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**Editor**

**S. SUNDARAM**

## ON THE WATCH-TOWER

### Convergence

I have a clear memory from my early days at the university that occurred during a class session. The school was notable for the number of its Nobel Prize-winning professors. In addition to this stellar group there was also another tier of professors who were highly recognized in their various fields. In the normal university setting, at least at that time, these were people one would hear about, but never encounter unless one was pursuing a specific advanced graduate degree. What was different about the school I was attending was that all these professors were required to teach some undergraduate courses, often prerequisites for an undergraduate degree. This was a brilliant approach because at an early stage in the students' university life it made it possible for them to come in contact with people whose thinking, research, and ideas were shaping society.

The moment I remember so clearly took place in a class on astrophysics. In spite of my initial aversion to the subject, I was quickly fascinated with the methods and ways of thinking applied to the attempt to comprehend the physical universe. Part of my excitement about the subject was the animated and interactive presence of the professor. He was involved in some cutting-edge research around the Big-Bang idea. During one class session I asked our professor a question. I do not remember exactly what that question was. What I do remember is that in the question I used the word 'why'. I suppose that our professor saw this as an opportunity to convey a message to the entire class, this fresh and impressionable group of young minds. He made no attempt to answer the question, but he did speak directly to my use of the 'why' word. What he said was that the question 'why' was not the concern of science, and if that was the sort of question that interested me, I would be better served speaking to someone in philosophy or the divinity school.

A few days later I ran into a friend who was pursuing a doctorate in the divinity school. I shared with him my recent experience in the astrophysics class, and asked him how such a question was approached in his discipline. Although now his response would not have affected me so deeply, at that time I was sufficiently young and naive to be sur-

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prised. He told me that 'why' was also not the concern in the divinity school. The study of divinity at the school examined 'how' and 'when' such 'why' questions arose in history; the movements and thinking that formed around them; the social and institutional consequences, but any attempt at either an intellectual or experiential response to the question was not their concern. The Divinity School was a 'graduate professional school for the academic study of religion'.

In recent times, the last four to five hundred years, a shift has taken place in the way human society values and processes knowledge. In earlier days the people who were instrumental in shaping the affairs of the heart and mind were those who were deemed wise. Always these were people whose vision and experience was broad — people who had thought about, experimented with, and arrived at conclusions about the variety of life's processes. Many of these individuals could be described by the term polymath — people whose expertise spans a significant number of different subject areas. In the culture of the Western world such names as Leonardo da Vinci, Michaelangelo, Galileo, Nicolaus Copernicus, Francis Bacon, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), and Omar Khayyam are examples of people with this synthesizing approach to knowledge. The expectation for the wise was that they be possessed of an expansive vision. A profound awareness of science, the arts, mathematics, poetry, philosophy, medicine, and spirituality was the norm for such people.

One of the hallmarks of our current time is the high degree of specialization that has taken place in virtually all fields of knowledge. Before the coining of the term 'scientist' in the late 1800's, people who engaged in the study of nature and the physical universe were called 'natural philosophers'. Natural philosophy was the attempt to describe and understand the workings of Nature and the universe. As a philosophical endeavour, it was not focused on practical results. However, applications did arise out of the ferment of observation and analysis. During the 19th century, science became a profession accompanied by the necessary institutions to support it.

Today the time of the polymath has passed. Due to the high degree of specialization, particularly in the sciences, it has become virtually impossible for one person to be an expert in more than one field of study. Even the process of scientific discovery requires the effort of teams of people. This state of affairs has been the source of phenomenal discoveries and an ongoing exponential growth in our overall knowledge base. It has also been the source of significant problems. Mahatma Gandhi foresaw some of the consequences of this trend in human

behaviour and values. He famously said: 'The expert knows more and more about less and less until he knows everything about nothing.' This thought was differently expressed by the Zen philosopher Shunryu Suzuki: 'In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities. In the expert's mind there are few.' In the Maha Chohan's letter (1880) the two poles that were dominating the direction of human thinking were described as 'brutal materialism and superstition'. At that time science was leading the charge for the materialistic worldview. The prevailing trend that has dominated scientific thinking for the past three to four hundred years has been named 'reductionist materialism'. It is called reductionist for a couple of reasons: 1) it reduces the universe and the allowed thinking about the universe to the physical realm only; and 2) it bases its analysis of that universe on an understanding of the smallest particles of physical matter as the building blocks of everything else. These smallest particles were once thought of as atoms, but now are recognized as sub-atomic. This line of thinking and the necessary dead end to which it was leading humanity was clearly recognized at the time of the founding of the Theosophical Society. It was one of the reasons that the TS came into being.

In our time, science has become the voice of authority in virtually all things. The gulf between the religious and scientific views has widened. This dominance has been achieved because, unlike most religious claims, the claims of science can and must be demonstrated. Although the range of scientific discovery and the development of far-reaching technologies is impressive, it still deals only with the physical realm. It can make no comment on the world of values, insight, love, intuition, or consciousness. It deals with a world of knowledge, not wisdom; of how, not why.

In the Maha Chohan's letter the predictable result of a continuation in the everincreasing trend of science-led materialism was discussed. He asks the question: 'How is the combative *natural* instinct of man to be restrained from inflicting hitherto unheard of cruelty and enormities, tyranny, injustice, and so on, if not through the soothing influence of a brotherhood, and the practical application of Buddha's esoteric doctrines?' The clear message was the need for the spiritualizing influence of the message of Theosophy to 'practically react upon the . . . moral code.' Theosophy and the movement that followed its reintroduction was not viewed as merely a better system of information, but as an active agent capable of shaping values, of influencing 'the ideas of truthfulness, purity, self denial, charity, etc.' Today the concepts of Theosophy have entered into the mainstream of thought in ways that few could have foreseen. The core ideas of brotherhood, oneness of all life, the

multidimensional nature of reality, karma, reincarnation, are familiar ideas to most people worldwide. Traditionally, these were seen as purely metaphysical or philosophical ideas.

In the Mahatma Letters, Master KH makes the statement that 'modern science is our best ally'. Particularly in the field of quantum physics, scientific language and thinking are aligning with some of Theosophy's core teachings. The ageless wisdom is finding new terms, this time scientific, to express its profound ideas. In the language of quantum physics, nonlocality, or entanglement, the central quantum observation that two objects separated in space react upon each other, is a scientific indication of the fact of Oneness, or brotherhood. Nothing is separate. Wave/particle duality as an aspect of the central quantum concept of complementarity describes the 'collapse' of waves of possibilities into particles. From the perspective of consciousness, these particles are perceived as things, events, people, or vehicles of consciousness. In theosophical terminology we could speak of the 'possibilities' of Atma collapsing into expression in Buddhi, and likewise with Manas to Kama, and so on. Discontinuity, which is observed in the phenomenon of an electron's 'quantum leap' to a higher or lower energy level, repeats the inner experience of creative insight, or illumination.

We find ourselves in a period of convergence, where the formerly radical ideas embodied in Theosophy are finding a widening acceptance. Although the deeper significance of these ideas is largely unappreciated, a common language is developing to move into the previously forbidden territory of consciousness. The necessary work of spreading ideas, of preparing the soil, is not over, but has been done sufficiently well for these concepts not merely to take root, but to begin to flower.

**The ideals which have lighted my way, and time after time have given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been Kindness, Beauty and Truth. Without the sense of kinship with men of like mind, without the occupation with the objective world, the eternally unattainable in the field of art and scientific endeavours, life would have seemed to me empty. The trite objects of human efforts — possessions, outward success, luxury — have always seemed to me contemptible.**

**Albert Einstein**

## SADHANA AND SERVICE\*

India prides itself on its religious and spiritual heritage, and often, reference is made to the fact that this country gave birth to the thought of the Upanishads and great works such as the Gita. Everywhere, even now, temples spring up like mushrooms, sometimes to the dismay of those responsible for the smooth flow of traffic. People flock to discourses on religious topics. So, there is a seemingly keen interest in religion.

At the same time, we face chaos, immorality and corruption. Hardly any country is as dirty as India. Other countries are overpopulated and poor, but their streets are not as filthy. But, this is only one part of the disorder. The citizens of India have become completely indifferent to the deterioration of their surroundings- the streets, forests, rivers, etc.- and feel they can do whatever they like irrespective of other peoples' convenience. In this country anybody can turn a loudspeaker onto the street, regardless of whether neighbours are studying for examinations or are gravely ill. The man who uses the loudspeaker does exactly what suits him, even though he in turn may suffer from the selfishness of others in some other form. Almost everybody participates either passively or actively in corrupt procedures, which has led to rapid moral degeneration.

Many people say that there is no other way of surviving. When such a remark was made to Mr. J. Krishnamurti in Bombay some years ago, he replied, 'Don't survive!' But people feel that in order to survive and promote their self-interest they must fall into this pattern; the result is that life is difficult for everybody. It is becoming more and more difficult to get admission into a school or a college, to obtain even the small things which are necessary, etc.

So, let us ask why there is this discrepancy between the conditions of Indians Society and the professed interest of Indians in the

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\*Public Speech delivered on 14 August 1986 during the centenary celebrations of Lotus Lodge, The Theosophical Society, Vellore.

religious life. Why has the so-called spiritual heritage of the centuries led to this morass from which nobody wants to rise? When the 'New Life for India Movement' was started to promote awareness of the need for right values, right means and right citizenship, the response of many was extremely negative. They said there is nothing that can be done; an Avatara Purusha, another Gandhiji is needed. There is a pervasive lethargy and indifference to the question of social responsibility and the moral climate of the country. This makes one wonder whether something is wrong in the existing understanding of religious or spiritual life, and whether, through the centuries distortion has taken place.

The spiritual life, if it is serious, demands discipline and the use of right means to bring about the necessary result. The means have included austerity, study, meditation, and other practices indicated by the word *sadhana*. When the means adopted do not fit the end, obviously there is failure. To climb a mountain, one should not set about constructing a boat. Similarly, to cross the ocean, it would not do to be equipped with a pickaxe, rope, and hard shoes. Unless the means are right, however carefully they are worked out, they will prove to be infructuous.

The existence of a society in which there is so much immorality, confusion, strife and insecurity seems to indicate that the concept of the means to be adopted to bring about a better life has been wrong. India's religious history is rich with the lives of sages and holy ones, perhaps more than that of any other country. This has been rightly called the land of the Rishis. What would the Rishis say about the present circumstances? Mr. Krishnamurti, a modern Rishi, felt deeply distressed. As mentioned above, in order to adopt right means or *sadhana*, one must be aware of what end is to be achieved.

Traditionally, people said *sadhana* is for obtaining *moksha* (liberation). Knowledge, from the spiritual point of view, is meant only to bring about freedom, in fact, the state of wisdom is a state of freedom from ignorance (*avidya*). People often regard liberation as freedom from the turmoil, sufferings and anxieties of the worldly life. They do not seek freedom as such, because it is not possible to seek something of which one knows nothing. Therefore what people really seek is freedom from the sorrows of life, and when *sadhanas* are adopted there is not a clear relationship in the mind between what is to be achieved and the means adopted.

First of all, there is need to have a clear conception of where suffering lies, what is the matrix. Is suffering in circumstances, in the very nature of life? Actually very little of human suffering is due to unavoidable circumstances, natural calamities such as earthquakes or tidal waves. Some calamities like drought and floods are not necessarily natural. Man creates them by destroying forests and vegetation. Therefore, only a very small proportion of human suffering is unavoidable. The vast majority of people suffer from their own actions; the wars, the hatred, suspicion, greed, love of power and so on are the source of immense suffering. But people do not like to think of what they themselves do to create suffering for themselves and others- the quarrels in the family, the treatment of those who are powerless and economically dependent, whether they are women or servants, the ambition, etc. Much thinking is needed to realize that we create the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Society is of our making, though very few accept this. Most people like to feel that circumstances outside cause suffering.

Buddhist and Vedantic teachings point out that all life is suffering. The baby cries as it enters this world. Birth is suffering, death is suffering, old age is suffering, everything is suffering. Man is surrounded by suffering and wants to escape it. But as long as he looks for the source of suffering outside, he deludes himself and, therefore, adopts means which never free him. It is necessary to realize that suffering is not in circumstances. It is a state of mind. Everyone can either create suffering for himself or make himself free under any circumstances.

In the *Vivekacudamami*, there is the statement that karma is for the purification of the mind. Karma means ceremonial action, and also action in general. As the *Bhagavad Gita* says, no one can live even for a moment without acting, and each action is an opportunity for the purification of the mind, depending on how we act or react to the events, people and conditions around us. We mostly make those conditions into forms of bondage and suffering. If a person finds himself in conditions of affluence, he can acquire undesirable traits of character, become addicted to vices, amenable to flattery, arrogant and self-conceited, isolated from other people. Wealthy people can be in an extremely unhappy state of mind, suspicious of everybody, imagining others are trying to deprive them of their wealth, etc. So the wealthy man is not necessarily a happy one, but it is he himself who is responsible. On the other hand, the same affluence may be an opportunity to develop a spirit of liberal-

ity, helpfulness to other, and so on. Our late President, Annie Besant, was an extraordinary example of magnanimity. Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Aiyar mentions in his biographical sketch of her that when each year came to an end, she had nothing left in her bank account because she gave so liberally. And, like Gandhiji, she said that all wealth must be held in trust for the sake of others.

Similarly, in poverty a person may become frustrated, envious, petty. It is also possible, in the same conditions to develop entirely different characteristics, to become sympathetic to the poor and lowly as a result of having known poverty, to be contented with whatever there is, to be patient and so forth. Again, Dr. Annie Besant was an example. She knew great poverty in her youth as a result of disagreement with her husband. She said that from that time, because she had so little money to feed her little daughter, she learnt to think of all children, in fact, all people as her own children. Never afterwards could she hear hungry lips cry without responding with tenderness. So, poverty can be the fire which converts crude ore into gold or it can turn a person into an unhappy, envious creature.

Many instances of this kind can be given, but the main point is that unhappiness comes out of one's own internal conditions, from wrong ideas. And there is only one evil, which is self-centredness, self concern, the self in all its forms. The self can make a person unhappy in any situation. Someone comes into a room and if others do not rush forward to welcome him with garlands, offer him the best seat in the room, and attend upon him he feels insulted. The *Bhagavad Gita* speaks about a state of mind which is absolutely untroubled, whether there is honour or dishonour, both being only projections of the mind. When there is a sense of self-importance, if somebody places a special chair for him he feels honoured; otherwise he feels insulted. But when there is no sense of importance, whether there is a chair or not, it makes no difference. The turmoils of human society are entirely generated by the mind. Hope arises only when a person says, "I am somebody, I want to achieve this, I must get that, I must become famous". When such wishes are not fulfilled, there is disappointment. So, the mind fluctuates from hope to disappointment, from elation to despair. It blames the neighbours or circumstances or whatever it likes to blame.

Because people rarely look to see where the real cause is, because of always looking outside, the 'I' remains unquestioned, intact. When

there is not sufficient satisfaction in worldly things, when people do not obtain success and position, or are unable to evade death and separation, they feel disappointed and say, 'I would like freedom from all these troubles, I want enlightenment, I want liberation'. But still the "I" is strong. Therefore outer actions are apparently religious, but the 'I', which is the source of disorder and unhappiness, continues to function as usual. Unless there is freedom from that 'I', society is bound to get worse and worse.

There is a mutual reaction between society and the individual. In a society which is corrupt, individuals feel pressure and say, 'I cannot do anything about it, I too have to adopt this way of life'. The more people react thus, the more are they creating and widening the sphere of corruption. Whether it is corruption or violence, the more it exists in society, the stronger is the influence on the individual; and the more individuals give in, the worse society becomes.

So long as people cultivate and protect the 'I', the separative identity, no *sadhana* or so-called religion will make them free. They are only creating unhappiness for others human society and all individuals is deliverance from the self, the thoughts of 'my advantage, my family, my nation'. The Lord Buddha said that the human mind is like a donkey tied to a stake. The rope which ties him may be long or short but he is still tied to the stake. And the stake is the 'me' and the 'mine'. So, the discipline or *sadhana* needed must bring freedom from self, which is synonymous with freedom from suffering and bondage.

'By their fruits ye shall know them' says the Bible. The chaotic, immoral society we live in proves there is something wrong with our ideas and we must adopt different means to happiness. Instead of breaking coconuts, indulging in idle prayers-and most people pray when they are sinning in daily life-instead of that, if we work at elimination of self-interest in our daily life and relationship, then we might achieve a lofty end. *Moksha* is freedom from this entity which we call the 'self', as taught in Mahayana Buddhism and in great texts like the *Yoga Vasishtha*. Modern knowledge is also bringing to our attention the truth that life is one. Some scientists say that earth acts like a single cell. If you disturb it in one place, you also affect it in another. *Bhumadevi*, the goddess earth, may be one consciousness, one entity. The idea that 'I am the self, I must promote my interest, my progress, obtain illumination for myself' may be a total illusion. The fact is that there is a unitary existence, a shared destiny, but we imagine that there is a separate destina-

tion to be reached by each one. All *sadhana* which is achievement for self is defeating its own end. Remana Maharshi remarked that there is no such thing as self-realization, because when there is realization, there is no self. If the self remains, there cannot be enlightenment.

Thus, if the end is no-self, to adopt a *sadhana* which lets the self preserve itself, is like constructing a boat to reach a mountain.

The self manifests itself both positively and negatively. When it is positive, there is anger, arrogance, love of power, greed, desire for pleasure, etc. and it is fairly clear that there is selfishness. But even in that case, pretence may prevail. Bertrand Russell pointed out that the act of an individual who kills another is called murder, but when a whole group of people murder millions of others, we call it a glorious war. There are many hypocrisies of that kind. But apart from these, there is negative selfishness. The Yoga-sutras say that whether you commit a wrong act, cause it to be done, or allow it to be committed, it is exactly the same. Madame Blavatsky also says, "inaction in a deed of mercy is a deadly sin".

As mentioned earlier, the world is full of suffering. There is not only personal suffering-separation, loneliness, etc.-but also suffering on a larger scale inflicted by one group of people upon another. There is immense poverty in one part of the world while another part lives in affluence. There is also suffering caused by oppression and cruelty, so common nowadays. Torture is widely practiced everywhere; women are practically slaves in many countries because they are politically, economically and physically weaker than men. In the midst of this suffering which exists everywhere, people who remain self-satisfied, hardly thinking of what is going on around the world, indifferent to the well-being of others are selfish.

Unselfishness is not a passive state. Unselfishness is the outgoing state of compassion; love in the loftiest sense. The unselfish person is like the sun which radiates light for the benefit of all alike. 'Love' is a much misunderstood word, often connected with sensual pleasure and mistaken for attachment. But love is not attachment, demanding return or reward, love is not possession or domination. Love expects no reward, payment or recognition, for that would be a kind of barter, not love. He who really loves is like the flower shedding its fragrance upon all passer-by alike, not asking whether he appreciates that fragrance or not.

Because the word 'love' is so little understood, it may be better to use the word 'service', for when there is unselfishness, there is an outgoing spirit of helpfulness. However, service should not be equated with all social service. In performing so-called social service, there is all too frequently competition, jealousy, expectation of reward, and so forth. When there are such motives, it is not service at all. Service is a total abnegation of self-interest which leads a person to act for the good of 'others', because he realizes that there is no 'other'. The 'other' is part of the whole. Outgoing generosity, openness of heart, action which emanates from the feeling of unity characterize real service.

So, the highest *sadhana* is what brings about the state of unselfishness, which leads to loving service. Mme. H.P. Blavatsky used the phrase 'not for himself but for the world he lives'. All of us have taken birth in this physical plane for a reason. That reason is to realize in the midst of all apparent differences the existence of unity. To realize it means to examine our relationship. In each relationship there is a right response, an opportunity to learn unselfishness. Therefore, daily life itself is a *sadhana*. It must grow into a life of completely disinterested service. The sages are said to be dedicated to *sarva-bhuta-hita*. Every other *sadhana* is only a means or aid to this end.

Meditation, study, whatever other means one adopts must lead to the realization that all life is one, all destinies one destiny. So daily life cannot be separated from religious or spiritual practice. During the centuries in India people gradually made compartments and put the religious life into one and daily life into another. This has led to the sad state in which we live, where there is utter disorder, corruption, etc. When the country begins to realize once again that there can not be separation between daily acts, thoughts, relationships, hidden motives, and the effort to attain grace or liberation, there will be a renewal of that spirituality which is really the true genius of India. Dr. Annie Besant said, 'India's genius is not for politics, but for spirituality'. One cannot be spiritual in the *puja* room or in the temple and carry on a worldly, selfish life everywhere else. The one great task before true Indians is to be courageous and live according to moral and spiritual principles, to realize that their own good as well as the good of all people can be ensured only by creating a spiritual atmosphere in daily life and following high standards of morality. There can be no greater *sadhana* or service that anyone can practice.

P.S. PANCHAKSHARI\*

## ON ENTERING THEOSOPHY & IMPACT OF THEOSOPHICAL WRITINGS AND PERSONALITIES

Many reasons and influences play on the personality of an individual leading to the doors of Theosophy or Ancient Wisdom. Everyone has a different state of experience depending on the circumstances. For me it was in the family as my maternal grandfather A. Sabapathy Mudaliar of Bellary, was influenced by Charles Bradlaugh and A.O. Hume who made him plunged into Theosophical Movement. He along with R. Jagannathia established Sanmarga Lodge in 1882. Their Diploma Nos. were 725 & 724. Karmic forces play a major role in getting in to Theosophy. I (Diploma No. 60380) entered the precincts of T.S. Lodge at Pune in 1977. A series of lectures on 'Death' was delivered by Bro. K.G. Bhadbhade; that was the first exposure to Theosophical teachings. His father Bro. Gangadhar Rao encouraged me to become a member of T.S. The four walls of the Lodge were filled with photographs of TS leaders, charts, etc. It takes time to get acquainted with the personalities, who made efforts to establish T.S. Strange words constantly strike your ears. i.e. Monad, Logos, Fohat, cycles, chains, rounds, Etheric body, Astral body, Kirlian photography etc. Member joins the stream of study class where 'Seven Basic Manuals' of Annie Besant & Leadbeater are explained, they are the foundation courses for new entrants.

I look at coincidences of connectivity with my family, which I had never thought before becoming a member. My wife was born on 20<sup>th</sup> Sept.—relating to Annie Besant's Nirvana, my eldest daughter was born on 24<sup>th</sup> Feb. —Rukmini Arundel's Nirvana, my eldest son was born on 12<sup>th</sup> Aug- relates to HPB's jayanti, my grandson was born on 17<sup>th</sup> Feb. connected with Adyar Day-Olcott (CWL & J.K.) All the four incidents prove strong links with Theosophy.

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\*Treasurer, Indian Section, TS.

I came across dedicated personalities at the Lodge. Col. R.G. Bhadbhade, a devout theosophist, well disciplined, methodical in approach, and a great role model to follow. Prof. S.S. Joshi of Physics Depts of Poona University, was blind, regular in attending study meetings, gave apt explanations during the study of *The Secret Doctrine* and other texts with authority. Dr. C.R. Sankaran was a retired Professor of Phonetics and Linguistics of Deccan College. He supplemented by adding explanations with his background of science, mathematics, linking the ideas to religion and philosophy. I have been fortunate to spend some time in reading to them Capra's *Tao of Physics* and Lester Smith's, *Intelligence Came First*.

During my early phase of Theosophy I first met Smt. Radha Burneir at the Annual Conference of Marathi Federation in 1978 at Khamgaon and was influenced by her strong conviction, erudition of speech. I was just a participant of the Annual Conference held at Amaravati in 1980. Here Radhaji spoke on 'Agony'. During the lunch break I asked her about Ecstasy following Agony, after a while she said "yes". In 1982 her train was passing through Hubli at 8.30 p.m. I took plantains, Peda Box, and offered to her in the compartment. My close and longer meeting with her was in 1994 at the School of the Wisdom at Adyar. In 1998 at The School of the Wisdom, she delivered biographical sketch of her father N. Sri Ram. If we observe her more closely, a lot can be learned.

I shall briefly mention the Theosophical books which have influenced me and might be of help in evolving oneself and in understanding of the Theosophical truths.

At the next level of Lodge meetings, the works of Founders are studied and you may come across strange passage from Stanzas of Dyan "*the Eternal parent (space) wrapped in her ever invisible robes, had slumbered once again for seven Eternities*". *The Secret Doctrine* of H.P. B. is derived out of Stanzas of Dyan. Vol I is *Cosmogogenesis*- which explains that everything merges into absolute bliss (*parinirvana*), Vol II is *Anthropogenesis*, explains spiritual basis of evolution of various races, physical man and his spiritual unfoldment.

*The Secret Doctrine* provides sign posts all along the path. It is a basic source book of Modern Theosophy. While reviewing the book in 1891, it inspired Annie Besant to join Theosophical Society and spear-

headed the movement. She has explained *The Secret Doctrine* in her book *Ancient Wisdom*, Prof. Ernest Wood has written *The Secret Doctrine Digest*, G. Barborka has written *Divine Plan*. There were groups of scientists based in London in 50's & 60's who came out with several 'Transactions'. E. Gardner's *Wider View, Story of Creation, Life and its Spirals* by E.W. Preston. These books make easy to understand, *The Secret Doctrine*.

For a systematic study of Theosophy Text Book is needed. H.P.B. herself has asked probable questions and answered giving explanation in her book *The Key to Theosophy*. In the preface it is stated '*To the mentally lazy or obtuse, Theosophy must remain a riddle*'. HPB advises that each one has to progress with self effort. C.W. L. wrote in 1912 the *Basic Text Book of Theosophy; The First Principles of Theosophy* by C. Jinarajadasa and *Basic Theosophy -Living Wisdom* by Geoffrey Hudson, all students are advised to go through these books.

Regarding Mysticism, Sadhana and Yoga Side of Theosophy, the following three classics fulfil the needs of the seeker :

1) *Light on the Path* (1885) by Mabel Collins. The 30 aphorisms convey spiritual instructions of several layers of meaning, as one walks along the path.

2) *The Voice of the Silence* (1889) by H.P. Blavatsky is a Poetic Master Piece, answers the ultimate question, "where does the path lead" in 3 fragments.

3) *At the Feet of the Master* (1911) by Alcyone (J. Krishnamurti) , it prepares the Sadhaka and explains how he has to begin to walk on the path.

Each of the three books are commented exhaustively by Annie Besant & C.W. Leadbeater titled "Talks on the Path of Occultism."

There are other commentators, Rohit Mehta, N. Sri Ram and Joy Mills, throwing light from various angles.

One should not miss to read *Mahatma's Letters to A.P. Sinnet & A.O. Hume*. The letters are replies to skeptical questions raised by the above two. The main message conveyed through the book is "Try". The three classics are in the list of books that inspired Rajneesh. He has



given Sunday talks on “Light on the Path” and Seven Portals, (part of *The Voice the Silence*) and brought in book form. Prof Shivaji Rao Bhosle EX. V.C. of Marathwada University, Aurangabad, used to keep a copy of *The Voice of the Silence* in his coat pocket during his college days and read sitting under a tree, during the free periods. Such is the influence of *The Voice of the Silence* on non-Theosophists.

As one advances deeper into Theosophical studies, it is beneficial to listen to senior members, who with their deep study and experience throw more light. ‘The School of the Wisdom’ gives an opportunity to discuss, refer to books, and to tune your ideas to perfection and to acquire more knowledge of Theosophy.

One must also have exposure about historical development made by Theosophy since 1875 to present day. I have gone through the six volumes of *Old Diary Leaves*, meticulously compiled by Col. H.S. Olcott, our First President; it covers the period 1874-1898, starting at America and settling at Adyar, Chennai. C. Jinarajadasa has compiled historical events, “50 years of Theosophy” in the Golden Book of Theosophical Society, 1925. Josephine Ransom has compiled two books titled *A Short History of Theosophical Society*, covering a period 1875 to 1937 and another 1926 to 1950. The Indian Section has come out with Hand-Book, which gives details of various events, persons and Theosophical Books in India.

I will further request earnest students to look into the autobiographical accounts written by Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater, which narrate as to how they came to Theosophical Movement and how it helped to transform their lives.

I have dealt with my experiences till 1998, thereafter other phase of my Theosophical Life takes over.

## NEWS AND NOTES

### Kerala

Bro. S. Shivadas, President KTF, participated in the Annual Day Celebrations of Anantha Lodge, Thiruvananthapuram and South Zone Conference of KTF on 3 August. He spoke on ‘Manusmruithi and Brahavidya’ and conducted study class on *In the Outer Court* at Sree Sankara Lodge, Ernakulam on four Firday in August. He participated in the Inter Lodge Meeting at Perinjanam on 17 August.

### South Zone Conference

The 131<sup>st</sup> Annual day of Anantha TS Lodge and South Zone Conference of Kerala Federation was conducted on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2014 at Anantha TS Lodge, Thiruvananthapuram. The theme of the conference was “Theosophy vs. Universal Crisis”. The Chief Guest was Bro. C V K Maithreya, former President, Madras Theosophical Federation. The programme started with Bharat Samaj Pooja at 8.30 a.m. Bro. P.T. Krishnadas, Secretary, KTF welcomed, R. Sasidharan Nair, President, Anantha Lodge, who presided and the meeting was inaugurated by Bro. S. Sivadas, President KTF. The keynote address was given by Bro. C V K Maithreya. He narrated the reasons for the universal crisis and also what TS can do to resolve the crisis. He also said that a man who does not know himself can never solve the problems of others and that ‘justice and mercy’ go together. He wanted TS to make use of technology to spread Theosophical knowledge. He remarked that in short, Theosophy is “truth and brotherhood”.

There was a talk on “Masters and the Path” by Dr. Viswakumar, Annapoorni Lodge, Alapuzha. In the afternoon session there was a talk on “Science and Theology” by Dr. C.G. Ramachandran Nair, former Chairman, Kerala State Committee of Science, Technology and Environment. The valedictory address was given by Bro. C V.K. Maithreya. Bro. C P C Thanupillai, Secretary, Anantha Lodge, thanked the participants.

### Inter Lodge Meeting

Inter Lodge Meeting was organized by Perijanam Lodge on 17 August for which theme was “Third Object of the Theosophical Society- As I

Learned and Practiced”. Members from Alleppy, Perijanam, Trichur, Ernakulam, Kodungallur and Irinjalakuda Lodge participated in it.

Trichur Lodge conducted regular classes on every Wednesday on “Teachings on Discipleship” and “Yogic Practice – Yama and Niyama” by S S Varma. Gouthama Lodge, Kannur, conducted regular Sunday meetings on *The Key to Theosophy*. Study classes were regularly held at the theosophical lodges of Alleppy, *Ernakulam*, Kozhikode and Thalassery.

### **Utkal**

Bro. B.S. Mohanty, Federation lecturer, delivered a talk on *The Secret Doctrine* in a joint Lodge meeting on 5 July. He explained the Cosmic Evolution, Universal Mind, Seven ways of Bliss, causes of misery, as stated in stanza 1.3 & 1.4.

Members of Barabati Lodge observed Asola Festival on 12 July. Bro. B.S. Mohanty spoke about the significance of the day based on the book *The Master and the Path*.

Bro. Sahadev Patra explained the philosophical aspect of Guru Poornima based on Mundak Upanishad.

Asola Festival was celebrated on 12 July at the Federation hall in Bhubaneswar. Sis. Pournamasi Pattanaik read out the chapter ‘Asola Festival’ from the book *The Masters and the Path*. Sis Sailabala read out an article related to the occasion. This article was written in Odiya Language.

Bro. Bhawani Shankar Babu, an active member of Bhawanipatna Lodge, passed to peace in June.

Bro. Binoy Bhusan Chakrabarty (Diploma No. 52213) passed to peace on 21 June. His contributions for the Theosophical activities of Barabati Lodge are noteworthy.

### **Uttar Pradesh**

The following talks were held at Dharma Lodge, Lucknow, in August:

Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri and Bro. U. S. Pandey spoke on ‘Dreams’. Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri gave a talk on ‘Future of Theosophy’

and Bro. U.S. Pandey’s subject of talk was ‘Esoteric aspects of Sri Krishna.’

Inauguration of a New Lodge at Lucknow- During a meeting of the members of new Pragya Lodge, Lucknow, on 01 August, members of other two Lodges Satyamarg and Dharma at Lucknow, also attended the meeting. Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri, Secretary of Pragya Lodge, welcomed the participants. Bro. U.S. Pandey, Federation Secretary, handed over Diplomas to five new members and formally inaugurated the new Lodge. He offered his greetings and complements to all members of the new Lodge. In his inaugural address Bro. Pandey spoke about the real work of the Theosophical Society and that of a Lodge. Bro. J.N. Sharma a very senior member of Lucknow complimented the members and office bearers. Bro. V.N.Verma, President of Satyamarg Lodge also spoke and offered his greetings. Bro. Vipul Narayan, Secretary of Satyamarg Lodge, gave some Theosophical literature to Bro. Sudhanshu Upadhyay, President of new Pragya Lodge, in order to give it to new members. Sister Vasumati Agnihotri outlined the activities of new Lodge and thanked all the participants.

Arundale Lodge, Sitapur: Smt. Urmila Srivastava, Secretary of Arundale Lodge, Sitapur, organized a special meeting of her lodge at Lucknow on 03 August. Some members of other lodges at Lucknow also attended it. Dr. O.P.Srivastava welcomed the participants. Sister Vasumati Agnihotri performed Bharat Samaj Pooja and also mentioned about its significance. On suggestion of the participants, Bro. U.S. Pandey, spoke on the theme ‘Thought, its power and use’ Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri supplemented with his comments. After interaction with other participants, Sister Urmila Srivastava thanked the participants and visitors.

Barabanki- Gyanodaya Lodge organized a special meeting on 12 August to observe the birthday of H.P. Blavatsky. Bro. K.K. Srivastava, Lodge’s Secretary, mentioned about the main events of her life and also about her works like *Isis Unveiled*, *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy*, etc.

Lucknow- A special meeting of Satyamarg Lodge was organized on 15 August in which Bro. P.K. Jayaswal, National Lecturer, delivered a talk on ‘Life and Consciousness’. About 40 persons attended the meeting.

In a special programme of Railway Senior Secondary School, Gorakhpur, organized on 20 August, Bro. U.S.Pandey was invited to address the students. Shri S.P.Singh, Principal of the school, welcomed the speaker and participants. Bro. Pandey delivered a talk on "How to become good human beings". In his talk he mentioned about importance of knowing one's aptitude and choosing subjects for study and profession accordingly, being sensitive toward others, helpful to other persons, animals and plants, being free from religious dogmas, avoiding crowd mentality, purifying thoughts and by observing our negative feelings like hatred, jealousy, revengeful attitude etc. and reducing such tendencies, being impersonal in dealings and above all strengthening and using Will Power for doing good deeds. He mentioned about Golden Principle to be adopted in our conduct and behaviour. That is we should behave in the same manner which we expect from others. He mentioned about inevitable operation of Law of Karma. About 60 boys and girl students of class 9, 10 and 11 and their teachers participated.

Bro. U.S. Pandey participated in the meeting of Sarvahitkari Lodge, Gorakhpur, on 20 August when Bro. R.P.Singh gave a talk on 'Shiva Tattva'. Bro. U. S. Pandey supplemented the talk by telling about details on "Shiva" as mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine*. He also discussed administrative matters with Lodge officials and handed over diploma to a new member.

A programme on "Meditation and Spirituality in daily life" was arranged at the initiative of some doctors of Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Science in Lucknow on 30-31 August, 2014. Bro. U.S.Pandey was invited to conduct the programme. During his talk he briefly introduced 'Theosophy' and then deliberated in detail on the theme 'Meditation. He mentioned about its actual purpose and need, mechanism and likely effects on mind, psyche and body. On 31 August he gave guidelines and tips on practicing meditation. It was followed by a talk on 'Spirituality in daily life'. There was lively interaction between the participants and the speaker. During the programme some pamphlets and other Theosophical literature were distributed among the participants.

The following talks were organized at Nirvana Lodge, Agra, in August 2014: Bro. Mukesh Kumar Gupta spoke on 'To be born as hu-

man being: A halting place in the Great Journey'. The speaker explained to ponder over 'Who am I?, From where have I come? And where have I to go from here?' He further explained the two types of attitudes 'inert' and 'conscious' as mentioned in Gita, causes of desire and what leads to the state of Yoga.

Bro. Hariom Tiwari's talk was on 'The significance of meditation'. He elaborated that it helps one in being free of tension and enhances his strength and capability. It is necessary to have pure intention in meditation.

In a dialogue organized on 'Beyond the gunas' the members of Nirvana Lodge expressed their views on 21 August. The participants were Dr. Harish Sharma, Dr. B.D. Rajoriya, Dr. Pandey and Dr. Mukesh Gupta.

Dr. Harish Sharma's talk on 28 August was on 'Mind is the mirror in which the self can be seen'. Dr. Malhotra, Bro. Poonam, Bro. Brajesh Rajput and Dr. Prabha Sharma also expressed their views on the aforesaid theme.

Smt. Manju Sundaram gave a talk on 'Wholistic Life: A perspective'. It was held under the auspices of Kashi Tattva Sabha on 29 August. Dr. Kalpalata Pandey of Kashi Vidyapeeth was invited by K.T.S. on the occasion of Teachers' Day (5 September) to speak on 'the Role of Education & Teachers for Peace'.

Bro. Pradip Mahapatra, Asst. General Secretary, Indian Section, gave a talk on 'Divine Love' at the Section HQ on 19 September.

Shri J. N. Juneja (Dip.59358) of NOIDA Lodge passed to peace on 25 June, 2014.

Smt. Chandrakala Tewari (Dip.75168) of Agra passed to peace on 09 August, 2014.

Shri Viswanath Tandon (Dip.96428) of Mirzapur Lodge has passed to peace.

**The School Of The Wisdom  
The Theosophical Society  
Adyar Chennai 600 020, India  
November 2014-February 2015**

**The Purpose of the School of the Wisdom**

The aim of the School of the Wisdom is to enable the individual to cease from being one who gives his intellectual adherence to a particular school of philosophy, and become one who learns to survey the problem of life directly by himself or herself. The essential search is to discover life as it is, life being inseparable from consciousness.

The School of the Wisdom aims at bringing each student to survey things 'from the centre' which is intuitive awareness. An intense sense of Life must always accompany every true student. There can be no Wisdom without an ever increasing sense of Wonder.

The aim of all studies in the School of the Wisdom is not the perfection of the individual but to enable the individual to use every faculty of his or her being for 'lifting a little of the heavy Karma of the world'.

Essential in the progress towards Wisdom is a growing intimacy with all aspects of nature. The message which each tree, flower, animal, meadow, sea, sky and cloud has, must be listened to and understood.

**3 to 14 November 2014  
Theme: The Voice of the Silence  
Director: Prof. R.C. Tampi**

This is the 125th year of publication of H.P. Blavatsky's priceless book on mysticism, *The Voice of the Silence*. She hoped that it would answer the need of 'The few real mystics in the Theosophical Society'. The course will be an attempt to bring home to the participants some of the mystical meanings and experiences conveyed by this mystical treatise in poetic prose with its profound appeal to the heart and intuition.

**Recommended reading:**

*The Voice of the Silence*- H.P. Blavatsky, *Talks on the Path of*

*Occultism*, Vol. II-C.W. Leadbeater, *The Creative Silence*-Rohit Mehta, *The Fullness of the Void* (The Yoga of Theosophy)- Rohit Mehta, *The Way of Wisdom*-N. Sri Ram

Mr. R.C. Tampi, is a retired Professor of English. He joined the Theosophical Society in 1959. As the Director of The School of the Wisdom he has conducted a number of courses on various theosophical subjects.

**17 to 28 November 2014**

**Theme: The Psychology of Yoga**

**Director: Mr. P.K. Jayaswal**

Topics for study will include Consciousness- its nature, involution, obscuration, fusion, expansion, release, and its four States; ideation –cosmic, divine and individual; The Mind-its nature, mental perception, the 'I' and its attenuation; matter-gunās, bhūta, indriyas, tanmatras; The relationship of Life and Consciousness; and Samādhi.

**Recommended reading:**

*The Science of Yoga*, and *Glimpses into the Psychology of Yoga* by I.K. Taimni

Mr. P.K. Jayaswal, is a retired Chief General Manager of the State Bank of India. He joined the TS in 1952 and has served as National Secretary of the TOS, Treasurer BEF, General Secretary of the Indian Section, and is a National Lecturer. He is deeply interested in Theosophy and in J. Krishnamurti's teachings.

**1 to 12 December 2014**

**Theme: Self-Transformation and the Spiritual Life**

**Director: Mr. Vincente Hao Chin Jr.**

The course covers an approach to self-transformation that serves as a foundation for an integrated and effective life, as well as an essential preparation for living the spiritual life. It includes exercises in self-awareness and a detailed study of meditation. Other facets of the course are, approaches to daily awareness, the exploration of transcendence, nurturing essential life-skills, probing into the nature of intuition, and the integration of impersonal values into our lives.

**Recommended reading:**

*The Process of Self-Transformation* by Vincente Hao Chin Jr., *The First and Last Freedom* by J. Krishnamurti, *The Key to Theosophy* by

H.P. Blavatsky, *Mysticism* by William James (The chapter on Varieties of Religious Experience), *Understanding Mysticism* by Richard Woods, *The Science of Yoga* by I.K. Taimni

Mr. Vincente Hao Chin Jr., is a former president of the TS in the Philippines, and a former president of the Indo-Pacific Federation of the TS. He is the author of the *Process of Self-Transformation*, *Why Meditate?*, *On Education*, and other works. He compiled and edited the chronological edition of *The Mhatma Letters* to A.P. Sinnet, and is the Associate Editor of the Theosophical Encyclopedia.

**5 to 16 January 2015**

**Theme: The Science of Theosophy: Foundation and Practice**

**Director: Ms Tran-Thi-Kim Dieu**

Theosophy is often criticized as a syncretism because it is difficult to be defined. The sessions of the School of the Wisdom will prove that Theosophy is a science based on a foundation and proven by experimentation. The two series of courses include:

For the first week: a presentation of the concepts of Spirit, Matter, and Consciousness, an exploration into the capacities of Mind such as Intuition and Intelligence, resulting in Universal Ethics, Meditation and Silence; for the second week: a deeper exploration into the matter of Meditation and its practices, the understanding of Feeling and Thinking and the application of Ethics which is the principal condition for discovering one's own Dharma; all this implies a Change of Paradigm which preludes happiness.

### **Recommended reading**

*The Round of Experience*, by Hugh Shearman, *Life's Deeper Aspects* by N. Sri Ram, *Yama & Niyama* by S. S. Varma, HPB's *Meditation Diagram*, *Meditation: its Practice and Results* by Clara Codd.

Ms Tran-Thi-Kim-Dieu, post-graduated in pharmaceutical technology. She has been exploring Eastern philosophies and religions in parallel with scientific ideas. She is most drawn to the philosophy of Nagarjuna and Krishnamurti. She is a member of the TS since 1972 and has been the General Secretary of TS France since 2009. She is also the Chairperson of the European Federation since 1995. She has travelled and lectured all over the world and regularly conducts meditation retreats in Europe.



## **THE SCHOOL OF THE WISDOM THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY ADYAR, CHENNAI 600 020, INDIA**

Please fill in BLOCK CAPITALS and send this form to the Secretary of the School of the Wisdom, The Theosophical Society, after obtaining the recommendation of the General Secretary of your Section or a well-known member.

Name:

Date of Birth:

Nationality:

**Address** (in home country):

Email:

Telephone No.

**Occupation** (if retired, former occupation):

Date of Joining the T.S.:

Diploma No.:

Section / Federation / Branch to which attached and whether now in good standing as a member: Breif History of Activities in the T.S.:

**Mention Briefly any other Activities** (allied movements or any other humanitarian work):

**Duration of stay in Adyar:**

.....

Term:

Applicant's

Signature

**Date of Application:**

.....

Recommendation

**Recommended by:**

Signature

# THE 139<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The 139th International Convention of the Theosophical Society will be held at the International Headquarters, Adyar, from 26 to 31 December 2014.

All members of the Society in good standing are welcome to attend as delegates. Non-members may attend by obtaining permission from the President. Requests for such permission, together with a recommendation from an officer of the Federation, should be sent to the Convention Officer before 15 November 2014.

Registration Fees	India	Other Countries
Members	100	US\$ 70*
Members under 21	40	...
Non-members	200	...
Non-members under 21	150	...

## Accommodation Charges (Sharing)

(From 24 December 2014 to 1 January 2015 inclusive)

	India (Members)	India (Non-members)	Others Countries (Members)
Accommodation with mat	Rs.100	200	....
Accommodation with cot	200	450	...

## Leadbeater Chambers

(including service, Furniture,

and bedding, but no blankets) 3500 6,500 US\$ 150\*

(Half rates will be charged for children under ten. No. charge for children under three.)

\*(or Euro or Pound Sterling equivalent)

## Accommodation

Factors considered in allocating accommodation are active membership, health, age, priority of registration, size of family, etc. Rooms and bathrooms cannot be made available for anyone's exclusive use. Non-members and young persons should be prepared to stay in dormitories. No special facilities can be provided for members who are ill or for women with babies. Mosquito nets and bedding will not be available. No kitchens are available. Ordinary medical attention will be available for minor complaints but there will be no provision for serious or infectious illness. Such cases will have to be shifted from the compound.

Accommodation is available for delegates from 24 December 2014 to 1 January 2015, both days inclusive, but can be guaranteed only to those whose registration and accommodation payments are received before 1 December 2014. Delegates from India requiring accommodation should send both the registration and accommodation charges together, But not before 1 September 2014.

Please note that in the event of cancellation there will be no refund of registration fees, but other charges will be refunded if application is received before 10 December 2014.

All communications and remittances should be addressed to the Convention Officer, The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Chennai 600 020. Remittance by bank draft, duly crossed, should be made payable to the Treasurer, The Theosophical Society, but sent to the convention Officer. Money Orders should be sent only to the Convention Officer. No cheques other than those drawn in Chennai will be accepted. Please provide your details in the Convention form.

International Secretary

## Note: -

**Receipts for the fees sent for registration, accommodation etc. in connection with the 2014 International Convention are being promptly sent. But please note that these are sent under ordinary post only and it may take even 5-12 days to reach outside Tamilnadu by post. Intending delegates have to bear with the delay due to postal services.**

# Convention - December 2014

**THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY  
ADYAR, CHENNAI 600 020, INDIA  
Email: 2014adyarconvention@gmail.com**

[To be filled in Block Capitals and sent to the Convention Officer.  
Non-members and those intending to attend the convention for the first  
time may please obtain a recommendation from the General Secretary  
of the Section concerned or from a well known member.]

1. Name:.....

2.Nationality:.....3. Date of Birth.....

4.Address (in home country):.....

5.E-Mail:.....

6.Phone/Mobile Number:.....

7.Occupation (if retired, former occupation):.....

8.Date of Joining the T.S.....9. Diploma No.....

10.Section / Federation / Lodge to which attached and whether now in  
good standing as a member:

.....

11.Proposed duration of stay in Adyar:

From:.....To:.....

12.Details of person(s) accompanying:-

Sl.No.	Name	Age	Member (Y/N)	Relationship
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13. Special Request, if any:.....

14. Recommended by .....

Signature

Signature of applicant:

Date: