



THE THEOSOPHIST

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CONTENTS

On the Watch-Tower <i>Radha Burnier</i>	3
To Strengthen the Link <i>Antonio Girardi</i>	7
Three Great Mysteries of Life in the Light of Theosophy <i>Mary Anderson</i>	10
Brotherhood is for All <i>Annie Besant</i>	16
Fragments of the Ageless Wisdom	18
Remembering HPB <i>Pedro Oliveira</i>	19
The Fundamental Question Concerning Intelligent Design <i>Dara Tatray</i>	23
Theosophy Leads to Perfection <i>Avantika U. Mehta</i>	30
Books of Interest	35
Theosophical Work around the World	37
International Directory	38

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Cover Picture: A spotted owlet looks at the viewer – by Dr T. P. Alaganantham

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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.

On the Watch-Tower

RADHA BURNIER

Conflict and Confusion

The question of conflict is important for any person who has some idea of what human life really exists for. Unfortunately, most of us live entirely in the present in the wrong way, because we are attending to small things, forgetting what is important. The present comprehends all our actions, feelings and thoughts. One can live in the present in this sense, completely absorbed by various things that happen to oneself and to the people around, and even to the environment by which one is surrounded. But there is some conflict — sometimes a major one, but very often small ones, which interfere with our aims and desires. Life is not what it could be from the individual point of view, because we do not know what is unalloyed happiness.

Physical living can be pleasant to some people; and to others something that has to be gone through willy-nilly. There are also human beings who manage somehow to eke out their lives, believing in a future existence. Meanwhile, all try to get as much pleasure, advantage and fulfilment of wants, by whatever means are available. This is all that the average person manages to do. So he is lost, absorbed, perhaps tied down by physical

existence and the circumstances which surround him.

All this can happen to anybody. But there is another way of living, which is the essence of life, that which we are meant to learn. It has nothing to do with the various circumstances in which one might find oneself; the circumstances may not actually matter very much. What matters may be entirely within that person: the peace, harmony, and the purity of the person who may face difficulties in the world may be entirely free of outer circumstances. He may live in the midst of what is thought of as luxury, pleasure and other things that people seek without realizing that they mean nothing in themselves. What matters is really the subtle change that comes over the consciousness of the person who meets these varying conditions. Does it become immune as a result of the apparent battering of life? Or does it grow into greater sensitivity and feelings which are pure and selfless, leading to depths where the beauty in every part of life is an alternative.

We are told that there were people like Kabir who carried on what might be regarded as humble tasks, but who shone with inner qualities which made others better and purer. Most persons are

The Theosophist

attracted to those who have done well in some direction from a worldly point of view. They themselves would like to follow if they could in the same direction. So a person who likes to have money or fame looks up to those who have succeeded in this field. This is also a reason for internal conflict or dissatisfaction. The desire to go ahead in the way which seems most attractive to oneself makes for many things that a person has to do in life.

In all circumstances the question arises, what is the internal condition? Is it restlessness, disappointment, wanting to cling to somebody else, great ambitions that lead nowhere? Or is it to understand that the human being is led up to a point where he has to find out, and live in the right way. This has nothing to do with circumstances; whether he is rich or poor, clever or not so clever, he can learn to be indifferent to circumstances and be watchful about what reaction takes place from within.

Outer conflicts always exist; they change circumstances as much as they did in older times. For example, it is far from the way in which people found it possible to meet pressures in medieval days. There was a time when obeying was very important. A large number of people had to obey what was laid down by religions, the state, custom, etc., as the right thing. Of course in earlier times there was not much communication between one part of the world and another, so there were differences from area to area. But obedience was part of life. Sir Thomas More's life was appreciated by many

people, and he was expected to follow the king with regard to certain things, and conflict arose, because by nature he could not do what was expected of him. So he was put to death. But the inward condition was for him more important than orders which were given.

But what is the position in which we find ourselves? Do we consciously or unconsciously do what others do, wear the same clothes, or spend leisure hours in the same unintelligent ways? In the old days people escaped, for instance by entering monasteries, but today people do what others consider to be fashionable. It requires a clear perception and a strong will, perhaps a view of life which goes beyond all these difficulties, to live intelligently and not like a sheep in a flock. Perhaps we could say that it calls for at least a certain perception of unseen things, and therefore one is capable of living what others may call a life of unworldliness. We may say that living Theosophically implies this; it advocates a changed manner of meeting circumstances and of remaining inwardly at peace. Of course this depends on what we mean by 'Theosophically'. It could involve living without confusion or conflict, because of seeing facts which encompass not merely physical circumstances.

The Theosophical Society was founded not merely to prepare people to live and work in a brotherly way, but to know to some extent the future of humanity. The future is born from the present, which does not mean that it must be dogged by the present. Much of what

On the Watch-Tower

we recognize as part of the present must be left behind, but there are important lessons to be learned before doing so. Life is at the midpoint between animal nature and human nature; it is attractive and charming when just observed and not regarded as something that could be useful to oneself. But we have to be advance guards leading the way to a new kind of life in which everything is Theosophical, whether it is actually part of the Theosophical Society or not. So let us consider the important principles and ways in which a Theosophist proves himself.

The Way as Much as We Can See

In his booklet on *What Theosophists Believe*, Bro. Raja tries to convey what is meant by the word 'Theosophy' — at least what he understood. It is a word which signifies knowledge, which people feel is indicated and to some extent made known by what has been spoken, or written about, in various books.

Bro. Raja points out in his booklet the following as mentioned: First of all Theosophy is not an atheistic philosophy, but a principle which reveals itself to some extent in what we see. What we see shows that there are indescribable potentialities in creation, also that the cosmic process is not 'māyā' or illusion. But the full nature of reality cannot be understood by the human brain, and therefore it is called māyā.

The whole process which we call evolution is not made clear to us. But from what we can see and understand we realize that not only does evolution take place

through what is visible to us, but also through what at present are invisible areas, planes, *loka-s*, etc. (Different names are used by different people). Some of these areas are not accessible to us, by means we have of knowing physical realities. But if we develop greater insights. we will come to know more of them. Our knowledge of the universe as a whole can develop to a vast extent, perhaps to an infinite level.

The development we know of is cyclic, which can be found by the study of Nature. There are periods of growth and also periods of rest. The work of development is carried on through all these, and everything has some element of the divine nature which pervades evolutionary work at every level. Everything is growing, becoming more awake, and reaching deeper levels of bliss and truth.

Without going too much into the details of each level of growth (so far as we can understand them) we will merely touch upon some levels. The divine nature, which implies Universal Brotherhood and the plan of evolution, is the basis of all. A point comes when an 'awakening' takes place in the human being, which is a form of consciousness unfolding itself. This develops as many incarnations occur, but we will not go into details, as mentioned earlier.

While this development takes place there are two laws which we must not forget to become aware of — one is karma and the other is reincarnation. As each person learns to act according to the divine

The Theosophist

plan, he becomes more capable of unfolding and therefore of acting according to the divine Will. The law of karma should never be thought of as a law of punishment, but as a method by which the individual becomes aware of the divine plan. It is a law, which like other laws, merely points the way to the working of the universe and teaches us how to adjust ourselves to the great stream of life, which takes every part to greater and more beautiful levels.

Every soul has to know for itself what is the inner nature of all that exists, and gradually it comes to realize that it is the most beautiful thing to take part in. All that is meant for self is a blunder, and causes what we call suffering, but it is really ignorance. As Bro. Raja says, outlining these ideas, which of course he puts in his own words, 'misery and suffering have as their ultimate gain the illumination of the soul'.

It is through reincarnation that the light increases in the minds of people who apparently undergo difficulties. It awakens aptitudes and insight into the

nature of the divine as the journey goes on. It is obvious that freedom (*moksha*) or liberation (*mukti*) are merely terms which we use for the time being, while we are under the impact of our own lack of understanding. The liberated soul, on the other hand, expands in consciousness and sheds the wonderful benefits he receives on others.

The ideal of the Theosophist is to become liberated from the ignorance and limitation which he unconsciously faces, and become fully awake to the whole purpose of a process in which he consciously takes part in the work. Those who have gone ahead help those who are still struggling. Some have different work to do, but those who are willing to help humanity remain and give their blessings and help in varied forms to those who are struggling to become free. Because of them no one is left alone, everyone has the benefit of a greater life, so we are as Theosophists men and women who start with universal brotherhood, but proceed to gain greater and greater wisdom, goodness and love. ✧

**Behold but One in all things;
it is the second that leads you astray.**

Kabir

To Strengthen the Link

ANTONIO GIRARDI

ANYTHING that can be ‘kept’ can also be ‘strengthened’, but the core of our meditation is the ‘link’. This link has to be considered not as a tie or a limit, but as a vital and whole awareness connected by spiritual searchers to the ‘conditions of being’, serving as a positive pointer to keep or strengthen a connection according to spiritual views, including:

- the link with the Masters of the Wisdom;
 - thankfulness to the Pioneers of the Theosophical Society;
 - living the reality of the philosophical search and of the tradition, always having in mind the values of the heart, solidarity, and service to others;
 - intuition;
 - being in harmony with nature;
 - artistic creation and interpretation;
- and
- meditation.

The ‘conditions of being’ are not a mechanical representation of those positive assumptions that Krishnamurti defines as ‘whole observation’, the only one through which we can grasp the wholeness and sanctity of life. The ‘conditions of being’ are nevertheless

important, and they shine in the state of impermanence that belongs to the human dimension; they are strong and beautiful only if they are distant from authority, accumulation, and from that distorted perception represented by prejudices and crystallizations. To summarize, ‘living’ those ‘conditions of being’ makes us aware of the search, the true link of Life.

The aim of the search is to overcome the duality of the observed and the observer, which is the whole observation, meditation, love, silence. Regarding this, we can talk of ‘awakening’, an awakening that a profound scholar such as professor Giangiorgio Pasqualotto of Padua University likes to define as ‘sudden but not improvised’ as the ‘science’ spoken of by Plato, which ‘comes suddenly (*exaiphnes*), but only after long periods of discussion’.

It is useful at this point in our reflection to go deeper into the ‘method’ of the Platonic and Neoplatonic tradition, which shows a striking analogy with Buddhist philosophy. This method reminds us of the word ‘discussion’, the Italian translation of the Greek verb *dialoghein*. By this Plato does not mean a superficial

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The Theosophist

confrontation by people who are strongly convinced of the truth of their opinions, but an open discussion where the speakers are willing to lay their opinions open to doubts.

This profound quality of the Platonic dialogue is analogous to what we find in Buddha's words and Zen Buddhism. Buddha does not declare a 'doctrine' in the sense of an organized system of truths, but asks the speaker — like Socrates in the Platonic dialogues — to reflect individually on the question, in order to arrive at the better solution. Thus the modern and contemporary Theosophical approach has much in common with the Platonic and Neoplatonic method, and also Buddhism.

The common line — among other things — is the importance given to the 'method' of the spiritual search, in Socratic and *maieutic* terms. Socrates, in 'Teeteto', says that if Teeteto wants to seek more deeply he will become, thanks to the present search, full of better meditations; if he stays 'empty' he will not overload those who are with him because, in his wisdom, he will not believe he knows what he does not know. So this is a method that reinforces the link with Wisdom and Compassion.

Damodar, one of the great Pioneers of the Theosophical Society, writes in a letter to William Q. Judge:

Some pantheists believe in two distinct realities: Matter and Spirit. However, meditating on this subject, I concluded that this definition is not altogether logical. I think there is one infinite existence

and not two. We can call it Spirit or Matter, as we wish, but it is one. Who can say this is Matter and this is Spirit?

From wisdom and compassion comes the fundamental concept of the Unity of Life, as said in the noble Pythagorean words: 'As far as a human being is allowed, you will know that Nature is One and it is similar in all.' Wisdom does not mean accumulating or making a list of knowledge, goods or concepts, but it means to develop a view to focus the harmonic qualities of the components of reality, starting from the one we perceive, without staying stagnant in it.

Compassion is not pure sensitiveness, a thought fixed on something or someone, a psychological defeat, but is an awareness that highlights the connections of unity among all human beings and things. Life is to create correlated systems, always changing, as if the mind should systematically break the limit of knowledge.

The system just described is very complex and we can see in it different processes that show all their limitations and the insufficiency of the concept of specialization, if they are considered separately from the whole and standing on their own. A part loses its proper meaning if detached from the whole. Wisdom and compassion need to be related, with a unifying view, because both strongly express the dimension of being and the consciousness of the whole. To allow this to happen, wisdom and compassion cannot be considered as a 'quid' (something) external to us, that we can

To Strengthen the Link

reach following procedures settled in advance.

However, there are some fundamental elements to follow in order to achieve them:

- to demolish the barrier of dualistic judgement;
- to overcome the contrast between heart and mind: there is neither supremacy of the heart nor of the mind (to feel with mind, to think with heart!);
- to promote a holistic culture so that we can track down the Unity in everything;
- to understand the dimension of causes and the action of karma;
- to remember that the dimension of dreams goes beyond ‘maps’ (landscape is different from its elements);
- to accept that if it is not possible to achieve a total spiritual enlightenment, we have to accept the reality of the ‘discontinuity’ of awareness.

Wisdom and compassion flourish spontaneously if the barrier between the observer and the observed is overcome. If not, we would continually discuss and talk of ‘definitions’ and we would not live in a wise and compassionate way.

Jiddu Krishnamurti says:

Every movement starts from the observer,

if he does not understand that the observer is the observed thing, he simply generates another series of images and he is entrapped again. But as soon as the observer understands that the thing he is acting for is himself, then there is no conflict between him and the image. He is the image. There is no separation. When he is separated, he does or tries to do something regarding it, but when the observer understands he is that thing, at that point there is neither sympathy nor antipathy and the conflict stops.

The Theosophical method is very close to all this and it is for this reason I would like to end my short lecture with these meaningful words of the international President of the Theosophical Society, Mrs Radha Burnier:

Theosophy is not a kind of empty philosophy, or a new sect or religion, but has something to do with learning about life and the realization of its beauty and its meaning. Those who work according to this purpose are a light that irradiates friendship and harmony, kindness and love towards all. If what we are studying does not change the quality of our relationships and attitudes, then there is something missing in our way of understanding Theosophy.

As the bee collects nectar and departs without injuring the flower, or its colour or scent, so let a sage dwell in his village.

Dhammapada, IV.49

Three Great Mysteries of Life in the Light of Theosophy

MARY ANDERSON

THERE are many mysteries in life, many unanswered questions. A mystery is a secret, not because someone refuses to explain it to us, but because no one is able to understand it fully.

There are three great mysteries in life. And because they are mysteries human beings ask different questions about them. They ask ‘what is our true nature and what is the true nature of the world we live in?’; ‘what is our origin and what is the origin of the world we live in?’; and finally ‘where is our world going and where are we going? — as Humanity and as individuals?’

The last two questions — the Whence and the Whither — may remind us of the story of a saint who visited a medieval lord in his great castle. He spoke one dark winter evening to the inhabitants of the castle in the great hall. A bird flew through the hall, in through one open window high up on the wall and out through another open window. The saint pointed out that our life is like what we know of that bird. We know only part of its flight, that is, its

flight through the lighted hall. We do not know what happened before it entered the hall from the darkness. We do not know what will happen after it leaves the hall to return to the darkness.

These questions are reflected in the fields of study in which humans are interested, that is, science in the widest sense, philosophy and psychology, and religion: both theology and mysticism.

Scientists probe into the nature of the physical world and the physical universe in all their aspects, including the very large (in astronomy) and the very small (in nuclear physics). Their tools are the physical senses and instruments which are very sophisticated extensions of the senses. Philosophers and psychologists probe above all with the instrument which is the mind into what has to do with the mind, for example, abstract ideas, and the mind itself — consciousness, the nature of man as the thinker. Theologians and mystics probe into the nature of what is beyond both man and the universe, both mind or consciousness and matter. That

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Three Great Mysteries of Life in the Light of Theosophy

‘something beyond’ is sometimes called ‘God’ or the Absolute or the Divine or Spirit or the One Life. Theologians base their investigations on scriptures, mystics base theirs on something in their own nature which is beyond the senses and the mind, the latter being the tools of the scientist and philosopher respectively. Many resort both to scriptures and to their own insights.

We can sum up those mysteries which fascinate mankind as the world of matter investigated by scientists, the world of mind or consciousness investigated by philosophers and psychologists and the world of the Divine or Spirit, investigated by theologians and mystics. Theosophy has something to say about all three fields of study. Let us start with the last mentioned: God or the Divine — for a very good reason: the Divine encompasses the other two. In other words: man is divine; all conscious beings are divine; the whole universe — matter and life — is also divine.

God in the highest sense — The Absolute — is indeed absolute. Thus it is omnipresent: there is nowhere where it is not. A bishop visited a school class and asked the children if they could tell him where God is. One boy answered: ‘Can you tell us where He is not?’ The absolute is eternal: there is no time when it was not or when it will not be. It is immutable, unchanging, and at the same time it is the root of all change. It is the origin of everything, the destination of everything and the true nature of everything. It is all that was, all that will be and all that

eternally is. All beings, human and non-human, all things we know and all things we do not know arose and arise continually out of that Absolute, that Oneness. It is ‘absolutely’ everything. Thus it is not only all that is but also all that is not! For that reason it is sometimes described as the plenum or the fullness — infinity — and sometimes as the void or emptiness — zero. It is described as a fullness because it is omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient and eternal, because it is all things at once. We can conceive of it as an emptiness, because it is no one thing exclusively. None of them describe it fully. To think of the Absolute in this way is the *via negativa*, the path of *neti-neti*, rejecting all descriptions and all explanations because they are all insufficient. It is beyond our power of conception.

The oneness of nothingness is always there, is always complete in itself. This is perhaps what is known in Christianity as *God transcendent*. But, from our point of view, as beings living in a world that is changing and temporary, the Divine puts forth or manifests an aspect of itself from time to time, and thus a universe comes into existence. This is perhaps what is known in Christianity as *God immanent*.

How does all arise out of the Absolute, the Oneness which is also the Nothingness? This can be symbolized by numbers or represented by other symbols. The Oneness that is the Absolute is not only centripetal but also centrifugal. It not only exists in itself, in what to us appears as sleep or as God transcendent, but also manifests itself in what to us appears as

The Theosophist

waking or as 'God immanent', dwelling in a universe which is also God.

When this happens, the One shows forth two aspects of itself. So from the one we proceed to the two. One of those aspects is the root of all future consciousness. The other aspect is the root of all future matter. (Consciousness and matter, as aspects of the One, are inseparably linked.) Where there is matter, whether shaped in a form or formless, there is consciousness, though it may not be recognizable to us as consciousness. And all consciousness expresses itself in matter, including invisible or formless matter.

These two aspects of the One, consciousness and matter, are symbolized by the number two. They are also symbolized in many cosmogonies as heaven and earth or as father and mother. When heaven and earth are drawn apart, the universe comes into being, between 'heaven and earth'. This may be expressed as a gigantic yawn! Another symbol of the beginning of things is father and mother becoming separate beings and coming together again, united by the force of love. Then a child is born, who is symbolically the Universe. As we know, when there is procreation multiplicity follows. Thus the Universe comes into being, not through an act of creation by a personal God in the image of a human being, but through the manifestation or outpouring of the One Divine Life. Another symbol of unity becoming diversity is the white light passing through a prism and producing the seven colours of the spectrum.

These are symbols suggesting where we come from and where all things come from. If we place another prism, but inverted, in the path of the seven colours of the spectrum, they return to the white light representing the Oneness, the Divine. This fact symbolizes where we are going and where the universe is going, that is, returning from the many to the One, to the Divine which is our origin and our home.

Let us now consider the field studied by science: The World, the Solar System, the Universe — matter and the life dwelling in matter. According to theosophical teachings, there is no dead matter. All matter is alive, is even conscious and is indestructible. And, since everything is divine, all matter is divine. The forms which matter takes may come and go, may appear and disappear, may emerge and dissolve again, but matter itself never 'dies', it only changes its forms, it is *transformed*. Matter is continuously in movement. We know from science that the very atoms that make up matter constantly move. Objects we know, the forms in Nature and man-made forms also move, that is, they change, but more slowly.

What is this movement? It is a movement like that of a pendulum, between one extreme and the other: growth and decay, life and death, summer and winter. To use another symbol: it is the outbreathing and the inbreathing of the One Life. Thus plants, insects, animals, human beings, even mountains and oceans, planets, suns and galaxies come and go, from the 'big

Three Great Mysteries of Life in the Light of Theosophy

bang' (if there was a 'big bang'!) to the 'black hole' (and theosophists might add: from the black hole to the big bang!).

All this movement, coming and going, is a sign of life. The heart of things expands and contracts, like our heart. This movement is the basis of two concepts in many religions and in the Theosophical philosophy: Reincarnation and Karma. Reincarnation proclaims that we are born, we die, we are born again, and so it continues. The physical form disintegrates, the life takes on other forms. The Law of Karma proclaims that there is absolute justice. Action and reaction, cause and effect are equal. Action (and Karma means action) disturbs the balance of nature; it creates imbalance, disharmony. Thus a cause is set in motion. And Nature seeks to restore harmony. A certain effect results.

Let us now consider the field studied by philosophy and psychology: Humanity, encompassing not only humanity, but also humanity's origin: the other Kingdoms of Nature. According to Theosophical teachings, the life, consciousness and Spirit that we *are* has passed through other more elementary kingdoms of nature before dwelling in the human kingdom: so-called *elemental kingdoms*, comprising for example the life in atoms; *the mineral kingdom*; *the plant kingdom*; *the animal kingdom*.

These form a great ladder of life leading up to humanity and on to divine beings. Through these Kingdoms of Nature, the expressions of life and also consciousness become more and more sophisticated:

Scientists have spoken of a kind of consciousness and sympathy in atomic particles. In the nineteenth century a scientist who was a Theosophist, Jagdish Chandra Bose, demonstrated that there is consciousness in *minerals* — much more elementary than our consciousness. But our consciousness may also be elementary compared to that of more developed beings! In the mineral kingdom consciousness seems to be at the outer, purely *physical* level. Minerals are visibly influenced by shocks, by violent blows of various kinds. Think of earthquakes or fire in the bowels of the earth or in volcanoes, creating igneous rocks. Think of the *activity* of the stonemason or the sculptor.

In the twentieth century the 'secret life of plants' was investigated, revealing *in the plant kingdom* much more sophisticated consciousness, at the level of *feeling*. For example, a plant shows fear and sympathy when another plant or another form of life is hurt or even threatened.

In the animal kingdom consciousness is still more sophisticated due to the capacity of free movement. The animal develops to some extent the ability to think, learning from its experience.

In the human kingdom thought becomes much more sophisticated. Abstract thought becomes possible. There is the capacity for self-knowledge, that is, a person can know and know that he or she knows. From the level of logical thought and everyday knowledge, a human being may rise to Wisdom.

It is interesting that those levels of

The Theosophist

consciousness correspond to aspects or principles in man's make-up. There are many presentations of man's constitution. Put simply, we may distinguish the following: The *physical* body with its vitality, our physical sense impressions, originating in the mineral kingdom. *Feeling*: emotion, desire, born at the stage of plant life. *Mind*, which became active at the animal stage. Like a mirror, man's mind may turn in two opposite directions, reflecting either what is below or what is above, that is, allying itself either with emotions and desires or with the next principle: *Wisdom* or *Buddhi*, spiritual insight, which is at the same time love — the mark of the spiritual human being. *Spirit* or *Ātmā*: that Oneness with all, which is our true divine nature.

It is obvious that we are not conscious at the finer, spiritual levels of our being. We are conscious at the physical level. Thus we feel what happens to our body: sensations of pain and pleasure, etc. We are conscious at the emotional level. We feel happiness and sadness, likes and dislikes. We are conscious at the mental level. We can reason logically, but our reasoning is influenced and sometimes vitiated, even unconsciously, by our personal wishes, our prejudices and our likes and dislikes.

These are the levels of our being at which we are conscious, as we are now. Taken together, they are known as the personality, a term derived from the word *persona*, meaning a mask. In the classical Roman and Greek theatre, the actors wore a mask. We are like actors who are

immersed in their roles and who have forgotten who they are. Our future lies in the conscious development of our true nature which is at present unconscious. It lies in love that is pure, impersonal, universal, unselfish and wise. It lies in Wisdom that is unprejudiced, objective, broad-minded and loving.

As already mentioned, the mind is a mirror which can reflect what is below or what is above. It is a two-edged sword, capable of destroying us or cutting our bonds. Our future lies ultimately in a return to Spirit, to the One-ness that is our true nature, our true home and at the same time the true nature and the true home of all beings.

Theosophy is not only a teaching. It is a way of Life. If we really assimilate theosophical teachings we ourselves change. Thus, we shall act differently because we feel differently, we think differently. Teachings concerning God or the Divine — the One Life — can make us feel responsible. We are not simply 'poor sinners'. We are divine beings. We may thus become more self-reliant and therefore more dynamic and efficient.

But not only am I divine. All other human beings — those I like and those I dislike — are also divine. Thus we should become more loving. And all other beings — animals, plants, minerals, the very Earth herself, other heavenly bodies — are also divine. We therefore feel close to them, we love them spontaneously, naturally. What hurts them hurts us. What makes them happy makes us happy. Thus we shall care for nature, for our planet.

Three Great Mysteries of Life in the Light of Theosophy

Moreover, we shall never feel unhappy, lonely or abandoned.

Teachings concerning the universe, matter and their appearance and disappearance — constant change — help us to cling less desperately to anything we value: any possessions, any status due, for example, to riches or fame. Thus we may become more independent, less dependent on anything like wealth, the ‘bubble reputation’, even friendship.

Theosophical teachings on humanity and all other living beings and their evolution from the Oneness — their true nature — to multiplicity and forgetfulness of that true nature — and ultimately back to our true nature in the Oneness — should engender optimism and spur us to action.

Whatever our troubles, our misery, our sorrow, our pain, the end is sure.

If we can see life in this way, many hindrances fall away. We are less disturbed by desires, envy, dislike. We are more loving, wiser, happier and therefore more efficient. The Theosophical view of life is a wider view, inspiring us, taking us away from our little worries, explaining tragedies as the payment of debts, as lessons to be learned, as opportunities to be taken. If we really study Theosophy, we shall see life in a new light. We shall penetrate into the mysteries of life, which does not mean that we ‘solve’ them. But we may understand them better, seeing them in the light of One Great Movement of Life. ✧

Mr CONRAD JAMIESON

Mr Conrad Jamieson, a long-standing resident-worker at Adyar and former International Secretary of the TS, passed away at his residence on the compound on 25 May 2010. Hailing from New Zealand, Mr Jamieson had come to Adyar with his wife Helen in 1983. Soon after that he became the Superintendent of the Garden Department. Later on he was appointed International Secretary and worked in that capacity for several years. His other contributions at Adyar included work in the Archives and in the Public Relations and Information Office, when many a visitor was delighted to hear him on aspects of the history and work of the Society. Mr Conrad Jamieson will be remembered for his gentleness, his dedication to Adyar as the International Headquarters of the TS, and for his good sense of humour. He will be missed by his many friends at Adyar, in New Zealand and around the world.

Brotherhood is for All

ANNIE BESANT

YOU cannot have brotherhood here until you yourselves are brotherly. You cannot build a brotherhood without brothers, and that is a matter for each individual man and woman; and unless you can learn in your everyday life to live in a brotherly way, to look upon everyone around you as a brother — whether older, equal or younger, matters not, you have relations with them and therefore there are obligations and duties towards them — unless we all thus live, we cannot make a Brotherhood. For duty is not a thing of contact, as too many people think: He does not help me, why should I help him? Because he does not help you, you ought to help him, for thus you show him the way. If he is rough to you, you should not be rough to him, but teach him gentleness by being gentle; goodness is as ‘catching’ as disease.

Hatred ceases not by hatred at any time; hatred ceases by love. And yet, five and twenty centuries after the Lord Buddha spoke those exquisite words, men are still trying to cure crime by cruelty, to get rid of offences by blows. To be brotherly is the noblest thing on earth; and if your heart is sometimes sad, or

life is sometimes lonely, it need never be sad while there is one broken heart to bind, it need never be lonely while there are men, women, and children who want your help.

A beautiful phrase was once used to me by my daughter. You know my children were taken away from me, because I would not teach them Christianity. And during their minority they were taken away from me. But the moment they were free they came to me — both boy and girl; and my daughter, who was then only eighteen, said one day: ‘Mother, I think I was taken away from you when I was little, so that you might be a mother to thousands of other children. I am glad it was so.’ Now that is true. But you do not need to have your beloved taken from you in order that you may be a mother or a father to the children around you who need your help.

Every one who is more ignorant than you is really your child; everyone who has less power than you have, everyone who is sadder than you are, is really your child. It is the heart of love we want. That love, beginning in the family, spreads outward to the community, to the nation, and

Taken from a lecture given in Benares.

Brotherhood is for All

finally beyond the nation to humanity. The heart of love, which is the God within us, pulses within the Spirit of each of us, and is his very life. The heart of love flowing out in all directions, sending out floods of beneficial affection, answering every cry for help, making one spring forward to the aid of the sad and the downtrodden. If your sister was downtrodden and miserable, you would not sleep until you had brought her home. But there are our sister-women everywhere, downcast, miserable, and trampled on, and while they are as they are, no nation can rise to its full greatness, nor fulfil its purpose in the world. Do you fear that touching the impure will make you impure? The touch of love can never bring you pollution, nor can evil come through that to soil you.

There is a lovely story told by Olive Schreiner. I can only tell it as I partly remember it, for I read it very long ago. The gates of heaven were open and many were pressing in, and their garments were shining and pure, and angels were standing round, all clad in white raiment, wondrous, lucent. And a woman came in, in very white robes and clean white feet, and as she walked along the golden paths the angels cried out: 'See how dirty her raiment is with the mud of earth, and her feet are sprinkled with blood.' When she came near to the throne of the Christ, he asked her: 'How came thy raiment to be white?' And she answered: 'Lord, I kept then very white and clean on earth. I saw a woman lying in the gutter, and I trod on her that I might keep my garments white. No mud soiled me, for I saved my feet

from being soiled by treading on her body.' And the face of the Christ was sad, and all the angels veiled their faces, and the heavenly city disappeared.

The woman went back to earth, and she toiled amongst the miserable and the poor, she never thought about her garments or her feet, she only thought of helping the miserable and the degraded. Until one day she saw, fallen down, a poor woman of the street, and she raised her, muddying her own robe, and clasped her close, and bore her to the heavenly gates. And as they passed in, the angels cried: 'See how her garments are shining, and how her feet are covered with pearls', and the Lord Christ asked her: 'How come you are here, with feet that are stained, and garments that are impure?' And she whispered gently: 'Lord, my sister was in the mire, and I lifted her up and I have brought her home, but the mud soiled my raiment and her tears fell on my feet.' And the face of the Christ was glad, and from her garments shone out the light of heaven, and the angels laughed with delight with the lustre of the pearls up on her feet.

For purity does not come from lack of contact with the impure, but from the love which stoops to redeem and to uplift. Only when, with heart of love, we embrace the miserable and the degraded, only then shall we learn to understand the glory of God in every human form, and realize that the love which redeems is the characteristic of the Saviours of the world, who, being themselves free, can alone break the bonds that hold others in misery.

Fragments of the Ageless Wisdom

For wisdom, which is the worker of all things, taught me: for in her is an understanding spirit holy, one only, manifold, subtil, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good quick, which cannot be letted, ready to do good,

Kind to man, steadfast, sure, free from care, having all power, overseeing all things, and going through all understanding, pure, and most subtil, spirits.

For wisdom is more moving than any motion: she passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness.

For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty: therefore can no defiled thing fall into her.

For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness.

And being but one, she can do all things: and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new: and in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God, and prophets.

For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom.

For she is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of stars: being compared with the light, she is found before it.

Wisdom of Solomon

Remembering HPB

PEDRO OLIVEIRA

HOW does a person who is free from self-interest see the world? How does she see herself? If we are not free from self-interest we may tend to speculate about this matter, but speculation cannot take us very far. One possible answer to these questions was given by Śāntideva, a Buddhist teacher from the University of Nalanda in the eighth century CE. He wrote: 'Whoever wishes to quickly afford protection, to both himself and other beings, should practise that holy secret: the exchanging of self for others.'

In her life and in her work Madame Blavatsky did practise that holy secret. There are numerous instances of her generosity, compassion and selflessness. For example, when she saw a poor woman sobbing, with her two small children, in the quay of Le Havre in France, just before boarding the ship that was supposed to take them to the United States. On approaching her she became aware that the woman had been swindled by a supposed agent for immigrants in Hamburg who sold her bogus tickets. Without hesitation HPB went to the ticket office and exchanged her first class ticket for three tickets in the third class.

Years later in India, after having met

the Coulombs in Egypt and saving them from starvation, even though she knew they were trouble, she approached her Master for guidance in how to deal with them. He not only instructed her to keep them in the household but also quoted from an ancient book of spiritual discipline:

If thou findest a hungry Serpent creeping into thy house, seeking for food, and, out of fear it should bite thee, instead of offering it milk thou turnest it out to suffer and starve, thou turnest away from the Path of Compassion. Thus acteth the fainthearted and the selfish. (*Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. XII, p. 587)

In early 1885 she fell seriously ill. The doctor came and, after examining her, told those at Adyar that she would not survive. However, one of those unusual events that surrounded HPB took place at the Headquarters building. C. W. Leadbeater and HPB's nurse were sitting in the area which is today the President's Secretary's area, not knowing what to do in the situation. CWL reported that he heard steps on the roof and suddenly Master M. appeared at the door, walking straight to HPB's room. He apparently

Mr Pedro Oliveira is in charge of the Editorial Office, Adyar, and was formerly international Secretary.

The Theosophist

stayed there for a few minutes before he left the room and disappeared from the roof. Later on HPB would explain that during this visit the Master had given her the choice of leaving her old and sick body for good or staying on for some more time and finish *The Secret Doctrine*. Once again she exchanged self for others.

Her Teachers did not regard her as perfect but they did see her as a unique individual. The following passages from *The Mahatma Letters* exemplify their attitude towards her:

With him we associated a woman of most exceptional and wonderful endowments. Combined with them she had strong personal defects, but just as she was, there was no second to her living fit for this work. (Letter 45)

After nearly a century of fruitless search, our chiefs had to avail themselves of the only opportunity to send out a European *body* upon European soil to serve as a connecting link between that country and our own. (Letter 22)

She was a pukka occultist, quite unlike today's self-help 'gurus' who widely sell the notion that serious effort and sound ethical values are not really relevant for the search of self-knowledge and discovery of the secrets of nature. This is what she wrote:

For thirty-five years and more, ever since 1851 that I saw my Master *bodily* and personally for the first time, *I have never once denied or even doubted Him*, not even in thought. Never a reproach or a murmur

against Him has escaped my lips, or entered even my brain for one instant under the heaviest trials. From the first I knew what I had to expect, for I was told that, which I have never ceased repeating to others: as soon as one steps on the Path leading to the *Ashram* of the blessed Masters — the last and only custodians of primitive Wisdom and Truth — his Karma, instead of having to be distributed throughout his long life, falls upon him in a block and crushes him with its whole weight. He who believes in what he professes and in his Master, will stand it and come out of the trial victorious; he *who doubts*, the coward who fears to receive his just dues and tries to avoid justice being done — FAILS. He will not escape. (*BCW*, vol. VII, p. 247)

Even before her passing on 8 May 1891, many students had already converted her teaching into an ideology, attributing to her an authority she had never sought for herself nor for her writings. Her statement below, therefore, acquires increasing significance as a true testament from her to the effect that Theosophy can never be chained to any authority, to any school of thought, to any author, but that it is indeed a living teaching, a life-transforming wisdom:

Orthodoxy in Theosophy is a thing neither possible nor desirable. It is diversity of opinion, within certain limits that keeps the Theosophical Society a living and a healthy body, its many other ugly features notwithstanding. Were it not also, for the existence of a large amount of uncertainty

Remembering HPB

in the minds of students of Theosophy, such healthy divergencies would be impossible, and the Society would degenerate into a sect, in which a narrow and stereotyped creed would take the place of the living and breathing spirit of Truth and an ever growing Knowledge. (1888)

Both, the above statement and those which follow are taken from the messages she sent to the American Conventions of the TS during the last four years of her life. They show her growing concern that Theosophy should be seen in its essence as a living Wisdom, but also that the members should become aware of the essential work of the TS and of the dangers that such a work faced both from the outside world as well from within the Society's own membership:

Men cannot all be Occultists, but they can all be Theosophists. Many who have never heard of the Society are Theosophists without knowing it themselves; for the essence of Theosophy is the perfect harmonizing of the divine with the human in man, the adjustment of his godlike qualities and aspirations and their sway over the terrestrial or animal passions in him. Kindness, absence of every ill feeling or selfishness, charity, goodwill to all beings, and perfect justice to others as to one's self, are its chief features. He who teaches Theosophy preaches the gospel of goodwill; and the converse of this is true also, he who preaches the gospel of goodwill, teaches Theosophy. (1888)

There were numerous hostile forces working against the TS at the end of the

nineteenth century: the press, some spiritualist groups, Christian missionaries as well as some intellectuals who suspected that the Founders had a private (and political) agenda. Not surprisingly, some of the opposition also came from certain TS members who took turns in criticizing, sometimes aggressively, both Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky. Their names are now part of Theosophical history: M. and Mme. Coulomb, Babajee, Mohini Chatterji, Arthur Gebhard, A. O. Hume, among several others. Her statement below contains relevant advice for members of the Society today:

What can be done to prevent such a thing [the wrecking of the moral and ethical foundations of the Society] is for each Fellow of the Society to make Theosophy a vital factor in their lives — to make it real, to weld its principles firmly into their lives — in short, to make it their own and treat the Theosophical Society as if it were themselves. Following closely on this is the necessity for Solidarity among the Fellows of the Society; the acquisition of such a feeling of identity with each and all of our Brothers that an attack upon one is an attack upon all. Then consolidated and welded in such a spirit of Brotherhood and Love, we shall, unlike Archimedes, need neither fulcrum nor lever, but we shall move the world. (1889)

In the next statement HPB touches upon a very familiar pattern in TS work which was there perhaps from the very beginnings of the Society's history: a narcissistic attitude towards the Society and their members. It is only too easy for

The Theosophist

us to fall in love with our own opinions, to become so identified with our own perceptions and personal ideas that in the end it becomes impossible for us to be part of a group of workers sharing interest and activity in a common cause:

Many are the energetic members of the Theosophical Society who wish to work and work hard. But the price of their assistance is that all the work must be done in their way and not in any one else's way. And if this is not carried out they sink back into apathy or leave the Society entirely, loudly declaring that they are the only true Theosophists. Or, if they remain, they endeavour to exalt their own method of working at the expense of all other earnest workers. This is fact, but it is not Theosophy. (1889)

As mentioned earlier, many students tend to see Theosophy as an 'author-centred' teaching instead of a living and transformative Wisdom. In some mysterious way Theosophy, even in its dimension of a doctrinal exposition of the breathtaking processes unfolding both in the human being as well as in the universe, acts like a mirror in which the student can see himself or herself. If the attitude towards the teaching is a wrong one, that is, an attempt of using it as a scaffolding for self-aggrandizement, disaster looms:

Theosophy is essentially unsectarian, and work for it forms the entrance to the Inner life. But none can enter there save the man himself in the highest and truest spirit of

Brotherhood, and any other attempt at entrance will either be futile or he will lie blasted at the threshold. (1889)

In one of her last messages to the Conventions of the TS in America, HPB alerted the members about the dangers to which the Society is exposed when members allow the forces of divisiveness, suspicion and ill will to take root in their minds and in their hearts:

No opportunity will be lost of sowing dissension, of taking advantage of mistaken and false moves, of instilling doubt, of augmenting difficulties, of breathing suspicions, so that by any and every means the unity of the Society may be broken and the ranks of our Fellows thinned and thrown into disarray. Never has it been more necessary for the member of the TS to lay to heart the old parable of the bundle of sticks than it is at the present time; divided, they will inevitably be broken, one by one; united, there is no force on earth able to destroy our Brotherhood. (1891)

On 15 April 1891, just a few weeks before she passed away, she included in her last message to the American Conventions her appeal to the members of the Theosophical Society, which is at the same time simple, direct and uniquely moving:

Every wish and thought I can utter are summed up in this one sentence, the never-dormant wish of my heart, 'Be Theosophists, work for Theosophy!'

The Fundamental Question Concerning Intelligent Design

DARA TATRAY

THIS is a discussion of what I regard as the fundamental question concerning intelligent design; or at least the fundamental question from a particular point of view, and that, not necessarily the view of science. There are other questions concerning intelligent design which may be more productive from a scientist's point of view; but no question is more fundamental, in my opinion, than the question relating to the nature of intelligence. A further consideration arises towards the end of this discussion: whether or not we can rely on the intelligence of the designer, when the designer is a human being rather than a metaphysical principle. The present discussion also provides background information with which to better understand four important words and how they interact with one another: Life, Consciousness, emergence and karma.

According to the doctrine of physical monism currently dominating the scientific imagination, what exists is matter/energy out of which life and consciousness emerge at a certain stage of complexity. According to Theosophical teachings, however, Life and Consciousness are involved in the beginning. The process

of emergence is what makes them explicit in the end. We tend to think of karma in purely human terms — action and its consequences; as you sow, so shall you reap, and so forth. But the doctrine of karma also refers to the underlying principle of order or harmony that is holding the whole process together and guiding it all the way. Not as a guide which forces, but rather like Whitehead's idea of the divinity as a 'lure' that gently entices. Surprisingly, perhaps, the law of karma can also be seen working at the grossest material level. Every species is the result of a unique series of events and interactions, engaging in adaptation, ecological opportunism and niche construction. Life, in process of evolution, changes the environment in which it lives and then further adapts to that environment. This history of past events and their consequences is karma — action and its results. Underlying the whole process is a force tending towards equilibrium or Order. So let us now examine the meaning of Life and Consciousness from the top down, as it were.

Let us begin with a few rhetorical

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The Theosophist

questions. Is intelligence something human beings possess, to varying degree; or is it universally diffused — and not just among humans? Is intelligence acquired by the ego or does intelligence (as opposed to intellect) exist in inverse proportion to ego? Is intelligence an epiphenomenon of either the brain or of thought? Metaphorically put, is thought the receiver or the transmitter of intelligence? There is a fairly consistent answer to these questions across diverse cultures and climes, East and West, from the Upanishad-s and Plato to Bruno, Blavatsky and Bohm: and it is their answer to these questions that I am about to give.

A basic distinction must first be made between intelligence and intellect, and between small ‘m’ mind and capital ‘M’ Mind; between thought and consciousness and between consciousness and its content. Platonists, Gnostics, Theosophists, Buddhists and Vedāntists have always distinguished two ways of knowing corresponding to two distinct fields of knowledge. For example, G. R. S. Mead distinguishes between gnosis and ordinary knowledge when he writes: ‘Gnosis is knowledge; but not discursive knowledge of the nature of the multifarious arts and sciences’ (Mead, 1906 b). Intuitive insight and direct perception, in which there is no separation between the knower and the known, the observer and the observed, is central to Vedānta, Buddhism, Taoism and Patañjali Yoga. It also features strongly in the work of the Presocratics, including Heraclitus and Parmenides, in Plato and the Neoplatonists, and also more

recently in the philosophy of Spinoza, Schelling, Bergson and Bohm. Gnosis, direct perception, unitive perception, whichever of these near-synonyms you prefer, is a way of knowing not mediated by thought: a mode of knowing of which Aldous Huxley once observed that when there is a change in the mode of knowing there is a corresponding change in the mode of being (and vice versa when there is a change in the mode of being there is a change in the mode of knowing). Intellect is related to discursive, analytic thought, which is always conditioned, and intelligence relates to the present moment, the unconditioned, the spaces in between thought. Then there is the nature of consciousness to consider. Professor E. A. Burtt presented a valuable insight into the general Western conception of consciousness, when he pointed out that the Westerner generally: ‘defines “consciousness” as always implying awareness of some object’. By contrast, the Eastern thinker sees something of vital importance beyond and underlying all objects — namely, the universe that encompasses them, and the self that apprehends them — the knower, which by its very nature is the subject of consciousness and always eludes us when we try to make it an object. In fact, he is sure that when its essence as knower is fully realized, the separation between subject and object that is necessary for rational knowledge is transcended, and the self becomes aware of itself as a unity in which that separation has been overcome. He is likewise sure that consciousness — so far

The Fundamental Question Concerning Intelligent Design

from disappearing in this realization — only then becomes freed from its prison and fulfils its intrinsic nature (Burt 1965, p.286).

In nondualistic systems such as Advaita Vedānta, the universe in which objects exist and the Self that apprehends them are one and the same nothing often described as pure consciousness.

Consciousness carries different connotations in South Asian philosophical systems than in the West. Consciousness without an object, that is, contentless consciousness, is regarded as consciousness *per se* or pure consciousness, which is sacred or divine, infinite and universal. Thought and representation are not consciousness itself but part of its content, just like all material objects. In the classical Indian metaphysics known as Sāṅkhya the distinction is made between pure consciousness, *Purusha*, and *Prakṛti*, which is matter or nature, a metaphysical principle underlying all physical manifestations or phenomena (Schweizer 1993, p.847). This latter category not only includes all physical objects and processes but also all mentalistic qualities such as thought, desire, volition, the sense of I-am-ness and so on.

In Sāṅkhya the category of mind includes three distinct but related functions, all of which are regarded as material: 1) *buddhi*, which is a highly refined or subtle material substance, comparable to the Greek *nous*; it refers to the higher reaches of human intelligence including intuitive and unitive perception; 2) *manas*, which is the cognitive faculty itself, the

rational discriminating analysing intellect, the organ of cognition as such; and 3) *ahamkāra*, the I-maker or ego which ‘appropriates all mental [and other] experiences to itself’ (Schweizer 1993, p.848). In this system, the only thing that is not material, is not a thing at all, but pure consciousness without content, *Purusha*, which never becomes anything but without which nothing can come to be.

One of the benefits of the mind/consciousness dualism of Sāṅkhya metaphysics is that it sheds light on the nature of consciousness.

Consciousness is what remains after all the other categories of existence are negated or transcended. Consciousness is what underlies every object and every representation. It was present in the beginning and remains when all else has passed away. In the Vedānta the same nothing, the same totality called *Purusha* in Sāṅkhya, is described as Brahman of which it is predicated only ‘that it is, that it perceives, and that it enjoys eternal bliss’ (Müller 1883/2002, p.176). The authors of the Upanishad-s discovered something ‘behind the veil of the body, behind the senses, behind the mind, and behind our reason’ which they called the *ātman*, the universal Self (Müller 1883/2002, p.176). They argued that the *ātman* is finally identical to Brahman and that this universal consciousness, which is pure intelligence, is our true nature, the eternal element in us. Furthermore, the authors of the Upanishad-s maintain that everything in the universe is guided by this intelligence, supported by this

The Theosophist

intelligence and established in this intelligence (*Aitareya Upanishad*, III.3).

We must not forget that intelligence, in this usage, must be distinguished from discursive reason, the cognitive faculty, and the I-making principle or ego in any form. Small ‘m’ mind and intellect are personal, whereas intelligence and capital ‘M’ Mind are universal in every respect.

Moving along to the present day, let us take a look at David Bohm’s understanding of intelligence. Bohm described his theory of the implicate order as making possible, ‘the comprehension of both inanimate matter and life on the basis of a single ground, common to both’ (Bohm 1980/1997, p.193). That ground he variously described as consciousness, the generative order, and the holomovement. So-called inanimate matter and life are both to be understood on the basis of a common ground, the nature of which is intelligence. Distinguishing between thought and intelligence, Bohm and Krishnamurti began by defining intelligence as mental alertness, the capacity to read between the lines, particularly to read thought and to understand it.

They then moved on to consider the deeper levels of intelligence, where intelligence may be regarded as synonymous with God (Dialogue with Bohm in Krishnamurti 1986, p.509/526). Krishnamurti suggests: ‘Religious people, instead of using the word intelligence, have used the word God’. Bohm replies: ‘God is perhaps a metaphor for intelligence. God means that which is immeasurable, beyond thought’ (Dialogue

with Bohm in Krishnamurti 1986, p.525–6). Krishnamurti agrees and then reminds us that our image of God and our ideas of God have been created by thought to satisfy its desires and assuage its fears: ‘the desire for this intelligence, through time, has created this image of God. And through the image of God, Jesus, Kṛṣṇa, or whatever it is, by having faith in that — which is still the movement of thought — one hopes that there will be harmony in one’s life (Dialogue with Bohm in Krishnamurti 1986, p.526).

This is not to deny the existence of an intelligence, or God, beyond thought desire and fear. They are not saying that there is no such thing as God, when God is divested of our superstitions and fears: they merely point out that the word, the image, and the ideas constructed by our thoughts are not God.

Thus, the way to harmony in life is not through the image, but only through the actuality of God, or if you prefer, the actuality of ‘what is’. In this understanding it is not until the entire process of thought is understood that there is any likelihood of being inspired, guided or touched by anything other than thought in the long term. We may have our moments, but until our lives are grounded in universal intelligence, they remain what Mead described as processions of fate. Perhaps the ground or totality of which Bohm speaks, the highest generative order, is the same as the pure consciousness of Vedānta: both being beyond thought and immeasurable. In *Science, Order, and Creativity* Bohm and Peat use

The Fundamental Question Concerning Intelligent Design

fractal geometry to illustrate how order can exist within apparent randomness (Bohm and Peat 1987, p.173). The Mandelbrot fractals contain a hidden order — the base figure and the generator — which manifests the most remarkable array of complex images, including six-pointed stars, snowflakes, mountains, images of the Buddha, and so forth: all based on a simple figure with a generator applied at different scales (Bohm and Peat 1987, p.152–4). This model may help to answer the question, where does order come from? If order can be hidden within apparent geometric randomness, then perhaps order can also be hidden within the apparent randomness of life more generally. That hidden order is Intelligence. In the Platonic system it would be described as the Good, and in the Gnostic system as Mind, all of which are often capitalized to distinguish them from their lower and often very distorted reflections.

Bergson held that disorder does not exist. In his view there are only two types of order: geometric and vital (Lorand 1992, p.580–87). Geometric order includes the movement of particles through space and time, the order of number, the functioning of machines and the more subtle orders evident in the growth of plants and the development of language (Bohm and Peat 1987, p.111). Geometric order is secondary, vital order is fundamental. In Bergson's view, the intellect creates an artificial or mechanical order, which may be of practical value, but is not the truth about reality. It is the vital order that orders nature; 'the order of the

intellect is lifeless' (Lorand 1992).

This understanding informs Bohm's treatment of the generative order or the holomovement — the totality. What Bohm calls the totality appears to be the same no-thing called *Purusha* in Sāṅkhya and Brahman in Vedānta. Thus, pure consciousness, intelligence or Mind may represent the ultimate generative or implicate order from which both mind and matter and all its evolutes arise. Furthermore, as all manifestations of order — mechanical, biological, hermeneutic and other — derive from the generative order, this raises the possibility that the totality, the holomovement and pure consciousness are of the nature of order, and that ultimately, it is order that unfolds from them. This is consistent with Plato's treatment of the Good and Plotinus's treatment of the One. I suppose it could basically be described as a form of emanationism.

In this model, it is proposed that although the totality is of the nature of order, and ultimately only order unfolds from it, the same cannot be assumed of the semi-autonomous parts of nature such as the human intellect or thought. Further, in this model it might be proposed that order, peace and happiness are part of the deeper orders of being, so that we need not think in terms of creating order out of chaos, surviving a hostile world, struggling to find happiness or anything of that kind; but, instead, find out what it means to live in harmony with the natural order, and not merely the order of physical nature. Do Intelligence and Order

The Theosophist

come from the personal empirical self, or from the universal Self, the totality, variously described as pure consciousness, Brahman, the *ātman*, the Ultimate Principle or God?

The ultimate source of order, for Bohm and Krishnamurti appears to be the intelligence beyond thought, which is synonymous with God, pure consciousness and Brahman. They argue that thought is a material, mechanical, measurable electrochemical process, which takes place in the brain and is largely a reaction to the past; whereas intelligence is neither mechanical nor measurable, nor is it the product of thought or time. They finally agree that the relationship between intelligence and the brain, or between intelligence and thought, is that the brain can be an instrument of intelligence, thought can be a 'pointer' to intelligence; whereas in itself thought is 'barren'. It has no value without intelligence (Dialogue with Bohm in Krishnamurti 1986, p.520). It becomes important, then, to clearly understand the difference between thought — which is a movement in time away from 'what is' — and intelligence, which exists in the depths of life, or the deeper recesses of the generative order, and can be contacted only by a mind that is free from desire and fear, pleasure and pain, the twin impulses propelling the mind outward, further and further into confusion. We might ask, what is this intelligence that is potentially our pilot through life? We have already seen that it is not a personal possession, it is not desire, it is not thought or intellect. Nor is it social convention dictating to us what

is right and what is wrong. Rather it is the light of universal intelligence or pure consciousness; a reflection within us of the holomovement, the whole movement, which is synonymous with the Good in Plato's sense.

So where does all this leave the question of the cosmic design and its designer; and the related but separate question concerning the intelligence or otherwise of human designers, let us say scientists or geneticists? The human being can be, and ultimately is, a microcosm or mirror of pure intelligence or pure consciousness, which is inseparable from the Good or the totality. In the meantime, we are in large measure the embodiment of desire, fear, and conditioned thought. Does this imply that scientists and the rest of us should not be doing what we do because we cannot be trusted? That would be a rather idiotic position to take, not to mention impossible. As the *Bhagavadgītā* eloquently points out, it is not possible for a human being to remain actionless even for one second. However there is also to be taken into account the inescapable difference between ourselves as creators, inventors, manipulators — and the action of the totality, Brahman or God, in which worlds endlessly appear and disappear in a regular ebb of creation and dissolution the nature of which is order. The Good in us, the Intelligence in us, which is universal, is tempered by having become embodied in an instrument that has been taken over by conditioned thought. That is the Krishnamurti/Bohm position. By contrast, the action of the totality is not distorted by the personal element. It is by

The Fundamental Question Concerning Intelligent Design

definition whole, complete, unlimited. Our actions are all limited, fragmentary, conditioned and so forth.

It does not matter how clever we become or how uneducated we might remain; our basic status as conditioned contingent beings remains unaltered.

Would it make any difference to my basic argument concerning intelligent design, if advanced scientists from another world created all 'life' on earth? I think not, because Being, not beings, 'created' life. I believe that this universe and everything that comprises it is the creation, expression, or emanation of Being or pure consciousness. If we wish to speak in terms of 'multiverses', which personally I would not, then equally I would say that the totality of all multiverses is the creation or emanation or expression of Being, not beings. That would be the view of Plato, Blavatsky, Bruno and Bohm among others I might choose to rally round me. In this argument, if advanced scientists from another world created life on earth that would not amount to saying that they created Life itself. Life is the totality, the

immeasurable, the vastness of which space is just a reflection and of which all that exists is an emanation. All that beings can do, whether they be terrestrial or extra-terrestrial, is tinker around with what Being has already produced: namely, the necessary conditions for existence — on earth, in heaven, or on Mars as the case may be. I believe that we can rely on the intelligence of Being, which is of the nature of intelligence and bliss — *satchit-ānanda* — in a way that we cannot rely on the intelligence of conditioned, limited beings such as humans. Does this have any implication as to how we might view the scientific endeavour? I think it implies only that we view all human and alien endeavour with caution, with humility, and where possible with safeguards against the unintelligence that flesh is heir to, whether that flesh be pink or green. But this should not just be a story of caution, either, for you never know what is really acting behind the things we do: particularly since that intelligence upon which we can rely is within us. All that we have to do is find our own way back to it. ✧

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Theosophy Leads to Perfection

AVANTIKA U. MEHTA

THE word 'Theosophia' is derived from two Greek words meaning 'Divine Wisdom' and was coined by the Neoplatonists in the second century of the Christian era to connote the truths revealed to man by his Evolutionary Elders at the dawn of human life on this planet. These have been added to and checked and rechecked down to the present day by an unbroken succession of Adept occult investigators.

'Theosophy' is defined neither in the constitution of the Theosophical Society nor in any official document. It is evidently intended that each one should discover for himself what it is or of what nature it is. There have been persons throughout the ages who have embarked on this quest and what has been recorded of their findings or teachings is available for our study. We can find out what Theosophy is, partly from the thoughts and writings handed down from ancient times and partly by studying modern Theosophical works.

HPB declared with no hesitation that, though Theosophy is not a Religion, it is Religion itself. It is the wisdom religion, the source from which all the true religions

that have been taught in the world have taken their origin. Theosophy is the body of truths which forms the basis of all religions and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any.

Theosophy leads us to Perfection — which is an assertive sentence. The questioner knows about THEOSOPHY and the sacred word PERFECTION, and so he asks: How does Theosophy lead to Perfection?

The Masters, and our past and present leaders, exhibited by the quality of their lives that Theosophy means following a Path which leads us to Perfection. To follow on this path an aspirant should imbibe qualities such as those mentioned in the three Theosophical classics, invaluable to aspirants on the spiritual path, namely *At the Feet of the Master*, *The Voice of the Silence* and *Light on the Path*. Moreover, in *The Masters and the Path*, CWL says that there are four ways of approaching the beginning of the Path — by contact with those who are already on the path, by deep thought, by listening to and reading sacred words and by the practice of virtue. There are four qualifications, of which the last is given

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Theosophy Leads to Perfection

in *At the Feet of the Master* as Love and it is said that without this the other qualifications are in vain. This then is the one road to the path proper — the way of love, of unselfishness in thought, word and deed.

All the old selfish habits of body and mind must be overcome by the positive virtues. The word 'virtue' as used here cannot mean mere passive goodness or the absence of wrongdoing; it must be taken in its old meaning of strength. Virtues are forms of strength of the soul. When the soul dominates the personal life, it will be seen to be full of such virtues.

The first of these qualifications is Discrimination and this is usually taken to mean the discrimination between the real and the unreal, which leads men to enter the Path. The second quality is Desirelessness, discrimination having already shown us that the things which most men desire, such as wealth and power are not worth having. When this is really felt, not merely said, all desire for them ceases. The third quality is Good Conduct and the fourth is Love. The law of growth, of development, of evolution, is also the law of beauty, proportion and harmony and all are integral parts of the supreme Law of Love.

For all these qualities I would like to quote a few Golden Verses, which may be divided into two parts: The first, treating of practical or human virtues, whose aim is the making of a good man, from the animal man to the human man; and the second, treating of the contemplative or divine virtues, the goal of which

is to make a human man a wise man, meaning a man into a Mahatma. If a man follows these precepts faithfully, he will be ready to tread the further path, to devote himself to the contemplative virtues and to become truly godlike, overcoming life after life and gaining a knowledge of the divine plan. I quote a few of the Golden Verses:

To live to benefit mankind is the first step.
To be able to speak is to have attained the power of helping others.
He who loves no one does not appear to ME to be loved by anyone.
No man is your enemy, no man is your friend. All alike are your teachers.
You yourself must become one with the Path.

Man is born into the world to become perfect. We have divine perfection within us, as within the seed is the power of the tree. We need time for the fulfilling of the command, for the growth into the splendour of the Image in which we are made. Theosophy teaches us that 'Life is ruled by Law'. The law of man — which means the law of incarnation, law of karma, law of evolution, law of brotherhood, law of health and happiness, the law of harmony, law of sacrifice and so on — is the unfoldment to perfection through many earthly lives.

Dr Besant said that the fact there is no religion in the world which is not full of ideas of sacrifice, shows that there is some great esoteric truth underlying it. The word 'sacrifice' comes from the Latin word 'sacrificio' meaning 'I make holy'.

The Theosophist

Reincarnation for every human soul has a complete and perfect plan, cherished in the heart of God. The life rightly unfolded will be a complete and beautiful whole, an experience led on by God through his secret nature, as are the trees and flowers by the secret nature of the world. We live in the divine thought and fill a place in the everlasting plan of divine intelligence. Thus we never sink or drop out of His counsel; even if we do go astray and betray the pattern at times through ignorance, God, Life, Law brings us back on to the right road. A Persian aphorism says 'God writes straight on crooked lines'.

The law of cause and effect, action and reaction, or compensation, as Emerson called it, is a causative sequence, regarded Theosophically as the one decisive force in human affairs. Under the law of cause and effect each one of us makes or mars his own life by his own conduct. All conditions and experiences are self-produced under the operation of this law, which Saint Paul describes in these words: God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Thus we can say that Theosophy explains to us how Reincarnation and Karma can provide an inspired and logical philosophy of life, which may be simply stated thus:

Perfected manhood is the assured destiny of the spiritual Self of every man. Reincarnation, as the evolutionary method, provides the necessary time and opportunity for self-perfecting. The law of action and continually modified reaction ensures justice to all men. The

attainment of perfection is rendered certain by the interior presence of an infinite, divine Power ceaselessly at work within the spiritual Self of every human being. Theosophy leads us like a mother who looks after and cares for the child during its infancy.

There is also another path and that is a condition of harmonious unity of ideal, thought, feeling and conduct. When this coordination of all the parts, spiritual, mental and physical of a human being is achieved and maintained to a reasonable degree, we ensure that no natural law is violated, a life which leads towards Perfection.

The third Object of the TS mentions: 'To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and Powers latent in man'. Man is an ambassador from the Creator to the subhuman kingdoms of Nature. Man's task is to uplift the lower forms to his own level; that which is hidden in the temple of Nature is revealed in man. 'Seek the way by retreating within' (*Light on the Path*). Man should show forth Nature's majesty and power, her unity, her hidden mind, her beauty and stability, her secret lore, her resistless urge towards self-perfection and her response through form to the power of the self within. Her qualities must become his in ever-increasing perfection for that is the evolutionary road along which she is leading him. 'Thus help Nature and work on with Her and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance' (*The Voice of the Silence*).

The way is open today as ever, to

Theosophy Leads to Perfection

communion with Them, a way which each man may find and tread if he will. This way may best be found by sharing in Their work, by sharing as They serve, by renouncing self and selfishness as They have done and by living for the fulfilment of the One Will as perpetually They live. Saint Kabir, Rahim, Narsinh Mehta and Mirabai had no certificate from prestigious universities but they had some principles. They believed in simple living and high thinking.

The laws of the spiritual life are Nature's laws applied to the man seeking a swift ascent to super humanity. The first rule of the spiritual life therefore is that the self must die, selfishness must be outgrown and accentuated. Krishnaji states: Where the Self is, beauty does not exist. We should forget as far as we can our little selves and feel that we are all ONE. A possible way to perfection is to forget ourselves and to identify our soul with the Eternal. To follow does not mean that one should blindly accept but it means that we must keep our eyes open and our hearts clear, free from all prejudices, all preconceived ideas, and so be able to lose ourselves in the Eternal.

HPB, the great occultist of the age, said to us in *The Secret Doctrine*: Lead the life necessary for the acquisition of knowledge and power and wisdom will come to you naturally. To work with the Law, to take advantage of the cycles, to generate right causes, means leading the life necessary. To realize that He is an eternal pilgrim going through the circle of necessity, rising or falling according to

his own choice — this is the first lesson to be learnt.

Our motto, 'There is no religion higher than Truth', has significance. As truth develops, we gain understanding, patience which gives us a sense of mental well-being, the restraint and poise necessary for the outward expression of our belief towards Truth and cooperative independence. One must be independent, free mentally, emotionally and physically, and yet learn to cooperate as we all are treading along the same path, to the same goal, obeying the same Law and Voice. Once we recognize this Law which is Universal, the one life in all things, we would live with true friendliness and affection for ALL — as pointed out to us in the first Object of the TS.

This way is open to all. It is called the razor-edged path, the path of Holiness, the strait and narrow way and 'few there be that find it'. Here HPB guides us by giving us the Golden Stairs: A clean life, an open mind and a pure heart . . . these are the Golden Stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom. Each of the steps is there to lead us to the 'Temple of Divine Wisdom'. We may say that the stairway is Golden because it leads to the hidden treasures of the Spirit — Wisdom itself. From the Golden Stairs, we know what we have to do, first in refining our personal nature, then in developing skills in relationship and finally, in acquiring or strengthening certain qualities in the service of others. The 'Constant Eye' referred to in the final step in the sequence

The Theosophist

given to us by HPB is to have an ideal of the achievement possible for all humankind, the realization by all peoples of the principle of universal brotherhood. Everyone must ultimately walk this Path. To put knowledge into practice is an absolutely necessary condition for rapid progress. The teaching of Theosophy can only be fruitful if it is lived. Let us try together to walk to the path of Perfection. Lord Kṛṣṇa says: 'However men approach ME, even so do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is mine' (*Bhagavadgītā*). We can thus justify that Theosophy certainly helps us

to tread on the path of Perfection better, with the understanding we can develop after practically practising Theosophical teachings in our daily life. The first Object of the Theosophical Society is Philanthropy. The true Theosophist is the philanthropist who 'not for himself but for the world he lives', a key to attain Perfection.

Let us try to practise in our daily lives the teachings of Theosophy so that we may tread the path:

From the unreal lead me to the Real.
From darkness lead me to Light.
From death lead me to Immortality.

The thing to be known does not itself begin to be when we get knowledge of it; it is only for us that our knowledge makes it begin. Let us then lay hold on this beginning, and make our way thither with all speed.

Hermes

Books of Interest

ECHOES OF THE ORIENT, The Writings of William Quan Judge, vols. I and II, compiled by Dara Eklund, Theosophical University Press, Pasadena, CA, USA, 2009.

These articles were originally published in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Several contributions include tributes to H. P. Blavatsky, H. S. Olcott and the Mahatmas, and other important subjects.

Dara Eklund states that Mr Judge in his letter addressed to H. S. Olcott, says: ‘The American Section therefore offers to you the reiterated assurances of its loyalty and its determination to cooperate with you and every other member of every Section in carrying forward the work of the Society, until we shall have passed away’ (p.xliv).

She also writes: ‘Rāja Yoga discards those physical motions, postures, and recipes relating solely to the present personality, and directs the student to virtue and altruism as the bases from which to start’ (p.78).

‘And we would have all sincere theosophists of the same mind, to the end that they may work unceasingly for the cause of theosophy in the channel at present fixed by Masters — the Theosophical Society — . . . without hope of any profit whatever’ (p.110).

‘It is wiser for theosophists to study the doctrine of brotherhood and its

application, to purify their motives and actions, so that after patient work for many lives, if necessary, in the great cause of humanity, they may at last reach that point where all knowledge and all power will be theirs by right’ (p.148).

‘The spiritual unity of mankind is the basis of our moral life. Regard, consideration, love, kindness are qualities which are exhibited and practised intuitively during the greatest part of daily life; the voice of conscience which meddles in every thought and act is indicative of brotherhood founded upon the sympathy of man for man, which is a fundamental fact of *human* nature’ (p.181).

‘But the real man is a spirit-mind, not destructible nor destroying; and the kingdom of heaven is not of meat nor of drink; it cometh not from eating nor refraining — it cometh of itself’ (p.248).

A very interesting article, ‘Habitations of HPB’ concludes: ‘Out of this house she seldom went. Here day after day and night after night for some years her every hour was open to the gaze of all men. Yet detractors never ceased their spiteful flings, but she worked on ceaselessly in those rooms, at that desk, editing, corresponding, transcribing *The Secret Doctrine*, leaving a treasury of information and suggestion for those who care to look beneath the surface and are not wholly carried away by the rush and bluster of transitory civilization’ (pp.256–63).

The Theosophist

‘This last outburst of the same energy and force which were manifested at New York in 1875, led to the founding of the Blavatsky Lodge, now having over four hundred members; the inclusion among the workers of such a well-known, active, and sincere woman as Annie Besant, led to the foundation of many Lodges throughout Europe, and at last to the formation of the European Section’ (p.298).

‘Today the literature of the West is full of all these things, and “Theosophy” has become a word so familiar that it can be found even in our humorous publications, a sure sign that it has ceased to be unknown’ (p.299).

‘Hence *The Secret Doctrine* was written, and mostly by the Masters themselves, except that she did the arranging of it’ (p.342).

Volume II has articles from *The Irish*

Theosophist, Lucifer, The Theosophist, World’s Parliament of Religions, The Path, besides Questions and Answers. ‘Faces of Friends’ is an informative account of the life and work of early pioneers of the Theosophical Society with photographs.

‘They started this movement by giving the impulse and the message; that is why we who have been in it so long have the confidence born of knowledge, knowledge that it will succeed’ (p.150).

These writings are in simple, easily understandable language and are of importance and value because of their perennial interest. Because of the voluminous nature of the published work this review has to be necessarily brief. But the student is recommended to study them by referring to the index and table of contents.

A. KANNAN

Arise and accept an antidote to ward off old age and death; it is the knowledge that all wealth and prosperity, all pleasures and enjoyments are harmful to us unless devoted to the good of others; they tend only to sicken and enervate our frames.

Yoga-Vāsishtha

Theosophical Work around the World

Brazil

Following his participation at the World Congress of the TS in Rome, Prof. P. Krishna will be the guest speaker at the International School of Theosophy, to be held at the Brasilia Institute of Theosophy, from 28 June to 4 July 2009, on the theme 'Theosophy and the Transformation of Society'. His morning presentations will include 'Individual, Society and Transformation', 'Theosophy and the Search for Truth', 'The Purpose of Education', 'Is there a Path to Truth?', 'The Nature of Enquiry in Science and Religion', 'Desire and Pleasure' and 'What is Right Action?' Each day will feature a questions and answers session, a panel of speakers which will explore Prof. Krishna's themes as well as group discussions. Prof. Krishna will also give the following talks at the Krishnamurti Study Centre located near the Institute: 'The Art of Dialogue' and 'Is the Ego an Illusion?'

United States

The Summer National Gathering of the American Section took place on 25–29 June 2009 at the National Headquarters in Wheaton. The theme was 'Nature: Gateway to Sacred Treasure' and presenters included Dr Scott Olsen ('The Golden Section: Nature's Greatest Secret'), Mrs Maria Parisen ('Lost: Reflections on a Poem of Counsel'), Ms Kathy Gann

('Journey into Beauty: How Nature Supports our Every Step'), Mr Jonathan Zimmer ('Bridge over Treasured Waters'), Dr Uma Krishnamurthy ('Yoga Psychology and the Transformation of Emotions'), Dr Ralph Hannon ('Sacred Science: Ancient Wisdom or Modern Fad') and Dr Amit Goswami ('The Quantum Activist'). Also included on the programme were a violin recital by Dr Carmelo de los Santos, discussion groups, the celebration of the centenary of Milwaukee Lodge and a premiere of the DVD '2010 Update: The Mahatmas and Their Letters', which is a complete remake of the original 1989 programme, including new material and appearances by a number of Theosophical speakers including Mr Ed Abdill, Miss Ianthe Hoskins and Miss Joy Mills.

Spain

The Summer School of the Spanish Section will be held on 22-28 August 2009 at Sant Feliu de Guixols in Girona. The theme is 'The Awakening of the Cosmos' and the guest speaker will be Mr Martin Leiderman, former President of Logia España in Los Angeles and a lecturer in the TS in America. After his opening talk on 'Esoteric Teachings of HPB in *The Secret Doctrine*' Mr Leiderman will present a study of each of the seven stanzas in the Cosmogogenesis part of that classic. ✧

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