

## **THE RELEVANCE OF OUR WORK**

**Tim Boyd**

*(Summary of Public Lecture delivered on 4.1.2020)*

At some point every person that comes into this world has the sense that they are here for a reason. There is a purpose for their life. For most people a deep awareness of the nature of that purpose remains unclear. Their hazy perception of its outline suggests that at a minimum we are in this world to be happy. How to accomplish this most basic goal then becomes the focus of one's living.

A few have the good fortune to uncover a purpose that gives meaning, fulfilment, challenge, and direction to the experiment of living. Although the specific work they do in the world may vary, one feature which is shared is that in one way or another that work is done for the benefit of others. The commonality of such work is that it takes place regardless of poverty or wealth, high or low social status, or in the words of the Theosophical Society's First Object, 'regardless of race, creed, caste, sex, or religion'. The life that is lived to benefit the self and others brings

about an awareness of connection and relationship with an ever-expanding circle of 'others'.

Of those few who find and pursue a purpose, fewer still find that purpose to be rooted in an open embrace of spirituality. Spirituality seems to be an unclear term in the minds of many people, encompassing everything from behaviours, to diet, to psychic abilities, to accepted beliefs. Stripped to its barest, the most essential nature of spirituality is the recognition of unity, of the undivided, interdependent, interrelated nature of all life. One could say that it is the movement towards grounding oneself in reality. To those whose life purpose lies in this direction there is a specific work in which they are engaged. As with others they are found in all of the various workplaces of the world — farming, finance, government, academia, religion — but beneath the outer forms of labour something else is going on.

The basics of the work could be described as purification. The poet, William

Blake, expressed it in this way: 'If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, Infinite. For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern.' Through self-study and observation we come to recognize the ways in which the tendencies of our minds continually deceive us and add to the suffering of the world. Once we can see, the cleansing takes place, and our addition to the violence and grasping in the stream of human thought ceases.

This process of unveiling necessarily spreads beyond the individual. What is being revealed is the 'Divine Seed' — the soul — and its radiance infuses everything one touches. So, 'normal' work becomes sacred; casual conversation is infused with meaning; ordinary events are seen in their true nature, as extraordinary, holy, and pure. This is no longer an act of will, but the effortless expression of a consciousness freed from the veils of conditioning that we have cherished for so long.



## **REALIZING THE DIVINE WITHIN**

*(Summaries of Symposium Lectures delivered on 4.1.2020)*

### **Clemice Petter**

Much has been said about the realization of the divine, and perhaps we can try to look at it once more. It is said that it is impossible to put into words that which lies beyond the realm of the mind, therefore it would be more advisable that we do not even try to describe that which is beyond description. Those who have realized the Self do not talk about that realization, or what happens after one realizes the Divine. They rather talk about what is preventing that realization, which has been pointed out to be the sense of separation, the idea that we are separated from each other. To see the falseness of this idea that we are individuals, that psychologically we are separated from each other, is the hard work that needs to be undertaken.

The difficulty is that we are blind in the psychological world, and being blind

we have developed walking sticks. Because we are able to somehow manage to move about in that world, we have forgotten that, in fact, we cannot see. The tragedy of this is that the blindness also prevents us from seeing what we are doing as we move about, the kind of world we are creating out of our limitation. And because we cannot see the danger approaching we run into it as helpless prey of our own ignorance.

Our eyes have never seen the truth; they are sealed by beliefs, dogmas, certainties, opinions, conclusions and so many crutches that it would take too long to list them all. The first step in the direction of seeing may be to let go of all crutches. But we are afraid to let them go, as we believe they are essential, and to stand without them requires tremendous work which most of us are not willing to do. So we go on hoping that some

day those walking sticks will help us to see. But this is impossible because they are just walking sticks and cannot function as eyes. In order to see we have to recognize that we are blind.

We talk about the realization of that which is Divine within. What is this 'within' that we talk so much about? Is

it not our psychological world? Is it not what we are psychologically? And if we are blind in that world, how can we see, or realize anything in there? If that is the case, then we first need to learn to see, and once we see, the work is done. Therefore, as J. Krishnamurti says: 'The first is the last step.'

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### **Vinayak Pandya**

What is the Divine? Generally this word makes us think of some god or deity or other spiritual power. The Third Object of the Theosophical Society (TS) says: 'To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.'

We have to accept what we cannot change. We need to be living in the present ignoring the past and avoiding thinking much of the future which is not in our hand.

We should focus on Theosophy in practice. This will include service, following the TS ideals, and meditation, not simply

sitting in a corner but concentrating one hundred per cent on whatever we do.

A belief in the law of karma will help us to relax. We need to trust invisible helpers. Whatever happens is for the good, based on what has been designed or the role given to us. We should avoid doubt and suspicion and accept that everyone is a creature of the Almighty. From one many are made, and again it goes back to the same place from where one has come.

The path is difficult. There are rewards once we overcome the test of time. Nothing is permanent.

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### **Trân-Thi-Kim-Diêu**

What is the purpose of a human life? This question is raised whenever a human soul starts its irresistible process of maturation. Once asked, very likely the soul will not halt in its search for an answer. Wandering, testing, experiencing, the human mind serves as an instrument to reflect upon its own nature and while doing so it discovers life's deeper aspects. Changing one's paradigm

is unavoidable at a certain point; it corresponds to changing one's own way of thinking and living.

How then to meet with true life without any bias, without any distortion of what is observed? What are the role and the impact of a clear mind in daily life? What does realisation mean in the spiritual sense? Is permanent realisation possible at all? Or is realisation also subject to impermanence like any other

phenomenon in the great manifestation which is divine? What is the practical 'use' of realisation?

Integrity of view and commitment to a lofty ideal constitute the testimonies

for freedom, the first characteristic of Consciousness — one which is the tangible manifestation of the Divine. Does realising the Divine within not mean to live a life in the full consciousness of this Oneness?

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## **IMPACT OF INDIAN SONGS**

### **Songs from Old Hindi Movies**

India is a country where people with multiple languages, cultures and religions live. Most of the people do not know the languages of one another. But music is something which has no language of its own but is the language of all. On 3 January 2020 there was an entertainment programme consisting of songs from old Hindi movies.

The film music of India is something

that binds together all the people of the country. Through film music all kinds of feelings and emotions are expressed, whether pain or pleasure, love or hatred, joy or sorrow, meeting or departing, hopes or disappointments, success or failure, and so on. Apart from that, many Indian movies songs also reveal the meaning and philosophy of life in many ways.



## **DANCE PERFORMANCE**

### **'PRIYA SAKHA' ('DEAR FRIEND')**

On 4 January 2020 there was a dance performance, 'Priya Sakha', meaning 'Dear Friend', by the differently abled Odissi dancer Nithyananda Das, with a unique theme. The Divine essence pervades the Universe in every aspect of existence. Man has always aspired for this divine essence within the self, which can be realised only through undivided faith and devotion. All human endeavour is founded upon the Divine Will. Man is but a puppet dancing to the melody of the divine flute.

This dance is a humble offering to

Lord Krishna from a dancer who lost his leg in an accident. Unable to dance any more, he entreats the Lord to give back his leg. Devotion is the eternal bond by which the devotee is bound to his Lord. Unparalleled is the love between them.

'O Lord Krishna! O Natabara! (the greatest of dancers', another name of Krishna) Please give back my leg so that I can worship you through my dance', says the dancer. 'The Brahmin devotee Shrivatsa struck you on the chest with his feet. Yet you adorn the mark of his feet on your chest as the symbol of love

of your devotee. Why do you forsake me and leave me alone in despair?’ Again and again he prays to the Lord to give back his leg.

Finally the Lord Krishna himself appears to the devotee and says: ‘O Sakha, my friend! Without you I am Unmanifest. Stand up and dance again

with the single leg you have. That will be your greatest offering to me. I’ll hold you in my arms as you dance, O Sakha. Together we will unfold the elements of the *Panchama Veda* — the treatise on dance and music. Come, Sakha, my dear friend, you will live and dance for me as I play on my Divine Flute.’



## EXHIBITION OF THOUGHT FORMS PAINTINGS

An exhibition of rare paintings representing different thought forms was inaugurated by the international President, Tim Boyd, at the 144th International Convention held at the Indian Section Headquarters in Varanasi. At the Central Hall in Shantikunj, 29 paintings were exhibited out of over 40 paintings believed to have been drawn and painted by three artists who were friends of Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater. This was done for usage in their book, *Thought Forms*, first published in 1901, based on the authors observations of various kinds of thought forms.

There is an interesting story about how these paintings, which were untraceable and presumed lost, were discovered. In 2015, Tim Boyd was conducting a study programme at the Indian Section Headquarters at Varanasi, when one of the participants, a member from Australia named Bronia Iwanczak, hap-

pened to mention that it was a shame that the valuable ‘Thought Forms’ paintings were hanging neglected on the walls of the Tibbitt Library and being allowed to deteriorate. On hearing this, the President, who had been unsuccessfully searching for these paintings at the archives at Adyar and the United States, rushed to the Library with the other participants and discovered the precious, long-lost paintings!

Bronia Iwanczak, an artist, along with another friend painstakingly cleaned the paintings, numbered them and put them in airtight boxes, which were later stored in an airconditioned room at the Indian Section Headquarters for safety. And there they remained, until this day, when they were exhibited to the public for the first time during this International Convention. It is believed that these paintings were a precursor to the modern art movement.



## RECEPTION

As is customary during the Convention, a reception was organised for welcoming the delegates in the afternoon on 31 December 2019 on the lawn in front of the Suryashram building. Despite the intense cold and foggy weather, the delegates gathered in large numbers to meet and greet one another and partake of the tea and refreshments provided at

the venue. It is always a wonderful opportunity to be able to meet one another at the beginning of the Convention and get acquainted, so that for the rest of the Convention there is the feeling of being among friends rather than strangers. A total of 1491 delegates had registered for the Convention by the opening day of which 86 were from outside India.



There are — even among . . . men of Science — those who are already prepared to find our teachings in harmony with the results and progress of their own researches, and who are not indifferent to their application to the spiritual needs of humanity at large. Amongst these it may be your task to throw the seeds of Truth and point out the path. Yet . . . not one of those who have only tried to help on the work of the Society, however imperfect and faulty their ways and means, will have done so in vain.

*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*  
Letter A – ML-33

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Number of delegates registered as on Saturday, 4 January: 1501

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