

Freedom of Thought

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

Freedom of the Society

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

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



THE THEOSOPHIST

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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

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

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

Youth & the Adyar School of the Wisdom

TIM BOYD

AS international President of the Theosophical Society (TS) I had a special interest in the Young Theosophists (YT) gathering in June of this year at the International Theosophical Centre in Naarden, the Netherlands. Having witnessed the recent resurgence of the YT movement, I looked forward to meeting and sharing with this group. Of the 31 who attended I had met a few over my years of TS travels. Coming from 16 different countries they were a diverse group with a variety of interests and experiences. It was fascinating to watch this group come together, each with their own unique background, with the Ageless Wisdom and its application as the binding factor.

Prior to June 3 almost everyone was new and unknown to each other. By the time they were leaving, five days later, tears were shed on parting from their new sisters and brothers. A great deal of energy and focus was placed on Theosophy and the role of the TS, but the real benefit of the gathering was the friendships that formed among young people searching for ways to grow and to serve. For some those bonds may be fleeting, but others have met brothers and sisters on the path with whom they will be working for years to come. I came away filled with great hope for the YTs and for the TS.

Whether young or not so young, we are creatures of habit and find ourselves repeating things: waking up in the morning, everyone has their process. Probably the regimen we did today is the one we did yesterday, and the day before. Every day most of us take at least a brief moment to look at ourselves in the mirror, and the face we see today we believe is the face we saw yesterday, and the day before. Our patterns during the course of a normal day repeat themselves. So time after time we find certain expectations arising in our minds, of what this day is, of who we are, of what our capacities are, based on what they have been yesterday. Then we come to the School of the Wisdom in Adyar, Chennai, India.

Frequently we come with at least the background hope that something we find will be different, that there is something about the teacher, or the place, or the information that will alter something fundamental within us and open up new horizons. Whether or not it is openly voiced, it is on our mind. Then we find ourselves here with the facilitator, always one that is capable in the area that they present. We sit and we listen.

The theosophical work comes under the heading of the Ageless Wisdom tradition. The “ageless” part of it should not be forgotten. It is as fresh as this new day, every day. It is ever-renewed and

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ever-present. There is only one thing that is required of us. When we hear “only one thing” it always points to something that sounds as if it is simple; and perhaps that is because it is, in fact, simple; but “simple” does not mean “easy”. The only thing that is required of us to experience the newness, the freshness we desire, is even a momentary lapse in the barriers of habitual expectation that we erect around ourselves. The only thing that prevents a light from shining into a room is that the door or the window is closed. The opportunity for them to open is ever-present.

In these moments when we are here together, we have a very special opportunity. Where are we? We are seated at Adyar, and what is that? In many ways it is just another point on the map, a spot of earth that if you look at a map could be identified. Lines could be drawn around it defining where it is and how we can find it, as with every spot of earth on the planet. This one has a very particular nature, as does every spot on the planet. But this one also has a particular history that has been embedded in the land on which we stand in many ways. It has been called “The Masters’ Home”.

Adyar is a place where great people have had profound experiences of connection to this Ageless Wisdom, and have then been able to communicate their experience to the world in their behaviors, writings, speech, art, in all the ways that they express across the spectrum of their relationships. Wisdom has

been able to pervade their being. So when we come here to a School of the Wisdom, this is the wisdom that we seek, the wisdom that is ever-present if allowed to be unobstructed. The words that we will hear will have great meaning if we allow for the capacity to hear.

In various scriptural texts it is said that stones can preach sermons to those who have the ears to hear. Do we have those ears? Is our hearing sufficiently unobstructed? In every moment, wherever we are, it is true that the place where we stand, the ground on which our feet are planted is holy ground. Here it is especially clear because we do not have the sounds of honking horns, or the constant movement of crowds that we encounter in cities, so it is a little bit more obvious. The place where we stand at any moment, any place in the world, is holy ground if we can realize it. Here more so, because in this particular moment that we call the School of the Wisdom, the intention is to become present in this way. There are many of us, so we magnify that intention, and we create a possibility. It is up to us what we do with it, how we treat it.

So, again, I would encourage each and every one of you, and especially young Theosophists, to make the most of this opportunity. This moment does not repeat itself — none do. So while we have it, let us appreciate it. Then we will be able to carry it on and pass on our exposure to wisdom — a wisdom that exceeds the words we will hear and the concepts we will come to understand.

A Case for Mythology

DAVID GROSSMAN

Nights through dreams tell the myths forgotten by the day.

C. G. Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections

SCIENCE and philosophy, religion and history are various pathways toward knowledge in our lives. We have excluded mythology for the most part and all that comes with it: gods, rituals, symbolism, and unexplained phenomena that is the heritage of every culture going back into the night of time, as fairytale and overheated imagination. Mythology can illuminate truths found in and through these various disciplines, giving them context and added meaning in what, deep down, concerns all of us; an underlying purpose and meaning to life.

We know many myths tell dramatic stories. Hollywood has certainly cashed in on this with cosmic violent thrillers starring such ancient mythic figures as Thor. If mythological stories and characters are fantasies and the result of overheated imagination why do they still have such a hold on the human psyche years and millennia beyond their creation? The fact is they “resonate” within.

Carl Jung in psychology and Joseph Campbell through teaching, lecturing, and book publications, beginning with his groundbreaking *The Hero with a Thousand*

Faces published in 1949, have both gone a long way in awakening many inquiring minds to the nurturing manna to be found in ancient mythologies and legends. Both have revealed meanings and applications to our lives and in various ways have helped to put mythology back on the map of the 20th and now 21st centuries as a legitimate source of exploration and insight into human unfoldment.

Campbell’s creative exploration into the world of mythology reveals patterns of great value when exploring the ideas of self-transformation and conscious human evolution. Unfortunately there have been those without the moral imagination to follow along and instead, which is sometimes the case, chose to attack what they do not understand, both academically and personally.

As far as this writer can see, although none of us are perfect, the personal attacks against Campbell were really unfounded. As for the academic attacks, Campbell was a creative maverick, a groundbreaker, and did not always recognize the narrow halls of orthodox academia. For Campbell mythology is “literature” that transcends

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the academic and becomes a kind of esoteric literature for “living the life”. Standing the test of Time, his work has been shown to be inspirational, insightful and of real value.

Campbell’s concept of *monomyth* (one myth) refers to the theory that sees all mythic narratives as variations of a single great story. A basic theosophical premise holds that it is the evolutionary story that we all participate in, as essentially Spiritual Beings, and that physical, mental, and spiritual evolution are interwoven and interblended at every point. Mankind is “The Hero with a Thousand Faces” which points to the universality, that in small and in large, underlies the myths of all cultures, from ancient India, to legends of the Native Americans, to stories out of Africa; the list seems almost endless.

There are still debates going on whether Campbell was a Jungian or not. Campbell, like Jung, was tuned into the universality and power of myth, and both were honest explorers of truth in life. To try and define, or box in either is a futile attempt to limit the insights and genius of both men. Those who want to define, dissect, or “pigeonhole” either thinker will not fully reap the benefits of what either has to offer. Dr Jung turned mythology and its symbols inward to explore the workings of the human psyche through the tools of inner symbolism as navigational guides into the mountains and forests of the “unconscious”.

Dreams which are not interpreted are like letters which have not been opened”, says the Jewish Talmud.

Among other things, Jung, a psych-

iatrist and an explorer of the inner human landscape, is responsible, along with the pioneering insights of Freud before him, to speak of the “unconscious mind” and its effect upon us. (Theosophically speaking we would rather say the subconscious as, according to the Wisdom Tradition, the whole universe is conscious.) Jung, to his credit, developed the idea further into a broader and more insightful understanding. His concept of universal archetypes (reminiscent of Plato’s “Divine Ideas”) is how he explains the universality of myths and mythic symbolism.

Jung drills down into the deep psychological meanings that can be attached to many mythological journeys and dramatic confrontations that are depicted in the mythologies of civilizations around the world. (This relates to the unfoldment of each of us from infancy, through childhood, adolescence, and coming into the full responsibility of adulthood, and Theosophy adds the further spiritual unfoldment through reincarnation.) He ties the idea to ancient Indian or Vedic ideas. As he puts it:

What has our psychology to say about the Indian assertion of a suprapersonal, world-embracing unconscious that appears when the darkness of the personal unconscious grows transparent? Modern psychology knows that the personal unconscious is only the top layer, resting on a foundation of a wholly different nature which we call the collective unconscious. The reason for this designation is the circumstance that, unlike the personal unconscious and its purely personal contents, the images in the deeper unconscious have a distinctly

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mythological character.” (“The Psychology of Eastern Meditation”, Jung, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, para 944).

Jung’s ideas about myth and the inner psyche of man have many parallels in “theosophical psychology” up to a point. He was in the scientific community and, although he had obvious mystic inclinations, he had to keep some of them private to have his academic status taken seriously. Then, as pretty much now, there was no room for the transcendental in the halls of “reputable science”.

His levels of the unconscious and archetypes, as well as how “in dreams and visions of the night we are instructed”, are explained in the theosophical teachings, through gaining knowledge of the inner states we pass through daily, and of the astral body, the astral light, and the Ākāśa.

Before Jung or Campbell, Madame H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) was defending the integrity of universal mythology and pointed to some very interesting facts to be found in the various mythologies from all quarters of our world, making observations echoed by later “mythologists”. She reveals mythological keys that can help humanity on the journey of life that does, indeed, have a higher purpose than the mere preservation of the species. Theosophy presents a program, so to say, for our spiritual transformation far beyond what is generally envisioned in the exoteric religions of today or the scientific concepts that crash upon the shores of materialism.

“For years we have repeatedly noticed that the same esoteric truths were ex-

pressed in identical symbols and allegories in countries between which there had never been traced any historical affiliation,” says HPB in *Isis Unveiled*, vol. I, p. 577. “Myth was the favorite and universal method of teaching in archaic times”, also states HPB in *Isis Unveiled*, vol. II, p. 493. She adds that “Plato declares in the *Gorgias* and the *Phaedo* that they [myths] were the vehicles of great truths well worth the seeking.” (*Isis Unveiled*, vol I, p. xiii)

Among many others, there are two illustrations found in *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* concerning some truths and knowledge imbedded in myths that we might find interesting. In her first major writing, *Isis Unveiled*, vol. I, pg.160–161, Blavatsky states unequivocally that in the descriptions of the mythic figure, Thor, was imbedded a knowledge of electricity.

It is described that when the thunderbolt-hurling Thor prepared for battle he would first put an iron belt, “girdle of strength”, around his waist and buckle it (connecting the two poles which are needed for electricity to flow). “His belt of strength is a closed circuit, around which the isolated current is compelled to run instead of diffusing itself through space.” (*Isis Unveiled*, vol. I, p. 161) This enhanced his celestial power. Then, as he grasped one of his weapons, a thunderbolt or his electric hammer, he would put on his iron gloves to protect himself. The description is filled with other symbolism connected to the power of electricity. HPB puts it this way: “Rendered into plain English, how can

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this myth be interpreted but as showing that the Norse legend makers were thoroughly acquainted with electricity?" (*Isis*, *ibid.*) As a parallel, Thor is associated with the ancient Hindu god, Indra, who is also often shown with a thunderbolt and is depicted as a fierce god of the sky.

A well-known example now of historical facts imbedded in myths is illustrated by the actual discovery of Troy. In fact it was not that long before HPB began to pen *Isis Unveiled* that the world was spinning with the discovery of the actual Troy. Excavations on the site of Troy started more than 150 years ago. The site was discovered in 1863 by Frank Calvert, but it really became famous thanks to the excavations conducted by the German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann in 1870. Blavatsky briefly mentions his work in *Isis Unveiled*.

In Book II of her *The Secret Doctrine* HPB has this to say:

Who can forget that Troy was once upon a time proclaimed a myth, and Homer a non-existing personage, while the existence of such cities as Herculaneum and Pompeii was denied, and attributed to mere fairy legends? Yet Schliemann proved that Troy had really existed, and the two cities, though buried for long ages under the Vesuvian lava, have had their resurrection day, and live again on the surface of the earth. How many more cities and localities called "fabulous" are on the list of future discoveries, how many more personages regarded as mythical will one day become historical, those alone can tell who read the decrees of Fate in the astral

light." (*The Secret Doctrine*, vol. II, p. 236)

In the modern Theosophical Movement the study of mythology, legends, and symbols falls under its second object: "the study of comparative religion, philosophy, and science." Mythology runs through all these disciplines. The story of humankind told in *The Secret Doctrine* from the beginning of a "Great Cycle" (Manvantara), presents the journey of the countless unfolding lives involved in the life of the universe until its reabsorption into "The All" is the "Theosophical Mythos".

Mythology is a key to understanding the dynamics of the inner and outer world. The multifaceted meanings in myths, the various keys in symbolism, help us to realize that each human being is essentially in search of the holy grail; we are all Jasons on the quest for the "Golden Fleece".

Krishna is in each of our chariots as we take stock of the opposing army of illusion that we must battle. As we do the work upon ourselves that allows for more selfless action and as we enter more fully into the awareness of the unity of all life, it seems we cannot help but to slowly become conscious participants over many incarnations. Like Proteus we take on different shapes and forms during our unfoldment in the great evolutionary journey of the spiritual soul, or as it has been expressed: "Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance." (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, I, 66) ✧

Light, Love, and Hope — II

RAGHAVAN N. IYER

BREATHING on behalf of the world's disinherited, one can become a messenger of hope to others. Everyone has had the experience, in dark periods of doubt and despair, of receiving a sudden bright flash of inspiration and hope. Gratitude for this light mysteriously received can become the basis of a faith and confidence that one may give light to others. If one persists in one's solitude in thinking of all those beings who are disinherited, yet worthy of one's compassion, one can reach to them in their deep sleep and in their dreams.

Through the strength of what George William Russell called the Hero in Man, one can give to them that hope or saving grace that will sustain them, whatever their condition. Thus one forms invisible magnetic bonds with other human beings, channels of transmission that can move in every direction. To do this is to go beyond any conception of individual salvation or progress based upon a personalized and localized notion of love or light.

One learns how to move towards the sun so that one's shadow declines, and one begins to understand what it is to stand

directly under the sun and cast no shadow. By freeing oneself from self-concern, one becomes truly confident in one's capacity to reach out and help human beings no matter at what distance. Letting go of all external labels, tokens, and pseudo-proofs of love and light, one is prepared to bask, so to speak, in the supernal light and truth, the boundless wisdom and compassion of the Spiritual Sun.

The entry into this light is to be understood not only in terms of a mystical metaphor. It is also linked up to the presence of actual beings who have become Bodhisattvas of Compassion, rays flowing from a cosmic energy such as *avalokiteśvara*. As the lord who looks down from on high, *avalokiteśvara* may be envisaged as seated in total contemplation and calmness, wrapped in an extraordinary golden halo of perfect purity and love. He holds within the gaze of his overseeing eye all humanity. To meditate upon this paradigm of all the *tathāgatas* and Predecessors, *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas*, is to restore one's sense of the ontological plenty of the spiritual realm.

Thus one may transcend confining conceptions of the evolutionary history

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of humanity or the false notion that human spirituality is entirely dependent upon localized events in the past. Rather, one will come to know humanity as extremely old, extending over millions upon millions of years and sustained throughout in myriads of ways by countless saviours and helpers and teachers. Many of them were humble wanderers in villages who had no external marks, bore no labels, and made no claims. Nonetheless, they helped and uplifted the human heart, giving hope to others, and then moving on. Their lives are an uninterrupted and living testimony to the ubiquitous force and presence on earth of the Tribe of Sacred Heroes.

To raise one's sights to this extraordinarily universal perspective is to begin to see that many questions which once were bothersome are no longer difficult. As soon as one thinks of love separatively or in terms of bilateral contexts, one thinks in terms of particularized intentions and externalized concepts of the will. This concretized will is bound up with proving something, showing determination in a context, through mostly verbalizing and acting out.

Whereas, if one thinks in terms of vast collective hosts of beings, uniting all humanity through invisible ties, one is drawing closer to an idea of will as a universal and impersonal force. By inserting oneself within the invisible brotherhood of true helpers of humanity, one can learn to do what one can, according to the measure, degree, and depth of one's knowledge and feeling, without engendering any false conception of the will.

In whatever one does and in whatever way one releases the higher will, one is merely drawing a certain portion from an inexhaustible and universal source. If one understands this, one will not ask to draw more from it than one in fact can use, or more than one can properly sustain. In other words, one will begin to see through the tricks played by the human mind, which is the great deceiver and the adversary in us, when it tries to escape from what can be done by demanding more. When the mind insists that it must know whether its share of love and light is adequate in relation to its aim or self-conception, it becomes the great deceiver and obscurer of the light and love that are latent in every human soul.

Many supposedly philosophical questions and spiritual concerns are really nothing but what the Buddhists call *attavāda*, the dire heresy of separateness. They reflect the philosophic error of assuming that all one's tendencies, desires, and thoughts make up some kind of entity which is cohesive and persistent and, above all, cut off from the rest of humanity. This is an illusion. There is no such entity. No true sense of selfhood can be located in this aggregate of ever-changing and second-hand chaotic tendencies.

Instead, this aggregate of the *skandhas* represents one's karmic share in the collective accumulations of tendencies of all humanity. All human beings, one might say, have contributed to the growing of weeds, and every human being has got his or her share of the world's weeds to take in hand and to cut down. At the same

time, every human being has got to find and sow the seeds of wisdom and compassion. This can be done only through cultivating patience and the power of waiting, rooted in the willingness to work with the cycles of Nature.

As the prophet teaches in *Ecclesiastes*, there are different seasons, times for sowing and times for reaping, times for living and times for dying. That is true with regard to all the manifestations of love, and the wisest know that the deepest love is beyond manifestation. As Maeterlinck wrote, there are in love silences with so profound a depth that the unexpressed flows with uninterrupted continuity across the barriers of time and space.

This deeper love is often forfeited because of a concern with what can be demonstrated, what can be increased, mitigated, or compared. To recover the lost potential of the soul, one must rethink what is real. On the one side, there is that which is universal and includes all that is potential. On the other, there is the entire collection of particular, episodic, finite expressions and manifestations. Vast though they are, they are in the end limited in relation to the inexhaustible content of love and light within the immortal soul of every human being and at the heart of the whole cosmos.

By learning to think in this way, one can begin to discern immense beauty in the idea that every human being is, in the simple act of breathing, both living and loving. Most of this is unconscious or unrelated to any particular desires or

demands. But in the case of the wisest beings, the most enlightened masters of compassion, this breathing is self-consciously benevolent and universal.

Having become conscious of the enormous potential energy within the heart of the cosmos, they are able skilfully to direct and channel that energy to vast numbers of souls. They have learnt how to help particular persons at particular times only through lifetimes of trial and error. They have recognized the proliferating consequences of doing too much or not doing enough. Through practice, over millions of years and myriads of lives, *bodhisattvas* become intelligent and skilful in the application of wisdom and compassion, light, and love.

To be able even to understand such possibilities in such beings, much less to be able to move in that direction, one must shake off conventional divisions between the head and the heart. Often it is assumed that it is a great thing for the mind to become sharper, smarter, and more intelligent. It is also conventional to think of the heart as sentimental. Both these notions are based upon misconceptions. In the subtle vestures of human beings, in what is called the spiritual heart, lies the basis of the highest intelligence, ideation, and creativity.

Therefore, from the spiritual point of view, one cannot activate any of the higher centres in the brain unless one has first aroused a spark of fire in the spiritual heart. Many human beings are able, sporadically, to release extraordinary powers, skills, and flashes of genius.

These intermittent abilities represent an unbalanced condition that is a reflection of excess and deficiency in previous lives. They are accompanied by a karmic frustration at not being able to tap and recover knowledge self-consciously, and such individuals have got hard lessons to learn before they can create new and better balances within themselves.

Hence the importance, especially with children, of withdrawing undue emphasis upon the mind and developing instead a sense of the heart. Instead of fostering an obsessive inclination to grade the mind, one should encourage an evolving conception of excellence in relation to the heart. This does not happen automatically; unless one becomes fearless and courageous, one cannot release the potency and spiritual strength in the heart. One must educate the heart in the best truth that one knows.

This truth includes the mortality of one's body, the immortality of the soul, and the means of making that immortal soul function within a mortal body. It is crucial to give children some of the fundamental truths of the Divine Wisdom, and in particular to teach them not merely to look at things in terms of today and tomorrow, but rather in terms of their finest impulses and most generous urges. Over a lifetime of learning, these can provide the basis of authentic fearlessness and true universality in compassion and love. One must include in one's heart people whom one does not see. To do this requires an active imagination, ultimately a capacity to visualize the whole of humanity. This involves a dynamic balance

between one's contemplation of all the beings that exist on this Earth and one's relationships with those who are nearby.

In practice, this requires simplification and a development of precision, which is at the origin of all etiquette and manners. One must learn not to overdo with people who are immediately around oneself. To do less is to do more. Thus one will have a great opportunity to keep oneself intact, without getting into syndromes of excessive expectation and rapid disillusionment. While maintaining a greater steadiness in relationships to those around oneself, one will, at the same time, see beyond them. One will develop a concern to take one's place in the family of man and to become what is called in the Buddhist tradition a son of the Buddha family.

Like the Bodhisattvas and Buddhas, one becomes willing to think in terms of serving all beings on Earth. This is not something that one can contemplate or emulate in a short time. Instead, it will require a repeated renewal. It will have some impact at the moment of death and also a distinct effect upon the kind of birth one will have in the next life. Not immediately, but eventually, it will change the current and tropism, the tonality and colouring, of one's varied relationships to the vestures and their use.

By gaining this precision, one will become more free, and at the same time the better able to help other human beings. One's mind becomes more willing, vibrant and versatile by becoming an obedient servant of a heart that has found deep peace within itself. Once the heart

Light, Love, and Hope — II

has discovered within itself its own secret fire, it can, through various forms of daily meditation and oblation, activate that fire. Whether one calls this the fire of devotion, of *tapas*, of wisdom or truth, these are only different aspects of that which is ultimately the fire of the Mysteries. It is the fire that represents the immortal self-subsisting sovereignty of the individual human soul. It is capable in principle of becoming a self-conscious mirror of the whole cosmos.

Therefore it is also capable of reaching out from within the inmost sanctuary and affecting, learning from, teaching, and helping everything that exists. This requires deliberate and systematic training because of the diverse kinds, speeds, and levels of communication between beings based upon the vibrations of the heart realm. The more skilful one becomes in using karmic opportunities to participate in the partial modes of love and learning of this world, the more one learns how to shed a little light for a few human beings upon a few things, while at the same time ceaselessly looking beyond one's horizon towards the limitless potential within all.

Eventually, one can reach a point where one has the great privilege of seeing no more evil and limitation because they have lost their fascination. They are really nothing more than a grotesque representation of muddle, error, and delusion, ultimately based upon captivity to illusion. They are futile and short-sighted, they are short-lived. But so long as there are elements in so many beings

that are caught up in short-term considerations, evil and limitation are compounded. While at first they may look like an awesome all-potent monster, one later sees that this is not true.

This is a form of protection for those who are on the Path and concerned with the real work of the human race. That work is continuous, though hidden by a stream of invisibility, because most people are simply caught up in the external sights and sounds of reality. They are captives to exaggerations of form, limitation, and evil. Hence the importance, at the individual level, for each human being to say, like Jesus: "Get thee behind me, Satan." One cannot say this for others; one must do it for oneself.

As long as there is light, there will be shadow. Yet every human being can at any moment turn his face away from the shadow and towards the light of the sun. Whenever one is with other souls, one can ask oneself: "Do I love others more than myself? Do I take less and give more to others? Do I actually reach out within myself, within my mind and heart, and also in my acts, towards other human beings? In the way I look at other human beings, can I salute the Divine within them? Can I shed light and also be grateful for the light that I daily receive from others?"

By asking questions of this kind, one will find that all increments of change become significant. Life becomes not only worth living, but worth consecrating. The mind and the heart recapture the immanence of the ideal of boundless Love and Light. ✧

“The Golden Stairs” — III

DAVID P. BRUCE

10. A Courageous Endurance of Personal Injustice

In daily life we undergo a variety of tests such as school exams, applying for a driver’s license, competency tests for professional licenses, and many more. Unlike those of the spiritual life, these tests share one thing in common: their date and time is known in advance. Spiritual aspirants are not given a schedule; they do not know *when* they will be tested, only that they *will* be tested. Confirmation of this is found throughout the religious scriptures of the world as well as in the writings of those who have lived a sanctified life. The last four precepts of “The Golden Stairs” represent moral qualities needed to meet these inevitable tests, beginning with step ten: *a courageous endurance of personal injustice*.

In Joshua 1:6, the Lord speaks to Joshua: “Be strong and of good courage.” So important is this advice that it is repeated in verse 9: “Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid.” In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Krishna chastises Arjuna: “Surrender not to unmanliness . . . forsake this small weakheartedness.” In less dramatic

fashion, courage is extolled in “Ye Wearie Wayfarer”, a poem by the Australian poet Adam Lindsay Gordon:

Life is mostly froth and bubble,
Two things stand like stone,
Kindness in another’s trouble,
Courage in your own.

And consider this provocative statement by the Christian apologist C. S. Lewis: “Courage is not simply *one* of the virtues but the form of every virtue at the testing point.” Those who would downplay the importance of courage may counter with “Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the Earth”, but they are wrong. Cowards will never inherit anything but misery, fear, and subjugation to the will of others. In Matthew 5:5, the word *meek* means “gentle”, not timid.

Authentic courage (not to be confused with the cheap counterfeits of bravado, insolence, or braggadocio) is most uncommon in human affairs. In a speech given in 1966, Robert Kennedy declared, “Moral courage is a rarer commodity than bravery in battle or great intelligence.” In a similar vein, Napoléon Bonaparte observed: “As to

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moral courage, I have rarely met with two o'clock in the morning courage.” What did Napoléon mean by “two o'clock in the morning courage”? Aristotle would have known. Consider this passage from his *Ethics*: “It is thought to be a better proof of courage to remain calm and undismayed in sudden alarms than in those that are foreseen: the action proceeds more directly from the moral state, because it is less the result of preparation.”

11. A Brave Declaration of Principles

The adage describing discretion as the better part of valor would seem to apply to the eleventh step of “The Golden Stairs” — *a brave declaration of principles*. There are times in life when we are confronted with the hard choice of either standing by our convictions in the face of opposition, or abandoning them for the sake of personal comfort and safety. These are defining moments. History provides notable examples of heroic souls standing by their convictions, willing to pay the ultimate price — Socrates, Giordano Bruno, Sir Thomas More, and Nathan Hale, just to name a few. While remaining true to our most cherished beliefs, few of us will suffer the consequences of death by poison, burning at the stake, the sword, or hanging. Our tests may not be so dramatic, but that does not make them unimportant. We have to acquit ourselves well at each and every opportunity, so that eventually the thought of abandoning our principles becomes unthinkable.

In these situations, a little discernment goes a long way. As taught by Aristotle, courage is the golden mean between the two extremes of cowardice and recklessness. What sometimes passes for unbridled courage is really nothing more than bombast, belligerence, and effrontery. If our public declarations of principles are tainted by these qualities, they are unlikely to create sympathy among those with a different point of view. Besides, the third step of “The Golden Stairs” — *a pure heart* — precludes such manner of expression. In this regard, animals can teach us something. These words about a canine in Lord Byron's poem “Epitaph to a Dog” exemplify the golden mean of Aristotle: “Strength without insolence, courage without ferocity.” In his no less commentary on “The Golden Stairs”, Sidney Cook adds: “A declaration of principles will be no less brave, effective for being gentle and tactful.”

Finally, it is worth noting that there is no valor in preaching to the choir. We should not delude ourselves that we are speaking “truth to power” when we are speaking to a friendly audience. When there is a definite price to be paid for speaking the truth, then courage is needed. It may not be martyrdom, but it could be public disapproval, loss of one's job, or even ostracism from one's family. We can only speculate as to how many times the dreaded question of “what will people say?” has caused people to betray their professed ideals. Let our *ideals* be the shining stars that guide us through life,

not the shifting winds of public opinion.

12. A Valiant Defense of Those Who Are Unjustly Attacked

“The Golden Stairs” contains two references to injustice, both of which are found in the third group of precepts (steps 10–13). As noted earlier, this group represents the qualities of character needed to successfully face the periodic tests and challenges which all aspirants undergo during their spiritual unfoldment. With regard to how one should react to injustice, step 12 — *a valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked* prescribes an approach which is the polar opposite of the advice given in step 10 — *a courageous endurance of personal injustice*. It would seem that step 12 calls for action, while step 10 calls for passivity. Why the difference?

One of the basic texts of Buddhism, the *Dhammapada*, advises the disciple in the very first chapter not to return anger for anger, hatred for hatred, or retaliation for injustice. The Christian disciple receives similar advice from the Bible, such as turning the other cheek (Matt. 5:39) and “not rendering evil for evil” (1 Peter 3:9). The student of Theosophy views these instances as opportunities for clearing the karmic debts of the past. As stated in Mahatma Letter 123, he understands that personal suffering can be turned to “spiritual advantage” if one has learned to develop a “serene fortitude”. While a stoic endurance may be an appropriate response when we are the target of injustice, we have no right to tell someone

else to buck up, turn the other cheek, and accept the misfortunes of life with a smile. That would be callous, unfeeling, and an affront to moral decency. Rather, we have an obligation to come to the defense of those who are unfairly attacked, especially the poor, the weak, and the defenseless.

This raises a question. How does a spiritually minded person launch a “valiant defense” without doing violence to their principles? Some people, while vigorously defending the innocence of a friend or family member, at the same time invest enormous amounts of emotional energy attacking the perpetrator. They apparently subscribe to the adage that the best defense is a good offense. This may be a good strategy in football, chess, the courtroom, or military maneuvers, but not in personal relations.

There is a phrase in Abraham Lincoln’s second inaugural address that provides wise guidance: *with malice towards none and charity towards all*. Another president, George Washington, is known to have carried on his person a notebook containing 110 rules of civility, one of which was: *Reprehend not the imperfections of others for that belongs to parents, masters, and superiors*. We can defend the innocent without impugning the character of others.

13. A Constant Eye to the Ideal of Human Progression and Perfection

As in all endeavors, success comes to those who stay the course, despite the challenges or obstacles they may

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encounter; therefore constancy is a key to success. As for human perfection, that idea may seem foolish and naïve to those who subscribe to conventional wisdom. They believe human nature is hopelessly flawed, supporting their case with countless examples of human folly from past and present.

The sages of the Wisdom Tradition were not blind to human failings, but they also saw the inner potential for what humanity is destined to become in the distant future. There is an interesting passage in Mahatma Letter 1, which characterizes human nature as “prejudice based upon selfishness; a general unwillingness to give up an established order of things for new modes of life and thought; . . . pride and stubborn resistance to Truth if it but upset their previous notions of things.” But that assessment applies to humanity en masse and not to individuals who are ready to do the difficult work of self-transformation.

Eventually, every soul will have to do the work described in “The Golden Stairs”. *The Secret Doctrine* describes the journey of the soul as an “obligatory pilgrimage”, wherein growth is acquired, first by “natural impulse”, and later by “self-induced and self-directed efforts”. It has been said that perfection is the child of time. The timeline of humanity’s evolution, as put forth in *The Secret Doctrine*, encompasses unimaginable stretches of time. So, when a skeptic says human nature has not changed much in two thousand years, they are right, but it is analogous to me saying my

neighbor is still the same person he was two hours ago. If one is content to drift with the crowd, it will be a very long journey; but if one is willing to step out from the masses and travel the steep and thorny road that has been trodden by sages since time immemorial; if one is willing to persevere and practice the teachings of the Wisdom Tradition; then, in the words of HPB, “there is reward past all telling — the power to bless and save humanity”. The choice is ours:

The intellect of man is forced to choose
Perfection of the life, or of the work,
And if it take the second must refuse
A heavenly mansion, raging in the dark.

W. B. Yeats, “The Choice”

Coda

The thirteen steps of “The Golden Stairs” are followed by a brief coda, or summation, which simply states: “These are the golden stairs, up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom.” Having discussed each of the steps, let us consider the symbolism in the coda. Various metaphors have been used to represent states of high spiritual consciousness. In Exodus 19:3, for instance, Moses climbs the *mountain* to speak to the Lord. In Genesis 28:12, Jacob dreams of a *ladder* ascending from earth to heaven. The *stairway* is also an apt symbol, because it suggests a gradual elevation of consciousness and increasing clarity of vision the further one climbs. Note, too, that climbing a stairway is actual work requiring continual

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effort, as does putting spiritual precepts into practice. It is also a path leading to a specific destination, in this case, the Temple of Divine Wisdom.

Gold is another widely used symbol, based on its physical properties, such as malleability, resistance to tarnish and corrosion, and its warm, attractive hue. It may symbolize accomplishment, as in the Olympics, wherein the winner of an event is awarded the gold medal. It also represents timeless values and spiritual treasures. In *The Voice of the Silence*, for example, we find reference to the “golden flame”, the “golden key”, and the “golden gate”. The truths of the Wisdom Tradition are timeless because they endure throughout the ages and do not change with the fashions du jour. As the French historian Jacques Barzun noted in his summa *From Dawn to Decadence*, “It is a false analogy with science that makes one think latest is best.”

Finally, it should be noted that the temple of wisdom is not to be found in some remote desert location or inaccessible mountainous recess. In reality, it is found within — deep within the very heart of our being, where, as *The Voice of the Silence* says, is found “the one unfading golden light of Spirit”. So, if that is the case, why do most people look outside of themselves when that temple lies within? The answer is that it is indeed hidden from view. But why is it hidden? Why is it so difficult to find?

G. de Purucker, in his book *The Golden Precepts of Esotericism* explains: “The only thing that prevents your receiving this light is the enshrouding veils of selfhood: selfishness, egoism, anger, hate, envy, and ignoble desires of all kinds.” Removing these veils is the work that all “learners” must do, and that task is outlined in the very first steps of “The Golden Stairs”. ✧

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake,
not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn,
which does not forsake us even in our soundest sleep.
I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable
ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavour. . . .
To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts.

Henry David Thoreau
Walden

Patanjali's Yoga Meditation for Inner Awakening

VINAI VOHORA

MEDITATION has become a very essential part of this chaotic world, with stress all around in every compartment of life. People have been seeking peace and happiness in the outer world through wealth accumulation, positions of authority, fame, and a host of other activities. But these have not given the inner contentment they seek. Some take to drugs, drinking, and various negative behaviours to fill the gap in their lives, with dire consequences. Instead of finding comfort, they spiral downward into depression and other psychological and health problems. The solution is a balanced outlook of inner harmony through meditation and calm, and focused outer activity that gives success and inner contentment.

What Is Yoga?

Yoga means union of the parts of ourselves which were never divided in the first place. The purpose of yoga is to make the principles and practice more understandable and accessible. The descriptions focus on practical suggestions of how to regulate the mind, so as to attain direct experience beyond the mind.

Yoga is a journey within, exploring and moving through the various levels of our being. We have to dive deep into the ocean of meditation.

What Is Yoga Meditation?

The *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali clearly outline the art and science of traditional yoga meditation for Self-Realization. It is the process of systematically encountering and transcending each of the various gross and subtle levels of false identity in the mind. Outward longings drive us from the Eden within; they offer false pleasures that only impersonate soul happiness. The lost paradise is quickly regained through deep meditation. We are like gold in the mud, when the mud of ignorance is cleansed away, the shining gold of the soul, made in God's image, is seen within.

Patanjali's Yoga Meditation

Patanjali's Raja Yoga incorporates eight limbs, each with its own place and function. Together they form a complete system for spiritual unfoldment. The 8 limbs are: Yama (observances), Niyama (disciplines) — the dos and don'ts — Āsana (posture), Prāṇāyāma (energy

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control), Pratyāhāra (control of senses), Dhāraṇa (concentration), Dhyāna (meditation), and Samādhi (absorption, enlightenment). Yoga is scientific meditation. Through a series of scientific steps of discipline, the life energy, Prāna, is made to reverse its outward flow inward, to attain conscious awareness of God, or the Divine, and of the soul's eternal oneness with It.

Meditation is the science of God-Realization. It is the portal through which every seeker of every faith must pass in order to contact God. Withdrawal of the consciousness from the world of the senses for the purpose of communing with God was taught by Christ in these words: "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet (draw the mind within), and when thou hast shut thy door (the door of the body and senses), pray to thy Father which is in secret (within you); and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly (shall bless you with the ever new Bliss of his Being). (Matt. 6:6) Meditation is not to be talked about, meditation is to be lived and experienced.

Dharma: the Eternal Principles of Righteousness

We are all striving to think and act in the proper way, but we also have to learn control of the body. Ordinarily, the body rules us, saying: "I am master over you. Whatever I dictate, you must do. If I am hungry you must feed me. If I am cold, you must put a sweater on me. If I am tired, you must give me sleep. Whatever I see, hear, taste, touch or smell that

I desire, you must give that to me." And we, like little unwilful children — not even children, rather slaves — follow the dictates of the body. Therefore when we sit to meditate and the body is restless, Patanjali says, the next step we have to learn is āsana — the correct posture for meditation. The body's restlessness is caused by desires, temptations, and sensations which have to be curtailed by disciplining the body to sit still.

Meditation Place, Time, and Āsana

To discipline the body to sit still we have to form positive habits related to meditation. First and foremost, we should seek a quiet place, as noise is distracting. We should meditate on a firm seat in a quiet corner, preferably at the same time and place daily, as the area we use will get saturated with the vibrations of our efforts to quieten our restless mind. The habit we form will help us to quickly settle into the meditation frame of mind.

When we have settled in our area of meditation, we should tense and relax the body, for by relaxation the consciousness is released from the muscles. To start meditation we have to sit in a good posture by firmly holding the spine, neck, and head erect and motionless. We should focus our eyes at the starting point of the nose, the spot between the two eyebrows, the seat of spiritual vision. The reason why we focus our eyes upward is so we do not allow the conscious and subconscious thoughts to arise continually. The subconscious is the seat of memory of all that transpires. The spine, head, and neck are held erect so that the

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energy can flow unhindered up the spine. If it is bent, it pinches the spinal nerves, causing a blockage in the flow. We should gradually lengthen the time of meditation over a period; initially the goal should be quality and depth even for a short period.

Prānāyāma as Witness in Meditation

When the mind is singularly concentrated in meditation, all distractions are arrested. The novice seeker may be discouraged by receiving only occasional peace, interrupted constantly by fierce invasion of restless thoughts. The seeker should try patiently again and again to dispel the marauding thoughts.

If a glass vessel is filled with muddy water and allowed to settle, after a while the mud particles settle down to the bottom of the glass. Similarly, if we patiently wait for our restless thoughts to settle down, and do not nervously stir up the water, the mud will not rise to the surface. The movement of the mud particles do not indicate agitation, but a mere settling down process.

The ordinary man's mind, similarly, is muddy with the countless, restless thought-streams running into the river of his consciousness. During ordinary activity the invading thoughts are completely merged in his consciousness. This is why the average man does not know how restless he is. He discovers it, to his dismay, when he starts to practise meditation. For the first time in his life, he begins to stand aside as a conscious witness of the bewildering torrent of his thoughts and often blames meditation

for making him agitated and restless.

Hence Patanjali speaks of Prānāyāma as learning to control the life force (Prāna) that feeds the body and the sensory instruments. In meditation it is very essential to get hold of the life force (energy) through Prānāyāma, and use it to withdraw the consciousness from the body and senses, and place it upon the altar of interiorization, where God can be found: "Seek ye the kingdom of God within." Between where we are and Self-Realization stands the mind. By exploring the different levels of the thinking process, one at a time, we will discover that "who I am is different from this particular thought pattern that I am witnessing now". None of the thoughts that we experience are who we are, they belong to the ego, not the soul.

The soul, being a part of God, is the witness and the Silent Watcher, the transcendent Consciousness, untouched by Maya. On this path of self discipline God is not in the slightest upset, as to how many times we stumble and fall on the spiritual path. He is watching one thing: He wants to see how many times we pick ourselves up. Each time we make a mistake in our discipline — when we become careless, slothful, forgetful, indifferent, He says: "That is alright my child. But know that I will never become careless, slothful, or indifferent towards you."

God does not expect us to be perfect, but He does expect us to become perfect. What is perfection in meditation? It is not the attainment of anything, but the discarding of everything, we become nothing or no-thing, which

leads to an expansion in consciousness.

Be a Witness of the Mind

The purpose of meditation is to witness the thought process, meaning to observe the natural flow of the mind while not being distracted or disturbed. We have to observe everything as a witness. When we notice a negative thought, we should label it as not useful. We can deal with those thoughts in a more positive, practical way if we can label them as: “useful” or “not useful”. We should promote the positive, useful thoughts and do nothing with the negatively labelled, “not useful” thoughts. Witnessing the thought process means to be able to: (1) observe the natural flow of the mind, (2) notice the nature of the thought patterns, (3) while not being disturbed or distracted by this mental process. The simple formula is: Witnessing = Observing + Non-attachment.

To witness, we need to have a calm mind with an intuitive screen in front of us, where we can observe what is transpiring on the other side without attachment, letting the thoughts flow by. The least desirable state of the mind is the disturbed, restless, troubled, or wandering mind. We are not only beset by the distracted mind, but also by the additional feature of an intense, negative, emotional involvement. Our thoughts are coloured or afflicted in some way by attraction or aversion, or like and dislike, which is related to the ego with its attachments of “I”, “me”, “mine”.

This is where meditation can be used as a means to weaken the grip of the deep impressions called *samskāras*, which are

the driving force of actions or *karmas*. When we have mastered the art of Prānā-yāma in meditation, we will see that our everyday life and activities are under our control, we have control over the flow of Prāna in the body and senses, for where the energy is, there is also the consciousness.

Pratyāhāra: Interiorization of the Mind

Going beyond Prānāyāma to the next stage of discipline in meditation, we can go so deeply that we are able to forget everything that binds us to the material world, including the body. Patanjali called this state Pratyāhāra: interiorization of the mind. When in meditation we have deeply practiced Prānāyāma, we reach that state of interiorization where the mind is no longer bound by the thoughts and sensations of the body and of this world.

We see that even when passing through all the changing experiences and dualities of life, there is a silent, stillness within us — a calm state of thoughtless awareness, a deeply alert state without thoughts, untouched by any of the experiences we are going through in the world. This is a very lofty state. It is like an iceberg, with ninety per cent of the consciousness in the silent depth of stillness, and ten per cent as the calm, clear mind, guided by that decisive clarity of intuition. There is just a deep inner communion with God, or the Divine, knowing that It knows and being part of It.

Intuitive Experience of Devotees

As aspirants go deeper into medi-

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tation they experience extraordinary glimpses and higher states of consciousness — a heightened expansive awareness of peace and stillness. The inner peace first experienced by the seeker in meditation is his own soul; the vaster peace he feels going deeper is God. The seeker who experiences unity with everything has established God in the temple of his infinite inner perception.

A lady, while gazing at the spiritual eye, perceived brilliant, crystal-clear colours entwined with soul-solacing joy. As she watched, the translucent colour filled her whole head in blissful vibration of Love. Another devotee experienced the witnessing state. As he focused on the spiritual eye, stillness stole over his perception, filling his mind with calmness into a state of deep, transcendent stillness. He was conscious of everything around him — seeing whatever was present, yet not feeling the body at all. There was only this feeling of omnipresent stillness, not a ripple of restless thought, just a state of deep calmness, a bliss-filled stillness, and yet he could see and feel everything. His friends were talking to him and in response, with a little gap, words would just happen without thinking as to what to say. Such experiences come with steadfast effort in meditation.

Dhāraṇa — Concentration

After Pratyāhāra the next step is Dhāraṇa, or Concentration. This state is when the interiorised mind, freed from the senses and thoughts arising from sensory input, is focused on God. As we

meditate with one hundred per cent focus, we are concentrating upon God in one of his divine forms or as one of his beautiful qualities — as Light, as Wisdom, as Love, or as Ānanda, Bliss. To commune with God, we need to go into silence.

Stillness in meditation means being absorbed and feeling God's presence at the spiritual eye, the sixth chakra. Stillness is also breathlessness. It is in stillness that we experience communion with God as Peace, Joy, Love, or Light. How to achieve that state of stillness? By concentration, a one-pointed focus, on holding the mind steady and absorbed on one aspect only. And in this state of Dhāraṇa, we feel these concepts of God and experience them within this body temple, in the Great Light of God.

Expand the Consciousness to Feel God's Infinite Nature in Dhyāna

After achieving the states of interiorization and deep concentration described by Patanjali, then going still deeper in meditation, one attains the next state: Dhyāna, or true meditation. Dhyāna is the conception of the magnitude of God as not only experienced within this little body temple, but as his Universal or Cosmic manifestation. In other words, if we are concentrating in the state of Dhāraṇa on God's Love, we feel it as a bursting feeling of deep satisfaction and love within the heart and within the mind. However, in the deeper state of Dhyāna; we feel: Oh! That Love is not just something that God is giving to me. His Love is that which sustains and is flowing through all human

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hearts, through all expressions of creation.

In the same way, the little Light that we see in the state of Dhāraṇa becomes the cosmic Light of Spirit, which envelops this world, the universes, and the solar and stellar systems beyond what anyone has dreamed about. His Love, his Light, his Wisdom, or any of his aspects experienced in our body, expand into universal experiences of the Infinite nature of God. The inner experiences overflow into our everyday life, and we cannot distinguish between any human being as either a naughty or a good child of God. There is no distinction of caste, colour, or creed, or even from animals — we see all as one Life. We no longer feel these distinctions because we see God in that universal nature, that universal form, dwelling in all. We experience that God in every breath of the breeze and every leaf of every tree, in the sky, grass, in every created living form, in every atom.

From Worshipping God to Oneness with God

Now in these states of Dhāraṇa and Dhyāna, we are perceiving God in the state of devotion — meaning there is still a sense of separation between God and devotee. But then we come to the ultimate and final state outlined by Patanjali, Samādhi. Here, we no longer feel or experience God, but we become one with him. In the earlier states we are like a wave on the ocean, and then in the state of Samādhi, that wave of the ocean dissolves in the ocean. “The dewdrop

slips into the shining sea!”

In Samādhi meditation there are two states: (1) In the *savikalpa* state, one is completely withdrawn from this world: the body is in a trance-like or immobile state. In that samadhi-ecstasy one completely loses that sense of separation. The devotee knows: “I am in the Father and the Father is in me.” (2) And in the higher state of *nirvikalpa* samādhi he becomes fully liberated, then without any loss of God-perception and that feeling of God-union, one can go about in this world performing exacting duties as the will of God — “Not my will, but thy will be done in and through me”.

Joining with Infinity is Kaivalya — Brahman, there is nothing beyond, beside, or outside of it. It is all that is, was, or ever will be. “Centre everywhere, circumference nowhere”. The *Gītā* states: “All things exist not as a creation of Spirit, but none else than Spirit Itself, the colossal manifestation, the Manifest, the Unmanifest, and That beyond (xi:37), is the Ultimate Mystery, resolved only in Oneness with the Illimitable Absolute.”

Conclusion

Patanjali's yoga meditation teachings are merely guideposts to show the way to the spiritual traveller; realization is the destination, a union of soul and Spirit. Meditation is the doorway to these heightened states of stillness, of thoughtless blissful awareness, that allows us to experience God in his various aspects and his glorious Ecstatic Love: “He who knows, knows, naught else knows.” ✧

The TS: Meeting Ground of the Wise or Playground of the Foolish? — II

MARCELLO R. SERINI

THE Function of the Theosophical Society

◆ To summarize the role of the TS implies accepting the notion that there is a perennial “pulsation”, like a subterranean stream, issuing forth from The Universal Self (“I AM THAT I AM”, Exodus 3:14) to counter the crystallizing tendencies of primordial root matter (*mulaprakṛti*) upon the embodied living entities, or *jivas*, as well as the “directional pressure” (*māya*) of the Logos of our system or galaxy that maintains the existing state of Creation (at least for the current *kalpa*) throughout the *manvantara*. (For Puranic lore refer to *Devi Purana*; to The Bible re Genesis; for mathematical improbability of “spontaneous evolution” refer to *Mathematical Challenges to Neo-Darwinism*, Wistar Institute, Philadelphia, 1966.)

◆ This “pulsation” manifests with synchronized regularity both as a self-corrective mechanism and as a catalyst of change to further, protect, and maintain, the unfoldment of conscious life, and (in our case), the evolution of humanity as a whole.

◆ Guidance of the “pulsation” is undertaken by “realized souls” in consonant action — not unlike an orchestra playing a musical score — to stimulate (embodied) consciousness and bring about specific results within a given period of time.

◆ Given that we are dealing, for lack of better words, with “conscious spiritual energies” (*chit-śakti*) and not written lore handed down by generations of specialised library keepers, it behoves us to realize that if the TS as *the recipient of a partial fragment of the Ageless Wisdom* is to maintain a place of usefulness for the “orchestra players”, it must become aware of the ongoing tune or score that is being played and not hark back or take its guidance from past achievements and notions, as if these represent all there is to be had.

For “*The Wisdom*” springs from and pertains to that Pulsating Self; whilst “*The Ageless*” refers to the recorded lore of humanity that encapsulates *some* of the guiding principles of that Eternal Self. It follows that, since we are dealing with “Consciousness and its functions”, it is neither the physical structure nor the

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organization of the TS that is to become (the hoped for) cornerstone of future religions, but the ability of a nucleus of dedicated human beings to maintain, protect, and propagate the Dharma of the Spiritual Life in an enlightened manner, consonant with the times that we live in and in tune with “the players”.

With reference to the earlier-mentioned obstacles posed by tradition, the decade-old article by Michael Flannery, “Darwinian Evolution: A Scientific Pip-Squeak in a Suit of Cultural Armour”, (*Evolution News*, July 2011) notes the impact of those “cultural gate-keepers” that promulgated the ideas of Darwinian Evolution and goes on to say: “Darwinian evolution today has far more cultural than scientific power. They are not, in the 21st century, cut from the same cloth . . . its persistence rests not on the empirical evidence or even its scientific utility, but upon its power within the larger culture it serves . . .” *May not the same thing be said of “theosophical teachings” today?*

Does not the equivalent of “scientific utility” of Theosophy equate with the Brahma Vidya (the gnosis within the mind of God) or, more appropriately, that “inner core of knowledge” capable of making Man realize his place in the Cosmos, and, how to reach that state beyond the play of circumstances and thus understand the unified whole?

At this juncture, it is worth remembering that in the *Suśruta Samhita* (Sutrasthāna) the venerable Dhanvantari, in expounding *Vedotpatti Adhyāya* — Origin of the Science of Life — says: “The Self-

Born (Lord Brahma) propounded this science (Āyurveda) even before creating living beings . . . *later noticing that men are short-lived and of poor intelligence.* He divided it into eight branches.”

We therefore have here, a tradition stating that:

(1) “Knowledge” existed prior to manifestation; (2) This corpus was systematized to suit circumstances. (3) Decisive limiting factors prevail. We note, also, that the “importance of Man” is stressed and that in Āyurveda, Man is seen as the conglomeration of five primary elements and *ātman*, or the soul. When considering to whom the knowledge should be given the venerable Dhanvantari states: “(One) who is endowed with age, chastity, bravery, cleanliness, right conduct, politeness, strength, prowess, intelligence, courage, memory, wisdom, ability to grasp the meaning of words and interpret them; . . . whose mind, speech, and activities are pleasant and who is capable of withstanding strain” (self-study and recitation of scriptures or *Sishyopanayaniya Adhyāya*).

Should we not, therefore, as students of Theosophy, on understanding the implications of the above, reach beyond to that “everlasting knowledge” and, in the light of the aforesaid qualities, make it available and useful to our fellow human beings — not as a tradition held by a society — but as an ever unfolding direct expression of the Universal Self?

How can that be done?

The task at hand appears arduous if not impossible. But, here again, we have

the guidance from evolved souls to assist us. In Chapter Four of the *Suśruta Samhita* the “Necessity of Interpretations” is stressed at length: “Even after the science has been studied, if it is not properly interpreted in its meanings then it will only be causing exertion. Just as a donkey carrying a bundle of sandalwood understands only its weight and not the sweet smell of sandalwood, similarly a foolish person, though having read many sciences, acts like a donkey in interpreting the meanings of the science.”

The problem is that we strive to interpret and rephrase the teachings but not the fundamental essence, that is, *becoming aware of the essential nature of Man and of the Universe*. In mistaking the load for the fragrance, we fail to see that it emanates from a different dimension and remain stuck with the useless. “All the Vedas are as useful to an enlightened Brāhmana as is a tank in a place covered all over with water.” (*Bhagavadgītā*, 2.46)

Consonant Teachings

The emphasis now should be on understanding *the source of the essence* as well as the most effective and useful methods needed to reach it. Within the context of theosophical writings and activities, it implies stressing those works that facilitate the understanding and development techniques capable of not only reaching the very heart of that Consciousness, or Self, but also of elucidating its very nature. Works such as those based on *Yogānuśāsana* (exposition of Yoga), the

Saiva Philosophy, expositions of *The Voice of the Silence*, the *Yoga Vāsishtha*, Laya Yoga, Tantric treatises, Hermetic teachings and generally the teachings of the Siddhas of South India. All of these clearly denote, not only the means of reaching “That Consciousness” but also of rendering its workings understandable to the student; permitting the ensnared *jiva* to be transformed into a *Super-conscious Being* (refer to *Śiva Samhita*) capable of working in harmony with the Universe and of rendering meaningful service to Humanity.

The above “fresh approach” may best be appreciated by seeing what the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture in Kolkata, West Bengal, has done over the past two decades in organizing five biennial international seminars on Consciousness, where participants included not only philosophers and scientists but also mystics. Approaches such as these (organized and instituted by those very “initiated swamis” so dear to HPB), seeking to establish a “Science of Consciousness” as the means to directly understand the underlying reality or unity of life (the *Experiment* cognizing the “None comes unto the Father but through me” — John 14:6–7 — The Gospels) are what is required by the TS to institute. And so, its teachings will be moved from essentially elementary descriptions of the (unfolding) Universe, to its “substance”, that is, consciousness, as a meaningful next step towards enlightenment.

Regarding “understanding the power of *chit-śakti* in determining the nature of

The TS: Meeting Ground of the Wise or Playground of the Foolish? — II

each object” (refer *Yoga Vāsishtha*, Section on Liberation), we, as students of Theosophy, have to recognize the limitations of the current teachings as they stand, as well as our entrapped state of being and genuinely seek for that “Conscious Principle that is Śiva”, “who is the bridge to cross the ocean of the world, and who is the master of all knowledge”, (refer *Sri Guru Gita*, 33 – *Skanda Purana*). That Principle is obtained and experienced through the *grace of Initiation*, or *śakti-pāta*, and not through conventions, lectures, talks, books, or mere aspiration. It leads to the direct perception of the Universe, as it really is, and of the Self as being that.

It gives the power to help Humanity by imparting that real and liberating knowledge . . . “burning up all the karmas acquired through countless lifetimes” (*GG*,73). And, for that matter, the TS will become a genuine meeting ground of the wise, thus avoiding that “playground of fools” pitfall, frequented by those that “due to inflated ego and pride . . .

equipped with the power of austerity and learning, revolve in the vortex of worldly life, like pots on a water wheel” (*GG*, 85).

With the harnessing of Atomic Energy and the rise of Genetic Science, Humanity may be said to have come of age. We, now, must become the keepers of life of this planet at this very critical time, when we seem to have left those eternal truths behind in this vast universe where we live.

A fresh approach leading to understanding Cosmic Life (aka Consciousness) through Deeper Teachings is required.

This will move students from the presently held notion of *becoming* to one of *being* . . . away from inherited and established theosophical notions of future lives and incarnations. If this is tak-en up by the serious students and imparted within the TS, the Society will move forward in the 21st century in a meaningful and purposeful manner, thereby helping humanity whilst ensuring its future mission in times to come. ✧

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Suggested Reading

My Big TOE by Thomas W. Campbell written by a nuclear physicist in the language of contemporary culture, unifies science and philosophy, physics and metaphysics, mind and matter, purpose and meaning, the normal and the paranormal.

The Mind's Interaction with the Laws of Physics and Cosmology by Jeffrey S. Keen (Honours Degree in Physics & Mathematics), Imperial College, London. (Pioneering discoveries leading to equations, graphs, universal constants, formulae and laws of nature that eventually connect to cosmology, and the structure of the universe.

Infinite Mind, Science of the Human Vibrations of Consciousness by Valerie V. Hunt.

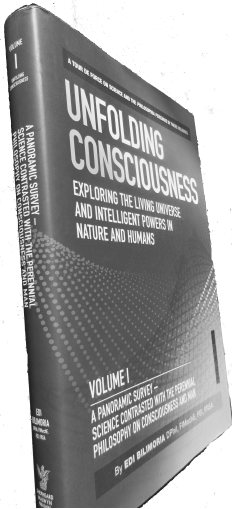
Developing Supersensible Perception, S. R. Joye PhD (A blend of Patanjali & Steiner on Consciousness.)

Never get into your head that your faith alone is true and every other is false. Know for certain that God without form is real and that God with form is also real. Then hold fast to whichever faith appeals to you.

Knowledge leads to unity, but ignorance to separateness.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa

Books of Interest



UNFOLDING CONSCIOUSNESS: EXPLORING THE LIVING UNIVERSE AND INTELLIGENT POWERS IN NATURE AND HUMANS by Edi Bilimoria, DPhil, FIMechE, FEI, FRSA. Shephard-Walwyn Publishers, South-west London, England, 2022, in 4 vols. presented in a slip case, £98.50.

philosophical, but Edi Bilimoria takes a much wider, more inclusive view. “Who am I?” is the underlying question of *Volume I: A Panoramic Survey-Science Contrasted with the Perennial Philosophy on Consciousness and Man*, which provides an overview of the field, highlighting both the value of science and its limitations as a tool for examining the deeper problems of life and consciousness, and makes the case for the perennial philosophy as a bridge to reach a greater understanding of these areas. In *Volume II: Peering down the Microscope — Man’s Internal Landscapes*, Bilimoria manages the seemingly impossible task of finding common ground in the mass of beliefs and practices, old and new, from diverse cultures, religions, and philosophies, to demonstrate an overlap and unifying doctrine even on such issues as post-mortem existence and rebirth and the complexities of the human mind. *Volume III: Gazing through the Telescope — Man Is the Measure of All Things* is even more ambitious in its aim to show how the human being fits into the grand scheme of the universe, to examine the question of emergence from the spiritual to the material, from the implicate order to its explicit expression. It draws on the insights of symbolism and mysticism, and the deepest teachings of occultism to explain the nature of consciousness. In this 21st century, an era in which science

These four volumes are a tour de force on science and the philosophia perennis:

I - A Panoramic Survey — Science Contrasted with the Perennial Philosophy on Consciousness and Man.

II - Peering down the Microscope — Man’s Internal Landscapes.

III - Gazing through the Telescope — Man Is the Measure of All Things.

IV - References & Resources, Further Reading.

Endorsements:

“When you consider the scope, width and erudition of this book, it is not surprising that it took its author over 20 years to complete. Most philosophical books take a single view of the problem of consciousness, either scientific or

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is our dominant paradigm and is playing an ever increasing part in our technology and our lives, this book helps to adjust the balance and resolve the conflicts between science and religion on issues like evolution and purpose, the nature of consciousness, and what it truly means to be a human being as opposed to an animated robot or a biological mechanism.

This is a complex work, but *each chapter opens with a synopsis and closes with a summary of the principal themes*, which are extremely helpful and means that despite their complexity, the three volumes are always easy to understand and follow. I would recommend this trilogy to anyone who wants a broad overview of the various traditions which have led to the current Western understanding of man's place in the Universe."

Dr Peter Fenwick is Emeritus Consultant Neuropsychiatrist and Neuropsychologist at both the Maudsley and John Radcliffe hospitals. He was a senior lecturer at Kings College, London, where he worked as a consultant at the Institute of Psychiatry. He worked with the Mental Health Group at the University of Southampton, and held a visiting professorship at the Riken Neurosciences Institute in Japan. He is President Emeritus of the Scientific and Medical Network.

"I know of no other work of such scope and depth relating to the ultimate questions raised by human existence both in terms of our origins and destiny."

David Lorimer, Chair of the Galileo Commission and International Programme Director of the Scientific and Medical

Network, Editor of Paradigm Explorer.

"*Unfolding Consciousness* is a remarkable tour de force through spiritual meanders of esoteric traditions, from East and West, and their dialogue with modern science. It is as fascinatingly provocative, as it is informative and it will equally challenge the scientist, the philosopher, and the artist. In contemporary, unpretentious language, it takes the reader from the spiritual mission of humanity to the principles of the universe (and back), with careful consideration of both scientific evidence and metaphysical subtleties; and underneath it all, it seeks the traces of consciousness, in all its forms. Just like its main theme ourselves, and our rapport to the universe this is not an easy book; nor should it be. It is an *important* work, which is worth taking time to engage with."

Dr Ana-Maria Pascal, MBA, PhD, SFHEA, Director, Liberal Arts Programmes, Associate Professor in Philosophy and Public Ethics, Provosts Group, Regents University London.

"It is refreshing to read a masterly study of consciousness written by an author who roots their arguments in a profound grasp of esoteric wisdom. It is not simply that such wisdom conveys profound insights for understanding the essence of consciousness. Of far greater importance is the skill that Edi Bilimoria brings in clarifying our place in the vast panorama of which we are a part. There is nothing more pressing in our day than this challenge for us to act in synergy with the planet (and, in more esoteric

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terms, the macrocosm). Bilimoria shows that the ancient axiom that “man is the measure of all things” can be revitalised in the context of contemporary science. And he brings an encyclopaedic grasp of modern physics, neuroscience, and psychology to support his supremely optimistic view that consciousness is fundamental to reality. This is an insight whose time has come, and he shows himself to be a diligent and creative guide to what a post-materialist understanding of consciousness will mean for us all.”

B. Les Lancaster, *Professor Emeritus of Transpersonal Psychology, Liverpool John Moores University and Director, the Alef Trust.*

“This work presents a comprehensive, lucid and well-written overview, with careful attention to detail and yet full of far-ranging and potentially transformative ideas.”

Rupert Sheldrake, *PhD, biologist and author of The Science Delusion.*

“As we enter the age of post-materialist science, in which *consciousness* is seen as a fundamental rather than incidental feature of the Universe, there is an urgent need to extend science to accommodate the mental and spiritual domains. However, this is not a new endeavour, since it also characterises various esoteric traditions which go back a thousand years and embrace a variety of cultures. The unique and remarkable achievement of this work is to put this endeavour in a proper conceptual and historical context and only someone with the extraordinary breadth of vision

of the author could have achieved this.”
Bernard Carr, *Emeritus Professor of Mathematics and Astronomy, Queen Mary University of London, and President of the Scientific and Medical Network*

Biodata:

Born in India and educated at the universities of London, Sussex, and Oxford, Dr Edi Bilimoria presents an unusual blend of experience in the fields of science, arts, and philosophy. He is an award-winning engineer and consultant. A student of the perennial philosophy for over half a century, he has given courses and lectured extensively in the UK and internationally in California, The Netherlands, India, and Australia. He also worked as Education Manager for the Theosophical Society in Australia from 2009 to 2011.

Dr Bilimoria has published extensively in the fields of science, engineering and the esoteric philosophy. His book *The Snake and the Rope* was awarded a prize by the Scientific and Medical Network on which he now serves as a Board Director. An enthusiastic glider pilot for many years, he is also a choral singer and a dedicated concert pianist. The outcome of his involvement in music and the perennial philosophy is a discernment of the higher laws governing all life and existence, at all levels, and the necessity of striving to live with integrity according to this realization. ✧

TIM WYATT

Theosophical Society in England Board member and Secretary and Conference Organiser, Leeds Theosophical Society

Theosophical Work around the World

39TH Congress of the Federation of Theosophical Societies in Europe

Mrs Jenny Baker, National President of the Theosophical Society in England (TSE), which hosted the European Congress, reports that its theme, “Healing Oneself, Healing the World”, which now seems most appropriate, was decided upon in 2018, long before the pandemic began to affect individuals and nations around the world. But thankfully, the University of York, where the Congress took place from August 1 to 6, 2022, is set in beautiful grounds and the Exhibition Centre proved to be an excellent choice for the delegates who came in person from several European and other countries such as Belgium, Canada, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Scotland, and Spain. There were 19 countries participating in total, counting those participating online: Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, Mexico, Singapore, and the USA. We were also pleased to have several younger members attending and actively helping.

Miss Trần-Thi-Kim-Diêu, Chair of the European Federation, and Mrs Baker formally opened the Congress, welcoming all participants before including them in the recitation of Annie Besant’s Invocation to Unity, followed by the European anthem (known as the “Ode of Joy”).

The Congress was honoured by the presence of both the International Secretary, Ms Marja Artamaa, and the International Treasurer, Ms Nancy Secrest. Unfortunately, due to his many commitments, International President Tim Boyd could not attend in person but was kind enough to give the opening address live from his home in Chicago at 5.30 in the morning.

Although all the talks were based on the theme of healing, the speakers brought a great variety of approaches to the subject and gave the participants much to consider. There were also discussion groups where the theme was further explored in lively but friendly debate.

The first week in August is usually the time for the English Section’s Summer School, so Thursday was devoted to English speakers. Ms Teresa Keast, an English member, gave the prestigious Blavatsky Lecture on “Anger Healed from within Outwards”: “Anger is a topic we tend to avoid, yet it provides us with the perfect opportunity to understand that anger ‘healed from within outwards’ is paramount to resolving conflict and for developing our conscious evolution as a collective human family.”

Each day began with a choice of either Yoga or Tai Chi, and the first talk was preceded by a twenty-minute meditation to set the correct atmosphere for the day. Delegates did appreciate an afternoon

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visit to Castle Howard, one of Yorkshire's magnificent stately homes built over three hundred years ago and owned by the Howard family. There was also time to explore the historic city of York. The evenings were more relaxed, with two musical and video presentations, and a presentation from Ms Secrest, International Secretary of the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS). She explained its founding by Annie Besant and outlined the great work of members to alleviate suffering all around the world. On the last evening they had terrific fun dancing to a local folk band.

The whole event was live-streamed for those who could not attend in person. The talks were translated into Spanish and special thanks are due to Mrs Angels Torra, General Secretary of the Spanish Section, and Ms Sara Ortega van Vloten, also from Spain, for their sterling efforts in translation.

Also to be thanked are Ms Trân-Thi-Kim-Diêu, Ms Krista Umbjarv, Mr Damon Scothern, photographer, Ms Andrea Baptiste, Mr Barry Thompson, Mr Gary Martins, the web master, and all the speakers and participants for making this such a successful and fruitful event.

At the closing session, Mrs Baker handed back the banner of the Federation to the Chair, who passed it on to the General Secretary of the Belgian Section, Mrs Sabine Van Osta, the next host of the European Congress.

Finnish Section Summer School

Mr Tapio Ratt-Seule, editor of the Fin-

nish Section magazine, *Teosofi*, reports that there were 35 attendees at the opening ceremony of their Summer School (8–12 July 2022) on Friday evening at their Kreivila Summer Centre. Their General Secretary, Mr Janne Vuononvirta, opened the course with the theme “Masters of the Wisdom and the Path of Discipleship” by welcoming those present: “It is wonderful to see you all, as this summer school is a symbol of hope. Maybe we can go on an expedition on the Path during this weekend and our path will be strengthened. We have guest lecturers Pablo and Michele Sender from the Krotona Institute of Theosophy in Ojai, California, and Ms Marja Artamaa, international Secretary and former GS of our Section, has also come to greet us from the Theosophical Society (TS) international headquarters in Adyar, Chennai, India.”

In addition to the Finnish attendees, there were two from Sweden, one, an Indian by birth, came from Ireland, one from Italy, and another from Estonia. In her welcoming words, Marja brought them greetings from the President Tim Boyd. They also saw video clips from Adyar and Marja described the daily life and atmosphere there.

As expressed in short extracts from three participants who were present:

1. “Pablo Sender’s course was rewarding with his enthusiasm, the broad scope of the subject, and his clarity. His wife Michele also played an important role during the visit, contributing with a talk and helpful comments on ‘Nirmanakayas

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Some attendees to the European Congress: Miss Tr n-Thi-Kim-Di u, Chairperson of the European Theosophical Federation (*4th from the right*); Mr Janne Vuononvirta, General Secretary of the Finnish Section (*1st from the right*); and Krista Umbjarv, European Federation Secretary (*kneeling in front of the European Federation banner*)



Mrs Jenny Baker (*right*), National President of the English Section & host of the European Congress, giving a gift to Miss Kim-Di u in gratitude for helping with the Congress



Miss Kim-Di u passing the European Congress banner from Mrs Baker to Mrs Sabine Van Osta, General Secretary of the Belgian Section and next European Congress host

Theosophical Work around the World



Group photo of most of the participants of the European Congress that took place in the University of York, England, from 1 to 6 August 2022, on the theme: “Healing Oneself, Healing the World”

Theosophical Work around the World



Mr Pablo Sender, addressing the Finnish Section's Kreivila Summer Centre audience on "Masters of the Wisdom and the Path of Discipleship"



Pablo and his wife Michele (*to his left*) with a group of young members and Mr Janne Vuononvirta (*to Pablo's right*), General Secretary of the Finnish Section of the Theosophical Society



Group photo of the 35 participants attending the Kreivila Summer Centre theosophical school in the south of Finland

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— Their Nature and Work'. The highlights were that identification with our bodies is the main problem. Instead of denigrating the physical body, one needs to find the higher one within oneself. How we treat others in our daily life is what matters the most. Are we here to help and serve, or to promote our own interests? What is really important to the Masters of the Wisdom is how much we help and serve. The connection between Master and disciple is something private."

2. "No spiritual progress is possible except by putting the interest of humanity before self-interest, or altruism. Pablo explained in depth and with clarity the parable of the two paths up the mountain, the winding and the straight one.

New insights emerged on the subject: the path is not marked; there is no sign of a path. Being a disciple is first and foremost a state of mind. Its prerequisites are 1) selflessness, 2) self-knowledge, and 3) self-control. Physical teachers or gurus are only necessary initially. Then the Path begins and the aspirant must walk it alone, under the careful watch of the Master on the inner planes. It is all about trying to do the right things, and maybe even at the right time."

3. "The charm of Theosophy is that when we are reflecting on our own path, no one comes and says 'choose Theosophy, it is the only right path'. Within the TS, freedom of choice is truly cherished, which relates to the TS motto: 'There is no religion higher than Truth.'" ✧

Intuition has to be known from a deep and profound analysis by which we find out what is from egotism alone and what is not; if it is due to egotism, then it is not from the Spirit and is untrue. The power to know does not come from book-study nor from mere philosophy, but mostly from the actual practice of altruism in deed, word, and thought; for that practice purifies the covers of the soul and permits that light to shine down into the brain-mind. As the brain-mind is the receiver in the waking state, it has to be purified from sense-perception, and the truest way to do this is by combining philosophy with the highest outward and inward virtue.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

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