

MEDITATION

Dr Madhav Kolhatkar

(Summary of Theosophy-Science Lecture delivered on 28.12.09)

Man has made rapid progress in the scientific field. Today he has the power to destroy the entirety of life on Earth. The human race is also plagued by violence and hatred arising from greed. Humans are the only creatures who wantonly kill not only other life forms but members of their own species.

Man has become 'self-assertive' out of proportion and has lost the ability to integrate with other life forms and reap mutual benefits.

The wise among us human beings are greatly concerned. A few, like J. Krishnamurti, wondered whether man had taken a wrong turn in the process of evolution, and is heading towards self-destruction.

The reason for this dilemma is that though man is endowed with a potent and extraordinary brain, he has not learnt to use it properly. There is disorder and chaos in the functioning of different regions of the brain.

Man has many minds. One of them is the conscious mind. Others work at the subconscious or unconscious levels. The mind is different from the brain; its ability is limited by the portion of the brain in use.

The solution is to bring order, leading to the harmonious functioning of the different portions of the brain, freeing the mind from the clutches and limitations involved. The key to establishing such order is meditation.

Energy is distributed in different parts of the brain. When the spiritual brain is provided with added energy, order is established. It culminates in a mutation when all the regions of the brain function harmoniously under the leadership of the spiritual brain.

The person reaches an unbelievable depth of understanding. There is freedom from fear. Love for all life forms develops and there is true integration with Nature.

THEOSOPHY AROUND THE WORLD

Slovenia has four Lodges and sixty-seven members. Regular study classes and meetings were held and also several public lectures. The Winter School was organized in Soncek in February 2009, and the Summer School in June 2009 in Kranjska Gora which was conducted by the Vice-President, Mrs Linda Oliveira, and Mr Pedro Oliveira. They both gave talks at other Lodges. Three issues of the magazine *Teozofska Misel* were published. Some members gave support to Tibetan children, and to the HPB Hostel and the Social Welfare Centre in Adyar.

In Croatia, regular meetings and discussions were held. The All-Croatian Groups meeting took place in June 2009. *Human Regeneration* by Mrs Radha Burnier has been translated.

Ukraine has now four Lodges, two Study Groups and 71 members. The two Lodges in Odessa and Dnepropetrovsk were chartered this year. All the Lodges and Groups held regular meetings and study classes. The Ukrainian Theosophical Conference was held in Kiev during November 2008, with the theme 'Beauty an Expression of the Soul'. In May 2009, the Museum Centre for HPB and family was opened in Dnepropetrovsk and a Conference on the theme 'Real Guidance comes from Within' was held. Members from Russia, Slovenia and Romania were also present at Dnepropetrovsk.

The American Section organized TheosoFest 2009 which was attended by

1600 persons. The Inter-American Theosophical Federation Conference was attended by members from North, Central and South America. Several other programmes and events were organized at national and local levels. Regular classes were also held at various centres. The prison programme was revitalized with new courses. The Vienna Correctional Centre in Illinois has a Theosophical Study Group which is attended by over thirty prisoners.

Membership of the Section was further reduced to 3694 and an initiative to attract new members has been introduced. A video documentary entitled 'Journey to Blavatsky's Tibet' has been produced. Several books were published this year in German, Dutch, Spanish, Italian, Czech and Chinese. A monthly e-Newsletter has been broadcast since January 2009, and a popular Theosophical community social network has been established. The Archives promoted awareness of the Society through local area programmes.

The Inter-American Theosophical Federation held a regional event in Zamoran, Honduras, in 2009 and 42 persons from thirteen countries participated. A new Study Group emerged in Zamoran. There are thirty-two members in the Regional Association in Central America: five in Guatemala, fifteen in El Salvador and twelve in Nicaragua. Theosophical study continues in all these countries.

Argentina reported an increase in

membership and activities all around. There are now 327 members and 19 Lodges. *The Theosophist* was translated into Spanish and published on the website of the Section. Three issues of the national Theosophical magazine *Teosofia en Argentina* were published. Spanish books and pamphlets were published and sent to many countries in Central, South and North America. A Summer School, Retreat, a camp for youth and several seminars and study classes were held.

There was a further decrease in membership in Brazil, which now stands at 745. However, that Section remains the largest in Latin-America. Guest speakers at the International School of Theosophy held in July included Mr Ed Abdill, Ms Juliana Cesano and Mr Pablo Sender. The first Portuguese-Spanish Seminar, also held in the same month, attracted more than 200 members from a number of countries. In Colombia, visiting speakers to the Section included Isis Resende, Carmen Cesar Galante and Gaspar Torres. A 'Theosophical Week' was held in December 2008 with a number of activities and twenty-one members attended the Portuguese-Spanish seminar in Brasilia.

In Bolivia a retreat was held in San Benito on the subject of Mind, Consciousness and Evolution. There was also a national gathering held in La Paz with the participation of members from all Lodges in the country. In

Uruguay new attempts were made to make the Society and the Theosophical principles more widely known. Blavatsky Lodge in Venezuela has done, upon request, service to the community in its area, including planting trees and mediating conflicts between neighbours.

In Mexico, a School of the Wisdom was organized in November on the theme 'Mahatma Letters: Probation and Chelaship' The Guest Speakers were Ms Ana Lorena Howell and Ms Maria Orlich from Costa Rica. Mexican members participated in several seminars and meetings. An International meeting was held for young Theosophists. New Study Centres were started in Xalapa, Veracruz and Queretaro.

In the Dominican Republic a number of well-attended activities took place. Apart from a Retreat in Jarabacoa, a Summer School was held in Santo Domingo. The Lodges and Study Groups held regular meetings and study classes took place in Puerto Rico. A delegation of members attended the Inter-American Congress of Theosophy in Wheaton, Illinois. Another delegation attended the seminar in Honduras.

Mrs Diana Dunningham-Chapotin, International Secretary of the Theosophical Order of Service reports a growing interest and involvement of members, partly attributable to an expanding team of volunteers. The Theosophical Order of Service is active in 28 countries.



THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF LIGHT AND THE LIGHT OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Dr Dara Tatray

(Summary of Short Lecture on 28.12.2009)

The nature of light is one of the most fundamental features of cosmology. Most of what we know about the universe, all that we see, has been carried to us by light; and what we know of the nature of light is intimately connected with what we think about the nature of reality. In terms of science or cosmology we might say that information about the world is carried by light in a physical sense. In spiritual fields such as meditation and yoga the nature of consciousness is equally fundamental; and we might be inclined to say that everything is conveyed to us by the light of consciousness, or the light of intelligence. Numerous analogies might be made.

Is there a hard-and-fast divide between the light of consciousness and the light of Newton and Einstein? I tend to think there is not, and that in some respects the science of cosmology and the science of yoga have been studying the one phenomenon, albeit from different perspectives. Certainly it is suggested in the Mahatma Letters that the God of the theists and the force of science are one and the same (Chron. Letter 65). Drawing an analogy between light and consciousness, or even equating them, however, is only the

beginning; for we are still left saying something about we know not what. Whether we call it force, energy, matter or God we are merely naming a mysterious power or substance the exact shape or nature of which remains unknown.

Several schools of metaphysics including various interpretations of Vedanta, suggest that everything is consciousness. However, if only consciousness exists, or if everything that exists is consciousness, we need a new understanding of consciousness. Otherwise, what would it mean to say that the physical world is nothing but consciousness? Or that matter is a form of consciousness? Such a statement could not be made of thought or even the mind as ordinarily conceived. So what is it that can take the shape of all that we see and all that we do not see? HPB once described it as the Omnipresent Proteus of the universe, the one eternal element, imperfectly known as Spirit-Matter. With the enormous strides taken by certain branches of science in the direction of metaphysics and mysticism in recent years, are we any closer to understanding this protean substance now than in her own day?



COORDINATION OF SCIENCE AND HUMAN VALUES

Prof. C. A. Shinde

(Short Lecture delivered on 28.12.09)

The basic human nature is to act according to what is considered 'right' and to avoid what is considered 'wrong'. As a human being this is an important human value to have discrimination of right and wrong. We may be curious about each other but we need to have concern for each other. Man needs to know that Earth does not belong to man but man belongs to the earth. Scientists are curious about consciousness although they have not accepted it, but they know man is a self-conscious being.

As a human being one needs to explore his own depth of human nature to know that Love, compassion, spirit of service, dedication, peacefulness etc. all come from within man himself. But today in our modern civilization unfortunately this inner world of man is neglected, mostly by the scientific heritage. But the fact is that science itself is based on certain human values like love of truth and its search. Several areas of human suffering have been overcome through science and its techniques. Several scientists are now treating reality as a whole, not only the physical world, the object of sensory observation, but also the observer, the subject, the self. They have turned their attention to man, the observer. Thus they are rising from the science of

physical nature to the science of human nature.

If science studies in this direction going into the depths of man, great values come. Then in the true sense, the human factor in science may be used to overcome human suffering. Thus if the scientist is value-oriented then with the help of nuclear science he can create nuclear medicine but not the nuclear bomb. So man can get through the illusion of scientific materiality by such coordination of science and human values. He then comes to the understanding that values come not from 'things' but from the depths of human nature, (not from physical nature) which means at the sensory level there is no place for values because values come from beyond the sensory level. From that experience of higher levels benefits will finally manifest at the sensory level. It is only when that higher level is stirred that human values such as love, concern for others, search for truth and the spirit of service can manifest themselves in human life.

Coordination of science and human values is quite possible in this era in the light of Theosophy because in the light of Theosophy spirituality is the search for truth in man's inner world

just as science is the search for truth in the world around us. Coordination of the two makes man truly spiritual. To be truly spiritual is to be related to the wholeness of life. Spirituality is an attitude towards life in which nothing is excluded from our sensitivity and attentiveness. So this is the era as for as human evolution is concerned where science and spirituality will merge in the investigation of the science of living

which includes human values. The scientist, the artist, the sculptor, the musician, the philosopher, the poet, the writer and the mystic are all different expressions of the same reality which one can clearly see in the light of Theosophy. All express creativity in their own ways so there is an urgency to bring about co-ordination on the basis of human values and deeper understanding if humanity is to survive.

THE BHARATA SAMAJ ASSOCIATION

The daily puja is being performed at 6 o'clock in the morning during the Convention at the Temple of Light.

The puja book, which was sold out during the year, has been reprinted and is available for sale through the Theosophical Publishing House. The

demand for CDs and cassettes is encouraging; also several young people have been trained to carry on the work of the Association in other parts of India. The Association plans to conduct training camps and teach the mantras in places outside Adyar.

THE THEOSOPHICAL ORDER OF SERVICE

Mr Claude Robertson Dunn, TOS East and Central Africa

In Mufulira, Zambia, the local TOS group runs an annual public speaking competition for High Schools which has gone on for many years. Tanzania has a good record of TOS work. Kenya has a strong culture of TOS work. The Nairobi Lodge provides school fees for five boys at Starehe School which has been the top senior boys school for many years.

Five additional boys are also supported at other schools. The Lodge also collects funds for the protection of nature by helping the tree planting project in the Aberdare region. Support has also been given to the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Daphne Sheldrake Animal Orphanage that protects many elephants from the actions of poachers. The Nairobi Lodge also helps a number of orphanages and

old people's homes. In 2008 the Centenary of the TOS was commemorated by having a stamp issued by the Postal Authority, at which ceremony a government minister was present.

Mr B. L. Bhattacharyya, TOS India

Two new TOS regions were established during the year, one in Rajasthan and other in Hariyana. There twenty TOS Regions in now with more than one hundred active TOS Groups and more than 6,000 Life and Patron Members. Permanent programmes such as Balwadi, primary schools, orphanages for the blind, charitable dispensaries continue in many regions of the country. The Adruta Children Home of Bhubaneswar, sponsored by the Mahabharat TOS Group in Orissa, benefits many needy children. Activities of TOS Groups include distribution of study materials to needy students, food for orphanages, hospitals, old age homes, distribution of clothes, school uniforms, etc. TOS volunteers went to the flood-affected area of Sundarban and Ganga Sagar in which thousands of people and animals lost their lives and provided help and support. The TOS Madras Region started a new project called 'Seeing Eyes for Everyone'. It covers eye checks, glasses and operation when necessary for thousands of poor children and slum dwellers. The Delhi TOS Group started a fully fledged dental care unit.

Mr Marcos Resende, TOS Brazil

The TOS has its own newsletter and some TOS groups have their own space

in the TS Lodge bulletins, especially in the cities of São Paulo state. It raised donations to orphanages, homeless shelters, nursing homes and needy mothers in maternity hospitals and distributed warm clothes to the homeless during the winter time. Special campaigns of this nature are always run during Christmas time.

These are several of the activities carried out during the year: clothing and shoes for homeless, Easter eggs for needy children. On Mother's Day funds were raised and donations to Nursing Homes. There was a winter campaign with the collection and donation of 300 pieces of clothing for adults and children to NGOs and public institutions.

TOS in Rio de Janeiro organized a Meeting on Consumption Awareness, held in August 2009. The writer and university professor, Paulo Roberto Silva, was invited to talk about his book *Conscience and Abundance*, explaining the concepts of economics related to drug awareness and a life more suited to the emerging consciousness today. TOS explained the affinity of its own goals and those of the book and mediated a debate on the subject. There was a representation by supporters in the Walk Against Violence and Protection of Religious Freedom, held on Copacabana Beach, Rio, 22 September 2009. Some of our workers are members of animal protection groups, trying to bring about changes in the law so that cruelty to animals is reduced.



OPINION AND BELIEF WITHIN THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Annie Besant

(Excerpted from Adyar Pamphlets No. 36, 1913)

Some of our members echo the statements of one seer or another, and seem to consider that such a statement ought to preclude further discussion. But no one in the TS has any authority to lay down what people shall think, or not think, on any subject. We are not in the position of an orthodox Church, which has certain definite articles of faith, which imposes certain definite creeds in which all faithful members are bound to believe. The only point which we must accept is Universal Brotherhood, and even as to that we may differ in our definition of it. Outside that, we are at perfect liberty to form our own opinions on every subject; and the reason of that policy is clear and an exceedingly good one. No intellectual opinion is worth the holding unless it is obtained by the individual effort of the person who holds that opinion. It is far healthier to exercise our intelligence, even if we come to a wrong conclusion and form an inaccurate opinion, than simply, like parrots, to echo what other people say, and so put out of all possibility intellectual development.

In fact, differences of opinion among the members ought to be regarded as safeguards to the Society rather than as menaces, for our one greater danger, as HPB recognized, is the danger of getting into a groove, and so becoming fossilized in the forms of belief that many of us hold today; this will make it difficult for people in the future to shake off these forms, and thus will involve posterity in the same troubles which so many of us have experienced with regard to the teachings among which we were born. The Society is intended, always has been intended, to be a living body and not a fossil, and a living body grows and develops, adapting itself to new conditions; and if it be a body which is spiritually alive, it should be gaining continually a deeper and fuller view of truth. It is absurd for us to pretend, at our present stage of evolution, that we have arrived at the limit of the knowledge which it is possible for men to obtain. It is absurd for us to say that the particular form into which we throw our beliefs at this moment is the form which is to continue for ever after us, and to be accepted by those who follow us in time. All of us who study deeply must be fully aware that our conceptions of truth are continually deepening and widening, that, as we might reasonably expect, we find new avenues opening up before us; and nothing could be more fatal to a Society like ours than to hallmark as true special forms of belief, and then look askance at anyone challenging them, trying to impose these upon those who will come after us. If the Society is to live far into the future, as I believe it will, then we must be prepared to recognize now, quite frankly and freely, that our knowledge is fragmentary, that it is partial, that it is liable to very great modifications as we learn more and understand better; and especially is this true of everything which goes under the name of investigation.

A clean life, an open mind, a pure heart.

H. P. Blavatsky

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