

## **THEOSOPHY AND THE CROWDING WORLD**

**Mr Tim Boyd**

*(Summary of Public Lecture delivered on 28.12.2012)*

It is not often that one can point to an event and identify it as something that has never occurred before in human history. Very recently such a momentous event transpired. Largely unnoticed in the popular media, it entered our world and has proceeded to take root. This new state of affairs is influencing every aspect of life on earth in subtle and in very blatant ways, and while it offers great promise, it also assures massive problems and disruptions in its wake. It is something which should hold special interest for those who feel that Theosophy has meaningful application to the problems in the world.

To describe the event is simple. In 2008, for the first time in known human history the planet's population became predominantly urban. More people now live in cities around the world than in rural environments. Worldwide, urban concentration is accelerating at break-neck speed with estimates of eighty per cent of the global population crowding

into cities within the lifetime of most of us. As a condition of contemporary living this is a demanding state of affairs. For us as Theosophists it is even more challenging.

The literature and teachings of the TS make little reference to this aspect of our current reality. One might say that perhaps it goes unmentioned because it has no real bearing on the inner life; that the potentials of the human spirit transcend outer conditions. On a certain level this is true, but perhaps we should explore more deeply. The TS and contemporary Theosophy, the most recent iteration of the Ageless Wisdom, came into being in response to both an outer and inner climate that prevailed at the end of the nineteenth century. The broad mission was directed towards a deadening materialism and superstition that threatened to overrun human thought and institutions. The soothing balm of the Ageless Wisdom and the brotherhood it demanded, was seen as

a necessary counterbalance to the materializing influence of nineteenth century science. Looking back we can say that the effort has been both successful and unsuccessful.

The 'struggle for life' which was such a focus in the Maha Chohan's Letter has not diminished. One might even say that in present conditions it has increased. Quantum physics and cutting edge biology have made great strides in dematerializing their description of the world we live in, revealing a universe in which consciousness is central. However, this view has not yet descended to the level of popular awareness. Conventional thinking and behaviour is still rooted in a worldview that sanctions materialistic self-identification and all of the ills that flow from it.

The predominance of city life as the focus of human culture and development brings new challenges. Beyond the obvious stresses placed on the outer environment with pollution, crowded living conditions and competition, the stresses on the inner environment are even more profound. There is a psychic pollution that enfolds cities around the world making them difficult and inhospitable places for the sort of inward balance that genuine spiritual living demands. The countless millions who are 'peopling their current in space' with the mixture of normal unhappiness, doubt, craving, confusion and a mixed bag of occasional happiness and fleeting satisfactions, throw off an atmosphere

that is thick and unwieldy. What to do?

There is a fascinating and instructive short line in one of the letters from the Masters to Olcott. Jinarajadasa quotes it in his comments on the Maha Chohan's Letter. In it the Maha Chohan is described as one 'to whose insight the future lies like an open page'. This remarkable statement of vision supports the content of the letter. It also indicates the Maha Chohan's anticipation of the global society's development to our current state, as well as the value of Theosophy and the TS in this new world.

Retreating to the cave or forest for enlightenment is no longer the option or the need for the spiritual practitioners of this particular moment. Our ability to apply the insights of Theosophy to the creation of energetically wholesome islands in the midst of the roiling currents of modern city living is what is called for — whether that island finds its location in a home, a meeting place, in a virtual community or within the growing expanse of our own consciousness. The work for us is not merely to form these centres of influence, but to connect them with others, those kindred spirits whose teachings and practices have been made possible by the reintroduction of Theosophy to the world scene.

In the words of Annie Besant: 'Let us judge our spirituality by our effect on the world, and let us be careful that the world may grow purer, better, happier, because we are living in it.'



# AN ENQUIRY INTO REGENERATION

*(Summaries of Symposium Lectures delivered on 29.12.2012)*

## **Prof. R. C. Tampi**

'There is nothing permanent except change.' This was the theory of the Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, who maintained that change is the only reality. Modern man is overwhelmed from all sides by changes of all kinds. There is too much change in too short a time and he cannot keep up with it. The future overtakes us even before we begin to adjust ourselves to the present.

Despite the fast and sweeping changes around man there has been little change in human nature as such. A Mahatma pointed out: 'As for human nature in general, it is the same now as it was millions of years ago'. The unwillingness to change modes of thinking, pride, resistance to Truth etc., are the characteristics that have remained unchanged over the ages.

Though human nature is slow to change, 'the whole order of Nature evinces a progressive march towards higher life'. Evolution, which means the unfolding of inner nature, is a process of gradual growth. The inner nature of everything has been gaining increasing recognition by modern science. Teilhard de Chardin has pointed out the essential nature of the 'within' of things. He says 'in the eye of the physicist, nothing exists legitimately, at least up to now, except the without of things. . . . Finally, it breaks down completely with man, in whom the existence of a within can no longer be evaded, because it is the object

of a direct intuition and the substance of all knowledge'.

Evolution indicates progressive improvement. 'Everything that is good, enlightening, that is calculated to alleviate another's trouble and inspire him with courage, every improvement of social, political and other conditions, is part of evolution' (N. Sri Ram). In man evolution is a self-imposed, self-devised, self-directed effort towards progress. The Masters of the Wisdom aid in all changes for human progress. They are especially concerned with the spiritual regeneration of man. They have referred to the idea of 'a regenerating practical Brotherhood'. The Theosophical Society has three declared Objects and one important purpose. That purpose is the spiritual regeneration of humanity.

For different reasons human regeneration has been considered as of fundamental importance. When it takes place all else follows naturally. Though the influence of Regeneration is internal it has its effect on the external conditions. Regeneration results in the fundamental transformation of man. As a consequence the higher spiritual qualities express themselves without any special effort. The possibility of total transformation through Regeneration is the most inspiring truth of Theosophy. It is the most important means of human perfectability.

## **Dr Nagesh L.**

Human regeneration refers to the renewal, restoration or regrowth of something lost by us in the past, on the way to our current status. It must be addressed immediately because both humanity and our planet are advancing to a mega crisis.

The pace of life is speeding up. The 'World Wide Web' has revolutionized the field of information technology to such an extent that information across the globe now spreads as fast as light. This unprecedented rate of progress is also observed in applied sciences like Genetics, Biotechnology, Nanotechnology, Molecular Biology, Electronics and Communication, etc. As a result, more of us are living in the fast lane, eating fast foods, owning fast moving vehicles, driving on fast tracks, earning at a fast pace and also becoming ill at a fast rate. Not only is the accelerated change putting us under immense stress, it is also putting increasing pressure on our planet.

The very mindset or perspective of life has shifted to amassing, possessing, exploiting and abusing inner as well as outer resources. Eroding human values, the degradation of ethical principles, gluttony to diabolic proportions, an insane penchant for sensual pleasures and insensitivity to the higher cause and the good of the larger population are the characteristics of the current human status.

To live with these changes is a great challenge. It will force a complete revision of our thinking about who we

are, and to prompt us to contemplate and explore the deeper layers of our consciousness.

At this juncture a person or group makes the initial step towards regeneration. The problem is that a large segment of the population is so caught up in the routines of daily living that it prevents them from delving deeply into life. A lot of our thinking is superfluous. What we probably need is an unconditional introspection of our inner selves.

The problems in the outer world are the extrapolation of the crises observed in our inner consciousness, which is dominated by the 'ego'. The egocentric consciousness is short-sighted, destructive, constricting and devastating.

The root cause for all our problems is related to our inner consciousness. How do we go about transforming this? 'The same consciousness which created the problem cannot solve the problem.' It is imperative that we move to a higher level of consciousness.

Everyone's life has an 'outer purpose' and an 'inner purpose'. The inner purpose is to 'awaken'. That is the purpose of the whole of humanity and of the globe. Such an awakening is possible with a shift in our consciousness, so that we move from self-captivity to self-liberation. This is probably what Krishnaji termed as inner flowering. Getting rid of conditioning and allowing altruism to flower is the best option, and that is why the leaders of our Society rightly said that Theosophy at its

core is Altruism. The Objects of the Theosophical Society have been carefully crafted to promote and achieve the same. They are complementary to each other, all of them aimed at human regeneration; and supplement each other so well that working towards one Object automatically leads us to achieve the others. They reveal that behind all the diversities in the manifest world, there is only one entity, the 'One in All'.

### **Dr Sundari Siddhartha**

Theosophy was generated a long time ago to regenerate values, principles and ideas which had been shifted hither and thither by a different set of values, principles and ideas.

This was regeneration at one level. But regeneration cannot happen just at this level. To facilitate an enquiry into regeneration, while accepting the infinite possibilities and variations of this unique but essential activity in life, we can theoretically identify different types of regeneration, namely, spiritual, social, botanical, ritual, scientific, ethical and others — with Individual

There exists a plan in nature, i.e., 'Evolution'; and one cannot stay away from contributing to and augmenting it; such is the beauty of the scheme. A regenerated man, aware of subtle operations, may move the spiral of evolution to a higher level. He becomes a humble servant and a congenial conduit for the higher forces to reach the lower planes. Having been born human, that is what we need to do and what we should necessarily do.

Regeneration at the head.

Regeneration is a continuous process. It has a cause and an effect. It has hurdles and advantages, and can be natural and imposing. Its outcome is not predictable and can be good or bad. Nor is it time-bound. It is inevitable, because it occurs in everything that is not permanent. And the impermanent includes the whole world — origin *weoruld* meaning age of mankind; Sanskrit *jagat* (ever moving), whereas Permanent is That One Alone. So this enquiry into Regeneration is an eternal quest which should not stop with just the *enquiry*.

## **THE MEANS DETERMINE THE END**

### **Mr Ricardo Lindemann**

*(Summary of Short Lecture delivered on 29.12.2012)*

Mr J. Krishnamurti emphasized that 'the means determine the end', which would be obvious, if we really understood the law of karma, but in the world of politics everywhere there seems to

be a tendency to affirm that the end justifies the means, and so the world suffers the consequences.

It is important to perceive that the final results of what happens to us are

not absolutely predetermined, but are really a complex resultant of a vectorial composition of forces of karma (*sanchita*, *prarabdha*, *kriyamana* and also different kinds of collective karma). Dr Besant said: 'Few things, perhaps, are so dangerous as a little knowledge of the law of karma. And unhappily many of us have stopped at the point of a little knowledge.'

But even to choose the right direction for our ship in life to arrive at the goal of nirvana, the end of human evolution and the beginning of a superhuman one, we must choose the right means to come to samadhi or ecstasy. According to the *Yoga-Sutra-s*: 'On the clarification of memory, when the mind loses its essential nature (subjectivity), as it were, and the real knowledge of the object alone shines (through the mind) *Nirvitarka Samadhi* is attained' (I.43). This initial level of samadhi is reached by a preliminary development of spiritual discernment. This involves the clarity of right memory, self-observation and purification of our motives. So, without this spiritual discernment, how can we even begin the spiritual path and choose the right means? Master KH pointed out:

How can you know the real from the unreal, the true from the false? Only by self-development. How get that? By first carefully guarding yourself against the causes of self-deception. And this you can do by spending a certain fixed hour or hours each day all alone in self-contemplation, writing, reading, the purification of your motives, the study and correction of your faults, the

planning of your work in the external life. These hours should be sacredly reserved for this purpose, and no one, not even your most intimate friend or friends, should be with you then. Little by little your sight will clear, you will find the mists pass away, your interior faculties strengthen, your attraction towards us gain force, and certainty replace doubts.

Dr Radha Burnier, international President of the Theosophical Society, comments: 'Krishnaji said "the first step is the last step", and the direction taken with the first step is what matters.' Therefore, the first step must have in itself the nature of the last one, otherwise we will take the wrong path to the goal. It is not possible to reach the Supreme Truth, walking in falsehood. It is not possible to reach the peace of nirvana while walking in contradiction and conflict. If we want to reach Nirvana the quality of peace must be present, to some extent, from the very first step. Affinity with the nature of the goal we wish to reach must be our compass, otherwise we will lose the path. This is why also Mr J. Krishnamurti said 'the means determine the end'. If there is no coherence between the steps taken, i.e. the means used, and the goal to be reached, we will lose the goal. Indeed, we will reach only another destiny determined by the nature or quality of the means used. The common saying so often used in the world nowadays, that 'the end justifies the means', is the very road to lose the real goal and to find suffering. It indicates deep ignorance of the Law of Karma. For we reap always only that which we sow.

# THE FOUNDATION OF FUTURE RELIGIONS

**Mr Kiran H. Shah**

*(Summary of Short Lecture delivered on 29.12.2012)*

When we look at the subject, 'The Foundation of the Future Religions' a question arises in our minds — in spite of there being so many religions in the world, do we need another religion?

Most of the present religions were started by followers of enlightened persons who according to the needs of that time, condition and place, guided people to the path of virtuous and altruistic living to lead to the internal peace and happiness that people have been seeking since time immemorial.

Unfortunately, with the passage of time, their followers divided themselves into groups, sects and creeds. Some of them, taking advantage of people's fear and ignorance, turned themselves into institutions, amassing huge wealth in the name of doing charitable work. They introduced beliefs, dogmas, rituals, blind faith and superstitions and preached that theirs was the only religion which would take them to salvation. Enlightened persons after whom the religions were founded never wanted to claim that theirs was the only path.

In spite of so many religions, humanity has not changed much. History is full of conflicts, wars, terrorism, violence, cruelty, misery, poverty, hunger and so on. In the name of sports and medicine, animals are being hunted and killed. Many species like the tiger, cheetah, leopard and rhino are on the endangered and extinction lists. It is said that fifty

million whales have been killed and are still being killed.

J. Krishnamurti often remarked that for millennia the human mind has not changed. It is the same human mind and the problems faced are the same.

Religions have not been able to diminish the many problems that face humanity. The teachings and the message of Theosophy — oneness of life — gives hope, and is the foundation of a future religion. More efforts have to be made to help people realize that the brotherhood of humanity and the oneness of all creations of nature — humans, animals, vegetables/plants and minerals — are natural facts, and this realization can bring peace and happiness to the world.

Theosophy, the Divine Wisdom, has been in existence since time immemorial and is the foundation, the cornerstone of all religions. We are each one spark of the same Divinity and are linked together with the golden thread of Divinity. We all come from the same source and our happiness, peace and salvation lies together. We are all like different parts of an orchestra. If the sound coming from one instrument is not in tune with the other musical instruments, it distorts the soothing and melodious music coming from the whole orchestra. A man cannot be safe and happy if all the other people around him are unhappy, suffering from

fear, conflicts, terrorism, poverty, hunger and disease. Only by removing inequalities in the world can a lasting peace, happiness and harmony be

found. Reverence and respect for all life, the environment, nature and ecology should be the fundamental teachings of the future religion.

## INAUGURATION OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE

Dr Chittaranjan Satapathy, Secretary, Olcott Education Centre, began his address to the gathering thus:

‘Today we have gathered here for the inauguration of the new Vocational Training Centre, for which the *bhoomi puja* was done on 17 October 2012 and at which our international President laid the foundation stone in a simple ceremony. Two months and eleven days later, I am happy to inform all of you that the new building in Damodar Gardens is ready for occupation and use.’

He listed the factors that contributed to the completion of the project in so short a time: the specific donations and the sources, the opting of pre-fabricated structure, the constant supervision and monitoring by Mr S. Ram Kumar, Director of the Vocational Training Centre, who also played a major role in arranging the funding, and the constant encouragement and valuable guidance at every stage of the project from our international President, Radhaji, who is very keen that we provide vocational training to boys and girls passing out from our school as well as to other underprivileged children so that they

can earn a decent living. She is also very keen that apart from being trained for a vocation, they are also taught to become good human beings. The entire OES Board supports her ideas which has greatly encouraged the start of the new Vocational Training Centre.

Vocational training is given free and benefits the poor, especially women. The World Bank reports that in South Asia there are 30 million unemployed graduates without jobs and there are almost 30 million skilled jobs for which skilled personnel are not available, which clearly points to the need for vocational training instead of everyone doing a general university education.

Dr Satapathy extolled the work done by Col. Olcott in empowering the underprivileged, and mentioned the work that could be done by the Training Centre to support the Colonel’s vision. ‘Now that the new training centre is in place, we need to get on with the training courses’ he said. He then emphasized the need for donations to realize the vision, and requested Sections, Lodges and members to come forward and help.



---

Printed at the Vasanta Press, The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India