013 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*.

Update – Proposed Sale of Theosophy House, Kent Street, Sydney

With the failure of Theosophy House to sell at auction due to a downturn in the commercial

property market, and a three month contract with two agents which yielded no reasonable offers, the National Headquarters and Blavatsky Lodge find themselves still located in Theosophy House. Discussions have taken place between the Headquarters and the Lodge as to where we go from here. Up until now the building has been jointly owned by Blavatsky Lodge (75%) and the Australian Section (25%). The Lodge has agreed to an offer by the Section to increase its share of ownership, with each to own 50% of Theosophy House, thereby assisting the Lodge to remain in the building with the National Headquarters for the time being. Level 1 will be leased out by the Australian Section. Also, the original plan for the National Headquarters to purchase from Blavatsky Lodge the former premises of the Adyar bookshop will therefore no longer apply. The relevant bodies will be rescinding any previous motions and passing any new ones required. It seems that the universe has other plans for now ...

National Lecturers for 2013

The following members were appointed in July by the National Council as National Lecturers for 2013:

Noel Bertelle
Barry Bowden
Dianne Kynaston
Richard Larkin
Simon O'Rourke

As from next year, the title of 'Supporting Lecturer' which has been used for many years will therefore no longer apply. TS centres are asked to contact the National President if they are interested in receiving any particular lecturer. Requests will be met if possible, but taking into account the spread of lecturers around the Section as a whole.

Visits to TS Centres by National President

The National President is visiting most of the centres around the Section during her travels this year. Below right are some photos which were taken during her visits to Melbourne and Tasmania during June. The Tasmanian photographs were taken during a joint weekend organised in Launceston by Hobart Branch and Launceston Lodge. At the retreat centre which was the venue for this event, participants walked a labyrinth modelled on the one at Chartres, France.

Theosophical Encyclopedia on the Web

In 2006 the print edition of the *Theosophical Encyclopedia* was published by the Theosophical Publishing House in the Philippines. The General Editor and originator of this unique idea was Australian member Philip S. Harris, who passed away some years ago. The Associate Editors were Vicente R. Hao Chin, Jr., from the Philippines and Richard W. Brooks from the United States and included more than 1,200 articles.

A new, expanded version of the *Theosophical Encyclopedia* is now online at: http://theosophy.ph/encyclo/index.php?title=Main_Page

The Editors are: John Algeo (General Editor), Vicente Hao Chin Jr. (Associate Editor), and Robert Ellwood (Consulting Editor).

Theosopedia, as it is called, is under continual development and contains both totally new articles and updates of those in the print edition.

Consciousness in Animals – a Recent Scientific Opinion

The Section website includes a new item concerning the recent landmark Cambridge Declaration of Consciousness. It is well worth a look. See the newly added list on the home page: <http://www.austheos.org.au>

Transitions

News has come to hand of the passing on 4 July 2012 of Jean Bannister, a long-time member of Adelaide Lodge. Possibly our member of

longest standing, Jean joined the TS in 1935 and was a stalwart of the Society for many decades. She is remembered with affection.

Note to all Overseas Recipients of this Magazine

We are happy to continue to mail this magazine to our complimentary overseas recipients but wish to check whether receipt of *Theosophy in Australia* is still required. If you are an overseas recipient and are receiving a complimentary copy of this magazine, please email Richard Larkin by **Monday 15 October** if you wish to **continue** receiving the magazine: memsec@austheos.org.au



Melbourne Lodge visit, left to right: Gilda Butchko, Dorothy Darby (President), Ken Edwards, Linda Oliveira (National President), Kari Torgersen (State Representative) and Edward Sinclair.



Walking the labyrinth, joint Hobart Branch and Launceston Lodge weekend, Emmanuel Centre, Launceston.

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

Section Directory

Australian Section National Headquarters

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Fax: 02 9264 5857
www.austheos.org.au
Campbell Theosophical Research Library:
campbell@austheos.org.au

Australian Capital Territory

Canberra Branch, Chartered 17/7/1971:

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

New South Wales

Blavatsky Lodge, Chartered 22/5/1922:

2nd & 3rd Floors, 484 Kent Street, Sydney
NSW 2000
Telephone: 02 9267 6955 Fax: 02 9283 3772
Email: contact@tssydney.org.au
www.tssydney.org.au
Meet: 2.00pm Wednesdays
Members Meeting: 2.00 pm 2nd Saturday
each month
President: Stephen McDonald
Secretary: Pamela Peterson

Newcastle Lodge, Chartered 3/12/1941:

Meet: Morrison Room, 29 Highfield Street,
Mayfield NSW 2304
8.00pm 2nd Friday each month
(excluding January)
Study group (members) confirm dates with
Lodge
President: Danny Boyd
Tel: 02 4937 4225

Gosford Group:

Meet: The Neighbour Centre,
Pandala Road, Narara NSW 2250
8.00pm 2nd Tuesday each month
Coordinator: Marianne Fraser
Tel: (02) 4339 7118, 0400 713 273
E-mail: marifraser256@gmail.com
Secretary: Roni Ostergaard
Telephone: 02 4358 1413

Northern Beaches Group:

Postal address: c/ Mina Singh Batra,
22 Woodland Street,

Balgowlah Heights, NSW 2093

Meet: c/- above address
8.00 pm 3rd Friday each month
Coordinator: Patricia Witts
Tel: 02 9450 1362

Queensland

Atherton Lodge, Chartered 27/4/1950:

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

Brisbane Lodge, Chartered 21/1/1895:355

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

Sunshine Coast Lodge, Chartered 1/4/2004

Meet: Buderim Croquet Club, Syd Lingard
Drive, Buderim QLD 4556
7.00pm Thursday
President: Penny Houghton
Tel: 07 5453 7595
Email: penny26@tpg.com.au
Secretary: Joyce Thompson

Toowoomba Group:

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

South Australia

Adelaide Lodge, Chartered 26/5/1891:

310 South Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000
Tel: 08 8223 1129
Email: president@tsadelaide.org.au
http://www.austheos.org.au/adelaide
Meet: Members Meeting 1.00pm 4th Friday
of every month. Please contact Lodge for
additional meeting dates.
President: Sheryl Malone
Secretary: Audrey Brimson

Tasmania

Hobart Branch, Chartered 7/6/1889:

13 Goulburn Street, Hobart TAS 7000
www.theosophicaltas.websytle.com.au
Meet: 8.00pm Monday
President/Secretary: Helen Steven
Tel: (03) 6228 3048

Launceston Lodge, Chartered 12/1/1901:

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

Victoria

Melbourne Lodge, Chartered 9/12/1890:

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

Mornington Peninsula Group:

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

Wodonga-Albury Group:

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

Western Australia

Perth Branch, Chartered 10/6/1897:

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

Mount Helena Retreat Centre:

1540 Bunning Road, Mt Helena WA 6082
Tel: 08 9572 1513
Caretaker/Manager: Hana O'Rourke

Theosophical Education and Retreat Centre, Springbrook, Qld

2184 Springbrook Road,
Springbrook QLD 4213
Tel: Office/Hall 07 5533 5211
email: bhora@bigpond.net.au
Caretaker: Barry Hora
Administrator: Dara Tatray
Tel: 02 9264 6404

