

## 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.

# The Experience of Grace

TIM BOYD

AT the outset of H. P. Blavatsky's (HPB) Diagram of Meditation she mentions two essentials required in order to engage in the process of meditation. First, she talks about the necessity to "conceive of Unity", and then she talks about the twin aspects involved in such an effort.

The first is "by expansion in space"; the second is "infinite in time". So, time and some sort of extension within our thinking becomes an important aspect of the meditative process. As we go through the process of just living a life, time is a variable experience. Even though we measure it in seconds, minutes, and hours, our experience of time varies. The old expression that "time flies when you're having fun" is not just an "old-folks" expression. It is our shared observation.

In moments of crisis or pain, it seems that time has a way of moving much more slowly. Time is not absolute or unchanging. It is also apparent that as we grow older time is a relative thing. It seems to pass more quickly. It is a common expression among older people: "Where did it all go? It seems like yesterday." I hesitate when I am with friends who have children, because when I think about them, I remember them as small. When I ask about the small child, it turns out that now

they have graduated from college, or are married. All of these things are part of this flexibility in the perception of time.

Given a long enough life, one thing that we realize is that it is impossible for us to know all that there is to know. During his life, Socrates was described as the wisest of all men. This recognition was based on something that was to him a fact, which he stated as: "I know that I do not know." He also phrased it in another way: "I am ignorant of what I don't know." This recognition separated him from other people of deep knowledge. During the course of our lives, we study various philosophies and systems of thought in an effort to have a grasp on a greater reality. Invariably they come up short of giving an adequate description of reality.

In Indian spirituality four Brahmanic stages, or ashramas, of life are identified: (1) Youth, where we listen and learn. (2) the householder, where we apply the things we have heard to building a family and accumulating wealth. The final two phases relate to a process of maturation in the direction of our consciousness. (3) In the third ashrama, the ideal is a time of introspection. Having fulfilled the various responsibilities in life one

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enters a time to look more deeply at things, to try to connect with states beyond worldly conditions. So, it is described as the “forest-dweller”. (4) The fourth and final ashrama is the renunciant, where all worldly relationships are abandoned and the remaining life energies are focused on union with the Divine.

The system of the four ashramas was based on the ideal of eighty years of life, each phase being approximately twenty years. This age-related process was observed, standardized, and somewhat followed by a process of becoming more and more focused and aligned with reality, or Unity. Again, this was all connected to the idea that there is something beyond our capacity for knowledge.

There is an interesting pamphlet by I. K. Taimni that came out in the 1970s. It addresses the subject of divine grace and self-reliant effort, and the distinction between these two ways of viewing life and the world. “Grace” was defined as “an unmerited divine assistance”, or *krpa* in Sanskrit.

Taimni makes the point that grace as an experience is undeniable, and consistent with our own experience. There are times in most people’s lives where seemingly out of nowhere some exalted experience descends on us; where without any observable cause we are uplifted in ways that do not seem to be justified by our behavior. There are countless examples in human history. One of the most recognized and popularly sung songs in the English language is called “Amazing Grace”, which recounts one

man’s experience. It was written by one who, in his later life, became a Christian minister, John Newton. When he had this experience of grace, however, he was far from being an exemplar of any religious practice whatsoever.

Earlier in his life Newton was a slave trader, a shipmaster who bought, sold, and transported African slaves during the 1700s. It was while crossing the Atlantic Ocean with a boatload of slaves that he had his experience of grace. The words of the song that he wrote years later describe it: “Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found, was blind, but now I see”, are the words in the first verse of the song.

In the Bible there is the familiar story of the Prodigal Son who leaves his father’s house, takes his share of his father’s wealth, and squanders it all in traveling to reach a debased state in a far land. There he lives his life, cut off from the glories he had known, hungry, and working in the lowest occupation. One day he remembers how good his condition was in his father’s house. With the hard-won sense of all that he has left behind he declares: “I will arise and return to my father’s house.” So, there is this gracious moment that many would describe as unearned by his behaviors and activities. This lies outside of the range that we can normally claim to understand.

Another point that Taimni makes in his brief article is that there are two views conditioning the way many people live their spiritual lives. There are those who

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engage in the Bhakti path, emptying oneself in loving surrender to the Divine with the expectation, and the experience of “unearned”, divinely bestowed blessing. The Sanskrit word for the other approach of self-reliant effort is *Purushārtha* — the spirit (*Purusha*) whose purposeful activity (*artha*) is addressed to establishing a meaningful life. This is very much aligned with the theosophical point of view, that the universe is governed by laws of cause and effect, of Karma.

From the view of self-reliant effort, grace is not arbitrary and does not simply appear because some undeserving person asks, or prays for it. The thinking is that, even though it is unseen, there must be a cause. The question becomes, which of these competing ideas is correct? Or, what blending of these two is an accurate view of the universe and the way we function within it?

What we know is that every cause does not necessarily reveal itself in an immediate effect. In the realm of mechanics, or chemistry, results appear quickly, making an awareness of the linkage of cause and effect clear. We mix certain chemicals together and certain things happen right before our eyes. But in the life sciences it is different. When we talk about the biological world, which is made of living things, we plant a seed that looks like a pebble and over a period of time it becomes something very different. The causes inherent within that seed, when nurtured, show themselves over time.

Children are born in a birth process

that is nine months from the time of conception to the time that a functional human being appears. In the geological world we hear about earthquakes occurring in different places around the world. This is a long-term phenomenon, where the tectonic plates of the Earth are pushing against each other over a period of time. The forces generated are unexpressed for a time, but at some moment there is a sudden powerful and destructive release. The causes do not reveal themselves instantaneously. There is the idea that a similar accumulation of inner effects is involved in experiences of grace.

For those who find value in the theory of reincarnation, when we think in terms of many lives, every single cause does not have its flowering in every life. We tend to divide Karma, which literally means “action”, into the two poles of cause and effect. Those ancient sages who gave deep thought to it classified Karma into three types: 1. *Prārabdha*: that karma which has “ripened” and finds expression in this life. 2. *Sanchita*: the total reservoir of our karma of which only a fraction is active in any given lifetime. 3. *Āgami*, the karma we are presently creating from moment to moment.

In Tibetan Buddhism they have a funny way of addressing the inexplicability of Grace while still maintaining the cause-and-effect Karma model. They recognize that even if we take karma as one of the laws of the universe, there are things that still remain unexplained. So, they have a category of karma described as “lucky karma”. It is not something that

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is necessarily a result of our actions, it is as if universal forces beyond our comprehension conspire and we are blessed.

One of the difficulties for us is that our consciousness is not sufficiently expansive to embrace a complete description of reality. However deep we may be as students or practitioners, as was said in Shakespeare's Hamlet: "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in your philosophy." Even HPB, in writing *The Secret Doctrine*, commented that many of the words and thoughts were not her own, and that very frequently she was given things to write that she did not fully understand.

Whether we call it grace or just the nature of things, we find that there are certain things embedded in us that are not the result of our efforts. The whole idea that there is a Divine Plan in which not only we, but every atom and energy

of this universe functions is fundamental to an appreciation of spirituality. We are an infinitesimal part of a Greater Life to which our personal will and efforts are meaningless. Within us there is a pattern that is imprinted in such a way that by effort or by Grace we are all destined to grow into the fullness of the Divine itself.

These are thoughts that can assist us in developing a balanced approach. J. Krishnamurti called Truth "a pathless land". There are no established means to explore or describe it. Rumi, in his poem, said: "Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I'll meet you there. When the soul lies down in that grass, the world is too full to talk about. Ideas, language, even the phrase "each other" doesn't make any sense." We are surrounded and permeated by a universal consciousness that is divine in its nature. We are here to connect with that. ✧

**Love is the crowning grace of humanity,  
the holiest right of the soul,  
the golden link which binds us to duty and truth,  
the redeeming principle that chiefly reconciles  
the heart to life, and is prophetic of eternal good.**

Petrarch

# The Descent of *Manas* — II

RAGHAVAN N. IYER

BECAUSE many human beings have identified with their physical bodies despite the fact that they are self-conscious beings, they have forgotten both their divine inheritance and their myriad debts, even on the physical plane, to those who went before. While some older cultures may have been preoccupied with ancestor worship, modern societies are almost blind to what they owe to the lunar *Pitris*. If they were true to this inheritance, they would have a greater grasp of the right use of all the senses, because these would all be recognized as vital powers, the reflections of divine potencies upon the astral plane. This would bring a sense of the sacred to the use of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. Instead, there is constant abuse of all the sense perceptions and therefore there is a sense in which people are vampirizing the lunar *Pitris*, living upon them without acknowledgement, misusing the energies derived from them. This neglect of duty entails a costly vulnerability to the *kāma rupa* of the moon which goes through its own cyclical changes, appearing on the physical plane as the waxing and waning of the physical moon in its

mutual relations with the sun and earth. Behind this visible process lies a whole set of disintegrating tendencies which were discarded as unusable from an earlier period of evolution, but which exercise a powerful negative effect upon those vulnerable to them through the misuse of their own energies.

Such people are recognizable by their appalling lack of natural gratitude. The idea that all life is an expression of gratitude through service and duty, which is entirely natural to solar beings, seems strange to them because it brings back bad memories of base ingratitude in other lives. Familiar with gratitude merely as a passing emotion, they can hardly resonate to Pliny's teaching that the whole earth is a kind nurse and mother to mankind, and its elements are not at all inimical to mortals. Their moral and spiritual deficiency goes back to the lost continent of Atlantis, wherein they were engrossed in utilizing spiritual knowledge for the sake of self-aggrandisement. As a result, there was enormous damage to the Third Eye, which then closed. Therefore, they now experience a technical difficulty

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in being intuitive, as well as in conserving, consolidating, or controlling astral tendencies. Owing to their alienation from their spiritual heritage through the astral damage they have done to themselves, they tend to concoct theories which purport to disprove the possibility or use of any metaphysical intuition at all in the human race. Meanwhile, they remain subject to the affinities they have formed with classes of elementals, shells and elementaries, and hence to the sullen state of depressed consciousness that is their inescapable karma. What they must learn, and what their karma affords them the opportunity to learn, is that they exist solely for the sake of reaching out to something larger than themselves. If through the initially painful recognition of their own awesome responsibility and austere duty they learn this lesson, it will work to the long-term good of the soul. But if they indulge and engage in this perverse and cyclical state of mind, they are only prolonging the karma that goes back to other lives.

Individuals must one day come to see that in a universe of Law all human qualities are connected with cosmic sources and forces. Nothing is accidental. A person cannot be a silent worshipper of the Spiritual Sun and cannot constantly think of it without always being full of optimism and benevolence. On the other hand, one cannot be caught in the meshes of cynicism and pessimism without having connected oneself to the dark side of the moon through *adharma* and the persistent misuse of powers. In Kali Yuga there are

many such souls, and though they desperately need help, and do not know how to help themselves, they try to lay down the conditions of life for all. Harming and even destroying each other in their ignorance, they use up human bodies, and in extreme cases, through annihilation there is a compassionate release of the immortal Triad altogether from the astral form so that another cycle of incarnations may be initiated by the Triad. The soulless shell that is left behind is dominated by the perverse energies of the tortuous mind, and only dissipates after it goes through a terrible torment. Long before this extreme condition, there are warnings and whispers by the divine Triad, and if these last chances are taken promptly, there can be a gradual restoration. If they are not taken, they may be given again, though each time the signals will be fainter. But if they are repeatedly flouted, doom is inevitable.

Seen in this light, much that goes on in human life in the name of rationalizations and ideologies, much that is repeated again and again as a form of inefficient self-hypnosis, amounts to nothing but a pathetic and soul-destroying denial of the meaning and justice of life. If people persist in this despite abundant evidence to the contrary, they are only rendering irreversible their own passage down the lunar path of self-destruction. In the presence of the solar light everything is rapidly intensified. If one receives and becomes a sacrificial user of the life-giving current of the wisdom, at whatever level, this is sane. Every authentic effort counts. It is not so important to take a

constant inventory of where one comes out; what is vital is the refusal to give up on the effort and the steadfast will to maintain a strong line of courageous conviction, inserting oneself into a larger and larger perspective. If one does not do this, one will accentuate the opposite tendencies. Such is the nature of light. In the presence of light energy, the dark will necessarily be activated, and all the ghouls and vampires, all the nefarious elements connected with doomed sorcerers, will deposit themselves in the astral corpus, the *linga śarira*. Truly, it is for the sake of all souls that such occult teachings as the correspondences of human principles and planetary globes are given out, not for the amusement of dilettantes or the derision of scoffers.

*“Gratification of curiosity is the end of knowledge for some men,” was said by Bacon, who was as right in postulating this truism, as those who were familiar with it before him were right in hedging off WISDOM from knowledge, and tracing limits to that which is to be given out at one time. . . . Remember:*

*“. . . knowledge dwells  
In heads replete with thoughts of other men,  
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.”*

*The Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, p. 165

The mind that is able to absorb Divine Wisdom is itself an inherently pure substance which can reflect the light of Spirit. But when it is continually used in association with the voracious sense organs of an astral form chained to a physical body, in order to feed the appetites, the desires,

the fancies, and the tyrannical will of the boisterous elements that make up the persona, the mind gravitates downwards. This may be called the lunar activity of the mind, whereas when the mind draws upwards to the *buddhi*, it is solar. When the mind ascends towards the Spiritual Sun, becoming itself a great luminous globe close to the causal realm, this is the mysterious sacrifice of *manas*. Also, because *manas* has come down one plane there is acute awareness and imperious intelligence in the fickle world of materiality. Hence there is a solemn responsibility for all thoughts and sensory consciousness in a world of contrast, differentiation, and moral choice. Owing to the descent of *manas* down one plane, all life is ethical, therapeutic, and probationary, from the impartial standpoint of the immortal soul.

The test of being truly human is to see everything as involving ethical issues. The moment one starts to see all life as fraught with extremely complex choices which invoke the highest and profoundest morality that is concerned with soul evolution, linking consciousness with motive and the welfare of every single soul in its pilgrimage, one discovers an exalted concept of ethical sensitivity, far superior to the ersatz notions of right and wrong in conventional morals. At best, these dicta embody worldly wisdom based on the past, and are only able to support social expediency and, occasionally, certain good habits. True morality involves the direction, either upward or downward, that is given to

every single life atom. Its enormous scope encompasses the vast sweep of the Root Races of humanity, which “commence with the ethereal and end with the spiritual on the double line of physical and moral evolution — from the beginning of the terrestrial round to its close”. The moral task of the immortal soul summons it in a great sacrifice, for it takes the daunting risk of descent into a restricting vesture of clay. Its awareness is lent in the direction of differentiation and disunity, the direction of potential death through discord, doubt, and despair. This materialization of the spiritual energies belonging to mind takes place macro-cosmically and micro-cosmically, involving both the principles of sevenfold man and the globes of the planetary chain. “. . . It is a case of descent into matter, the adjustment — in both the mystic and physical senses — of the two, and their interblending for the great coming ‘struggle of life’ that awaits both *entities*.”

Dynamically, only the *ātman* and *buddhi* are of the spiritual plane because they have an eternally self-sustaining light-energy. The *ātman* is in perpetual motion and *buddhi* is the diffused but indestructible light of the *ātman*. *Ātman* and *buddhi* do not typically incarnate in human beings. If they did, human beings would be gods. But before human beings can become gods, they must become heroes. For them to become heroes they must enter the thought sphere of *manas* and elevate it towards higher altitudes. This is what Buddha meant by dictating terms to the mind, made captive

through craving to the world illusion. In this paradigmatically human arena, most testing takes place on a plane that is invisible to the persona. As a result, people without a sense of morality rooted in *manas* suppose that they are not being tested, or that they can get away with mental dishonesty and sanctimonious hypocrisy. But if, as in Edward Bellamy’s strange story, all human beings were endowed with telepathy, there would be a quick ending to furtiveness and religiosity since all particularized thoughts would be instantly known to all. No doubt there would be deeper secrets locked up in *ātma-buddhi*; but there would be a much purer mode of communication because a great deal of the humbug masquerading behind the mask of self-righteousness would be transparent. There would be no room for deceptive façades and moral evasion.

This is only a pale anticipation of the state of consciousness of civilizations yet far in the future, in the Fifth and the Sixth Rounds, when the state of consciousness would be so exalted, that beings enigmatically referred to as Sixth Rounders like Buddha or Sankara, or Fifth Rounders like Plato and Confucius, would represent the average of those future humanities. The entry of such beings into the Fourth Round, like raindrops that presage the monsoon, must remain mysterious. Such beings speak in terms of experience concerning invisible realities, using language to intimate and evoke latent perceptions in human beings who, even in the Fourth Round, have not taken full advantage of

the Fifth Race, which is archetypally characterized by pure thought.

Rationality and reason, in the best sense, constantly look for universality and effortlessly practise the Golden Rule, never expecting of another what one dare not expect of oneself, always putting oneself to the test and eschewing all negative judgements of others. By these criteria, many human beings have fallen below the potential of the fifth sub-race of the Fifth Root Race of the Fourth Round, and behind even the powers of thought of its first sub-race. This abnormally retarded condition is quite independent of Kali Yuga, and goes back to the fourth sub-race as well as to the Fourth Root Race. It is a strong persistent shadow which again and again obscures a variety of individuals. An individual may make progress in three lives upon the Path and may have the good fortune to be in the presence of teachers and co-disciples whose consciousness is naturally magnanimous, and who naturally represent the graces of the Golden Age. But the fourth time around this individual could be pursued by the dweller on the threshold, by the conglomeration of all the terrible tendencies which had not been worked out and which go back to an earlier incarnation. When it comes, it has to be faced, and the light of Spirit must be heroically reaffirmed in the midst of the worldly maelstrom.

*Manasic* or ethical evolution rests on a fundamental distinction between what is self-sustaining, enduring, and indestructible in the spiritual realm, and what

is changing, evanescent, and discontinuous in the material realm. Because of the downward movement of thought from the spiritual plane into the material plane and upward back to the spiritual plane, there is a constant possibility of the crass materializing of the spiritual, the effete etherealizing of the material. When a human being wakes up to the practical and profound alchemical implications of the metaphysical teaching that every moment one has the opportunity either to choose ethereal and refined conceptions or the opposite, then the doctrine of the seven globes comes alive. One can take even the most worldly material events and lend them beauty, significance, and meaning from the standpoint of the immortal soul through the power of *manasic* consecration. For the noetic mind it is natural even to take the most trivial subject and to give it a deeper meaning, whereas the mind caught in the coils of *kāma* can take even sacred themes and constantly concretize them. Those who understand what is really at stake and who begin to reflect upon etherealization versus concretization could then look at their feelings, their thoughts, and particularly their words, to find out how much they are raising consciousness and how often they are lowering it. The tone of voice becomes important; the light in the eyes becomes relevant; one's first thought on waking and one's last thought before speaking become valuable tests. When the spiritual life becomes real in these ways, life itself is transformed, enriched, elevated, even beatified.

## The Descent of *Manas* — II

H. P. Blavatsky urges, as do the Mahatmas, that people become aware of these tendencies. Again and again the Masters of the East have written with great pain about the difficulty of teaching spiritual wisdom to a materialistic age because of the constant danger of over-categorization, over-definition, and concretization, which are real dangers that affect what happens to the Teachings. While some of this is due to materialization of terms, obscuring the meanings behind the veil of words, the real problem is in consciousness, not language. The difference in the end is between Wisdom and knowledge, between the Sun and the planets, between the *ātman* and the other principles. Without the Soul Science, Gupta Vidya, the Secret Wisdom, and Ātma Vidya, Spiritual Self-knowledge, all the other facets of occult learning will be useless. They will merely become mechanical activities, mixed up with psychic fantasy. Although they may increase the operation of instinctual behaviour, and be often mistaken for the spiritual, they will have little to do with the spiritual, least of all with fully self-conscious spiritual impulses.

Without the help of Ātma-Vidya, the other three remain no better than *surface* sciences, geometrical magnitudes having length and breadth, but no thickness. They are like the soul, limbs, and mind of a sleeping man: capable of mechanical motions, of chaotic dreams, and even sleep-walking, of producing visible effects, but stimulated by instinctual not intellectual causes,



least of all by fully conscious spiritual impulses.

*The Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, p. 169

The great danger is that if one is caught up in the exoteric form of the esoteric teaching, through lack of meditation, inattention to duty, and insufficient assimilation of the ideal of sacrifice rooted in metaphysical understanding, one will merely activate a lunar astral form and generate the *kāma rupa* of a disciple. In other words, everything will become merely the mimetics of mechanical motions. On the other hand, if one is truly in search of the immortal soul, viewing spiritual realities and seminal ideas as one's true invisible companions, then one will be constantly probing into the hidden depths of one's own nature in silence with calmness, serenity, contentment, and cheerfulness.

One will deepen and strengthen whatever elements of these qualities one can already find within, always putting the onus upon oneself, and never on the side of others or on the side of discontent, psychic noise, and petulant complaint. The sovereign responsibility and golden opportunity in the use of this teaching are great because if it is applied in earnest each day, it will infallibly deepen all one's perceptions. Seeing beyond the outer surface of terrestrial life to the inmost depths of every other human soul, one will truly become a friend and a helper of the entire human race.

*(To be continued)*

# Pythagorean Harmonics: Sacred Number and the Golden Verses — IV

KIRK GRADIN

“God geometrizes.”  
Plato

## IV. Geometry, Number, and Sound

From the very beginning of Eons — in time and space in our Round and Globe — the Mysteries of Nature . . . were recorded by the pupils of those same now invisible “heavenly men”, in geometrical figures and symbols. The keys thereto passed from one generation of “wise men” to the other. Some of the symbols, thus passed from the east to the west, were brought therefrom by Pythagoras, who was not the inventor of his famous “Triangle”. The latter figure, along with the plane cube and circle, are more eloquent and scientific descriptions of the order of the evolution of the Universe, spiritual and psychic, as well as physical, than volumes of descriptive Cosmogonies and revealed “*Geneses*”. The *ten points* inscribed within that “Pythagorean *triangle*” are worth all the theogonies and angelologies ever emanated from the theological brain. For he who interprets them on their very face, and in the order given — will find in these seventeen points (the seven Mathematical Points hidden) the uninterrupted series of the

genealogies from the first *Heavenly* to *terrestrial* man. And, as they give the order of Beings, so they reveal the order in which were evolved the Kosmos, our earth, and the primordial elements by which the latter was generated. Begotten in the invisible *Depths*, and in the womb of the same “Mother” as its fellow-globes — he who will master the mysteries of our Earth, will have mastered those of all others.<sup>52</sup>

As this quote from *The Secret Doctrine* (*SD*) indicates, the importance of geometry to *Theosophia* cannot be overstated. H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) called it “the Alpha and Omega of mystical conception” in its transcendental application to all seven of the divine sciences of the once universal Wisdom Religion. Like “number”, this Pythagorean approach to an understanding of geometry is vastly different than that of modern materialistic science. Quite apart from any utilitarian use or application in the study of visible Nature, the most basic geometrical constructions such as the circle, triangle, and square pertain to deific, immortal presences, both

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within and without. Like the sacred portraits given of the fully awakened Bodhisattva whose heart beats in unison with the logoc sound and light of the cosmos, they represent living moral and spiritual paradigms coexistent with the generative, unchanging, and all-pervading foundations of life, their eternal beauty and wisdom surpassing all mutable objects made beautiful or comprehensible by them. So integral are they to spiritual awakening and self-transformation, wrote HPB, that the deeper levels of reality they pertain to are only obtained through initiation<sup>53</sup> on the path of renunciation.

In typical chronologies of Western history, Euclid (ca 300 BCE) is considered the “father of geometry” and one of the greatest mathematicians of antiquity. However, it is well known that he was a codifier and synthesizer, not an inventor or discoverer. And though it cannot be proven by extant documents, it is suggested by Sir Thomas Heath and Thomas Taylor that much if not all that is given in Euclid was passed down orally for centuries through the earliest Pythagoreans and formed a quintessential part of required study in the Platonic Academy. “Let no one ignorant of geometry enter here” is said to have been engraved over the door of Plato’s school in Athens. Along with Theon of Smyrna (ca 120–140 CE), Nicomachus (ca 60–120 CE), and Iamblichus (ca 235–345 CE), Euclid provides us with one of the most important ancient sources of study regarding Pythagorean teaching.

It follows that in attempting to unfold some glimmer of the profound meta-

physical and metapsychological meanings associated with the famed Pythagorean decade of ten points, we could begin by constructing the graphic in a Euclidean manner while correlating the various stages with seed ideas drawn from *The Secret Doctrine*, the mythos of Greek antiquity, and other traditions. This means beginning with a circle, upon which the entire superstructure of Pythagorean/Platonic cosmogony, of both metageometry and Euclidean geometry, is built.

Ontologically prior to the drawn circle of bounded circumference, consciousness dwells in the unbounded sphere of abstract Space, the highest Deity passed over in silence by the Pythagoreans. Both void and plenum, it is the non-dual Reality called *Parabrahmam* or *Paravach* in Hindu philosophy, the *śūnyata* of Buddhism, “the face of the Deep” in Genesis, the Chaos (χάος) of Hesiod and Homer.

The original Greek conception of Chaos is that of the Secret Wisdom-Religion. In Hesiod, therefore, Chaos is infinite, boundless, endless and beginningless in duration, an abstraction at the same time as a visible presence. . . . For in its etymological sense, Chaos is Space . . . and Space is *the* ever Unseen and Unknowable Deity in our philosophy.<sup>54</sup>

To the finitizing mind this One Reality appears as darkness and absolute unconsciousness. To the awakened Seer it is a realm of absolute light. At the same time, this “center which is everywhere and circumference nowhere” should not be confused with the drawn circle. According to Nicomachus, the drawn circle is the Pythagorean *Monas*, meaning the

Monad or One, associated with Apollo, whose name (*a-pollo*) means “without differentiation”.

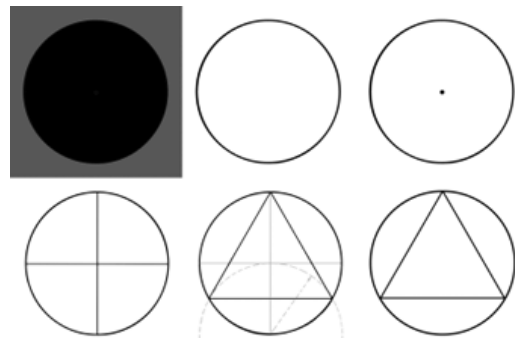
The monad is the non-spatial source of number . . . holds seminally the principles which are within all numbers . . . beginning, middle and end of all things . . . without it there is no knowledge of anything whatsoever, since it is a pure light, most authoritative over everything in general, and it is sun-like and ruling, so that in each of these respects it resembles God . . . just as he made this universe harmonious and unified out of things which are likewise opposed.<sup>55</sup>

In the cosmogenesis of *The Secret Doctrine*, the Monad as primeval Unity is first linked with the unmanifested logos, the pre-cosmic origin of every kosmos initiated by the potential point in the circle. This Monad “which lives in solitude and darkness” is also without dimension, limits, or boundaries. In the esoteric traditions within Northern Buddhism, HPB correlates the unmanifested logos with *Vajradhara*, also known as *Dorje Chang* in Tibetan or *Adi-Buddha*, the Supreme Buddha. “As the Lord of all Mysteries he cannot manifest, but sends into the world of manifestation his heart — the ‘diamond heart’, *Vajrasattva*.”<sup>56</sup> Similar to the myth of *Vishvakarman*, the entire kosmos is a singular essence which sacrificially manifests itself as the One Life in order to differentiate into the Great Chain of Being.

Simultaneous with the potential point is the diameter line of the circle called “Father-Mother”,<sup>57</sup> *Purusha-Prakriti*, *Prajna-*

*Karuna*, from which proceeds the second logos, the manifested. Is this diameter line vertical or horizontal? If vertical, the 1 and the 0 is the number ten, pre-cosmic Ideation, the Heavenly Man. In Kabalistic terms, it is Adam Kadmon or the “Ancient of Days”, both the origin and culmination of all human knowledge and the “androgynous synthesis of the creative builders”<sup>58</sup> wholly latent in its omnipresent, pregenetic glory. HPB affirms that Pythagoras knew of the decimal system since the sacred spiritual science which he taught was built upon the number ten.

If the diameter line is horizontal, it is symbolic of pre-cosmic Substance, that of *SVABHAVAT*, “THE VOICE OF THE WORD” of Stanza IV. It is the unstruck Pythagorean monochord, divine mother Nature, the Buddhist *Mulaprakriti*, the “Plastic Essence” which fills the universe, providing the material basis of every plane and form of embodiment. At this level of pre-cosmic unfoldment, matter and spirit, horizontal and vertical are identical in essence and expressed by the “X” or cross within the circle. Geometrically, both are needed in order to delineate an upright equilateral triangle within a given circle.





“The first and Fundamental dogma of Occultism is Universal Unity (or Homogeneity) under three aspects.”<sup>59</sup> “The Deity is one, because It is infinite. It is triple, because it is ever manifesting.”<sup>60</sup> In the Jewish mysticism of the Kabala, the first three formless emanations of the Sephirothal Tree, the tree of Life and the source of noumenal nature are *Kether* (the Crown), *Binah* (Intelligence), and *Hokmah* (Wisdom). In Christianity, the theological trinity is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, while in the earliest known Vedas we find *Agni*, *Vayu*, and *Surya*. This trinity became in the later Upanishads, *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, and *Shiva* and in Advaita Vedanta, *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, Truth-Consciousness-Bliss.

For the Pythagoreans, the triangle was the first true number and the first perfect space-enclosing geometrical figure associated with Proportion (*analogia*), Harmony, Knowledge, Piety, and Friendship. In Greek antiquity, the third principle binding horizontal and vertical into a logic triad is that of *Eros*. “As in the oldest Grecian Cosmogony, differing widely from the later mythology, *Eros* is the third person in the primeval trinity: Chaos, Gaea, *Eros* . . .”<sup>61</sup> *Eros* is the highest aspect of Venus-Aphrodite, Divine Will, the Hindu *KamaDeva* and the Tibetan *Fohat*, the active energy binding ideation to substance on every plane. As the highest expression of sacrificial compassion, it is “the propelling force, the active Power which causes the ONE to become TWO and THREE — on the Cosmic plane of manifestation.”<sup>62</sup> It is cosmic electricity guided by Universal Mind arising with primordial, logic light which heralds every

dawn. All other noumenal or phenomenal forces are differentiations of that one Force which in Platonic thought causes the Universe itself to move with circular motion. In *The Secret Doctrine*, this *arupa* three-in-one (Spirit-Matter-Fohat), is the newly awakened Cosmic Mind, *Mahat*, or *Maha-Buddhi*.

. . . the Pythagorean Monad descending from “no-place” (*Aloka*), shoots like a falling star through the planes of non-being into the first world of being, and gives birth to Number One; then branching off, to the right, it produces Number Two; turning again to form the baseline it begets number Three, and thence ascending again to Number One, it finally disappears therefrom into the realms of non-being.<sup>63</sup>

By mystic transmutation, wrote HPB, the three-in-one becomes a QUATERNARY, “the Triangle becomes “the TETRAKTYS” as “THE RADIANT ESSENCE BECOMES SEVEN INSIDE, SEVEN OUTSIDE.”<sup>64</sup> The Tetraktys is the combined luminous wisdom of countless suns, the oceanic immortal nectar harvested from an infinite series of previous cycles and holds in potentia all that will emerge in the current manvantara. This is connected with the deepest mysteries of *Manu* and *Manasa-putra*. “Hence we learn in the ‘Commentaries’ that while no Dhyana Chohan, not even the highest, can realize completely ‘the condition of the preceding Cosmic evolution . . . the Manus retain a knowledge of their experiences of all the Cosmic evolutions throughout Eternity.’”<sup>65</sup>

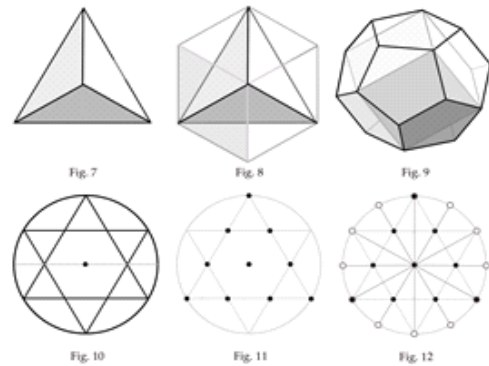
Conceptually and geometrically, there are a number of ways of visualizing this

passage from three to four, triangle to tetrad. For example, the geometric fourth point may be understood as lying outside the triangle, equidistant from each of the three points already established and equal to the length of each side of the original triangle.

In this way, the triangle, becomes a tetrahedron, the simplest possible form enclosing three-dimensional form with six edges (Fig 7). One equilateral triangle thereby transmutes into four. In addition, the tetrahedron is the only one of the five Platonic solids that is self-reciprocating. That is, if you take the center point of each face of the tetrahedron, an inner tetrahedron is formed, an inner seven, *ad infinitum*. In addition, the six edges of the tetrahedron correspond to the diagonals of each face of the six-sided cube or hexahedron, another geometrical symbol of the seven (Fig 8). This process of unfoldment can be continued as the Kabalistic axiom states: the dodecahedron, “the whole of twelve faces”, lies concealed within the perfect cube. When the cube is constructed within the dodecahedron, the sides of the cube are in golden ratio to the sides of the dodecahedron (Fig. 9).

Alternatively, the fourth point of the Tetraktys may be taken as the monadic center-point already established in the center of the two-dimensional triangle. “Simultaneous” with its diameter line, it provides a rotational *laya* center in which the upward pointing triangle is mirrored in a downward pointing triangle (Fig 10). In this way, “above” is reflected “below”.

With the grid provided by the interlaced triangles and their common center point (the seventh), we can precisely locate the archetypal ten points of the Pythagorean decade (Fig 11). Furthermore, if we extend diameter lines from center to each nodal point thus defined, we arrive at a twelve-fold division of the perimeter circle pointing again to the “Twelve Great Orders” of the zodiac and *nidānas* (Fig 12).



All this begins to give us some understanding of why the Pythagoreans considered the Tetraktys to be both four, seven, and ten (the sum of the first four numbers). Having emerged in three steps from the one, it symbolized “the completion and perfection of Number”, the elements of which all else is composed, called *Kosmos* (world-order), *Ouranos* (heaven) and *Pan* (the All). It was the all-inclusive archetype, which was believed to underlie every class of phenomena, bridging macrocosm and microcosm, as suggested by the eleven Tetrads that Theon of Smyrna listed. It represented self-conscious immortality and the highest wisdom, the sacrificial descent from One to Many and back

again, the logoc heart and breath of Nature by which the Pythagoreans swore their most sacred oaths. As Hierocles states in his commentary on the Golden Verses: “The Tetraktys contains and binds together all beginnings whatsoever, the elements, numbers, seasons, ages, societies and communities.”

In relation to the teaching given in *The Voice of the Silence*, the fourfold Tetraktys could be fruitfully correlated with the two wings, head, and tail of *Kālahansa*, the three-fold A-U-M of the *pranava* or *Gāyatri* mantram.<sup>66</sup> The logos itself and its light, *Daiviprakriti*, is linked in the *SD* with the *Madhyama* and *Pasyanti* forms of *Vach*. Rooted in *Nāda Brahman*, the unstruck sound. The sacred Word is said to bind into one the seven eternities of Being (the white swan) and the seven of Non-Being (the black swan). At the *manvantaric* dawn, this omnipresent vibrational field periodically wakens and sustains every spiritual atom, the entire monadic stream about to emerge and differentiate through the seven *Dhyanis* into the seven kingdoms of Nature.

. . . geometrical figures . . . when closely studied, will yield not only a scientific explanation of the real, objective, existence of the “Seven sons of the divine Sophia”, which is this light of the Logos, but show by means of other yet undiscovered keys that, with regard to Humanity, these “Seven Sons” and their numberless emanations, centres of energy personified, are an absolute necessity. Make away with them, and the mystery of Being and Mankind will never be unriddled, not even closely approached.<sup>67</sup>

Through the monochord, Pythagoras also demonstrated the correspondences of primary geometries with number and sound. Although a single string represents an indefinite continuum of tonal flux that may be infinitely divided, when plucked, certain harmonic nodal points innately occur. These nodal points or consonances are determined by the ratios of the first four whole numbers corresponding to 1/2, 1/3, 1/4, of the total string. This series is the numeric or architectural foundation of the diatonic musical scale of seven notes, the basic “field” of which is the octave, 1:2, the doubling of the vibrational frequency which inversely correlates with the halving of the string. As one of the great luminaries of the European Renaissance, Francesco Giorgio showed in his treatise titled *Harmonia Mundi*, that by utilizing the octave of 6:12 one can arrive at whole number solutions for the remainder of the scale. By further subdivision through arithmetic and harmonic mediation one arrives at the perfect fifth or 2:3 (6:9) and the perfect fourth or 3:4 (6:8), the two most powerful musical relationships. Thus, the consonances upon which the Greek musical system were based — octave, fifth and fourth — can be expressed by the progression 1:2:3:4, which also contains the composite consonances of the octave plus a fifth (1:2:3 or 6:12:18) and the two octaves (1:2:4 or 6:12:24). These were shown by Giorgio to correspond with the double and triple proportions given by Plato in the *Timaeus* as the fundamental divisions of order and harmony inherent in the cosmos and in the structure of the human soul.

## Pythagorean Harmonics: Sacred Number and the Golden Verses — IV

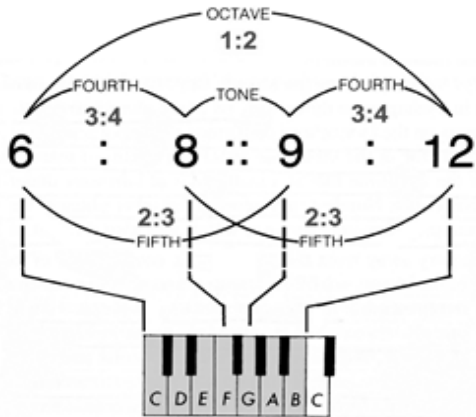


Fig. 13<sup>68</sup>

Nicomachus was a celebrated mathematician of the 1st century CE, who wrote that astronomy, like music, is a science inspired by Pythagoras with mystical and theurgic properties, and that the motions of the stars and planets have a perfectly melodious harmony. The harmonies of the seven sacred planets connected with the immortal gods could be reflected in earthly music and in human life, once the corresponding noetic principles had been awakened and activated. This inner, spiritual, and ideational aspect of planetary motion is the famed music of the spheres retold in different ways by Cicero, Plato,

and others. For more than 1,600 years the idea was considered ridiculous and unscientific because of lack of supporting evidence, but modern science has begun to find that musical sounds are in fact emitted by heavenly bodies apparently due to differing oscillations in their atmospheres. They are inaudible to the human ear, but can be detected by scientific instruments. This is true not only for the earth, the sun, and other planets, but also of galaxies. In 2003 a black hole in the Perseus galaxy cluster was found to be humming a drone 57 octaves below a middle C in the piano. According to NASA, this is roughly one million billion times lower frequency than the human ear can detect.

To the man who pursues his studies in the proper way, all geometric constructions, all systems of numbers, all duly constituted melodic progressions, the single ordered scheme of all celestial revolutions, should disclose themselves . . . by the revelation of a single bond of natural interconnection.

Plato

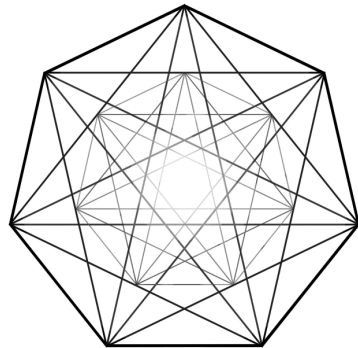
*(To be continued)*

### Endnotes

52. H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. i, p. 612.
53. *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 67.
54. *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 336 fn.
55. *The Theology of Arithmetic*, attributed to Iamblichus, translated by Robin Waterfield, 1988, pp. 35–39.
56. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. i, p. 571. Also see *The Voice of the Silence*, verse 114, fn.
57. *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, p. 15.
58. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. i, p. 98, fn.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 59
61. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
62. *Ibid.*
63. *Transactions . . .*, p. 105
64. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
65. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. ii, p. 310.
66. *The Voice of the Silence*, verse 19, fn.
67. *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. i, p. 430.
68. *The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library*, Kenneth Sylvan Guthrie, p. 27.

Number seven, or the *heptagon*, the Pythagoreans considered to be a *religious and perfect* number. It was called “*Telesphoros*”, because *by it all in the Universe and mankind is led to its end, i.e., its culmination (Philo. de Mund. opif.)*. Being under the rule of seven sacred planets, the doctrine of the Spheres shows, from Lemuria to Pythagoras, the seven powers of terrestrial and sublunary nature, as well as the seven great Forces of the Universe, proceeding and evolving in seven tones, which are the seven notes of the musical scale. The *heptad* (our Septenary) was regarded as “*the number of a virgin, because it is unborn*” (like the Logos or the “Aja” of the Vedantins); “*without a father or a mother, but proceeding from the monad, which is the origin and crown of all things*”. And if the *heptad* is made to proceed from the Monad directly, then it is, as taught in the Secret Doctrine of the oldest schools, the perfect and sacred number of this Maha-Manvantara of ours.



H. P. Blavatsky  
*The Secret Doctrine*, vol. ii, p. 602  
Verbatim with the Original Edition, 1888  
Theosophical University Press,  
Pasadena, California, 1970

# Spirituality in Modern India

CLEMICE PETTER

THE end of the 19th century was the beginning of massive changes in the world. It was then that the industrial revolution gathered strength and the world would never be the same. Technology started, developing at an unbelievable speed, electricity was discovered, and an engine powered by petrol was created. It was a matter of time before the computer came into place, and with it came the urgent need for a transformation in the human mind.

One can easily see why there is this urgency for change. With the development of more technological tools, it was obvious that a civilization used to wars and domination was also going to build more powerful weapons. It would be disastrous and tremendously dangerous for a mind that is self-centered, and therefore aggressive and violent, to have access to high technology. The reason for the danger was also obvious, and we did not have to wait long for the atomic bomb to be developed. Since then, humanity has had the means to destroy itself. Being of a selfish nature, the human mind is not able to see the dangers unleashed by technology without wisdom to guide its

use. We will now focus on the spiritual revolution that started along with the technological revolution.

We know that India is the birthplace of many sages; that it is to India that most of us go for a spiritual search. It has a tradition of religious seekers that one will not find anywhere else in the world. The tradition of *gurukulas* is as old as India itself. To understand the vision and meaning of an ashram is not easy for the Western mind that is used to blind belief and dogmatic ways of religion.

To talk about the impact of what we call modern civilization on the Indian culture, we need to understand a little more about India as a whole. It is a mistake to think that in India one will find only Mahatmas. They are there, no doubt, but also many misunderstandings of the scriptures can easily be found. It is easier to find what in India is known as bogus, than real, yogis. Maybe this is because there are also not many real seekers, and maybe there are more people trying to get the best of both worlds than those interested in truth. Truth is not always sweet or pleasant, so most of us are not ready to face it; we would rather have a sweet

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illusion and a teacher who is ready to give us what we want instead of what we need.

So India is a mixed bag where one may find almost anything. To find truth one has to be willing to let go of illusions, but how can we let go of something we do not even know we are holding on to? Therefore it is important to learn to identify illusion before we can venture into the search for truth. India has always been the centre for spiritual search, and it will always be. Therefore it is no wonder that at the end of the 19th century a silent spiritual revolution started with a new approach to spiritual awakening.

In India one can feel the smell of incense burning in temples on the busy roads of every town, be it a big city or a small village. Every household has a place in the home where people worship. It is a daily practice for Hindus to perform *puja* (Hindu act of worship), but India is not only the shelter for Hindus, it is also a shelter for Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Zoroastrians, Buddhists, Jews, and so on. India is known for its diversity, and one has to say that it is diversity that makes India the mother of *all* religions and an “Incredible India”.

To talk about spirituality in India is to talk about spirituality in the world. The feeling one gets when in that country is that it is the hope for a new generation of spiritual awakening. Also being there one hears many things — people who say that a new wave of spiritual awakening is going to come from California, Brazil, or even Finland, one has heard — but the fact remains that it is India that holds the fertile

soil and has a tradition of Mahatmas being born one after the other. Now we will discuss four Indian sages in modern India with very similar teachings.

### (1) Sree Narayana Guru

It was in this blessed land of India that on 20 August 1856, in the village of Chempazhanthy, Kerala, Sri Narayana (aka Sree Narayana Guru) was born to an Ezhava family of ayurvedic physicians. His early education was in the *gurukulam*, and unlike others of his caste, he studied religious texts as well as Ayurvedic works. In those days India was reeling under the weight of the caste system; it was unthinkable that somebody would dare to challenge it. The caste system is as old as India itself; it had always been part of organized society and because it has its roots in religion, it is a sensitive topic.

His first public act was the consecration of a Shiva *lingam*, which came to the attention of the Brahmin priests, who immediately challenged his authority, as only Brahmins were allowed to do so. To this he replied that it was not a Brahmin *lingam*, but an Ezhava *lingam*, and the priests were confused and unable to confront him. His works were published in Malayalam, the most common language spoken in Kerala. He propagated the ideals of compassion and religious tolerance.

One of his noted works, *Anukampa Dasakam*, extols various religious figures such as Krishna, the Buddha, Adi Shankara, and Jesus Christ. It was he who propagated the motto, “One Caste, One Religion, One God, for Humanity” (*oru jathi, oru matham, oru daivam, manushyanu*), a

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popular saying in Kerala. He furthered the non-dualistic philosophy of Adi Sankara by bringing it into practice, adding the concepts of social equality and universal brotherhood. Narayana Guru attained Samadhi on 20 September 1928 in Varakala, Kerala, at the age of 72.

### (2) Nisargadatta Maharaj

On 17 April 1897, Nisargadatta was born to Shivramant Kambli and Parvati Bai in Bombay. His father was a domestic servant and Nisargadatta had no formal education. He got married and had three daughters. In 1933 he was introduced to his Guru, Sri Siddharameshwar Maharaj, who gave him a mantra and introduced him to self-inquiry. He was with his Guru for around two years.

Nisargadatta taught what has been called Nisarga Yoga (*nisarga* can be translated as “nature”). In *I am That* he has defined it as living life with “harmlessness, friendliness, and interest” abiding in “spontaneous awareness” while being “conscious of effortless living”.

This dwelling on the sense “I am” is the simple, easy, and natural Yoga, the Nisarga Yoga. There is no secrecy in it and no dependence; no preparation is required and no initiation. Whoever is puzzled by his very existence as a conscious being and earnestly wants to find his own source, can grasp the ever-present sense of “I am” and dwell on it assiduously and patiently, till the clouds obscuring the mind dissolve and the heart of being is seen in all its glory.

Nisargadatta did not prescribe a specific practice for self-knowledge, but

advised his disciples, “Don’t pretend to be what you are not, don’t refuse to be what you are”. He claimed that the names of the Hindu deities Shiva, Rama, and Krishna were the names of Nature personified, and that all of life arises from the same non-dual source, or Self. Remembrance of this source was the core of Nisargadatta’s message.

### (3) Sri Ramana Maharshi

He was born on 30 December 1879 as Venkataraman Iyer, but mostly known as Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. In a small village called Tiruchuli in Tamil Nadu, he was an ordinary boy who liked playing with his schoolmates.

In 1895, an attraction to the sacred hill Arunachala was aroused in him and in 1896, at the age of 16 he had a “death-experience” where he became aware of a “current” or “force” which he recognized as his true “I” or “self”. This resulted in a state that he later described as “the state of mind of Iswaran or the Jnani”. Six weeks later he left his uncle’s home in Madurai, and journeyed to the holy mountain Arunachala, in Tiruvannamalai, where he took on the role of a *sannyasin* (though not formally initiated) and remained there for the rest of his life.

Having first visited Ramana in January 1931, Paul Brunton published *A Search in Secret India*, in which he describes his meeting with Ramana Maharshi and the effect it had on him. Brunton calls Ramana “one of the last of India’s spiritual supermen”, and describes his affection toward him:

I like him greatly because he is so simple and modest, when an atmosphere of authentic



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greatness lies so palpably around him; because he makes no claims to occult powers and hierophantic knowledge to impress the mystery-loving nature of his countrymen; and because he is so totally without any traces of pretension that he strongly resists every effort to canonize him during his lifetime.

Ramana attracted a huge crowd who came to have *darshan* (the sight of a living God), when he was diagnosed with cancer in his arm. His devotees begged him to cure himself for the sake of his followers. Ramana Maharshi is said to have replied: “Why are you so attached to this body? Let it go”, and “Where can I go? I am here.” On the evening of 14 April 1950 at 8.47 pm Sri Ramana entered Samadhi.

### (4) Jiddu Krishnamurti

He was born on 11 May 1895 and attained Samadhi on 17 February 1986 in Ojai, California. In his early life, he was raised to be the new World Teacher, an advanced spiritual position in the theosophical tradition, but later he stressed the need for a revolution in the psyche of every human being and emphasized that such revolution cannot be brought about by any external entity, be it religious, political, or social. He also said that he had no commitment to any nationality, caste, religion, or philosophy, and travelled around the world the rest of his life, speaking to large and small groups, as well as individuals. He wrote many books, among them, *The First and Last Freedom*, *Freedom from the Known*, and *Krishnamurti's Notebook*. His talks have been recorded and can be found

on YouTube or on the Krishnamurti Foundations' websites.

What do these four teachers have in common? They bring a new perspective and approach to spirituality. They do not support the caste system and talk about the unity of life. They were born not too far from each other in time and space. They brought the same teachings in a language accessible to the Western mind.

With the exception of Narayana Guru, they did not initiate any disciples or claim to be a Guru. Even Narayana Guru did not follow the traditional way of initiating his disciples. The fact is that a new spiritual wave had come with these teachers and the similarities of their teachings are amazing.

Another common aspect of their way of teaching was that none of them formed an inner circle, and people were not given special teachings or treatment. There was no secrecy or emphasis on psychic powers and they did not create organizations in order to spread teachings. They talked to the crowd and did not select their audience in any way. There was no preparation required to those listening to the teachings.

Sri Ramana was not initiated by any tradition; he just followed his inner call. There is a story that one day, when he was still living in one of the caves on the Arunachala Hill, a swami came to meet him. The swami told him that he was there to initiate him, as the tradition is that one has to undergo initiation in order to attain the Supreme. The swami informed him that he was going to get all that was needed

## Spirituality in Modern India

and would be back in 2 or 3 days to give him initiation. Ramana did not say anything, he just observed the whole thing in silence. After the swami had been gone for a couple of hours, another man came and asked Ramana if he could leave some books in Ramana's cave for a day, as he came to do something in the town and for his convenience it would be good to keep them in one place. Ramana agreed and the man left the books there and left.

After a while Ramana got attracted to the pile of books and decided to have a look at them. As he took the first book and opened it to a random page, he read something that made him understand that initiation was not necessary. He put the book back into the pile and attended to his daily activities. The next morning the books were gone, and no one knew who took them. Also, the man who left them there was never seen again. When later the swami arrived with all the paraphernalia for Ramana's initiation, Ramana refused to take part in it and explained that he was not following any tradition, that his way was beyond tradition.

There is another story that illustrates Ramana's way. After the Ashram started to be formed, one of his early disciples started a court case, claiming that the Ashram belonged to him. Since no one dared to tell Ramana to appear in court, the judge came to the Ashram and questioned Ramana. One of the questions was to what tradition the Ashram belonged. To which Ramana answered: "It is beyond all traditions, my teachings are beyond tradition."

On another occasion, a Western disciple who came to live with Ramana in the Ashram, learned from some books about the Indian tradition that a guru is necessary in order to attain realization. He asked Sri Ramana when accompanying him on his daily walk: "Bhagavan, I learned that a guru is necessary in order to attain liberation. Since you don't say you are a guru, what will happen to me? I gave up everything to come here." Ramana answered by saying: "Find out who is asking this question."

J. Krishnamurti also did not initiate those living closely with him. He claimed that in self-knowledge there is no teacher, no disciple, and that one has to be one's own teacher.

While living in Thiruvannamalai, I came to meet with many disciples of Yogi Ramsuratkumar, who was a mystic living in the same town for many years. His Master had given him a mantra to repeat regularly. One day he learned that J. Krishnamurti was saying in his talks that it does not matter if one repeats a mantra or the name "Coca-Cola"; both hypnotize the mind. Puzzled by this statement he wanted to know who was right, his Master or J. Krishnamurti. Since his Guru was no more, he decided to meet J. Krishnamurti directly and ask him about his statement.

He heard that Krishnamurti was at Bangalore, and being without money, he traveled by taking rides with kind people. So it took him several days to reach there. On arriving there, he learned that Krishnamurti had gone to Rishi Valley. He then

## Spirituality in Modern India

went to that place. Arriving there he was told that Krishnamurti had just left for Chennai, so he went to Chennai. There he was denied a meeting with Krishnamurti, as he was dirty, without having had a bath for many days. He then decided to spend some time relaxing in the garden, in front of the building where Krishnamurti was staying.

Suddenly he saw Krishnamurti walking towards him, and he stood up delighted. Krishnamurti walked straight to him, took his hands, and said: "Both are saying the same thing." After this meeting he is said to have told people around him that all his doubts had vanished, and from that day onwards he started to send his disciples to listen to Krishnamurti's talks whenever he was in India. Even today many of his disciples come to the Krishnamurti Foundation to listen to his talks and read his writings. I have personally talked with a young man who said that he does not understand what Krishnamurti talks about, but that he reads and listens to his talks because this was recommended to him by his Guru.

So, this is a new approach to the spiritual search with teachings that give no emphasis on psychic powers, initiations, and traditional relationships between the liberated ones and those in search of liberation. This brings total responsibility to the one who is searching, and offers nothing less than freedom from all crutches and traps created by the mind. J. Krishnamurti says that he is no one's Guru, that he walks with us as a friend, talking over our problems and

difficulties in life. He also emphasizes that all authority, in the inner field, is evil.

This does not mean that we can be disrespectful or not care for the teachers of humanity. When we jump from worship to carelessness, it only shows that we are driven by fear and not by love. If we need to fear in order to take care of those who dedicate their lives to teaching us, to help us clear our way out of darkness, then maybe we need to reevaluate what we call spiritual search.

There is a natural authority which is not created by the mind, but is the outcome of love and care. An authority that is not imposed, but comes naturally. As long as we are not able to love, the mind creates authorities and imposes them on us and others. It is our self-interest that tells us that so-and-so has to be respected. We can clearly see this when we are submissive to people simply because they are powerful. Most of us treat servants with disregard and harsh words, while being soft-spoken when talking to those in higher social positions.

The new wave brings responsibility and independence. It takes the heavy burden from the Guru's shoulders and puts it back where it belongs — one's own shoulders. We become responsible to find our own way out from selfishness and darkness. It is only a self-centered mind that wishes freedom at the cost of someone else's sacrifice. So let those who have the urge for liberation sacrifice the ego in the flame of self-knowledge. This is the only sacrifice that is asked of us and the only one needed.

## Spirituality in Modern India

Ramana Maharshi's main means of instruction to his devotees in order to remove ignorance and abide in self-awareness was through silently sitting together with his visitors, using words only sparingly. His method of instruction has been compared to Dakshinamurti — Shiva in the ascetic appearance of the Guru — who teaches through silence.

Once, devotees asked Sri Ramana to explain the meaning of Shankara's hymn in praise of Dakshinamurti. They waited for his answer, but in vain. The Maharshi sat motionless on his seat, in total silence.

Later, commenting upon this silence, he said: "Silence is the true and perfect *upadesa*. It is suited only for the most advanced seeker. The others are unable to draw full inspiration from it. Therefore, they require words to explain the Truth. But Truth is beyond words; it does not warrant explanation." All that is possible is to indicate it. How is that to be done?

With Sri Ramana's explanation it is easy to understand why Krishnamurti traveled the world explaining again and again the same teachings for more than 60 years. My personal experience is that Krishnamurti prepares the noisy mind, brings it down to a certain quietness, and enables it to take the next step. This also explains why Sri Ramana never moved from the place where the teacher awaits.

In India one finds these four teachers of modern times, and it could not be

different, as this is where one finds the people with a mind capable of listening. India is modernizing, no doubt — there one finds everything one sees in the West — but still the things of the mind have not entered the heart of the majority of the people.

There is a quality of innocence that is hard to describe, maybe because in India people look at life as a play of God, which they call God's *leela*. They are able to take things lightly and are not so deeply identified with the material aspects of life. There is also the fact that in India God is not something separate from daily life; there one will come across serious seekers who leave everything behind — money, fame, and even the comfort of a clean bed every night — to find Truth. This is a reality, and one comes across such people every day. Even with all the modern facilities, Indians still care for those who dedicate their lives to find their way out of ignorance and darkness. There is no other country like India in spiritual matters.

With the advent of technology, human life has changed tremendously. The new generation does not accept tradition and is looking for new understanding. It is our responsibility to find the way to develop human qualities and relate with each other in a human way, without conflict and hatred. The teachings have been delivered, it is for us to listen and to bring peace on Earth. ✧

**It is not merely the freedom from something — peace of mind, physical peace — but the ending of all conflict, that is real peace, not only in ourselves but with our neighbours and with the world.**

J. Krishnamurti

# The “Elixir of Life”: From a Chela’s Diary — II

GODOLPHIN MITFORD, F.T.S.

THE whole rationale then, of the first condition of continued existence in this world, is (a) the development of a Will so powerful as to overcome the hereditary (in a Darwinian sense) tendencies of the atoms composing the “gross” and palpable animal frame, to hurry on at a particular period in a certain course of Kosmic change; and (b) to so weaken the concrete action of that animal frame as to make it more amenable to the power of the Will. To defeat an army, “you must demoralize and throw it into disorder”.

To do this then, is the real object of all the rites, ceremonies, fasts, “prayers”, meditations, initiations, and procedures of self-discipline enjoined by various esoteric Eastern sects, from that course of pure and elevated aspiration which leads to the higher phases of Adeptism Real, down to the fearful and disgusting ordeals which the adherent of the “Left-hand-Road” has to pass through, all the time maintaining his equilibrium. The procedures have their merits and demerits, their separate uses and abuses, their essential and non-essential parts,

their various veils, mummeries, and labyrinths. But in all, the result aimed at is reached, if by different processes. The Will is strengthened, encouraged and directed, and the elements opposing its action are “demoralized”. Now, to anyone who has thought out and connected the various evolution theories, as taken, not from any occult source, but from the ordinary scientific manual accessible to all, from the hypothesis of the latest variation in the habits of species — say, the acquisition of carnivorous habit by the New Zealand parrot, for instance — to the farthest glimpses backwards into Space and Eternity afforded by the “Fire Mist” doctrine, it will be apparent that they all rest on one basis. That basis is, that the impulse once given to a hypothetical unit has a tendency to continue; and consequently, that anything “done” by something at a certain time and certain place tends to repeat itself at other times and places.

Such is the admitted rationale of heredity and atavism. That the same things apply to our ordinary conduct is

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**Godolphin Mitford** (1844–1884) became a member of the TS in India and a probationary chela (disciple) of Master KH in 1882, but eventually failed, having dabbled in black magic during his wild youth.

apparent from the notorious ease with which “habits” — bad or good, as the case may be — are acquired, and it will not be questioned that this applies, as a rule, as much to the moral and intellectual, as to the physical world.

Furthermore, History and Science teach us plainly that certain physical habits conduce to certain moral and intellectual results. There never yet was a conquering nation of vegetarians. Even in the old Aryan times, we do not learn that the very Rishis, from whose lore and practice we gain the knowledge of Occultism, ever interdicted the Kshatriya (military) caste from hunting or a carnivorous diet. Filling, as they did, a certain place in the body politic in the actual condition of the world, the Rishis thought as little of interfering with them, as of restraining the tigers of the jungle from their habits. That did not affect what the Rishis did themselves.

The aspirant to longevity then must be on his guard against two dangers. He must beware especially of impure and animal<sup>5</sup> thoughts. For Science shows that thought is dynamic, and the thought-force evolved by nervous action expanding outwardly, must affect the molecular relations of the physical man. The inner men,<sup>6</sup> however sublimated their organism may be, are still composed of actual, not hypothetical, particles, and are still subject to the law that an “action” has a tendency to repeat itself; a tendency to set up analogous action in the grosser “shell” they are in contact with, and concealed within.

And, on the other hand, certain actions

have a tendency to produce actual physical conditions unfavourable to pure thoughts, hence to the state required for developing the supremacy of the inner man.

### **Practical process**

To return to the practical process. A normally healthy mind, in a normally healthy body, is a good starting point. Though exceptionally powerful and self-devoted natures may sometimes recover the ground lost by mental degradation or physical misuse, by employing proper means, under the direction of unswerving resolution, yet often things may have gone so far that there is no longer stamina enough to sustain the conflict sufficiently long to perpetuate this life; though what in Eastern parlance is called the “merit” of the effort will help to ameliorate conditions and improve matters in another.

However this may be, the prescribed course of self-discipline commences here. It may be stated briefly that its essence is a course of moral, mental, and physical development, carried on in parallel lines — one being useless without the other. The physical man must be rendered more ethereal and sensitive; the mental man more penetrating and profound; the moral man more self-denying and philosophical. And it may be mentioned that all sense of restraint — even if self-imposed — is useless. Not only is all “goodness” that results from the compulsion of physical force, threats, or bribes (whether of physical or so-called “spiritual” nature) absolutely

## The “Elixir of Life”: From a Chela’s Diary — II

useless to the person who exhibits it, its hypocrisy tending to poison moral atmosphere of the world, but the desire to be “good” or “pure”, to be efficacious must be spontaneous. It must be a self-impulse from within, a real preference for something higher, not an abstention from vice because of fear of the law: not a chastity enforced by the dread of public opinion; not a benevolence exercised through love of praise or dread of consequences in a hypothetical future life.<sup>7</sup>

It will be seen now in connection with the doctrine of the tendency to the renewal of action, before discussed, that the course of self-discipline recommended as the only road to longevity by Occultism is *not* a “visionary” theory dealing with vague “ideas”, but actually a scientifically devised system of drill. It is a system by which each particle of the several men composing the septenary individual receives an impulse, and a habit of doing what is necessary for certain purposes of its own free will and with “pleasure”. Every one must be practised and perfect in a thing to do it with pleasure. This rule especially applies to the case of the development of Man. “Virtue” may be very good in its way — it may lead to the grandest results. But to become efficacious it has to be practised cheerfully not with reluctance or pain. As a consequence of the above consideration the candidate for longevity at the commencement of his career must begin to eschew his physical desires, not from any sentimental theory of right or wrong, but for the following

good reason. As, according to a well-known and now established scientific theory, his visible material frame is always renewing its particles; he will, while abstaining from the gratification of his desires, reach the end of a certain period during which those particles which composed the man of vice, and which were given a bad predisposition, will have departed. At the same time, the disuse of such functions will tend to obstruct the entry, in place of the old particles, of new particles having the tendency to repeat the said acts. And while this is the particular result as regards certain “vices”, the general result of an abstention from “gross” acts will be (by a modification of the well-known Darwinian law of atrophy by non-usage) to diminish what we may call the “relative” density and coherence of the outer shell (as a result of its less-used molecules); while the diminution in the quantity of its actual constituents will be “made up” (if tried by scales and weights) by the increased admission of more ethereal particles.

What physical desires are to be abandoned and in what order? First and foremost, he must give up alcohol in all forms; for while it supplies no nourishment, nor any direct pleasure (beyond such sweetness or fragrance as may be gained in the taste of wine, and so on, to which alcohol, in itself, is non-essential) to even the grossest elements of the “physical” frame, it induces a violence of action, a rush so to speak, of life, the stress of which can only be sustained by

## The “Elixir of Life”: From a Chela’s Diary — II

very dull, gross, and dense elements, and which, by the operation of the well-known law of reaction (in commercial phrase, “supply and demand”) tends to summon them from the surrounding universe, and therefore directly counteracts the object we have in view.

Next comes meat-eating, and for the very same reason, in a minor degree. It increases the rapidity of life, the energy of action, the violence of passions. It may be good for a hero who has to fight and die, but not for a would-be sage, who has to exist and . . .

Next in order come the sexual desires; for these, in addition to the great diversion of energy (vital force) into other channels, in many different ways, beyond the primary one (as, for instance, the waste of energy in expectation, jealousy, and so on) are direct attractions to a certain gross quality of the original matter of the Universe, simply because the most pleasurable physical sensations are only possible at that stage of density. Alongside with and extending beyond all these and other gratifications of the senses (which include not only those things usually known as “vicious”, but all those which, though ordinarily regarded as “innocent”, have yet the disqualification of ministering to the pleasures of the body — the most harmless to others and the least “gross” being the criterion for those to be last abandoned in each case) — must be carried on the moral purification.

Nor must it be imagined that “austerities” as commonly understood can, in

the majority of cases, avail much to hasten the “etherealizing” process. That is the rock on which many of the Eastern esoteric sects have foundered, and the reason why they have degenerated into degrading superstitions. The Western monks and the Eastern yogis, who think they will reach the apex of powers by concentrating their thought on their navel, or by standing on one leg, are practising exercises which serve no other purpose than to strengthen the will-power, which is sometimes applied to the basest purposes. These are examples of this one-sided and dwarf development. It is no use to fast *as long as you require food*. The ceasing of desire for food without impairment of health is the sign which indicates that it should be taken in lesser and ever decreasing quantities until the extreme limit compatible with life is reached. A stage will be finally attained where only water will be required.

Nor is it of any use for this particular purpose of longevity to abstain from immorality so long as you are craving for it in your heart; and so on with all other unsatisfied inward cravings. To get rid of the inward desire is the essential thing, and to mimic the real thing without it is barefaced hypocrisy and useless slavery.

So it must be with the moral purification of the heart. The “basest” inclinations must go first — then the others. First avarice, then fear, then envy, worldly pride, uncharitableness, hatred; last of all ambition and curiosity must be abandoned successively. The strengthening of the more ethereal and so-called



## The “Elixir of Life”: From a Chela’s Diary — II

“spiritual” parts of man must go on at the same time. Reasoning from the known to the unknown, meditation must be practised and encouraged. Meditation is the inexpressible yearning of the inner Man to “go out towards the infinite”, which in the olden times was the real meaning of adoration, but which has now no synonym in the European languages, because the thing no longer exists in the West, and its name has been vulgarized to the make-believe shams known as prayer, glorification, and repentance. Through all stages of training the equilibrium of the consciousness — the assurance that all *must* be right in the Kosmos, and therefore with you a portion of it — must be retained. The process of life must not be hurried but retarded, if possible; to do otherwise may do good to others — perhaps even to yourself in other spheres, but it will hasten your dissolution in this.

Nor must the externals be neglected in this first stage. Remember that an adept, though “existing” so as to convey to ordinary minds the idea of his being immortal, is not also invulnerable to agencies from without. The training to prolong life does not, in itself, secure one from accidents. As far as any physical preparation goes, the sword may still cut, the disease enter, the poison disarrange. This case is very clearly and beautifully put in “Zanoni”, and it is correctly put and must be so, unless all “adeptism” is a baseless lie. The adept may be more secure from ordinary dangers than the common mortal, but he is so by virtue of

the superior knowledge, calmness, coolness and penetration which his lengthened existence and its necessary concomitants have enabled him to acquire; not by virtue of any preservative power in the process itself. He is secure as a man armed with a rifle is more secure than a naked baboon, not secure in the sense in which the *deva* (god) was supposed to be securer than a man.

If this is so in the case of the high adept, how much more necessary is it that the neophyte should be not only protected but that he himself should use all possible means to ensure for himself the necessary duration of life to complete the process of mastering the phenomena we call death! It may be said, why do not the higher adepts protect him? Perhaps they *do* to some extent, but the child must learn to walk alone; to make him independent of his own efforts in respect to safety, would be destroying one element necessary to his development — the sense of responsibility. What courage or conduct would be called for in a man sent to fight when armed with irresistible weapons and clothed in impenetrable armour? Hence the neophyte should endeavour, as far as possible, to fulfill every true canon of sanitary law as laid down by modern scientists. Pure air, pure water, pure food, gentle exercise, regular hours, pleasant occupations and surroundings, are all, if not indispensable, at least serviceable to his progress. It is to secure these, at least as much as silence and solitude, that the gods, sages, occultists of all ages have retired as much

## The “Elixir of Life”: From a Chela’s Diary — II

as possible to the quiet of the country, the cool cave, the depths of the forest, the expanse of the desert, or the heights of the mountains. Is it not suggestive that the gods have always loved the “high places”; and that in the present day the highest section of the Occult Brotherhood on earth inhabits the highest mountain plateaux of the earth?<sup>8</sup>

Nor must the beginner disdain the assistance of medicine and good medical regimen. He is still an ordinary mortal, and he requires the aid of an ordinary mortal.

### Physical results

“Suppose, however, all the conditions required, or which will be understood to be required (for the details and varieties of treatment requisite, are too numerous to be detailed here), are fulfilled, what is

the next step?” the reader will ask. Well if there have been no backslidings or remissness in the procedure indicated, the following physical results will follow:-

First the neophyte will take more pleasure in things spiritual and pure. Gradually gross and material occupations will become not only uncraved for or forbidden, but simply and literally repulsive to him. He will take more pleasure in the simple sensations of Nature — the sort of feeling one can remember having experienced as a child. He will feel more light-hearted, confident, happy. Let him take care the sensation of renewed youth does not mislead, or he will yet risk a fall into his old baser life and even lower depths. “Action and Re-action are equal.”

*(To be continued)*

### Footnotes

5. In other words, the thought tends to provoke the deed.
6. We use the word in the plural, reminding the reader that, according to our doctrine, man is septenary.
7. Col. Olcott clearly and succinctly explains the Buddhist doctrine of Merit or Karma, in his “Buddhist Catechism” (Question 83).
8. The stern prohibition to the Jews to serve “their

gods upon the high mountains and upon the hills” is traced back to the unwillingness of their ancient elders to allow people in most cases unfit for adeptship to choose a life of celibacy and asceticism, or in other words, to pursue adeptship. This prohibition had an esoteric meaning before it became the prohibition, incomprehensible in its deadletter sense: for it is not India alone whose sons accorded divine honours to the Wise Ones, but all nations regarded their adepts and initiates as divine.

# ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Adyar

*Theme: “Exploring and Understanding Universal Intelligence”*

31 December 2023 to 4 January 2024

## CONVENTION PROGRAMME

### Saturday, 30 December 2023

- 8.30 am General Council of the TS  
3.00 pm Flower Ceremony by the Order of the Round Table

### Sunday, 31 December 2023

- 8.30 am OPENING OF THE 148th CONVENTION  
Prayers of the Religions, Universal Prayer, Greetings  
Invocation and opening by the International President
- 9.30 am KEYNOTE “ADYAR EXTENSION” and TS REPORT of 2022–23  
Tim Boyd, *International President, TS Adyar*
- 1.00 pm INDIAN SECTION COUNCIL MEETING — I
- 2.30 pm BESANT LECTURE  
“Virtue”  
M. M. Sundresh, *Judge, Supreme Court of India*
- 3.30 pm RECEPTION
- 4.30 pm NEW YEAR’S EVE CONCERT  
Global Rhythms World Music, LEAP Boundary Breakers
- 7.30 pm Ritual of the Mystic Star

### Monday, 1 January 2024

- 8.30 am SYMPOSIUM ON EXPLORING AND UNDERSTANDING  
“Understanding an Explorer’s Mind”, Richard Sell, *TS in New Zealand*  
“The Science and the Art of Living”, Isis de Resende, *TS in Brazil*  
“Seeking and Knowing”, Gerard Brennan, *TS in Australia*
- 9.45 am SHORT LECTURES  
“Understanding Universal Intelligence”,  
Dr Deepa Padhi, *International Vice-President*

## Convention Programme

“Intelligence: The Foundation of All Life”,  
Mr Stephen McDonald, *National President, TS in Australia*

11.00 am INDIAN SECTION CONVENTION — I  
Inaugural Address, Tim Boyd,  
“State of the Indian Section”, Pradeep Gohil, *President, Indian Section*

1.00 pm TOS India Executive Committee Meeting

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3.00–4.00 pm WORKSHOPS  
“Theosophical Education — The Inner Flowering”  
Sonal Murali, *Director, Adyar Theosophical Academy*  
“Chanting Workshop”  
Jaishree Kannan,  
*Librarian, ALRC and Officer in Charge of the Surendra Narayan Archives*  
“An Exploration of the Seven Rays”  
*World Federation of Young Theosophists*

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5.00 pm THEOSOPHY-SCIENCE LECTURE  
“Contemporary Science: Facts, Ideas, Questions”  
Prof. Rajaram Nityananda, *Professor of Physics,  
International Centre for Theoretical Sciences, TIFR*

7.30 pm THEOSOPHY BY ART  
BEAT (Bank Employees Art Troop) Choir  
Skit by BTF (Bombay Theosophical Federation)

### Tuesday, 2 January 2024

8.30 am Devotional Meeting  
Chandrika Mehta, *India*

10.15 am PANEL: “Intelligence and Human Need”  
Linda Oliveira, *TS in Australia*  
Marcos de Resende, *TS in Brazil*  
Trân-Thi-Kim-Diêu, *TS in France*  
Chally Romero, *TS in Philippines*

11.15 am DISCUSSION GROUPS

1.00 pm INDIAN SECTION COUNCIL MEETING — II

3.15 pm INTERVIEW  
Ven. Olande Ananda Thera, *Venerable Buddhist Monk, Sri Lanka*  
Interviewer Patrizia Calvi, *TS in Italy*

## Convention Programme

- 5.00 pm PANEL ON THEOSOPHY AND ART: FROM ORIGIN TO HORIZONS  
Elif Kamisli, *Exhibition Manager, Turkey*  
Anupama Gaur, *Consultant Conservator, India*  
Erica Georgiades, *Director of the School of the Wisdom, Greece (online)*
- 7.30 pm EVENING PROGRAM  
Crea-Shakthi presents “Universal Consciousness:  
Life, Death & Everything in Between”

### Wednesday, 3 January 2024

- 8.30 am THEOSOPHICAL ORDER OF SERVICE (TOS)  
Presentation by Nancy Secrest, *TOS International Secretary, USA / Resident at Adyar, India*  
DANCE GROUP  
*Sri Arunodayam Home for Mentally Challenged Destitute Children*
- 9.45 am DIALOGUE  
“Theosophical Work and Universal Intelligence”  
Tim Boyd, *International President, TS Adyar*  
Pedro Oliveira, *TS in Australia*
- 10.45 am INDIAN SECTION CONVENTION — II “Illumination from Within”  
Opening and closing remarks, Chairperson Deepa Padhi  
“Meaning of Illumination from Within”, Vinay Patri  
“How to get the Illumination from Within”, Harsha S. S. Sonthi  
“Advantages of having Illumination from Within”, Adi Keshav Shastri  
“Difficulties in Getting Illumination from Within”, Mitalini Choudhury  
“Consciousness as Source of Illumination”, Harshvadan Sheth
- 1.00 pm TOS INDIA Annual General Body Meeting
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- 3.00—4.00 pm WORKSHOPS  
“Education for Life: The Art of Living and Learning”  
Sonal Murali, *Director of Adyar Theosophical Academy*  
“Chanting Workshop”  
Jaishree Kannan,  
*Librarian, ALRC and Officer in Charge of the Surendra Narayan Archives*  
“Art as a Language of the Universal Intelligence”  
*World Federation of Young Theosophists*
- 
- 5.00 pm PUBLIC LECTURE  
“Remembering the Future Garden”  
Joss Brooks, *Veteran Australian ecologist, Pitchandikulam Forest, Auroville*

## Convention Programme

7.30 pm CULTURAL EVENING  
Artistic Sharing by the Delegates and Adyar Choir  
Vinay Patri, *Moderator, TS India*

### Thursday, 4 January 2024

8.30 am QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS  
Tim Boyd, Deepa Padhi, Pradeep Gohil, Douglas Keene

9.45 am SHORT LECTURES  
“Universal Intelligence Is to Know the Field and the Knower of the Field”  
— An Advaitic Perspective Based on *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* 13.2  
Dr Radha Raghunathan, *Director, Adyar Library and Research Centre*  
“Advaita, *self*-knowing and Universal Intelligence”  
Sri Sankara Bhagavadpada, *A Hindu teacher of Jñāna Yoga and Commentator on the lifetime work of Sri J. Krishnamurti*

12 noon INDIAN SECTION COUNCIL MEETING — III

2.00 pm ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBERS

3.00 pm PLENARY SESSION  
Reports from the workshops  
World Federation of Young Theosophists (WFYT)  
Propagation Project

5.00 pm PUBLIC LECTURE BY THE PRESIDENT  
“The Land and Us”  
Tim Boyd, *International President, TS Adyar*

6.00 pm CLOSING OF THE CONVENTION

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6.00 am daily 1. Puja, 2. Silent Walking Meditation, and 3. Yoga and Pranayama.

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

Art Exhibition by Hemalatha

Surendra Narayan Archives Exhibitions

Renaissance of Art in Adyar: Paintings of Florence Ada Fuller

Visits to Social Welfare Centre, Adyar Theosophical Academy,  
Olcott School

Stalls of OES and BMAD

## INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORY

| Date | Section                    | General Secretary, etc.                | Address   | Magazine                                 | Email address                               |
|------|----------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| 1947 | Africa, East and Central   | ... Mr Narendra M. Shah                | ... PO Box 14525. 00800, Westlands, Nairobi, Kenya  | ... <i>The Theosophical Light</i>        | <b>narendrashahi999@gmail.com</b>           |
| 1909 | Africa, South              | ... Mr Desmond Chapman                 | ... 31 Streatley Ave, cnr.Lothbury Ave, Auckland Park, Johannesburg PO Box 91523                        | ... <i>The South African Theosophist</i> | <b>tsinsa.gensec@telkomsa.net</b>           |
| 1956 | Africa, West               | ... Dr K. A. Tutu                      | ... PO Box 720, Accra, Ghana  | ... <i>The West African Theosophist</i>  | <b>katutu@gmail.com</b>                     |
| 1929 | America, Central *         | ... Mrs Beatriz Elisena Martinez Pozas | ... Colonia Universitaria Norte, Calle Julio Mejia, Poligono, E-7 Mejicanos, San Salvador, El Salvador  |  | <b>bemapo03@hotmail.com</b>                 |
| 1920 | Argentina                  | ... Mr Leandro Cesano                  | ... Rivadavia 533, San Lorenzo, Provincia de Santa Fe   | ... <i>Teosofía en Argentina</i>         | <b>secretaria@sociedadteosofica.org.ar</b>  |
| 1990 | Asia, East and Southeast † | ... Mr Chong Sanne                     | ... 24 New Industrial Road, #03-09 INSPACE Singapore 536210   | ... <i>Newsletter</i>                    | <b>sanne@theosophyasia.net</b>              |
| 1895 | Australia                  | ... Mr Stephen Mcdonald                | ... Level 2, 162 Goulburn St., Surry Hills, NSW 2010  | ... <i>Theosophy in Australia</i>        | <b>pres@theosophicalociety.org.au</b>       |
| 1912 | Austria *                  | ... Mr Albert Schichl                  | ... Oberbaumgarten 25, 4204 Haibach im Mühlkreis  | ... <i>Theosofie Adyar</i>               | <b>theosofie.austria@aon.at</b>             |
| 2013 | Bangladesh †               | ... Mr Subrata Chowdhury               | ... Urban Gardenia, Flat 5B, House 45A, Road 3A, Dhanmondi, R/A Dhaka 1209                              |  | <b>house_advocates@yahoo.com</b>            |
| 1911 | Belgium                    | ... Mrs Sabine Van Osta                | ... Place des Gueux 8, B1000 Brussels   | ... <i>Le Lotus Bleu</i>                 | <b>info@ts-belgium.be</b>                   |
| 1965 | Bolivia †                  | ... Mrs Maria Luisa Cabrera            | ... c/Valdivieso N° 541 Cochabamba  | ... <i>Revista Teosófica Boliviana</i>   | <b>mlcp2@hotmail.com</b>                    |
| 1920 | Brazil                     | ... Mr Otávio Machesini                | ... SGAS Quadra 603, N. 20, CEP 70200-630 Brasília (DF)   | ... <i>Sophia</i>                        | <b>secretaria@sociedadeteosofica.org.br</b> |
| 1924 | Canada *                   | ... Mr Robert Béland                   | ... 1120 Chemin de la Rivière, Val David, P.Q., Canada J0T 2N0  | ... <i>The Light Bearer</i>              | <b>president.atcta@gmail.com</b>            |
| 1920 | Chile *                    | ... Mr Victor Aguayo                   | ... Casilla 11 Sucursal Paseo Estacion, Estacion Central, Santiago                                      | ... <i>Revista Teosófica Chilena</i>     | <b>sociedadteosoficachile@gmail.com</b>     |
| 1937 | Colombia †                 | ... Mr Armando Motta Zapata            | ... Carrera 6, # 56-40, Bogotá (Chapinero Alto)   | ... <i>Selección Teosófica</i>           | <b>stsgamoz@gmail.com</b>                   |
| 1997 | Costa Rica †               | ... Mrs Cecilia Calderón               | ... San José, 1350, Costa Rica  |  | <b>cmaycalderon@gmail.com</b>               |
| 2007 | Croatia ▲                  | ... Mr Darko Majstorovic               | ... Siget 11, 10000 Zagreb, Republic of Croatia   | ... <i>Teozofija</i>                     | <b>teozofija@teozofija.net</b>              |
| 1905 | Cuba                       | ... Mr Fidel Carrazana Macías          | ... Apartado de Correos 6365, La Habana 10600   |  | <b>teosocuba.1@gmail.com</b>                |
| 1987 | Dominican Rep. †           | ... Mrs Magaly Polanco                 | ... Calle Santa Agueda 1652 Les Chalet Col San Juan Puerto Rico Apartado 23 00926                       |  | <b>polancomagaly@yahoo.com</b>              |
| 1888 | England                    | ... Mrs Jenny Baker                    | ... 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA   | ... <i>Esoterica</i>                     | <b>president@theosoc.org.uk</b>             |
| 1907 | Finland                    | ... Mr Jean-Paul Silvan                | ... Teosofinen Seura, Vironkatu 7 C 2, Fin 00170, Helsinki  | ... <i>Teosofi</i>                       | <b>info@teosofinenseura.fi</b>              |
| 1899 | France                     | ... Miss Trân-Thi-Kim-Diêu             | ... 4 Square Rapp, 75007 Paris  | ... <i>Le Lotus Bleu</i>                 | <b>tsfr.office@gmail.com</b>                |
| 1902 | Germany                    | ... Mrs Manuela Kaulich                | ... Hauptstr. 39, 93138 Lappersdorf   | ... <i>Adyar</i>                         | <b>theosophie-adyar@gmx.de</b>              |
| 1928 | Greece                     | ... Dr Alexandros Bousoulengas         | ... 25 Voukourestiou St., 106 71-Athens   | ... <i>Ilisos</i>                        | <b>info@theosophicalociety.gr</b>           |
| 1907 | Hungary †                  | ... Mrs Adrienne Nagyiday              | ... H-1085 Budapest, Horánszky u. 27. fsz. 10   | ... <i>Teozófia</i>                      | <b>info@teozofia.hu</b>                     |
| 1921 | Iceland                    | ... Mr Haraldur Erlendsson             | ... PO Box 1257 Ingólfsstraeti 22, 121 Reykjavik  | ... <i>Gangleri</i>                      | <b>iceland.ts@gmail.com</b>                 |
| 1891 | India                      | ... Mr Pradeep H. Gohil                | ... The Theosophical Society, Kamachha, Varanasi 221 010  | ... <i>The Indian Theosophist</i>        | <b>theosophyvns@gmail.com</b>               |
| 1912 | Indonesia                  | ... Mr Widyatmoko Nekara               | ... Dsn. Parelegi no. 21, RT 02/ RW 09, Desa Purwodadi, Kecamatan Purwodadi, 67163 Pasuruan, Jawa Timur | ... <i>Teosofi</i>                       | <b>indonesia.teosofi@gmail.com</b>          |
| 1919 | Ireland *                  | ... Mrs Marie Harkness                 | ... 97 Mountsandel Road, Coleraine, UK BT52 1TA   |  | <b>marieharkness@yahoo.co.uk</b>            |

|      |                  |                                     |   |  |   |
|------|------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1954 | Israel ▲         | ... Mr Abraham Oron                 | ... PO Box 9114, Ramat-Gan, Israel 5219002  | ... <i>Or</i>  | <b>oravr@netvision.net.il</b>   |
| 1902 | Italy            | ... Mr Antonio Girardi              | ... Viale Quintino Sella, 83/E,<br>36100 Vicenza                                    | ... <i>Rivista Italiana di Teosofia</i>                          | <b>sti@teosofica.org</b>  |
| 1997 | Ivory Coast *    | ... Mr Pierre-Magloire Kouahoh      | ... Yopougon, 23 Rue Princesse<br>B. P. 3924, Abidjan 23                            | ... <i>Sophia</i>  | <b>pm_kouahoh@hotmail.com</b>   |
| 1919 | Mexico           | ... Mrs Juana Leonor Maldonado Ruíz | ... Ignacio Mariscal 126, Col. Tabacalera<br>Mexicana, Mexico, D.F. 06030           |  | <b>teosofiaenmexico@gmail.com</b><br><b>info@sociedadteosofica.mx</b> |
| 1897 | Netherlands, The | ... Mr Wim Leys                     | ... Tolsraat 154, 1074 VM Amsterdam   | ... <i>Theosophia</i>  | <b>info@teosofie.nl</b>   |
| 1896 | New Zealand      | ... Mr Richard Sell                 | ... 18, Belvedere Street, Epsom, Auckland 1051                                      | ... <i>TheoSophia</i>  | <b>np@theosophy.org.nz</b>  |
| 1913 | Norway *         | ... Mr Audun Solberg                | ... Knapstadveien 8, 1823 Knapstad  |  | <b>organisasjonssekretaer@teosofisksamfunn.no</b>                     |
| 1935 | Orlando ▲        | ... Mr Carl Metzger                 | ... 1606 New York Ave. Orlando, Florida,<br>32803-1838, USA                         |  | <b>TheosophicalSocietyCF@gmail.com</b>                                |
| 1948 | Pakistan †       | ...                                 | ... Jamshed Memorial Hall, M. A. Jinnah Road,<br>opp. Radio Pakistan, Karachi 74200 | ... <i>The Karachi Theosophist</i>                               | <b>bhagwanbharvani@hotmail.com</b>                                    |
| 1925 | Paraguay ▲       | ... Sr. Blas Osvaldo Añazco López   | ... Eligio Ayala Nro. 1.833 e/ Mayor Fleitas y Gral.<br>Aquino Asunción             |  | <b>ramafaternidadSTparaguay@hotmail.com</b>                           |
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| 1933 | Philippines, The | ... Mr Charlton Romero              | ... Corner P. Florentino and Iba Streets,<br>Quezon City, Manila                    | ... <i>The Philippine Theosophist</i>                            | <b>philtheos@gmail.com</b>  |
| 1921 | Portugal         | ... Mr Carlos Guerra                | ... Sociedade Teosófica de Portugal,<br>Rua José Estêvão, 10 B, 1150-202 Lisboa     | ... <i>Osiris</i>  | <b>geral@sociedadeteosoficadeportugal.pt</b>                          |
| 1925 | Puerto Rico †    | ... Mrs Magaly Polanco              | ... Apartado 36-1766 Correo General.<br>San Juan, Puerto Rico 00936-1766            | ... <i>Heraldo Teosófico</i>                                     | <b>polancomagaly@yahoo.com</b>  |
| 2012 | Qatar ▲          | ... Mr Lijo Joseph                  | ... Crewing Officer, Teyseer Services Company<br>P.O. Box 2431, Doha                |  | <b>qatarblavatskyldodge@yahoo.com</b>                                 |
| 2013 | Russia †         | ... Mr Alexey Besputin              | ... 159-52, Novomytischinsky prospekt,<br>Mytischii, Moscow region, 141018          | ... <i>Teosoficheskoe Obozrenie</i><br>(The Theosophical Review) | <b>pr@ts-russia.org</b>   |
| 1910 | Scotland *       | ... Mr Gary Kidgell                 | ... Christine Gear 32 Newmains Road<br>Kirkliston Edinburgh EH29 9AL                | ... <i>Circles</i>   | <b>garykidgell@hotmail.com</b>  |
| 1992 | Slovenia *       | ... Mrs Irena Primc                 | ... Kajuhova UI 9, 3000 Celje   | ... <i>Teozofska Misel</i>                                       | <b>irenaprinc3@gmail.com</b>  |
| 1921 | Spain            | ... Mrs Angels Torra Buron          | ... Av. Vall d'or, 85-87<br>08197 - Valldoreix(Spain)                               | ... <i>Sophia</i>  | <b>presidencia@sociedadteosofica.es</b>                               |
| 1926 | Sri Lanka †      | ... Mr D. A. L. Wanigasekera        | ... 146 Anderson Rd, Dehiwala,  | ... <i>The Sri Lanka Theosophist</i>                             | <b>dumindawanigasekera@gmail.com</b>                                  |
| 1895 | Sweden           | ... Mrs Birgitta Skarbo             | ... Karla Plan 5 B, 11460 Stockholm   | ... <i>Tidlös Visdom</i>   | <b>teosofiska.samfundet.adyar@telia.com</b>                           |
| 1910 | Switzerland †    | ... Mr Andrea Biasca-Caroni         | ... Via Collina 19, 6612 Ascona, CH-6612  | ... <i>The Lotus</i>   | <b>info@teosofia.ch</b>   |
| 1997 | Togo *           | ... Mr Kouma Dakey                  | ... S.O., A.R.T.T., BP 76, Adeta  |  |   |
| 2013 | Ukraine          | ... Mrs Svitlana Gavrylenko         | ... Office 3, 7-A Zhylianska St., Kiev 01033  | ... <i>Svitoch</i>   | <b>org@theosophy.in.ua</b>  |
| 1886 | USA              | ... Mr Douglas Keene                | ... PO Box 270, Wheaton, IL 60187-0270  | ... <i>The Quest</i>   | <b>info@theosophical.org</b>  |
| 1925 | Uruguay *        | ... Mrs Ema Ma. de Souza Leal       | ... Javier Barrios Amorín 1085,<br>Casilla de Correos 1553, Montevideo              |  | <b>st.uruguay@gmail.com</b>   |
| 1925 | Venezuela †      | ... Mrs Nelly Nouel                 | ... Romualda a Socarrás, Edif. de Oro<br>Piso 12, Apto. 122 – Caracas               |  | <b>nellynouel5@gmail.com</b>  |
| 1922 | Wales *          | ... Mrs Julie Cunningham            | ... Bryn Adda, Brynsiencyn, Llanfairpwll,<br>Anglesey, LL61 6NX UK                  | ...  | <b>theosophywales@yahoo.co.uk</b>                                     |

*Date refers to the date of formation*

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Indo-Pacific Theosophical Federation: *President*: Mr Gerard Brennan, 42 Melbourne Street, Concord, 2137, Sydney, Australia. **president@ipf-ts.org**

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