

Theosophy in Australia

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Freedom of Thought

As the Theosophical Society has spread far and wide over the world, and as members of all religions have become members of it without surrendering the special dogmas, teachings and beliefs of their respective faiths, it is thought desirable to emphasise the fact that there is no doctrine, no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none of which any member is not free to accept or reject.

Approval of its three Objects is the sole condition of membership.

No teacher, or writer, from H.P. Blavatsky onwards, has any authority to impose his or her teachings or opinions on members. Every member has an equal right to follow any school of thought, but has no right to force the choice on any other. Neither a candidate for any office nor any voter can be rendered ineligible to stand or to vote, because of any opinion held, or because of membership in any school of thought. Opinions or beliefs neither bestow privileges nor inflict penalties.

The Members of the General Council earnestly request every member of the Theosophical Society to maintain, defend and act upon these fundamental principles of the Society, and also fearlessly to exercise the right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof, within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.

Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society (1924)

Freedom of the Society

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

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

Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society (1949)

Theosophy

in Australia

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The Theosophical Society is composed of students or seekers, belonging to any religion in the world, or to none, who are united by their approval of the Society's Objects. Their bond of union is not the profession of a common belief, but perhaps a common search and aspiration. The motto of the Society—*There Is No Religion Higher Than Truth*—suggests that the goal and the journey are more important than any conclusions reached along the way.

Theosophy literally means 'divine wisdom', *theosophia*. It is defined neither in the Constitution of the Society nor in any official document. We are left to discover what it is for ourselves, taking as our guides whatever religions or philosophies we wish. Everyone in sympathy with the three Objects is welcomed as a member, and it rests with the member to become a true theosophist.

The Three Objects of The Theosophical Society

*To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without
distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.*

*To encourage the study of Comparative Religion,
Philosophy and Science.*

*To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the
powers latent in the human being.*

From the National President ...

Dara Tatray



Where are all the students in the Theosophical Society? I assume that we have something of a shortfall in that area because there are so few members writing for this magazine. One could expect that out of every five hundred members of the TS in Australia there would perhaps be twenty potential contributors to *Theosophy in Australia*. That would mean we ought to have regular submissions from at least forty writers; whereas in fact there are not four members regularly writing for the magazine. It might be worth pointing out that we are not looking for another Proust. With a limit of 2,500 words per article that would only be asking for trouble. But considering the fact that many members like to think that The Theosophical Society is composed of students whose common profession is a search for Truth, or at least some form of spiritual seeking, it seems strange that so few of us like to put pen to paper.

Writing is an excellent way of learning. It reveals to us with mirror-like clarity just how little we know about a chosen subject, while giving us the chance to learn more and to hone our skills before going public with our thoughts. Writing for our journals is also an excellent way of giving back to a Society that has given so much, to so many of us. Over the years, The Theosophical Society has also been beset with an equally regrettable problem: a proliferation of teachers, or rather, a widespread tendency to adopt a model of “teaching” in our discourse; as if we know what Theosophy is and we are going to teach those who do not know.

In the Rules of The Theosophical Society in Australia the purpose of the Convention Business Meeting (in other words the Convention) is primarily the following:

1. To discuss ways and means of implementing the Objects of the National Society.
2. To further the religio-philosophical purposes of the National Society by providing an opportunity for the exchange of ideas arising from the study and practice of Theosophy and allied subjects and to discuss ways and means of spreading the knowledge of Theosophy.
3. To provide means of close association between the Component Lodges (Branches) of the National Society and to bring the individual Members of the National Society into closer contact and understanding with each other.

Sadly, this year the convention was cancelled due to the floods in Queensland. But surely we would not achieve very much if we only considered these matters once a year. We can be brought into close contact with each other through the pages of our quarterly journal; and we can discuss ways of implementing our Objects through these pages, virtually all year round. Does the fact that we are not doing this suggest that convention, for most who attend it, is more of a subsidised holiday than anything else? If we considered how to engage ourselves and others in the process of learning about Theosophy, we might also learn how to present Theosophy in such a way that the medium (be it a lecture or an essay) clearly reflects the message that this is an enquiry-based Society. What better way to do that than through *Theosophy in Australia*? ✨

On the Beautiful

Linda Oliveira, International
Vice-President of the
Theosophical Society



In most of the great religions extant, the teaching of an immortal Trinity exists. Such a teaching also existed in ancient Greece. Plato taught of a Trinity of the Good, the True and the Beautiful. Another example is the Hindu tradition which includes *satyam*, *sivam* and *sundaram*. The meaning of these three terms is close to that of the Greek Trinity. Interestingly, English renderings of *sundaram* include beautiful, noble, well (similar to good) and right (similar to true). This word is derived from a verbal root meaning to shine or be bright. Indeed, when we think about it, that which we perceive as beautiful has a certain luminosity about it.

It has been posited by one author, J.V. Luce, that for Plato nothing could be more real and important than ideal beauty and absolute goodness, both being ‘the substance of permanently valid truth’. Luce states: ‘He saw in them the great controlling patterns that lie behind the changing face of the visible world’: the immutable aspects of the structure of reality. Therefore, when we endeavour to approach any of these three, we move more and more towards the fundamental nature of life, and of ourselves.

Some four decades ago, Dr Laurence Bendit wrote that in modern Theosophy a great deal of attention has been paid to the Good and the True, but not to the Beautiful. The reader may consider whether this claim is true, and whether it holds today. Ethics in theosophical teachings, which conduce to the Good, and attempts to know Truth through writing—and sometimes through vociferous discussions—have been present since the inception of the Theosophical Society. If all three qualities are equally

significant, then the Beautiful certainly merits more than a cursory glance.

Seven Observations on the Beautiful

Dr Bendit made a number of interesting and useful points in his small booklet, *The Yoga of Beauty*, seven of which are paraphrased here with brief comments:

It is difficult to describe the Beautiful. Something that is beautiful is known, though, through its effects on the beholder.

It will be a familiar fact that a thing that is beautiful to one individual may even have quite the opposite effect on somebody else. Many believe that classical art and architecture possess a timeless beauty. Others may see beauty more readily in abstract representations, or else bare and minimalistic art and architecture. Whatever the case, when we are elevated by the Beautiful, our fields of consciousness all align and become harmonious. There is a distinct effect of upliftment.

The Beautiful reaches us through the feeling aspect of the mind—specifically, that aspect of the mind which responds to finer feelings and not coarser ones.

We can deduce that the mind can therefore act as a conduit for the Beautiful, in a similar way that specialised cable can facilitate the flow of electricity. But in order to be a conductor of the Beautiful the mind needs to be sensitive and receptive, so that its aspect of finer feeling is vivified. When the mind is completely preoccupied with mundane things—for example, full of worries—it will not be receptive to the Beautiful in any form. It is possible to walk

through a superb tract of scenery completely oblivious to one's surroundings, when the mind is consistently preoccupied. Beauty only becomes more and more apparent as the field of our consciousness is cleared.

The Beautiful not only has an effect on us; it is actually transformative.

It mutates the consciousness to some degree, so that the individual can never be quite the same again. It is like a dropper which adds colour to a bowl of water. The change may be slight, but it permeates all of the water in the bowl and remains there. The same kind of principle is at work when our consciousness is elevated with the agency of the Beautiful.

The reason the Beautiful is transformative is because it has a buddhic impact.

To the theosophical student, this is likely to be a significant statement. Dr I.K. Taimni commented that the development of buddhi marks the beginning of that phase in our inner unfoldment which we associate with spirituality. Even a glimpse of *buddhi* as a result of an experience of the Beautiful lifts us momentarily out of the everyday world and may be quite uplifting, with an inrush of spiritual vitality.

The Beautiful simply lies there waiting to be found.

In a similar fashion to this, many acknowledge Truth as something which lies behind the great scriptural writings. It requires a certain insight to peel back layers of sacred writings and find the pearls of deeper Truth underneath. The Beautiful, too, may not be immediately apparent, only revealing itself as consciousness moves more into alignment with its subtle vibration.

The search for Beauty is a yoga in itself, akin to the path of bhakti.

Such a quest is therefore a way of coming to a state of union with one aspect of an immortal Trinity. When we merge with the Beautiful, even briefly, we also touch what is Good and

what is True.

A seventh point by Dr Bendit which we can note is that the Beautiful in effect embodies Wisdom.

One artist (Roger Fry, quoted in Bendit), has said that the great work is one which is able to withstand being repeatedly experienced and which, each time, shows some new depth, gives new insight. Wisdom is new and fresh; it does not become stale. So, too, with a great work of beauty—repeated experiences of it give new insights. This brings us to a consideration of ways in which the Beautiful actually manifests.

The Beautiful—its Manifestations

The Beautiful is revealed through various channels. We may respond to a few of these in particular, but as the mind becomes more sensitive, then new, and even surprising, manifestations of the Beautiful may make themselves felt.

A perception of the Beautiful may come about through various physical media, such as human art and architecture. To some, it may even be glimpsed in something that gives the appearance of being ugly. Then there is the superb artistry of Nature such as the changing fiery hues of a sunrise, the grace of a whale, the bare beauty of a desert, the shape of a flower, the seasonal cycles of a garden, and so forth. Nature's art may act as a transformative agent, even if we are not consciously aware of this fact.

We can think of certain emotions as being beautiful. Also, mental beauty is very real. For example, to the philosopher, a particular philosophical concept may possess an exceptional beauty. A scientist may respond similarly to an elegant scientific theory. Then again, great poetry and literature, products of the human mind, may elevate generations of people. To those who are particularly religious, the attributes of a Divine Being may become for them the quintessential representation of beauty.

If humans cannot uniformly agree about

standard parameters of beauty, then what actually makes things beautiful? Plato had an interesting response to this. For him, beautiful things become beautiful by the very presence *in* them of beauty. If this is true, then we may deduce that beauty makes itself known more readily when we are alive to the inwardness of things and not just the surface of life.

The Interiority of Beauty

Patanjali's view, mentioned by Dr Bendit, is that if we want to find Truth we do not have to move from where we are, but simply need to take down the shutters in our minds and stop letting the mind interfere with our perceptions. Similarly with the aesthetic: it is a matter of allowing the vision of the Beautiful to flow into us freely and without obstruction. As the author observed, we begin the search for the Beautiful from our background of conditioning which may be relatively narrow. In order to take down the shutters in our minds, our conditioning needs to be recognised for what it is, not once but many times. As our cultural conditioning lessens, we may in fact find the Beautiful in unexpected places, not necessarily limited to our previous more restricted cultural norms and preferences.

However, in the yoga of beauty, as in any other type of yoga, the difficulty is to actually remove these obstructions so we can see clearly. Its preparatory stages include the need for certain qualities: *vairāgya* (desirelessness, detachment, a certain emotional objectivity); and *viveka* (intellectual discrimination and clarity). In this, as in any type of yoga, there is therefore a certain discipline involved. The unfoldment of the two qualities mentioned here can help us distinguish between that which has true value and that which lacks an archetypal spiritual quality.

From the Worldly to the Spiritual

When we look around us, there is a certain shallowness in the world, as the following story illustrates:

A journalist one day asked the Master to name one thing that characterises the modern world.

The Master unhesitatingly replied, 'People every day know more and more about the Cosmos and less and less about themselves.'

And to an astronomer who held him spellbound with the wonders of modern astronomy, the Master suddenly said, 'Of all the millions of strange objects in the universe—the black holes and quasars and pulsars—the strangest, unquestionably, is the self!'

It is easy to get caught up in fads, or to believe that something has true value just because someone else asserts this. But when we can learn to be more objective and clearer mentally, then it is easier to discern the Beautiful—that which does not necessarily possess worldly beauty, but which possesses a certain archetypal element. We might think something is beautiful because the world seems to think so. But we need to come to a just appreciation of the Beautiful by ourselves, without the pressures of society or friends to conform.

Apprehending the Beautiful is really more a feeling than a thought. Because the finer emotions come into play, that which is beautiful elevates us not so much because of what it is, but because of our response to it. Ultimately, the Beautiful is something which we realise from within ourselves. Madame Blavatsky made an interesting remark along these lines in *Isis Unveiled*:

While the person who does not understand how the soul contains the beautiful within itself will seek by laborious effort to realize beauty without, the wise man recognizes it within himself, develops the idea by withdrawal into himself, concentrating his attention, and so floating upward toward the divine fountain, the stream of which flows within him.

Is this not another way of referring to the practise of meditation through concentration, one of the stages in Patanjali's system of yoga? After an active withdrawal of the senses inward, a gathering in of energy, one can focus on some elevating subject, paving the way for the possibility of touching one of those great controlling patterns that lie behind the changing face of the visible world.

Knowing Ourselves

Ultimately, J. Krishnamurti commented, we should not be concerned with beauty. This may seem to be a strange statement. He mentioned to an enquirer that if one is seeking beauty, sensitivity, then all concern about beauty must actually cease. He maintained that the worship of beauty is an escape. He asked whether we can be sensitive if we are unaware of what we are, of what is. Without the understanding of oneself, he maintained, all activity leads to confusion and pain: 'There is sensitivity only when there is the freedom which understanding brings—the understanding of the ways of the self, of thought.' As *Isis Unveiled* mentions, in the previous quotation, the soul contains the beautiful within itself. If we understand deeply enough the ways of the self, then we may touch the Beautiful.

But how do we know ourselves? It is suggested that we can do this ultimately through, and within, silence. In that voice, which is silence, the Beautiful makes itself known in its fullness. Throughout history mystics and visionaries have been inspired in a state of silence, experiencing a great interior illumination, a flood of inner light and joy, and a sense of unity which cannot be expunged from the memory. Attempts to describe it may only approximate the reality which has been known. In such a state dwell Goodness, Truth and Beauty.

Do we make opportunities for silence, *allow* silence to brood over the deep waters of the soul, providing the condition for what is within to flower? Or do we fill up such opportunities

with noise?

A sensitive and calm individual may touch the Beautiful in the midst of everyday life. Some years ago a Buddhist monk was working on a computer in an inner Sydney house, with loud street noise immediately outside in the form of a jackhammer. In response to a comment about the noise, he answered, 'Ah—the music of the street', in somewhat rapturous tones! He seemed, somehow, to apprehend the Beautiful in the midst of circumstances which might try the patience of others to the limit.

A final quotation from Dr Bendit, on the artist's experience of beauty, is a potent reminder of that unity to which humanity aspires, whether consciously or unconsciously:

The result of experiencing it leads him to the same point, to a vision of the same God, Tao, Atman or Brahman. And once a person has reached that point the various subdivisions, whether of the Good, True and Beautiful, or as between occultist, mystic and artist, cease to have significance, because all of them become one. ✠

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We All Want Peace, So Why are We Divided?

Edi D. Bilimoria

**Make the slightest distinction ...
heaven and earth are set infinitely apart**

—Seng Ts’an

The question of fragmentation and wholeness is one that long occupied the attention of the renowned physicist and philosopher David Bohm, and it certainly requires careful consideration.

We all have personal preferences. In literature you may prefer Jane Austen, I may prefer Dickens: we are not going to burn each other’s libraries over that. Then in music you may prefer Beethoven, I may prefer Bach: but we’re not going to stab each other in a fight over this. You may prefer Heifetz’s performance of the Beethoven Violin Concerto, I may prefer Menuhin’s: but we will not smash each other’s record collections over this. We recognise that it is the Violin Concerto that matters over and above any interpretation of this sublime masterpiece. In fact we have another unspoken agreement, that no single interpretation can do full justice to such a work, our appreciation of which is enriched by different interpretations from artists of differing backgrounds and cultures. In art you may like Rafael’s St Cecilia, but I prefer the Mona Lisa. We are not going to poke our eyes out in an argument over which is superior, since we both love art. And over food you may like quiche, but I like omelets. Are we going to throw eggs at each other in an argument over that since we both like a good meal?

Why then is the situation so different in the field of religion and philosophy? How boring would life be without differences, so why can’t we enjoy the differences between Jesus and Mohammed? Why do these differences engender serious fights, when in fact the fight is not over Jesus and Mohammed but rather about our images and thoughts about them?

It seems to me that preferences leading to differences cause no problems. But when differences turn to divisions then conflict arises. Why is this? And why are divisions caused in the realm of religion, politics and philosophical doctrine and not in other areas of cultural or aesthetic life?

Assuming that undivided mind is a fact, that consciousness is universal, why then am I divided and prejudiced? I know that countless mystics and sages declare the truth of unity, as do increasing numbers of leading modern scientists. So, why are we still divided? Some would say that the answer lies in reading *The Secret Doctrine*, or some other favoured text. Would that it were so!

Some Causes of Division and Conflict

What are the formative causes of division? All divisions leading to conflict and war have their origin and root in thought. Some of the key factors behind such divisions are as follows:

1. There seems to be a tremendous confusion over the relationship of thinking to reality; and the relationship of the

thinker to thought.¹ Thoughts may be things, as often said, but thought is not the truth about reality. At best, thought is only ever a representation: not the fact.

2. Another problem is that we fail to distinguish between uniting opposites and dualism. The one is perfectly natural. Polarity is a fact in nature—it causes no conflictual divisions. Dualism is a man-made delusion—an artificial concept born of illusion. It causes divisions.

3. We also fail to distinguish between comparisons that are meaningful and those that are inherently meaningless. For example, if I want to purchase a washing machine I have to choose between Fisher & Paykel, Bosch, Miele and Westinghouse. Only one of them will be required. But does it make as much sense for me to compare the scriptures of say, Buddha and Jesus, or the doctrines of Blavatsky and Besant in order to choose the “best” teaching? Why can’t I see that comparisons have meaning in the realm of practical and utilitarian living, but are meaningless, even dangerous, when dealing with big truths, sublime aphorisms and transcendent doctrines?

Of course division has its place. To learn a difficult piece of music I must learn it in small chunks. The problem starts when my identification with the fragment blurs the original practical and functional reason behind the division and I start to see the world as actually and literally made up of separately existing fragments.

There is also then a fundamental problem in our not understanding the inherent limitations of our theories. The word theory derives from the Greek *theoria* which has the same root as theatre, meaning to view or to make a spectacle.² Theory is then an in-sight—a sight into—a way of looking at the world. It is not a piece of knowledge about how the world or

reality actually is. If we supposed that theories gave true knowledge corresponding to “reality as it is” then we would have to conclude that the Newtonian theory of universal gravitation was true until 1900 after which it suddenly became false, when relativity and quantum theory suddenly became true. This ridiculous conclusion does not arise when we realise that all theories are ways of looking which are neither true, nor false, but clear and relevant in their context, becoming unclear and vague when extended beyond their legitimate domains. Newtonian theory is a new way of looking compared to the old Greek insights. Relativity and quantum theory are new ways of looking compared to Newtonian insights. But they are both just ways of looking: each with their own limitations.

We see what we expect and want to see

When I look at the world through my theories the so-called factual knowledge I gain will be coloured and shaped by those theories. The following report provides an excellent example of this phenomenon.³

During the course of a lecture on paranormal topics as part of a University Forum, Professor Arthur Ellison suggested to the audience that they try to levitate a bowl of flowers placed on a table. This was to be done by imagination and concentration, and also by chanting the word OM believed in the East to be a sacred sound. After the proceedings commenced, the bowl of flowers levitated about twenty millimetres into the air and then crashed down again.

The audience in the main were staggered by witnessing something for which there was no normal explanation. However one lady invited to sit in the front row said she noticed a ‘greyish substance under the bowl lifting it and the same greyish substance under the legs of the table lifting that.’ Then a Professor of Physics, also invited to sit in the front, pronounced, ‘Well, I saw nothing!’ and left the room. Nobody, least of all the lady and the Physics Professor, were aware

that the actual levitation was caused by a purely physical arrangement of an electromagnetic levitator artfully concealed under the table; the OM chant was suggested in order to hide the humming sound of the levitator!

Neither the lady nor the Physics Professor had observed the true, objective fact of the actual levitation of the flower bowl, but rather ‘saw’ what they both expected (and therefore in a sense wanted) to see according to their own subjective states, conditioned by their own cultural make-up and belief systems, i.e. according to their own mental re-presentational models—their own cracked “mental glass”. The lady was presumably a Spiritualist and therefore saw the greyish ‘ectoplasm’ lifting both the bowl and the table (her mental model) whereas in fact only the bowl levitated, the table having been screwed to the floor. By contrast, the Physics Professor saw nothing at all since his materialistic outlook (his mental model) would admit of no such silly nonsense as levitation by imagination, concentration and chanting.

The flower-bowl experiment shows that, despite the laudable intention to strip out extraneous influences that could bias the results, what happens in practice is that the latter invariably hold sway; for both the lady and the Physics Professor were seeing according to their subjective states and neither was truly looking. Only the general public presumably having no particular persuasions (towards either Spiritualism or materialism) were able to look objectively and truly.

Some of our assumptions about reality are embedded in our science-based culture, which contributes to persistent fragmentation in at least two ways:

1. It teaches us that the thinker is completely independent of the reality he thinks about.
2. Things are regarded as intrinsically and inherently divided and disconnected.

So we come back to the central issue. If I

look through cracked physical spectacles the sky outside will appear fragmented. I will immediately realise this and choose clear spectacles or no spectacles to look outside. Alas! That I could do just this with my thoughts. Instead I continue to wear my cracked mental spectacles and see a fragmented reality. But what I have seen is not what is, but an appearance conditioned by my mental model. I don’t see the actual sky through clear glass or no glass but a sky fragmented according to my own brand of fragmented thought. And because I have overlooked the fact that I myself am fragmented, I believe that I now have visual proof of the correctness of my fragmentary self-world view.

If you and I look at a flower pot from different angles we will never argue over our differing viewpoints. But if we regard our particular views as fixed and definite knowledge about flower pots, equating our partial viewpoints with the whole picture, then inevitably there is conflict since my fragment of fixed and definite knowledge is different from yours. Then, being perpetually confused, I seek an artificial sort of security and impose a rigid structure to uphold my own ideas. This self-perpetuating loop is what most of us are stuck in.

In optics, the refractive index is a measure of the bending of a ray of light when passing from one medium into another, as from water to air, which is why a stick appears bent in water. The equivalent of optical refractive index is “mental refractive index”, namely the degree to which my conditioning, prejudices, assumptions and suppositions collectively “bend” or distort true perception. This is not as fanciful as it sounds for HPB has also used a similar analogy (albeit in a slightly different context) to illustrate the distorting and fragmenting characteristic of ordinary mind:

As the white ray of light is decomposed by the prism into the various colours of the solar spectrum, so the beam of divine truth, passing through the three-sided prism of

man's nature, has been broken up into vari-coloured fragments called Religions.⁴

Any "thought ray" that is one-sided emerges from the mind as distorted or "bent". Undistorted perception or unified vision only occurs when my thinking is global, taking all sides of the argument into consideration; or when it is not filtered through any medium. The worst-case scenario is when I am so one-sided in my thoughts that my own thoughts never "escape" from me. I fool myself that I am seeing reality whereas in fact I am only seeing my own thoughts beamed back to me. Then I am truly deranged.

What can I do about it?

So my choices are either to continue to look through my cracked mental spectacles; or to look with clarified vision through clear mental glass, preferably to remove my spectacles, meaning to be critically aware of my thought process (not so much thought content) and its resultant conditioning.

My solution then is to look straight ahead, not to any one side. What does this mean in real terms? It means looking at the whole problem, not a partial view sideways on. Truth therefore is not just a point of view—it is all points of view considered as a whole. Lama Govinda said:

All our logical definitions are one-sided and partial, since they are bound to their starting point: the judging intellect and the particular angle of vision. What people generally regard as truth is little more than a one-sided statement.

The ideal remedy is that I should not resort to logical definitions and intellectual apparatus, since these are, by their very nature, one-sided; bound to their starting point; and therefore partial. But if I cannot at this stage avoid intellectual discourse, then the practical remedy is to ensure that I adopt a three hundred and sixty degree intellectual perambulation around my object of consideration instead of pulling in one direction.

The result will be that all my logical definitions and judging intellect will be many-sided and therefore even-handed, since they will maintain a global balance of "intellectual tension". Truth will not be reduced to a particular point of view, a one-sided statement or mere opinion, but a rounded and unified vision.

My "ten-tative" commandments to end fragmentation and realise undivided mind with special reference to the context of The Theosophical Society

1. *I shall not* make anyone or anything the common enemy. To be united by animosity towards a common enemy is no unity at all. Remove the common enemy and the disunity is apparent. So let's not make even scientific materialism or religious dogmatism the common enemy.

2. *I shall not* regard theosophy as HPB's or anyone else's answers and conclusions, or a body of instructions that we have agreed to hold on to as "theosophical doctrine."

3. *I shall not* be blinkered by the notion that theories give true and definite knowledge or direct descriptions about "reality as it really is".

4. *I shall not* conform.

5. *I shall* discern who we truly are from our accumulations and ideas about ourselves.

6. *I shall* regard new theory as a new way just of looking—as ever-changing forms of insight.

7. *I shall* be crucially aware of the activity and process of thought as such, not regarding its content as a "copy of reality".

8. *I shall* realize that knowledge is not about some separate experience. Experience-knowledge are inseparable aspects (two sides of the coin) of one undivided and whole movement.

9. *I shall* discriminate polarity and difference from dualism and division.

10. *I shall* live in a state of everlasting inquiry.

A body of concluders will ultimately fragment through the rigidity of its own content: a body of inquirers is undivided owing to the flexibility engendered by the very process of inquiry. 'There is No Religion Higher Than Truth' surely means to live in such unending inquiry, never concluding, ever seeking. ☒


References:

1. Bohm, D. (1980/1997) *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, London and New York, Routledge, p.18.
2. Ibid, p. 3-5.
3. This is a summarised account of a private communication to the writer by Professor Ellison in August 1996. A long-standing member of The Theosophical Society in England, Arthur J. Ellison was Emeritus Professor

of Electrical and Electronic Engineering at The City University, London. He has twice been President of The British Society for Psychical Research (a scientific body for studying paranormal phenomena) and the author of a comprehensive and lucidly presented book *The Reality of the Paranormal*, Harrap, 1988.

4. Blavatsky, H.P. (1877/1972) *Isis Unveiled*, Volume 2, p.639.

This article was based on a talk that was to be given at the National Convention in Brisbane, 2011, cancelled due to the flood. A Consultant Engineer by profession, and a pianist by training and inclination, Dr Bilimoria was the Education Coordinator for the TS in Australia from July 2009 to January 2011.



We have no creed to espouse. Truth transcends literal formulae and defies imprisonment within the bounds of declarations of faith. Therefore, while the point of view from which we shall aim at dealing with subjects will be that described by the objects of the Theosophical Society, we shall welcome criticism from any quarter, so long as the critic's language be becoming, his matter worthy of consideration, and his object an earnest endeavour to arrive at Truth.

Editorial comment, *The Austral Theosophist*, Vol. 1, No.1, January 1894, Melbourne.

Meditation

Madhav Kolkatar



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(Edited slightly for length)

Human beings are endowed with a particularly rich central nervous system and a brain that is extraordinary. But we have not yet learned to use that brain. The human being has also developed the power to wipe out the entire species. The development of science, if it does not go hand-in-hand with the development of spirituality, becomes one-sided and dangerous. Many people agree that meditation is the way out.

The first thing to understand perhaps is that mind and brain are not the same thing. Suppose we take a unicellular organism like an amoeba or bacterium which has no brain but has mind. Some bacteria require a lot of oxygen and light. So when we grow them and observe them, we see that they float up. They adhere with each other to form a pellicule; they cooperate with each other in this fashion and the result is everybody gets more light. Now how does this happen? The single bacterial cell has the apparatus to perceive that there is extra light some distance away. When it perceives it, an emotion is generated: 'I want to go there'. And there is an urge to take action, so a loop is established. This loop is actually an active part of the life process.

The mind is always associated with perception and then it generates an emotion. Suppose there is an amoeba and something toxic there, it will go away from it; if food is there it will go towards it. The perception generates either negative or positive feelings and then there is an urge to take action. Through this circular type of motion,

equilibrium is established. The same thing is present in all living things. Whether the same thing is present in atoms and at lower levels, I do not know.

With the development of the brain the power of the mind increases manifold. Early brains appeared in insects. The mosquito provides an excellent example. You are sleeping in a corner of a room, and your sweat contains lactic acid and the fumes spread through the room. The mosquito is in the other corner. Its brain has two cells which can perceive fumes of lactic acid and the two cells are a little distance away from each other. So the first cell receives the fumes at an early stage and at a greater concentration. The second cell receives it a little later with a slightly reduced concentration and on this basis the brain calculates that this has come from this direction and approximately this distance. See what the brain can do? The mind is now using the brain.

The blood vessels are the warmest part in the tissues. So the mosquito senses that here is the blood vessel and pricks it and never fails in getting the blood. We pathologists sometimes poke you four or five times, because we do not have those sensors: but the mosquito never fails. So this shows the advantage of having such a brain. Let us remember that, for every living creature with a brain, the capacity of the mind is restricted by the capacity of the brain. The reach of the mind is limited by the capacities of the brain. There is only one situation where the mind frees itself from the capacity of the brain—and that is meditation.

About thirty million years ago, the reptilian brain evolved the capacity to maintain the heartbeat,

the respiration and the metabolism, in response to the four important functions of survival: to search for food when you are hungry, to go to sleep when you feel sleepy, to be afraid and run away or attack and win when you are in danger, and ultimately to reproduce. The reptilian brain however has one disadvantage. Reptiles lay eggs and then abandon the eggs. When turtle eggs hatch, the new offspring are programmed to run towards water. Those that succeed survive and the others perish. This is not good economics.

About two hundred million years ago some creatures developed an emotional brain, the mammalian brain. It started developing in birds. And we know that though birds lay eggs many of them build nests. The parents stay together. One brings food and the other protects. The offspring are cared for until they become independent and fly away. This is the effect of the emotional brain. The reptilian brain is still in us, but the mammalian brain has developed over the reptilian brain. Effectively acting as a second brain, the mammalian brain developed because the ego that was present in the reptilian brain developed into something much bigger. If I get something, I have pleasure; if I do not get it, I am angry. If somebody else gets something, I feel jealous. All the emotions and the play of emotions which we experience are in our second brain, the emotional brain.

In the human being there developed a third brain, the cerebral cortex. This is the new brain which we call the intelligent brain. Fifty thousand years ago, there was a sudden mutation in this intelligent brain. With the mutation came the development of language. There was not only brain development; our larynx also changed. We started producing voices of different qualities and we started communicating with each other. Once written language developed, somebody who had lived thousands of years ago could still communicate with us, and so a vertical communication developed. Language made a tremendous impact on brain development. What we have evolved into today would otherwise

have taken a million years. Communication has allowed us to grow at a much faster rate and our intelligent brain has now developed unbelievable qualities. If it is allowed to act on its own it can fathom complex mathematics, it can indulge in great pieces of art and creation. It is capable of analysis and logic.

At the same time however, this third layer of the brain is the servant of the second brain. A criminal, for example, may be a very intelligent person, with an extraordinary brain that is used to achieve something which the second brain is dictating, with all its ego-driven emotional content. But there is a further development. We have also developed the spiritual brain. And that is the fourth layer. So why are we not using it?

Let us look at the energy supply. Our brain uses twenty percent of glucose and twenty percent of oxygen. Unlike plants, which take food directly from sunlight, we derive energy from food. Out of this, twenty percent is used for our brain. The first priority goes to the reptilian brain because it is concerned with survival. The next supply goes to the emotional brain; after that the intelligent brain; and if something remains it goes to the spiritual brain. Sometimes you get a patient who has inadequate oxygen carrying-capacity: he is very anaemic, or injured. What happens? When the body realises that enough energy is not available the intelligent brain is shut off and the other two brains work. Then we say that the person has become delirious because he has no control over his emotions. He starts talking nonsense, starts abusing anyone and everyone, and this happens because the third brain is out. If the supply of energy is reduced further, the second brain stops functioning and only the survival function continues. This is when we say that the person has gone into a coma. If that brain also fails to receive energy, then there is brain death. But if the oxygen supply improves gradually, then the second brain is activated and the intelligent brain is activated. In a normal person the three brains interchange their activities. For example, when I take plenty

of food, a great deal of energy is drawn by my reptilian brain because it has to digest that food. If I am very angry, my emotional brain starts drawing so much energy that my digestion goes haywire. My intelligent brain fails to control me though it knows what is right and what is wrong. This is because the energy supply to both is reduced and the reptilian brain starts drawing the maximum energy.

When I am learning and reading a book I am so much engrossed in doing that activity that it is the third brain which gets the maximum energy. Suppose there is a lecture after the lunch hour. What happens? The lecture is a loss even if it is a good one because the energy supply to the third brain is reduced. If the energy is to be supplied to the intelligent brain then you have to see that it is clean energy. There is clean energy only when we take proper food, so that the body does not have to expend too much energy in detoxifying the free radicals and therefore less energy is available to the brain. This is the secret of why we should take sattvic food, why we should have a diet rich in fruits and vegetables.

The spiritual brain gives us a new quality and that is the quality of introspection. For example, if I am using my spiritual brain, it separates me from the feeling of *me*, the feeling of *I*. This independence is a function of the fourth brain. The mind is normally engaged in reacting. After perception, there comes the stage of emotion and reaction. There is the urge to take action. Our intelligent brain has a store of memory, and even a small word can trigger a reaction. When the spiritual brain takes over these reactions stop arising. The loop of the mind is cut, and there is only perception. No reaction. Suppose a wicked thought comes to my mind and I am observing. If I am only observing, it is meditation. If I think: 'How did this thought come to my mind?' the second brain has taken over. Suppose you are walking on the street and you find somebody falling in front of you. At that stage, for a fraction of a second, you are not aware of your own self, but

sharing that experience with him. So you go and pick him up. It is a feeling aspect where compassion, which is a quality of the spiritual brain, has taken over. He goes his way and you start walking and immediately a thought comes: 'What kind of a fellow is he; he did not even say thank you?' The second brain has taken over.

There are three ways of increasing the energy supply to the spiritual brain. We now know that the brain is plastic. It has the capacity to communicate and to create new neuronal connections. When it is working it develops new connections and its power increases. When we were born we had trillions of neurons, but those neurons which we do not use, gradually perish. That is why, if a child is born deaf and dumb, it is necessary to diagnose it very quickly and implant an artificial ear. If you wait for four or five years, the neurons concerned with hearing are gone and therefore, surgery does not give us the result which we require.

Everything in the body is like that. If you do not use your muscles, they will perish. When an astronaut goes into outer space and lives there for two months without particular exercises, he cannot stand when he comes back to the earth, so weak do his bones and muscles become.

We have to increase the supply of energy to the spiritual brain by allowing it to work.

Now about the mind. We do not have just one mind, we have many minds. The conscious mind is just one of them. There is a lot of active data in the subconscious mind, and there is also the unconscious mind. Our reptilian mind works in the unconscious mind. The things which we have learned but do not remember that we have learned are implicit memories. Implicit memories are used by the unconscious mind. The subconscious brain uses the emotional episodes and combines them with memory. This may not always come to the conscious level. The subconscious mind has a much bigger capacity than the conscious mind. And what is the difference? The conscious mind

is the part which brings something into focus. Whatever is in focus, whatever is within the focusing attention is the role of the conscious mind. But the conscious mind always triggers reactions.

In meditation the information and stimuli coming from the parietal lobe are gradually cut off. Because thoughts stop arising there comes a moment when you go beyond space and time. The person who is observing at that moment is *ātman*, the universal Self. That is what you really are. The minute you go into the third brain or the second brain you become John or Narayana or Sīta or whatever it is. When observing you become a universal force; you are part of the universal existence. This is what meditation is.

Once the spiritual brain becomes dominant, when its power increases, all the other three fall

in line and order is established. The intelligent brain will not try to draw extra energy and the emotional brain will accept the counsel of the spiritual brain. The reptilian brain will be content with doing its own work and order is established. Today there is total chaos. My third brain knows what is correct, but my second brain will not listen. There is this very intelligent officer; he knows that taking a bribe is wrong but he cannot avert the temptation and so there is conflict between the three brains.

Observing is understanding. There itself starts the corrective action. You do not have to make any extra effort for that. Just observe without reacting. That is all there is to it. ☩

Dr Madhav Kolkatar is Professor of Pathology, University of Pune, India. He delivered this Theosophy-Science lecture at our International Convention, Adyar in 2009.



Katoomba

**Aeons ago
my ancestors looked out on this land
smelled the same scent
wet earth and eucalypt
saw the glittering beauty of sunlight
captured in a billion drops of water
clinging to leaves and boughs
and the sheer face of the cliff.
For this instant
I and the ancestors are one
that continuity of life
which exists through time and space.**

Suzanne May

Pothole

Peter Fokker



It is spring and every plant is enjoying the growing season. The valley is lush and green and many flowers are showing their beauty. Eastern Rosellas and magpies have made their nests and the blue wrens are fighting the intruder-images of their reflections in the windows.

Still the bitumen road with sandy verges runs through the valley, serving people. It is patiently there and does not change much over the seasons.

A pothole at the T-intersection is celebrating its 32nd birthday. Once, but only once, it was threatened with concrete infill which soon broke up. Our pothole was happy again.

Many years ago when the pothole was not yet born the whole area was a lush green paddock. Then one day lots of people came and trampled over the grass. Big machines followed, stripping the topsoil away and dumping gravel and sand to make a new road for the new owners, living nearby.

Some weeks later a mixture of tar and stones covered most of the road with black and hard material: bitumen. The pothole was spared this and looked happily to the future. It enjoyed being bumped over in dry and wet weather by big wheels. It liked being filled with rainwater. It loved little children's feet stomping in its water, spraying everything around it.

For a long time it had no water and became very dry and dusty, but still enjoyed the wheels bouncing over it, making it a little bit bigger and proud of its contribution to the passing people's experience.

Sometimes the pothole became very sad as a rolling vehicle collided with a wallaby, echidna or wombat. The animals lost their lives or were very hurt and the car owners were very upset.

Sometimes when full of water, the pothole could help a thirsty bird; or help a yabbie recharge his gills when on walkabout overland; or cool a long-necked turtle or a brown snake. It saw the antics of the pink and grey galahs and the overfly of an eagle.

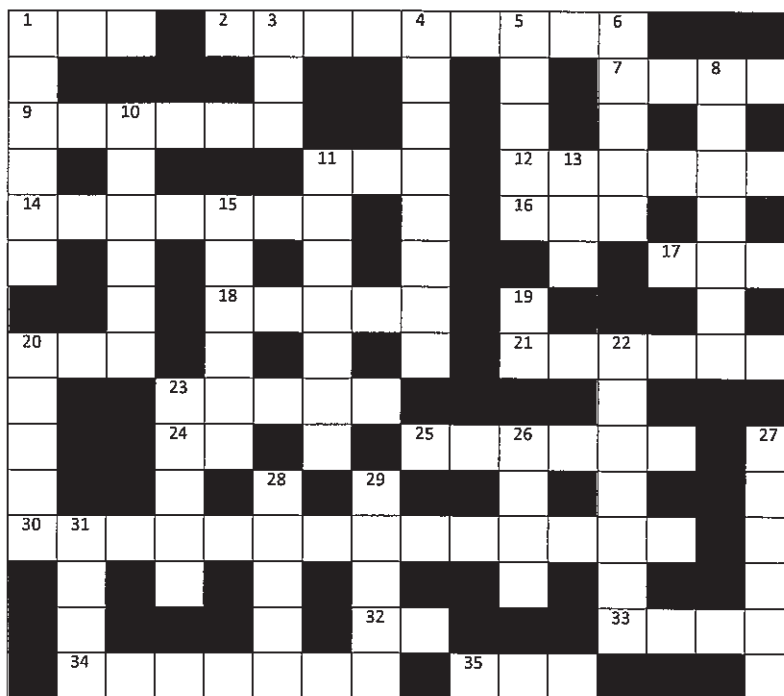
Being trampled by the hooves of cows and horses did not upset the pothole, but one day it was frightened by a machine putting in marker poles. This passed and the pothole was again happy with sunshine, rain, frost and most important, wind. The wind blows it clean of dust. After 32 years the future is no problem for our friend the pothole. It exists in the now and is always happy to have wet feet, be bumped by tyres or help others with their thirst. Our pothole does not know anything about consciousness, akasic records or love. It is happy to be there and to interact with anyone passing. Shouldn't we all be a bit like that too ?

Note: Our 32 year old pot hole did not need a publisher reference. People passing it will remember and that is enough to make it happy. ☒

Peter Fokker is President of the Canberra Branch.

Crossword

Tina Fiedler



ACROSS

- 1 Sacred tree to the Druids and ancient Greeks.
- 2 'Esoteric doctrine' or interpretation of the Vedas by Vedanta methods (Skt).
- 7 One of the Seven Deadly Sins.
- 9 Tibetan word for Lord or Master.
- 11 Has now become a Hebrew letter but was once the Egyptian handled cross. Also called the astronomical cross.
- 12 Member of the mysterious sect of Therapeutae living near the Dead Sea.
- 14 The planet Venus, as the bright Morning Star. Also the name of HPB's magazine.
- 16 Adversary of Osiris (Egypt).
- 17 Month that celebrates White Lotus Day.
- 18 A disciple, the same as *chela* (Skt).
- 20 The one ever-present reality in the infinite world (Skt).
- 21 Second International President of The Theosophical Society.
- 23 Theosophist (1908-1995) born in India. Served in high positions in the TS and was awarded the Subba Row Medal in 1955.
- 24 The chief seat of lunar worship in Babylon (Chaldean).

- 25 The female Logos of the Gnostics (Greek).
- 30 Helena Blavatsky's *magnum opus*.
- 32 Means 'the Father'. In Aramean it means one (Assyrian).
- 33 Great Hebrew Kabbalist and philosopher of the twelfth Century, also the Jewish priest and scribe who compiled the Pentateuch.
- 34 Austrian philosopher and architect of the first Goetheanum.
- 35 Latin word which means 'Self' the consciousness in man "I am I".

DOWN

- 1 Hermetic and esoteric sciences.
- 3 The nature god (Greek).
- 4 In Occultism this refers to everything finite.
- 5 The land of the shadows (Greek).
- 6 One who admits the existence of a god.
- 8 Maiden name of founder of Theosophical Society.
- 10 The White Buddhist.
- 11 Christian dogma of the 'three in one' and 'one in three'.
- 13 The father of Osiris and Isis. Esoterically, the sole principle before creation, nearer in meaning to *Parabrahm* than *Brahma* (Egyptian).
- 15 Australian Artist (1867-1947) and famous Theosophist.
- 19 The pernicious evil currents in the astral light that was personified by the Hebrews as a Spirit e.g. 'possessed by the Spirit of ...'.
- 20 Practitioners of the mystical dimension of Islam (Arabic).
- 22 Theosophy combined this with spiritualism to investigate supernatural phenomena.
- 23 Called the Mystic Seal. A system of occult signs made with the fingers (Skt).
- 26 'Infinite' and 'supreme' in philosophy—the final limit (Skt).
- 27 A Divine incarnation (Skt).
- 28 The universal Spirit or supreme soul; the divine Monad (Skt).
- 29 A compendium of Kabbalistic Theosophy.
- 31 Sacred symbols of birth, rebirth, cosmic and human, celestial and terrestrial.

Answers on Page 25

Coming Events Foretold

Reprinted in full from *The Theosophist July, 1882*

Statement of Tholuvore Velayudham Mudeliar, Second Tamil Pandit of The Presidency College, Madras



To the author of *Hints on Esoteric Theosophy*.

Sir – I beg to inform you that I was a *Chela* of the late “Arulprakasa Vallalare”, otherwise known as Chithumbaram Ramalinga Pillay Avergal, the celebrated Yogi of Southern India. Having come to know that the English community, as well as some Hindus, entertained doubts as to the existence of the Mahatmas (adepts), and, as to the fact of the Theosophical Society having been formed under their special orders; and having heard, moreover, of your recent work, in which much pains are taken to present the evidence about these Mahatmas *pro* and *con*—I wish to make public certain facts in connection with my late revered Guru. My belief is, that they ought effectually to remove all such doubts, and prove that Theosophy is no empty delusion, nor the Society in question founded on an insecure basis.

Let me premise with a brief description of the personality of and the doctrines taught by the above mentioned ascetic, Ramalingam Pillay.

He was born at Maruthur, Chittambaram Taluq, South Arcot, Madras Presidency. He came to live at Madras at an early period of his career, and dwelt there for a long time. At the age of nine, without any reading, Ramalingam is certified by eye-witnesses to have been able to recite the contents of the works of Agustia and other Munis equally respected by Dravidians and Aryans. In 1849, I became his disciple,

and, though no one ever knew where he had been initiated, some years after, he gathered a number of disciples around him. He was a great Alchemist. He had a strange faculty about him, witnessed very often, of changing a carnivorous person into a vegetarian; a mere glance from him seemed enough to destroy the desire for animal food. He had also the wonderful faculty of reading other men’s minds. In the year 1855, he left Madras for Chidambaram, and thence to Vadulur and Karingooli, where he remained a number of years. Many a time, during his stay there, he used to leave his followers, disappearing to go no one knew whither, and remaining absent for more or less prolonged periods of time. In personal appearance, Ramalingam was a moderately tall, spare man—so spare, indeed, as to virtually appear a skeleton—yet withal a strong man, erect in stature, and walking very rapidly; with a face of clear brown complexion, a straight thin nose, very large fiery eyes, and with a look of constant sorrow on his face. Toward the end he *let his hair grow long*; and, what is rather unusual with Yogis, he wore shoes. His garments consisted of but two pieces of white cloth. His habits were excessively abstemious. He was known to hardly ever take any rest. A strict vegetarian, he ate but once in two or three days, and was then satisfied with a few mouthfuls of rice. But when fasting for a period of two or three months at a time, he literally ate nothing, living merely on warm water with a little sugar dissolved in it. As he preached against caste, he was not very popular. But still people of all castes gathered in large numbers around him. They came not so

much for his teachings, as in the hope of *witnessing* and learning phenomena, or “miracles”, with the power of producing which he was generally credited; though he himself discredited the idea of anything supernatural, asserting constantly that his was a religion based on pure science. Among many other things he preached that:

- (1) Though the Hindu people listened not to him, nor gave ear to his counsels, yet the esoteric meaning of the Vedas and other sacred books of the East would be revealed by the custodians of the secret—the Mahatmas—to foreigners, who would receive it with joy;
- (2) That the fatal influence of the Kalipurusha Cycle which now rules the world, will be neutralized in about ten years;
- (3) That the use of animal food would be gradually relinquished;
- (4) That the distinction between races and castes would eventually cease, and the principle of Universal Brotherhood be eventually accepted, and a Universal Brotherhood be established in India;
- (5) That what men call “God” is, in fact, the principle of Universal Love—which produces and sustains perfect Harmony and Equilibrium throughout all nature;
- (6) That men, once they have ascertained the divine power latent in them, would acquire such wonderful powers as to be able to change the ordinary operations of the law of gravity, &c, &c.

In the year 1867, he founded a Society, under the name of Sumarasa Veda Sanmarga Sungham, which means a society based on the principle of Universal Brotherhood, and for the propagation of the true Vedic doctrine. I need hardly remark that these principles are identically those of the Theosophical Society. Our Society was in existence but for five or six years, during which time a very large number of poor and infirm persons were fed at the expense of its members. When he had attained his 54th year (1873), he

began to prepare his disciples for his departure from the world. He announced his intention of going into Samadhi. During the first half of 1873 he preached most forcibly his views upon Human Brotherhood. But, during the last quarter of the year, he gave up lecturing entirely and maintained an almost unbroken silence. He resumed speech in the last days of January 1874, and reiterated his prophecies—hereinafter narrated. On the 30th of that month, at Metucuppam, we saw our master for the last time. Selecting a small building, he entered its solitary room after taking an affectionate farewell of his *Chelas*, stretched himself on the carpet, and then, by his orders, the door was locked and the only opening walled up. But when, a year later, the place was opened and examined, there was nothing to be seen but a vacant room. He left with us a promise to re-appear some day, but would give us no intimation as to the time, place, or circumstances. Until then, however, he said that he would be working not in India alone, but also in Europe and America and all other countries, to influence the minds of the right men to assist in preparing for the regeneration of the world.

Such in short, is the history of this great man. The facts I have referred to above are within the knowledge of thousands of people. His whole occupation was the preaching of the sublime moral doctrines contained in the Hindu Shastras, and the instilling into the masses of the principles of Universal Brotherhood, benevolence and charity. But to his great disappointment he found among his large congregations but few who could appreciate his lofty ethics. During the latter part of his visible earthly career, he often expressed his bitter sorrow for this sad state of things, and repeatedly exclaimed:

You are not fit to become members of this Society of Universal Brotherhood. The real members of that Brotherhood are living far away, towards the North of India. You do not listen to me. You do not follow the principles of my teachings. You

seem to be determined not to be convinced by me. YET THE TIME IS NOT FAR OFF, WHEN PERSONS FROM RUSSIA, AMERICA [these two countries were always named], and other foreign lands WILL COME TO INDIA AND PREACH TO YOU THIS SAME DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD. Then only, will you know and appreciate the grand truths that I am now vainly trying to make you accept. You will soon find that THE BROTHERS WHO LIVE IN THE FAR NORTH will work a great many wonders in India, and thus confer incalculable benefits upon this our country.

This prophecy has, in my opinion, just been literally fulfilled. The fact, that the Mahatmas in the North exist, is no new idea to us, Hindus; and the strange fact that the advent of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott from Russia and America was foretold several years before they came to India, is an incontrovertible proof that my Guru was in communication with those Mahatmas under whose directions the Theosophical Society was subsequently founded.

THOLUVORE VELAYUDHAM MUDELIAR,
F.T.S

Witnesses: MUNJACUPPUM SINGARAVELU MUDELIAR, President of the Krishna Theo. Socy. COMBACONAM ARAVAMUDU AYANGAR, Fellow of the Nellore Theosophical Society.

“The official position of Vellayu Pandit as one of the Pandits of the Presidency College is an ample guarantee of his respectability and trustworthiness.”

G. MUTTUSWAMY CHETTY, Judge of the Small Cause Court, Madras, Vice-President of the Madras Theo. Socy.

EDITOR’S NOTE [i.e. HPB] – This is one of those cases of previous foretelling of a coming event, which is least of all open to suspicion of bad faith. The honourable character of the witness, the wide publicity of his Guru’s announcements, and the impossibility that he could have got from public rumour, or the journals of the day, any intimation that the Theosophical Society would be formed and would operate in India—all these conspire to support the inference that Ramalingam Yogi was verily in the counsels of those who ordered us to found the Society. In March 1873, we were directed to proceed from Russia to Paris. In June, we were told to proceed to the United States where we arrived July 6th. This was the very time when Ramalingam was most forcibly prefiguring the events which should happen. In October, 1874, we received an intimation to go to Chittenden, Vermont, where, at the famous homestead of the Eddy family, Colonel Olcott was engaged in making his investigations—now so celebrated in the annals of Spiritualism—of the so-called “materialization of Spirits”. November 1875, the Theosophical Society was founded, and it was not until 1878, that the correspondence begun with friends in India, which resulted in the transfer of the Society’s Head-quarters to Bombay in February 1879. ✠



Presenting Theosophy on a Learning-Based Model Rather Than a Teaching-Based Model

The 2011 convention was to include a plenary (full) workshop on finding new ways to present Theosophy on a learning-based model. A number of members have given serious consideration to the importance of the Society remaining free of dogma. Quite a number of those feel that the TS is not in fact free of dogma and that many members speaking on behalf of Theosophy or the Society do maintain certain articles of faith. Their assumptions about the world, and assumptions about Theosophy, are certainly not imposed on members, but appear to have been imposed on Theosophy. The question now remains: Where do we go from here? If we consider how to engage ourselves and engage others in the process of learning, we might, as a result, learn how to present Theosophy in such a way that the medium (be it a lecture or an essay) clearly reflects the message that this is an enquiry-based Society.

Unfortunately I cannot say, 'here is the model I prepared earlier', as one might on a cooking programme; but I am sure that if a few of us pondered this question for a while, we could come up with some practical tips on how to present Theosophy in talks and in articles in such a way that:

1. The speaker or writer does not give the impression of having the answers, or of speaking from a set position called Theosophy.
2. Encourages an attitude of learning and enquiry among the listeners and readers—which surely is one of the chief aims of The Theosophical Society—without which none of its Objects could be met.

As a starting point, I wonder if we might consider a few points from Arthur Ellison's 1998 Blavatsky Lecture, *Science, Consciousness and the Paranormal*, in which he presented a number of ideas that seem relevant in the present context:

'Studying Theosophy', then, does not mean reading all those books written by the earlier Founders and Leaders, trying to understand them, and uncritically believing everything in them. I have lost count of the number of "study courses" in Theosophy, in which, sadly, that is exactly what is done. A Theosophical study course **must** involve critically reading **other** books written by thinkers and investigators outside the Society, and comparing and contrasting the different points of view. In these ways we shall come to our own views which may well be different and certainly better for us than the views of earlier members written in a very different world many years ago (p.11).

Comment: We often hear that The Theosophical Society is not Theosophy, and yet, most meetings run by the Society involve the dissemination of ideas from books published by The Theosophical Publishing House. Is this not something of a contradiction? Admittedly those books contain some excellent material; but some Lodges and some Sections hardly wish to look at anything else, while still trying to maintain that the Society is not a sect. Professor Ellison suggests one possible remedy: that all courses (and talks) involve critically reading other books (and I would add, critically reading TPH publications). There is no substitute for

reading widely, and thinking broadly. The alternative is a highly parochial attitude to Theosophy. Another remedy is for speakers and writers in the TS to become aware of the fact that the state of the reader or the speaker is of paramount importance. I might have the most profound book in my hands, but without the eyes to read it, the profundity will be all but lost. Developing spiritual perception is always going to be indispensable in the field of Theosophy; and that aspect of learning is perhaps more important than accumulating knowledge.

The Theosophical Society the world over finds itself today in difficulty, with a declining membership and no clear sense of the way ahead. Perhaps we are out of tune with the times. This may be because we have not pursued all three Objects with sufficient energy and enthusiasm. We have perhaps tended to put forward too dogmatically the early presentation of the Theosophical theory. We have tended to “teach” the theory, to “explain” the planes and man’s functioning on them, almost as though we really knew it to be the truth. We have tended to quote those we assume (by faith) to know, against all the precepts given to us by our founders and leaders ... (p.15).

Comment: This is a useful point to take on board if considering moving to a learning-based model rather than a teaching-based model. Many of us have been highly inspired by previous leaders and previous members. We may have given their words careful consideration and feel them to be speaking the truth. They resonate with the highest within us. But we should not forget that their works represent a particular condensation of the vast ocean of Theosophy derived from Advaita Vedānta, Buddhism, the Kabbalah, Platonic thought, Alchemy, the Ancient Mysteries, Taoism and many other sources—coupled with their own insights. These are all culturally conditioned (even if

profound) **versions of Theosophy**. The works of Madame Blavatsky and her followers should not be equated with Theosophy, as I am sure she would agree.

In Ellison’s view, and I tend to agree with him:

... open-minded study of our theories, correcting them and updating them as we learned more (in accordance with our Objects), would have led to many scientists and many other thoughtful people joining the Society as a forward-looking open-minded set of people having modern scientific views and spiritual background... (p.17).

Comment: This is more or less what a number of us in this Section of the Society have been saying for the past two years, if not longer.

Do we have here the bare bones of a learning-based model? We do not know what Theosophy is, just as we do not know the truth about life, the universe and everything: we are finding out. Therefore we do not speak from a fixed position that we call Theosophy. We do not speak on behalf of Theosophy but share with others the fruits of our own studies, naming our sources just as other people name theirs (our sources being “Mr Smith” or Mrs Besant, not Theosophy). Ideally, we would have a fairly wide range of material at our disposal, even though we all have our favourites. But we cannot expect people to see the TS as anything but a sect if we concentrate on works published by TPH, Adyar. What would distinguish us from the Wesleyan Mission in that case? As the result of all of this we probably would not react if our hidden assumptions and presuppositions were questioned at the end of a talk. We are all here to critically examine our assumptions. That is the essence of enquiry. And, surely, without that process Theosophy will ever remain a closed door to us. ❀

Extract from *Vishnu Purana*

Translated by Horace Hayman Wilson, [1840]

Full text available at www.sacred-texts.com.

The *Vishnu Purana* is one of the sacred texts of India, the dating of which ranges from the first century BCE to around 500 CE: but even that ball-park figure is likely to cause controversy. One thing is certain, however, the *Vishnu Purana* is one of the main texts of post-Vedic sacred literature. Its prophetic account of the Kali yuga, in which virtue suffers total extinction, may be summed up in the oft-quoted line: *'The kings of Kali Yug will be addicted to corruption and will seize the property of their subjects. Then property and wealth alone will confer rank; falsehood will be the only means of success. Corruption will be the universal means of subsistence...'* Does that perhaps sound familiar in 2011? Some of the following will also perhaps ring a bell.

The observance of caste, order, and institutes will not prevail in the Kali age ... Marriages in this age will not be conformable to the ritual, nor will the rules that connect the spiritual preceptor and his disciple be in force. The laws that regulate the conduct of husband and wife will be disregarded, and oblations to the gods with fire no longer be offered ... Every text will be scripture that people choose to think so ... In the Kali age, fasting, austerity, liberality, practised according to the pleasure of those by whom they are observed, will constitute righteousness. Pride of wealth will be inspired by very insignificant possessions ... Wives will desert their husbands, when they lose their property; and they only who are wealthy will be considered by women as their lords ... Accumulated treasures will be expended on (ostentatious) dwellings. The minds of men will be wholly occupied

in acquiring wealth; and wealth will be spent solely on selfish gratifications. Women will follow their inclinations, and be ever fond of pleasure. Men will fix their desires upon riches, even though dishonestly acquired ... Men of all degrees will conceit themselves to be equal with Brahmans... Cows will be held in esteem only as they supply milk. The people will be almost always in dread of dearth, and apprehensive of scarcity; and will hence ever be watching the appearances of the sky ... In truth there will never be abundance in the Kali age, and men will never enjoy pleasure and happiness. They will take their food without previous ablution, and without worshipping fire, gods, or guests, or offering obsequial libations to their progenitors. The women will be fickle, short of stature, gluttonous: they will have many children, and little means: scratching their heads with both hands, they will pay no attention to the commands of their husbands or parents: they will be selfish, abject, and slatternly: they will be scolds and liars: they will be indecent and immoral in their conduct, and will ever attach themselves to dissolute men. Youths, although disregarding the rules of studentship, will study the Vedas ... Princes, instead of protecting, will plunder their subjects; and, under the pretext of levying customs, will rob merchants of their property. In the Kali age everyone who has cars and elephants and steeds will be a Rājā: everyone who is feeble will be a slave... Oppressed by famine and taxation, men will desert their native lands, and go to those countries which are fit for coarser grains. ✠

Crossword Answers

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|
| 1O | A | K | | 2U | 3P | A | N | 4I | S | 5H | A | 6D | | | |
| C | | | | A | | | | L | | A | | 7E | N | 8V | Y |
| 9C | H | 10O | H | A | N | | | L | | D | | I | | O | |
| U | | L | | | | 11T | A | U | | 12E | 13S | S | E | N | E |
| 14L | U | C | I | 15F | E | R | | S | | 16S | E | T | | H | |
| T | | O | | U | | I | | I | | B | | | 17M | A | Y |
| | | T | | 18L | A | N | O | O | | 19O | | | | H | |
| 20S | A | T | | L | | I | | N | | 21B | E | 22S | A | N | T |
| U | | | 23M | E | H | T | A | | | | | C | | | |
| F | | | 24U | R | | Y | | 25S | O | 26P | H | I | A | | 27A |
| I | | | D | | 28A | | 29Z | | A | | E | | | | V |
| 30S | 31E | C | R | E | T | D | O | C | T | R | I | N | E | | A |
| | G | | A | | M | | H | | A | | C | | | | T |
| | G | | | A | | 32A | D | | | 33E | Z | R | A | | |
| | 34S | T | E | I | N | E | R | | 35E | G | O | | | | R |

ACROSS

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|------------|---------------------|
| 1. Oak | 12. Essene | 20. Sat | 30. Secret Doctrine |
| 2. Upanishad | 14. Lucifer | 21. Besant | 32. Ad |
| 7. Envy | 16. Set | 23. Mehta | 33. Ezra |
| 9. Chohan | 17. May | 24. Ur | 34. Steiner |
| 11. Tau | 18. Lanoo | 25. Sophia | 35. Ego |

DOWN

- | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| 1. Occult | 8. Von Hahn | 19. Ob | 27. Avatar |
| 3. Pan | 10. Olcott | 20. Sufis | 28. Atman |
| 4. Illusion | 11. Trinity | 22. Science | 29. Zohar |
| 5. Hades | 13. Seb | 25. Mudra | 31. Eggs |
| 6. Deist | 15. Fuller | 26. Para | |



Call for Nominations for the Office of National President

The present term of the National President terminates at the National Convention to be held in Brisbane in January 2012. Therefore an election for that office must be held this year.

In accordance with Rule 20(2) of the Rules of The Theosophical Society in Australia I am calling for nominations for the office of National President, for a three year term commencing January 2012, from the members of the Society.

Dara Tatray has served one term as National President and is eligible to be nominated for re-election.

Nominations should be effected on Form 7 of the Rules and should be accompanied by a photograph of the candidate, curriculum vitae, relevant biographical data, a personal statement by the candidate, and the agreement of the candidate to stand. There shall be three nominators who must be members of the Society who have been in Good Standing for the last three years. The candidate must also be a member of the Society who has been in Good Standing for the last five years.

For your convenience extracts of Rules 20 and 21 of The Theosophical Society in Australia, explaining the procedure of the election and the duties of National President, follow on Page 27.

Nominations for the Office of National President must be **received in my office on or before the close of business 21 July 2011**. All of the above conditions of the Rules must be met for the nomination to be valid.

Zehra Bharucha, National Secretary

Extract from Relevant Section Rules- National President

Rule 20-Nomination for National President

At least nine (9) months before the date of election, the National Secretary shall call for nominations to be lodged with the National Secretary at a date six (6) months before the date of election. Each nomination shall be in or to the effect of Form 7 in Appendix II of these Rules and shall be accompanied by a photograph of the candidate, a curriculum vitae and relevant biographical data, a personal statement by the candidate, and the agreement of the candidate to stand. There shall be three nominators who shall be Members who have been in Good Standing for the last three years.

The Conduct of the election shall be supervised by two or more scrutineers appointed by the Executive Committee and be carried out by postal ballot. Within two (2) weeks after the close of nominations, voting papers and a personal statement written by each candidate and edited as necessary in consultation with the candidate, and a list of relevant biographical information on each candidate in point form, shall be circulated by the National Secretary to all Lodges (Branches) and to all National Members who are eligible to vote in accordance with Rule 10A (1). If there are more than two (2) candidates, voting shall be by the preferential system. If there is only one (1) candidate, voting shall be on a for or against basis.

Rule 21.National President

(1)The National President shall be an honorary position but the National Council may determine an honorarium, and in making this determination, the National Council may take into account the qualifications and the personal circumstances of the National President. The honorarium shall not exceed the equivalent of an appropriate salary for the position.

(2)The term of office of the National President shall normally commence at a Convention Business Meeting and terminate at another Convention Business Meeting. The National President shall be elected and serve for a term of three (3) years or until a successor is appointed. The National President shall be eligible for nomination and election for a further term, provided that a National President who has served for three (3) successive terms or part terms shall not be eligible for a fourth successive term.

(3)The duties of the National President are:

(a)To be responsible for continually monitoring

(i) The needs and functions of the Lodges (Branches) in relation to the purposes for which they were chartered,

(ii)The needs of Groups and National Members, and

(iii)The adequacy of services provided by National Headquarters,

and, where necessary, to take appropriate action.

(b)To be the driving force within the National Society for the promulgation of Theosophy and to act as the main face of Theosophy to the public and other organizations.

(c)To receive and deal with representations from individual Members.

(d)To make regular visits to the Lodges (Branches) and generally see to their welfare.

(e)As part of the main thrust of Theosophy in Australia, to supervise the maintenance of a National Lectureship Programme including the co-ordination of visits by both overseas and local lecturers and speakers to the various Lodges (Branches) and, where possible, Groups, and to ensure that all Lodges (Branches) are adequately served in this respect over a suitable time scale.

(f) To comply with the Rules and Regulations of The Theosophical Society and the Rules of the National Society for the time being in force.

(g)To take direction from, and to carry out the relevant directions of the Convention, the National Council and the Executive Committee.

(h)To submit an Annual Report of the National Society to the President and to the National Convention, after approval of the Report by the Executive Committee and to publish a summary of this report in the National Magazine. The Annual Report shall be sent to the President not later than the first day of November each year and shall include statistics of Lodges (Branches) and membership and a copy of the audited financial statement of accounts. ✠

Calendar of Events
National TS
Centres ...



Springbrook School of Theosophy, 29 April to 6 May 2011

Theme: Revisiting the Ancient Wisdom—A Sketch of the Doctrines and Principal Sources on which Madame Blavatsky based modern Theosophy.

Subjects covered will include:

- * The Buddhism and Brahmanism of HPB and the Masters
- * Kabbalistic teachings of the origin and constitution of the human being
- * Platonic views of matter and mind
- * An outline of the doctrines of the alchemists of the middle ages
- * Theories respecting psychic phenomena

Registration forms included in this issue.

Canyonleigh 25 to 28 February 2011

Theme: Living in Harmony with Nature

Presenters: David Lorimer, Barry Bowden and Dara Tatray.

THIS EVENT WAS FULLY SUBSCRIBED

Canyonleigh 11 to 13 November 2011

Theme: Heaven and Earth—Change and Continuity.

An exploration of Taoist thought, the I Ching and Tai Chi Chuan.

Arrivals: 11 November for a 10.30 am start.

Departures: Sunday 13 November, after afternoon tea.

Presenters: Horacio Paz and Dara Tatray.

Horacio Paz has taught Tai Chi Chuan for some twenty-five years, and practiced for forty years. Dara Tatray has a long-standing interest in Taoist thought and the I Ching.

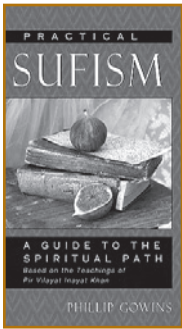
This will be an opportunity to explore Taoist philosophy and practice in beautiful natural surrounds.

Registration forms and further information in the September 2011 issue.

Annual Convention 2012

The Annual Convention will be held at St John's College, Brisbane, from Saturday 21 January to Wednesday 25 January 2011. The convention outing will be on Thursday 26 January.

Reviews...



Practical Sufism: A Guide to the Spiritual Path, Phillip Gowins, Quest Books, 2010

Practical Sufism, based on the teachings of Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan, begins with a useful foreword by Debra Bunch Gosh (Abi-Ru Shirzan), giving a short but valuable introduction to the meaning of the word Sufi. We are also introduced to the Sufi order to which Phillip Gowins, his teacher, Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan, and the late Hazrat Inayat Khan belong. Beautiful quotes from the two elder Sufis are found throughout the book.

We are told that, for Sufis, a teacher is essential because Sufis have no equivalent of a catechism or creed. As explained in the foreword: ‘The Sufi way is not a religion or a component of a religion but the heart of all religions and spiritualities’. Even books and words are seen as limited forms of communication. At best, to quote the poet Rumi, ‘Words set you searching’. And so, the Sufi teacher writes to set the student searching.

Abi-Ru Shirzan prepares us for the writing-style of Phillip Gowins by explaining that his method is identifiably Sufi. While on the surface the book may seem to be unorganized meanderings, there is a lot revealed to us below, beyond and above the surface.

Phillip Gowins (b.1945), became committed to the Sufi way of life about three decades ago, when he became associated with Pir Vilayat

Inayat Khan. He writes from the personal point of view of someone who came to the Sufi way of life unexpectedly and knew he had “come home”. Gowins is now a spiritual teacher and guide to the Sufi way of life. In this book he presents a series of instructions or teachings, including eighteen brief and simple exercises to help the student enjoy and understand the journey.

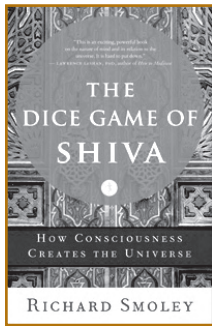
From his own experience of a Sufi community, Phillip Gowins encourages that way of life. The journey, within a Sufi community and with a spiritual teacher/guide, is a way to discover and question the teachings of the tradition; a way to receive encouragement and support on the journey. He sees the Sufi way of community as a journey where the path of self discovery is created by the student, not the teacher. Our fate, the writer assures us, is in our own hands.

The book has a practical approach to understanding difficulties and problems that can confuse and discourage young students or seekers new to the idea of an Ancient Wisdom. In the author’s own words, this is ‘a book of encouragement, not a book of description’. It would appeal to anyone new to the teachings of Sufism and anyone who likes to read and to understand the personal story of a spiritual teacher.

A useful index is included.

The book, as intended, is a book to set us searching. ✠

Reviewed by Marlene Bell



***The Dice Game of Shiva:
How Consciousness Creates the Universe
Richard Smoley, New World Library, 2009.***

This is an outstanding book on the theme of consciousness as creator of the universe. As the basis for his exploration, the author uses the well-known story of the dice game between Shiva and Parvati that Shiva always loses. From one point of view this is much explored ground for the various Perennial Wisdom traditions, but each of his insights is refreshingly different and enticing. This is a hard book to put down.

Each chapter covers a separate issue implicit in the theme. They explore a number of fundamental questions:

- What is the nature of consciousness?
- Is there a relationship between the One and the Many?
- What causes anything?

- How do I know that something is real?
- Why do we feel that an underlying justice should be built into the universe?
- Is there any sense in which the concept of faith makes any sense?

The issues are treated from a number of points of view, and the author squarely highlights the problems inherent in each, and in a way in which they can be understood. However, this is not a book based solely on a scholarly study of texts and the writings of others. It is also heavily dependent on a sustained and disciplined meditative life. There are many useful suggestions how readers might explore the themes in their own meditation. It is this combination of clear exposition, identification of difficulties, and meditative insights that are attractive features of Smoley's work.

Of particular interest are the tantalising references to what he calls 'inner Christianity'—insightful comments on passages and stories from the Bible that illumine the central theme. The prologue, entitled, 'A Kabbalist at Oxford', suggests a refreshing approach to a field that is generally dominated by a variety of Indian intuitions.

For members of The Theosophical Society it is a considerable comfort to learn that the author is the Editor of *The Quest*, the official journal of the American Section. ✠

Reviewed by Brian Parry

**Fast reading is supposed to save time.
Sprinting through a live oak grove saves
time, too, but sometimes it's pleasanter to
stroll.**

Paul Crume

NEWS and NOTES

National Convention 2011

As most readers will know, the national convention to be held in Brisbane in January 2011 was cancelled due to the flood crisis in Queensland. The cancellation of convention was probably a first for The Theosophical Society in Australia; and in the early stages of the decision-making process it was not an easy call to make. What if predictions of major flooding in Brisbane proved to be wrong? Were we being too hasty in considering the cancellation? The decision, however, was made on fairly standard risk-assessment criteria. The risk of holding the convention in the probable circumstances was simply too great. There has been a minor medical emergency at several conventions recently. What if we managed to reach St John's College and were then unable to leave in the event of a medical emergency? In any case, to have carried on with our talks would have been grossly insensitive while others around us, and their livelihoods, were literally drowning. So we trust that everyone involved agrees that there was little choice but to cancel. As it turned out, a couple of days before most of us were due to arrive, people were turned away from the university, so it was the right decision.

The tremendous amount of time and effort members of Brisbane Lodge put into convention preparations is another unfortunate casualty of the flood. Out of respect for the efforts of Brisbane Lodge, as a gesture of goodwill towards St John's College, and as an act of support for the city of Brisbane, it was decided to hold the 2012 convention in Brisbane rather than in Melbourne, which will take its turn in 2013. That gives us plenty of time to pray for a mild sunny Brisbane summer.

Speaking of the weather, in several parts of Australia, January is not the best time of year in which to hold a convention, so perhaps we should re-think the timing of convention. If we were not bound by financial necessity to use university colleges for accommodation, then we would perhaps have a freer hand with regard to timing. It is something to think about, at any rate.

General Council

The 135th Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society was preceded by a meeting of the General Council, which I was fortunate to attend as President (or General Secretary) of the TS in Australia. I think it is fair to say that it was an important meeting at which a number of significant decisions were taken. Each of the General Secretaries present would have been able to return to their Sections confident that a solution to some of the recent problems surrounding international elections in the Theosophical Society, and the administration of our international headquarters, is at hand.

In summary:

- The issue of voting for Additional Members, and other office-bearers was discussed at length. There has been much conflict on the matter of voting recently, and a degree of acrimony that is really regrettable. On the positive side, however, the TS will soon undergo an extensive review of policies and practices at an international level, which should gradually put many contentious issues to rest.
- It was decided that a Policies Document

or a Policies Manual be created, and that a committee be formed to draft those policies. This committee includes one person from each continent, which should make it fairly representative.

- It was also decided that a Rules committee be formed, consisting of two lawyers on the General Council, who will work closely with the Policies committee. The first rules to be reviewed are the apparently contradictory Rule 2(b) and Rule 5(b), which have caused great confusion in the voting for Additional Members in the past few years.
- The Non English-Speaking Publications Committee will now include one of the European General Secretaries (in addition to the *ex-officio* members residing at Adyar), in order to make this committee more representative of those Sections of the Society it is designed to serve.

No member of the Council voted against any of the above decisions.

Departure of Education Coordinator

Edi Bilimoria is due to be leaving Sydney at the end of March, to return to work in England as a Consultant Engineer. His services to the TS in Australia will not end with that, however, as he will continue to work as a consultant to the Education Unit on various projects already begun. For a variety of reasons he will be sorely missed. We wish him all the best in this new phase of his life.

Convention Programme

A number of members have said they would like to be able to decide whether or not to attend a national convention, based on the programme content. Unfortunately, it would not be possible to publish the programme in the magazine before the close of the early-bird registrations, because most of the speakers are selected for the programme based on who has registered for convention. So in order to accede to this

otherwise reasonable request the National President would have to develop some fairly impressive psychic abilities, at very short notice. However, we will make it a practice to publicise any details about the convention as they come to hand, or as they are decided. The best place to look for such information will always be our website, because that can be updated far more frequently than the quarterly magazine.

One or two members also mentioned that they would have booked their flights for an earlier departure, had they known the outing was to be on the last day, thereby saving the cost of one night's accommodation. That was in fact the reasoning behind scheduling the outing for after the close of convention: allowing a little flexibility for those who would like a shorter convention. We would therefore like to make it known now that for the foreseeable future, the convention outing will be scheduled for the last day, that is, the day after the closing of convention. Any other suggestions will be gratefully received.

Weekend Retreats at Vasanta Vihar, Chennai

Those visiting our international headquarters at Adyar, Chennai, may also be interested in visiting Vasanta Vihar, with its beautiful library dedicated to the teachings of J. Krishnamurti. This property was purchased for Krishnamurti by his adopted mother, Annie Besant, then President of The Theosophical Society. The beautiful estate was the venue for his talks in Madras (now Chennai) until the time of his death in 1986. The Krishnamurti Foundation India now runs monthly retreats at Vasanta Vihar, for those who wish to spend some quality time in dialogues about the teachings. The retreats generally consist of dialogues, video-screenings and time for private study and reflection. Anyone interested should contact thestudykfi@yahoo.co.in. Or, write to The Study, Krishnamurti Foundation India, Vasanta Vihar, 124 Greenways Rd, Chennai, 600028. ✨

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victor.gostin@adelaide.edu.au

Australian Capital Territory

Canberra Branch, Chartered 17/7/1971:

Postal Address: PO Box 7418, Fisher ACT 2611
Meet: Senior Citizens Club 10 Watson Street, Turner ACT 2612
8.00pm 1st Tuesday of month (Please confirm by email or telephone)
President: Peter Fokker
Tel: 02 6236 3170
Email: fokkerbakker@gmail.com
Secretary: Tony Fearnside
Telephone: 02 62887656
Email:janton@netspeed.com.au

New South Wales

Blavatsky Lodge, Chartered 22/5/1922:

2nd & 3rd Floors, 484 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000
Telephone: 02 9267 6955 Fax: 02 9283 3772
Email: contact@tssydney.org.au
www.tssydney.org.au
Meet: 2.00pm & 7.00pm Wednesdays
Members Meeting: 2.00 pm 2nd Saturday each month
President: Ruth Keenan
Secretary: Pamela Peterson

Newcastle Lodge, Chartered 3/12/1941:

Meet: Carrington Community Centre, Carrington NSW 2294
8.00pm 2nd Friday each month (excluding January)
Study group (members) confirm dates with Lodge
President: Danny Boyd
Tel: 02 4937 4225

Blue Mountains Group:

Meet: Springwood NSW
11.00am 1st Tuesday each month
Coordinator: Simon O'Rourke
Tel: 02 9267 6955

Gosford Group:

Meet: The Neighbour Centre,
Pandala Road, Narara NSW 2250
8.00pm 2nd Tuesday each month
Coordinator: Marianne Fraser
Tel: (02) 4364 0088
E-mail: priamarifras256@gmail.com
Secretary: Roni Ostergaard
Telephone: 02 4358 1413

Northern Beaches Group:

Postal address: c/ Mina Singh Batra,
22 Woodland Street,
Balgowlah Heights, NSW 2093
Meet: c/- above address
8.00 pm 3rd Friday each month
Coordinator: Patricia Witts
Tel: 02 9450 1362

Queensland

Atherton Lodge, Chartered 27/4/1950:

Postal Address: 14 Herberton Rd, Atherton QLD 4883
Meet: Meeting Room, Atherton Neighbourhood Centre, Mabel St, Atherton, 2nd Saturday of month
President: Max Brandenberger
Secretary: Chris Pang Way
Tel: 07 4091 5156

Brisbane Lodge, Chartered 21/1/1895:

355 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane QLD 4000
Tel: 07 3839 1453
Email: brisbanelodge@theosophyqld.org.au
http://www.theosophyqld.org.au
Meet: 10.00am & 12.00 noon Wednesday and 7.30pm Friday
President: Phillipa Rooke
Secretary: Angela Read

Caboolture Group

Meet: Caboolture Senior Citizens Hall
Hasking St Caboolture 7.00 pm Mondays
Coordinator: Position Vacant

Sunshine Coast Lodge, Chartered 1/4/2004

Meet: Buderim Croquet Club, Syd Lingard Drive,
Buderim QLD 4556 7.00pm Thursday
President: Jean Carroll
Tel: 07 5443 4733
Email: oneness@tpg.com.au
Secretary: Penny Houghton

Toowoomba Group:

Meet: Laurel Bank Park Hall, 50 Hill St, Toowoomba
1st Wed at 7pm and 3rd Sunday at 2:30pm of each month (Meditation 1pm & Study Group at 1:30pm)
Annual Springbrook Retreat each winter
Coordinator: Barry Bowden
Secretary: Julie Murphy
Tel: 0418210350
Email: murphyj@usq.edu.au

South Australia

Adelaide Lodge, Chartered 26/5/1891:

310 South Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000
Tel: 08 8223 1129
Email: president@tsadelaide.org.au
http://www.austheos.org.au/adelaide
Meet: 2.00pm Sunday & Members Meeting

1.30pm last Friday of every month.

President: Sheryl Malone
Secretary: Audrey Brimson

Tasmania

Hobart Branch, Chartered 7/6/1889:

13 Goulburn Street, Hobart TAS 7000
www.theosophicaltas.websyte.com.au
Meet: 8.00pm Monday
President/Secretary: Helen Steven
Tel: (03) 6228 3048

Launceston Lodge, Chartered 12/1/1901:

54 Elizabeth Street, Launceston, TAS 7250
Postal address: 66 Flinders Street, Beauty Point, TAS. 7270
email: rmholt@gmail.com
www.tased.edu.au/tasonline/theolaun
Meetings: Wednesdays commencing 7.00 pm for meditation, followed by meeting at 7.30 pm
Library open Wednesdays from 2 pm
President: Jenny Haslem
Secretary: Ruth Holt
Tel: 0448 397 246

Victoria

Melbourne Lodge, Chartered 9/12/1890:

126 Russell Street, Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel: 03 9650 2315 Fax: 03 9650 7624
email: meltheos@netspace.net.au
Meet: 2.30pm Saturday & 6.30pm Tuesday
President: Dorothy Darby
Secretary: Ken Edwards

Mornington Peninsula Group:

Coordinator: Daphne Standish
Tel: 03 9589 5439
Meet: Mt. Eliza Neighbourhood Centre,
Canadian Bay Road
first Sunday of the month 11am-3.30pm
(meditation - lunch - Theosophy)

Wodonga-Albury Group:

Meet: Shop 6, Tower Place, High Street,
Wodonga VIC 3690
1st Tuesday each month
Library hours Mon-Fri 10.00am-2.00pm
Coordinator/Secretary: Denis Kovacs
Tel: 02 6024 2905

Western Australia

Perth Branch, Chartered 10/6/1897:

21 Glendower Street, Perth WA 6000
Tel/Fax: 08 9328 8104
Email: tsp Perth@iinet.net.au
http://tsp Perth.iinet.net.au
Meet: 7.30pm Tuesday
President: Harry Bayens
Secretary: Deborah Weymouth

Mount Helena Retreat Centre:

1540 Bunning Road, Mt Helena WA 6082
Tel: 08 9572 1513
Caretaker/Manager: Elizabeth Collins

Theosophical Education and Retreat Centre, Springbrook

2184 Springbrook Road, Springbrook QLD 4213
Tel: Office/Hall 07 5533 5211
email: bhora@bigpond.net.au
Caretaker: Barry Hora
Administrator: Zehra Bharucha
Tel: 02 9264 6404

