



THE THEOSOPHIST

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On the Watch-Tower

RADHA BURNIER

Patience —The Spiritual Aspect

Let us imagine a person who has been blind since birth; not only does he miss seeing many ordinary things which are necessary to make life easier, but also the beauty of the earth, the colours of the sky, the birds, plants and animals, and of course, the faces of human beings. But the blind person still perceives, tastes, smells, hears, thinks, etc. He is able to experience the world in a different way from those who see things. Similarly, we can imagine how various other creatures like animals and birds know and live in their own world, because reasoning power, and the experience of reasoning which affects human life, do not have any meaning for them. We have a realization of animals through affection, but they cannot understand this human experience, just as they cannot understand what reasoning does, for they live by instinct and understand things in a different way.

By analogy we can understand that there are people who lead a life which is very different from ours. What is essential and vital to them is not important to us, and what is important to us has no relevance to the world in which they live. Time is very important in the human world, and more so to modern man than

to people in the ancient world. Organizations and institutions function to time, as do most human beings. If unaware of time passing, most organizations would collapse. This is only one level at which time works.

The illusion of time makes the human being face the world in a way which is psychologically different from those for whom time has no value. The first rule in *Light on the Path* says 'Kill out Ambition'. Ambition exists only under the control of time. It is the desire for achievement, to get something accomplished within a certain time. Ambition has therefore much to do with time as we know it.

Everything in Nature exists, grows and dies according to its dictates. When a child is born, we do not have to do much about its growth. Similarly, when a seed is planted, if the condition is right, it sprouts and becomes a seedling, and then becomes a tree bearing flowers and fruits. This happens by itself, and all this happens, not merely in the form of growth physically, but also by changes in the faculties every human has.

Every human being has extraordinary faculties, not only the faculty of reasoning, but others which awaken the sense of beauty, create awareness of peace, and so

on. These faculties have grown into the present state by themselves, but strangely enough, we do not accept the growth, that expansion, which comes through Nature. Because of our sense of time we feel that within a particular lifetime we must reach somewhere, and obtain some things.

Time is an illusion; it passes differently if one is happy and in another way if one is affected by distress. Standing in a queue could pass very slowly, but if we stand at the top of the queue, then time does not go so slowly. If we think about this we can see that the way time goes depends on our desire. If we are at the back of the queue and we want badly to be in front, time proceeds slowly, but if we are at the head of the queue it does not seem to move the same way.

Perhaps, this is one of the things to be kept in mind when Krishnamurti made such statements as 'Desire is time'. Ambition is a kind of desire — an intense desire — and produces many difficulties in relationships. Wars that take place and cause misery for vast numbers of people are the products of ambition. Ambition makes people want more and more things. We may be ambitious about small things or great things, about spiritual satisfaction or only intellectual or sensory satisfaction. It is all the same thing — the desire for achievement in this lifetime, or in a small way.

Animals do not have ambition, because they have no time sense unlike human beings. They do not recognize that others have gone ahead, etc., and so they are freer. The ambitious human being

wants the whole world to know that he is the one who has done better. This is part of the satisfaction that ambition gives, comparing oneself with others, saying 'I have run faster than everyone else'. The animal runs very fast unconsciously without trying to impress anybody else.

Competition in the world is the source of enormous evil, as Madame Blavatsky wrote in her little booklet *Practical Occultism*. It is part of the world in which the illusion of time is strong. Ambition, desire, achievement, all these are only expressions of the mind's illusions. The one who is free is one who does not feel the sense of time oppressing him, for he wants things to grow and move, according to the flow of Nature. Why is the small plant not a big tree? If we are not feeling anxious in terms of time, we will just be watching the plant growing into a tree; we will see that the man we call a bad man will become a good man, without forcing him and modelling him in order to make him change. We do all the things that the average human being wants to do, but those who know, the Masters of Wisdom, do not do such things. They act with patience. The quality of patience is a great quality which floods the world with light.

Being Free of 'Knowledge'

The knowledge that we have — mental knowledge — can be an illusion. We think, we see and we know, but what we know is really not worth knowing. Except for a small part of physical existence, for which it might have value, it has none from the spiritual point of view. We know some

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'facts' which may not be really facts at all. For example, when we say that we know such and such a person, it is possible that we know some facts about that person. But there is most often the illusion of knowing the person, even when we do not know all the facts about that person.

Meaning of a certain kind, which we cannot describe, is the heart of knowledge. In the beginning of *The Voice of the Silence* there is the phrase 'Having become indifferent to the objects of perception . . .' This is meaningful. The objects of perception will not disappear, for they exist, at least for the time being. But what happens to the average human being is that he or she becomes involved, and then entangled, in those objects. As soon as we say 'I like this, I don't like that, this is nice, that is not', the judgement we make is a form of involvement, a psychological entanglement.

Though the object of perception is still in existence, and the mind is observing, it can remain unpolluted, by not formulating opinions, getting attracted or repelled. It remains, in a way, indifferent. But, when the personal mind is not assessing, and formulating an opinion, neither attracted nor repelled, by the observation or attention it comes to know what is within, not merely what the object looks like outside. This applies not only to a particular object of perception but to all the world, that is to everything that we experience. The Middle Way taught by the Buddha is to experience no reaction, neither attraction nor repulsion. The mind is then only a witness. This is true renunciation

(*vairāgya*), a spirit of non-movement, which is true knowledge.

In a letter from a Mahatma, he says that they have only to turn their attention to something to obtain an instantaneous comprehension of what they are looking at. From their point of view, all our knowledge is trivial and we spend much time in the effort to accumulate knowledge which is trivial. We may even regard ourselves as experts, but apart from the practical use, if it has any, it has no value at all. Is a person who is knowledgeable about aeroplanes or anything of that kind, more generous because of it, more compassionate, more capable of being free of unhappiness and misery? I do not think so. Ordinary knowledge does not make any difference except in one's own imagination, and that is the case of all other people who are in the same predicament.

According to certain spiritual ideas, real knowledge is not the same as what we call knowledge. It is a perception of the truth of divinity everywhere. It is awareness of the One Reality being immanent in every atom. This perception is the source of awareness, of beauty and love in relationship. It is an insight into the hidden nature of things. The world of Light is different because of awareness, not the superficial knowledge which we at present appreciate so much. There is in that knowledge neither the illusion of time or knowledge of any particular kind.

The Theosophist is not just a member of the Theosophical Society; he has a special role — to discover real knowledge.

The Promotion of the Work

The evolution which has taken place up to now has been very instructive. Some of the recent scientific views confirm what certain Theosophists have been saying, that the future evolution on this earth will be a continuation of the present known process. The so-called non-living things, and then little creatures, vegetable life, and animal life have brought evolution to the present human stage; further steps will be taken when the human being improves. Of course, all these parts of evolution take immense time, but Nature has nothing to do with the time invented by human beings.

The future will take the human being beyond the stage of humanness to the level of the R̥shi, who knows many things of which he cannot speak to the average human being yet. But in this mysterious evolutionary process, he will learn what we mentioned earlier, that is, the nature of beauty, of love, and the perception which is awareness of the inside as well as the outside of things. It will be a new phase towards which we are moving. There are signs of the movement already in the statements of certain scientists, and of course, the people who know.

The insight or awareness of what will happen in the future is of great importance to all of humanity. We know that human beings who are mentally clever are not necessarily the people who will be leading figures in advancing into the future. It will be rather those whose intuition leads them to higher levels, and for that preparation

is necessary. If intuition is to work, it must not be mixed up with confused thinking about one's own capacities. On the other hand, it calls for a pure mind; those who have learned to keep their minds untouched by animalistic impulses, fears, and the kind of feelings that go with the stages of growing. Therefore, our judgement on various things will be based not on what we know as worldly considerations, but on factors which are necessary for the new stage. This new stage was touched upon very much in the earlier epochs of the Theosophical Society, but has now faded into the background.

The idea for example, that we must produce literature which will appeal to those who are intellectually advanced may not be very valid. We have to make an appeal to those who can see ahead into a way of life which will be extremely different. This way of life can only come about when the iniquities of present-day thinking and action do not enter the picture. It remains for the new mind to replace the old kind of thinking. We are in the process of beginning a new life, and cannot afford to encourage ourselves in appearing clever from the ordinary competitive point of view. There must be a radical change in our approach in which purity, love, a sense of what is right, and truth can exist. All these things matter.

If in the Theosophical Society there are even a few people who can exemplify in their life these qualities, they will begin to take effect. The danger is that as time goes on we will forget the original purpose. ✧

Recurrence, Self-transformation and Now

ALAN SENIOR

THE teaching of the *Overman* (Übermensch) by Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844–1900), the German philosopher and classical philologist, was written to inspire us to create ‘the new, the unique and the incomparable’ in ourselves and in art, and to discover the real meaning of our being. To translate this as ‘Superman’, as in the once popular 1903 stage play ‘Man and Superman’ by George Bernard Shaw, or Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster’s comic-book hero (which first appeared in 1938) was misleading, as was the science fiction television series ‘Andromeda’ (2000–5) which had characters called *Nietzscheans* who applied selective breeding, genetic engineering and nano-technology to transform themselves into Übermenschen. Such interpretations are far removed from Nietzsche’s idea, which meant ‘over-and-above-man’, the transcending of *Man as he exists at present*, to produce something completely different.

Secularization in European society had, for Nietzsche, effectively ‘killed’ the Christian God who had served as meaning

and value in the West for over a thousand years. What was needed was a new kind of individual living beyond pleasure and pain, to combat what the philosopher had sensed as ‘world-weariness’ in the 1880s, when life for many seemed to have no purpose, importance or meaning. What might he have felt if he had lived over a hundred years later? The terms he used to describe Western society, such as ‘decadence-values’, ‘degeneracy’, ‘corruption’ and ‘nihilism’ he would have applied tenfold to our modern epoch.

In the Prologue to the prose-poem *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (‘Thus Spoke Zoroaster’, 1883–5), Nietzsche’s main character declares that what he seeks is not disciples but companions, whom he calls ‘fellow-creators and rejoicers’. So the Übermensch is not to be thought of in any way as the superman of legend, but as a symbol of the humanity of the future which has overcome this world-weariness with joy in abundance. Nor is this an ideal beyond our reach (‘super’ or ‘above’) but something nobler and higher — nothing less than a process of

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self-transformation, being 'born anew' with the old self sacrificed. Perhaps this is what HPB felt when she made that optimistic prediction at the end of *The Key to Theosophy* (which seems so very far off in our strife-torn world) that 'earth will be a heaven in the twenty-first century in comparison with what it is now!'

God has died, said Nietzsche, so now the Overman (the Higher Man) can live in a life-affirming, life-enhancing way, once the self is overcome. This will lead to *that which lies beyond ourselves*, which can only be experienced, not taught. He has Zarathustra declare that so-called 'ways' to truth do not exist; nor does he invite believers, echoing HPB here by asking: 'what good or use is belief, which has nothing to do with truth?' So people must discover their own unique and incomparable selves by refusing to be 'reconciled, compromised or castrated by the present age'. Like all great teachers he can but point the way . . . 'I will show them the rainbow and the stairway to the Übermensch.' The 'children of the future' are to be changed forever, to become 'what they (truly) are', and he exhorts us to 'live as though the day were here'.

Nietzsche often speaks of the Will to Power, an important element of his philosophy and an attempt to understand motivation in human behaviour. He also suggests in a number of texts that this Will to Power is a more important constituent than pressure for adaptation or survival. In a later form he applies the concept to all living things, suggesting that adjustment and the struggle to survive is a

secondary instinctual need in evolution, less important than the desire to expand one's power. Nietzsche then took this even further, transforming the idea of *matter as force centres* into *matter as centres of Will to Power*, looking to dispense entirely with the theory of matter, which he saw as an antiquated survivor of the metaphysics of substance. Some commentators have seen the fully-conceived notion of the Will to Power as 'the element from which derive both the quantitative difference of related forces and the quality that devolves into each force in this relation', a doctrine of the synthesis of forces.

Nietzsche's idea of the Will to Power may also have been a response to Schopenhauer's 'will to live'. The earlier philosopher had regarded the entire universe and everything in it as driven by a primeval will to live, thus resulting in all creatures desiring to avoid death and to procreate. However, Nietzsche believed that both humans and animals really seek power; living is necessary to promote this power, gained in competitive fighting and warfare. Here he seems to have been influenced by his great knowledge of the ancient Homeric Greek books where heroes and nobles did not merely seek self-preservation; indeed, they often died quite young, risking everything in battle for the sake of power and glory.

But one wonders if Nietzsche also studied Eastern philosophy whilst formulating and modifying his ideas, such as the Brahminical Book of Evocation, where it states: 'Power belongs to him

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WHO KNOWS'. This will power, says the *Atharva-Veda*, is the highest form of prayer — intense, inward and pure. This is the true discriminating power, free from illusion and leads to Adeptship (not too far removed from Nietzsche's idea of the Higher Man, especially when this Eastern text states that will power becomes a *living power* devoid of selfish or unholy purposes, attained as a matter of course, the Adept having removed 'the veil which screens true knowledge from his view'). Again, when Nietzsche wrote of Truth, Time, Power of the Will and Woman, had he perhaps come across the 'fiery power' called *kundalini* in Eastern literature, also termed *the Power* or 'the World-Mother', the Eternal Feminine Principle and a true creative force? Yet a woman's aspiration would remain, for him, to give birth to an Übermensch and her relationships with men were to be judged by this standard. The word *femina* often occurs in Nietzsche's works; for instance, when he speaks of a crumbling away of the feminine instinct in modern society, a loss of both femininity and woman's 'true' vocation — to produce strong children.¹

We can see how HPB differs radically from Nietzsche when *she* states that Will is the exclusive possession of man, dividing him from instinctive desire in the animal kingdom. It is, she declares in *Collected Writings* (VIII), the offspring of the Divine, the God in man, unlike Desire (the motive power of the animal life). Blavatsky emphasizes too that desire should not be mistaken for will; the two must be separated with will made the

ruler, steady and constant, distinct from ever-changing and unstable desire. Both will and desire are creators but will operates intelligently, desire blindly and unconsciously. Are we therefore centred in the image of our desires, she asks, or do we create ourselves in the likeness of the Divine, through Will? This Will, she stresses, must be awakened, strengthened, and made absolute ruler in the body, helping to purify desire until it is centred on the Eternal, adding: 'Knowledge and will are the tools for the accomplishment of this purification.' Again, if Nietzsche had realized, as stated in the Rules written for all disciples in *Light on the Path* (13), that the power to be coveted by all adherents is that which will make them 'appear as nothing in the eyes of men' for it belongs only to the pure soul, then the philosopher may — just *may* — have revised his utterances on the concept of self, equating it with 'the power to awaken one's supreme essence'. This is the real power bestowed with the conquering of self, about which Nietzsche seems to have been aware to some extent in his talk of sustained higher consciousness.

Krishnamurti meanwhile asks if it is possible to live our lives *without* the operation of will, which he sees as 'the very movement of desire'. He objects to any system of control and, like Nietzsche, links the mind with time and conditioning . . . millions of years of conditioning in our ancient brains which function in time.

The moment you say, 'I will', it is in time. When you say, 'I must do that', it is

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also in time. Everything that we do involves time and our brains are conditioned not only to chronological time, but also to psychological time.

Krishnaji believed that the purpose of meditation is to find out for oneself whether *thought as time* can stop, because thought he saw as simply the reaction of memory, born *from* memory, and that our consciousness is what we are — our anxieties, fears, struggles, moods, despairs, pleasures, and so on — all the result of time.

This brings us to another of Nietzsche's key concepts, the theme of Recurrence.² It points to everything having happened before and that somehow *everything always is*. Within this *alwaysness* of things is a continued re-experiencing of them (whereby cycles of events constantly recur). Nietzsche was, like Krishnamurti, concerned with getting beyond recurrences via a higher degree of consciousness that transforms, drawing energy out of our ordinary thought, to become, he said, 'the thought of thoughts'. This alters us dramatically, determining new emotions and new desires, thus creating a new sense of reality. Then all the problems of ordinary life vanish in the light of higher consciousness, leading to the disappearance of our ordinary feeling of 'I'.

Nietzsche viewed the universe as a circle consisting in a definite number of changes which continually recurs. The activity is eternal but the number of products and states are limited. So no incalculable number of states can evolve from a given quantity of energy, i.e. the

quantum of energy that is the Universe. Thus repetition was bound to happen sooner or later — precisely similar states returning in the circle of Becoming, within the wheel of the cosmic process. Then, as in some aspects of reincarnation, every pain, pleasure, friend, enemy, hope, error, earthly environment may be experienced once more, like 'Groundhog Day' — a phrase used, since the 1993 Hollywood film of that name, to mean 'the same thing over and over again', particularly unpleasant repeating cycles as we go 'round and round in the same circle of woes' which in reality stems from ourselves. If our lives are turning ceaselessly in absolute recurrence, all potential remains unrealized in the round of habitual reactions. But 'that which lies above us is not in the future of passing-time', says Dr Maurice Nicoll (1884–1953), pioneer in psychological medicine and teacher of the philosophies of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky.

Mere length of days will not bring us to it, for we can remain . . . in the same part of the psychological world for all our remaining years, if we continue always to think in the same way and act with the same self-satisfaction. Time will then pass, but psychologically we will remain stationary, ever turning round the same circle in inner space, with weakening pleasure.

So the question remains: is it possible to empty totally the whole content of our consciousness which has been built through time, and to have complete

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insight into the entire nature of our selves? This implies having no motive, no remembrance, just instant perception of the constitution of consciousness. To enter *now* is to go beyond recurrence, Nicoll stresses, and when the illusion of passing-time leaves us, when we go beyond those ever-repeating states and perpetual reaction (where every pain, joy, thought and emotion is relived), then we are free from everything small, trivial and absurd.

Once a man understands that he is down here in time and space in order to awaken to another state of himself, everything that happens to him, whether good or bad, comes to have a new meaning.

Then we pass from absolute recurrence, from the illusion of tomorrow and the circle of habit, appearances and passing-time into a new kind of knowledge, self-transformation and a realization of the All; that is, mankind comes to maturity, arriving at a point of transition when another form of life is encountered.

We should realize that we are *here* in two senses — sitting in this room, in this place, reading this, also *here* experiencing our present mood, our reaction, our feeling. Recognizing this, we undergo at least something in the *now*, outside time. Then we can comprehend a little of the greater meaning, removed from those trivialities and absurdities that dominate our lives. This is ‘to become what we are’, with life freed from prejudice and judgement in ‘the experience of the moment’ and it involves thinking beyond

time, out of time . . . viewing things differently and giving a totally new interpretation to everything happening in our lives. Otherwise we remain in illusion, with life carrying us away — now up, now down — thinking only in terms of time, which causes us to fix our eyes always on tomorrow *which never comes* — for it is always tomorrow. So we live ahead of ourselves . . . never *here*, never in the place where we truly are, the only place where anything real can happen — in *now*. In order to change our lives we must change ourselves and such efforts lie as a point of force in the circle of *the life*. The choices we make must go beyond habit, as life is ascended only through right choices and right thinking. This affirmation of ‘the moment’ is above judgement and is a pre-condition of self-overcoming when we are liberated from our ordinary conception of time in terms of past, present and future. The ‘moment’ is timeless, beyond change, decay, ceaseless movement and becoming, and it can lead to Nietzsche’s transfigured and new-born humanity . . .

To summarize: *the present moment* is not now in the ordinary sense, says Nicoll, quoting Karl Barth, it is the Moment ‘that qualifies and transforms time, without which we are all asleep’. He adds: ‘Our future is our own growth in now, not in the tomorrow of passing-time.’ And the self-knowledge Nietzsche speaks of is likewise concerned with reaching *now*, where one is present to oneself. If we could penetrate to the eternal reality of our being we would find the one and only

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solution for every situation, contained in the true sense of our own existence, whose cause is internal . . . summed up in the growth of this feeling of *now*. This has no source in time whatsoever, for the creation of the world begins in ourselves. We cannot know ourselves unless we turn inwards, away from sense-perceptions. Then the illusions created in passing-time will start to leave us as *the life* begins to enter *now*. We are at the centre of things. The responsibility is ours. Thus the final

declaration in 'The Three Truths' stresses: 'Each man is his own absolute law-giver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.'³ So it *is* possible to get beyond those recurring stages, those ever-repeating states, because the world is a series of potential, achievable and radical mental transformations, otherwise our lives must always be founded on reaction. To repeat Nietzsche's recommendation: 'live as though the day were here'. ✧

Notes

1. Nietzsche also said that 'music is a woman, life is a woman, truth is a woman, whilst art perpetually creates new objects of attraction and desire . . . art becoming the arch-seducer'. Although he does not dismiss the notion, expressed in 'The Gay Science' of 1882, that somewhere in the world there could be women with 'lofty, heroic and royal souls, capable of and ready for grandiose responses, resolutions and sacrifices, capable of and ready for rule over men because in them the best elements of man . . . have become an incarnate ideal', he has to dismiss such possibilities because they 'always retain some motherly and housewifely colouration'. Similarly he declared that 'the perfect woman is a higher type of human than the perfect man', but added the corollary, 'and also something much more rare'. We should, however, perhaps be a little careful in attributing many of his otherwise offensive and unacceptable pronouncements concerning women as anything other than 'tongue-in-cheek' puns and metaphors, not necessarily reflecting his personal views. And even if he really meant some of his 'truths about women as such', he readily admitted in *Beyond Good and Evil* of 1886 that 'these are simply only *my* truths!'
2. Nietzsche's 'recurrence' must not be confused with the ideas of Mircea Eliade (1907–86), the Romanian philosopher and historian of religion. His 'Eternal Return' was concerned with 'the terror of history', whereby people feel the need to return to the Beginning at regular intervals, to escape the linear succession of events. He saw the abandonment of mythical thinking as the cause of modern man's anxieties.
3. *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, by Mabel Collins, ch. 8, which, she said, was written 'in a state of walking clairvoyance' and published in 1885. (It was repeated in *Light on the Path*, also published in 1885).

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Beyond Thought

LAURENCE J. BENDIT

‘YOU’RE a Theosophist, aren’t you?’ a lady recently asked me. I answered that I was not sure that I was deserving of the title but that I would like to be, whereupon she said to me rather aggressively, ‘I am a pupil of Krishnamurti.’

‘So am I,’ I replied, ‘in so far as he will accept pupils.’

‘But you can’t be both,’ she persisted.

‘I have followed Krishnamurti since the beginning,’ was my answer. ‘But I have never been a *follower* because he does not want followers but wants us to be independent individuals. And I have never had the slightest trouble in being also a Theosophist.’

‘You can’t be both. In the Theosophical Society you have to *think*’, she said. (I silently wished that were true.) ‘And Krishnamurti says you have to stop thinking.’

‘Agreed’, I rather tactlessly said, ‘but only if you are *able* to think, and do so. You cannot stop doing something which perhaps you have never done.’

On this we parted. But she set me

pondering about thought and what might be said to lie beyond it. I decided that the whole matter rested in our use of that central, cardinal principle of man, Mind, and especially in those powers of the mind which we most currently use: perception on the incoming side, thought and feeling within the fabric of the mind itself, the latter followed, maybe, by outgoing action.

I saw that perception and its reciprocal, action, might be by analogy taken to be the warp of the tapestry of our minds, while thought and feeling would be the weft, running across the others. The first two extend beyond the actual place where weaving occurs, but thought and feeling run between the selvages and to all intents and purposes remain in what might, in other words, be called the subjective world. The warp extends into the objective realm, in a two-way operation. In the interweaving of the two pairs of functions a tapestry, patterned and at least potentially rich and beautiful, is constantly being created, unrolling like one of the Chinese

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scroll-pictures where only a section of the whole is shown at any one time, the exposed part being what we call the conscious mind, the rest being the unconscious.

The analogy appealed to me. But what of the tapestry as a whole? That seemed to be where our argument led to. Is thought indeed more than a limited process when one comes to think of Truth? And if so, what lies beyond it? Is it indeed something to be discarded in favour of some new and as yet unrealized and unknown faculty? Or is it, as seems to be the law of evolution, to be absorbed into a new pattern of a higher order where it would have its place, somewhat in the way of the vegetable or vegetative life in the latter evolutionary state of the animal?

It is this which seemed the more likely, and hence is a ground for further study. Should we not do better to put it, not that we must stop thinking, but to learn to think differently, to use the mind in a new manner, bringing into it all that has gone before at the more-than-bodily level of our total existence?

This seems to be the key to the future. But if so, what is the difficulty? Something must be preventing us from going on easily into the new form of mind. On due reflection, it seems that the trouble is the mental habit we have grown, and have been using for at least a few centuries, trying to extricate our thinking from the confused mass-mentality of the herd of which we are a part — mankind at its present stage of evolution.

In the developing psyche or mind, the

ground from which it grows belongs to the feeling side of life. This, later taking the form of emotion, is primarily instinct, that faculty which is first designed to preserve the species at the physical level. Instincts (in the plural) are simply differentiated parts of an overall urge to live. They include fear and the desire to fight or fly — hence, aggressiveness — to feed, to reproduce. This is a phenomenon not of individuality but of the collective, of the species or subdivisions of the species. Hence it shows, when individuality begins to manifest, as an inchoate, blind tendency to conform. It is the very antithesis of originality and hence of individual thinking. As human beings, on the way to becoming civilized and sophisticated, the evolutionary forces within us urge us to emerge from the mass of instinctive reaction and behaviour.

The consequence of this is that we try to develop thinking — i.e., the function of intellect — in opposition to the development of instinct as it refines itself and becomes emotion which we realize blurs the sharp edges of thought and so is at this stage detrimental to it. So long as we see thought as our way to extricate ourselves and to become independent and individual thinkers, we need to separate the two. Which leads to the strange contradiction that we *feel* (emotionally) that feeling itself has to be relegated to a position inferior to thinking.

This may be the reason why, in 'theosophical' circles, the 'mental' or intellectual 'plane' has in the past been placed, diagrammatically, above the

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‘astral’ or emotional ‘plane’ and as lying between the latter and the more spiritual levels of our being. Such thinking is in line with the tendency, obvious in the world for some two hundred years, to exalt intellectual science and ‘reason’ and — again, *through feeling* — to make an idol of such science.

But people of wider and more modern vision have realized that this is wrong. C. G. Jung puts it that the ‘Scientific method must *serve* (my italic): it errs when it usurps a throne.’ This, in his commentary on the Chinese religious classic, *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, rests in a kind of science entirely different to that of the Western world.

Chinese, and especially Taoist, science, in contradistinction to that of the recent west, does not seek sequential cause-and-effect relationship between things and events. The latter, clearly, lie along the linear track of time as we know it: past, present and future. Taoism, however, looks at the significance of things in the immediate present. At any and every moment there is a pattern around one which reflects the inner state of the individual observing it. Indeed, one has to see himself as one of the objects in that pattern, following its change as time flows past. In that sense, the modern existential attitude is a revival of that ancient philosophy of Tao, which may be said not to follow a linear, sequential methodology, but one which, as it were, cuts across the time-stream ‘at right angles’. This involves another form of mental action from that of time-space or

intellect-science which has been paramount in the West. But who is to say that, apart from the technology which has developed from western science, one is superior to the other in giving us insight into the realities behind the phenomena of living? If anything, the balance may be found on the side of Taoism, in that it cuts right across the tedious processes of trying to find reality through logical, sequential thought — and getting nowhere except into a *cul-de-sac*, in the way some of our most brilliant contemporary philosophers find themselves. (Their conclusions are, indeed, conclusions in the literal sense of that word: shut in, as one is when one goes down a road and finds it blocked by a wall at the end.)

This is not to say that intellectual thought, provided we realize its limitations, is valueless — far from it. But it is not the only mental function we have at our disposal. And here we find interesting (intellect-scientific) material in the field of research into the functions of the brain. Much has come to light as a result of (again, intellect-science) technology.

I refer to the work of neurologists studying the brain when its two main hemispheres have been separated or damaged, whether by accident or surgery. For it then becomes possible to assess the function of each hemisphere as if they were separate organs. This is of value to the student of the occult, in that the physical brain is the outermost fringe of the mechanism by which the inner consciousness of mind reaches the clear-cut focus of the physical world.

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What has emerged is that the left hemisphere of the brain (in left-handers this is reversed) functions in the main on the lines of sequence, of time, of that whole order of acts which we call 'thought'. It is logical, seeing things in order, not all at once. The right hemisphere on the other hand is not sequential, time-governed, but takes things in as wholes. Time gives us a *present*, evanescent, but nevertheless the only part of time from which we operate at any instant. Space, on the other hand, is *all there* at any moment, and it is suggested that the right hemisphere can be said to work in terms of space rather than time.¹

This research shows us, moreover, that in order to function 'normally' (whatever that means) the two hemispheres have to be coordinated and balanced. This depends on the intactness of the *corpus callosum*, which is the mass of nervous tissue joining the hemispheres, at the base of the physical brain. This, incidentally, roofs over the third ventricle of which occultism has a good deal to say in terms of the *Kundalini* forces, the *chakras*, etc.; and in terms of the mythological psychology of the Golden Flower, the Dark Chamber where the King resides, etc. (See the article mentioned in the endnote.)

This apparent digression may, inductively, help us to conceive of the process which has as yet no name except the unsatisfactory one, 'intuition'. We can only say that it is a form of mentation, a step beyond separate thought and feeling and at the same time blending the two in a new synthesis. We should try to find out

more about it. Indeed, we may be sure that it is towards something of the kind that yoga and meditation are aimed; for such practices, designed to increase our awareness of both self and what we feel to be not-self, demand of us something less formalized than intellectual thought, yet better coordinated than inchoate experience.

Thought tends to organize the mind. Feeling, on the other hand, is, in a sense, shapeless, giving us an experience which is almost the reverse of the sequence and logic of thought. Clearly, a progressive and creative mind needs something of both, but the trend of the 'Age of Reason', so-called, that of science in its still current form, has been to organize mental function. This may be seen as partly due to the fact that mass as against individual consciousness, derives from the collective herd instinct from which individuality has to extricate itself if it wishes to develop; and in this, thought of the type shown in the left hemisphere of the brain has been the instrument. At the same time, this has led to the exaggeration which places thought in a rank superior to feeling even of the finest kind. We now have to redress the balance.

How? Each one probably has to find his own method, one suited to his own individual and unique pattern, yet still within the broad categories of his type, whether we think of this in terms of the 'seven rays', of astrology or the rest of the catalogue. But there seems to be one general suggestion for the present-day intelligent Westerner at least, which is to

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dis-organize his mind, to get himself clear of the rigidity which tends to permeate society. It is in effect what the rebels against 'the Establishment' seem to be trying to do today, and with reason.

We need, in other words, to loosen up the organization which is the pride of intellectual science, at least sufficiently to allow a new pattern of mind to emerge. *To allow* are the operative words, not *to make*, for evolution is, in its natural state, permissive rather than mandatory. Our intellects, having reached a certain state of logic and organization then stand in the way of these forces. The individual fears to lose what he has been at pains to acquire, and to find himself plunged once more into the morass of mass-feeling and animal instinctual drives.

It is clear that we have to discover how to allow these forces to shift us *forward* into a new form where both intellect and feeling will have equal place alongside one another. The modern mind is afraid that, if it relaxes, it will move *back* into its mass, and lose its individuality. The same kind of process has to take place as that which happens when a larval insect becomes a pupa or chrysalis; the larva dissolves and breaks up but then becomes the perfect *imago* or mature insect, far finer than its original. That such a thing is not only possible but inevitable if we are to fulfil our destinies as men seems to become increasingly clear. But this can only happen if, as my interlocutor said, we learn how to stop thinking in the old way, replacing the old pattern by something better; for then things can

happen in our understanding of life which neither old-type feeling nor old-type thinking can give us. Logic must give way to super-logic, emotion to the deep feeling known to the artist, be he a creator or one who is sensitive to beauty without of necessity being able to create at the physical level.

It is a useful exercise to try to experience non-logical and non-sequential awareness. Our habit is to study these things 'lineally', in detail, step after step, perhaps to insist on knowing intellectually the structure of what we are observing. But there seems also to be the possibility of cognizing it 'spacially' without reducing the thing cognized to intellectual terms. A myth — like a work of art — can have a direct impact without being broken down into an erudite study of symbolism, a dream may operate therapeutically without formal analysis. What seems important is to be aware of the impact, knowing it to be important and powerful.

To do this one has to extricate oneself from the (feeling-based) 'Establishment' mind and, as it were, to operate at a level of feeling on a higher octave than the instinctive which makes the mind conservative. It can be done with deliberate practice, and when achieved, it opens up a new series of perceptions based on feeling value rather than intellectual concept.

Logic and mathematics tell us that it is impossible to square a circle in terms of a formula or equation. The converse is, obviously, also true. But super-logic can find the way to do this 'impossible' thing.

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Maybe there is some deep intuition in the fact that the younger generation call certain people 'squares'. They, themselves, in many cases, find interest in symbols, and in particular, in the basic circle — call it *mandala, rosa alchemic*, or whatever it may be: a perfect, rounded, balanced figure. Our task, as Theosophists

is to solve the riddle of squaring the circle by using our minds to link the two — to get rid of the set of habits of belief and obedience to authority which make us 'square', and to move forward, not into anarchy but into the perfection of the *mandala* which encompasses us within the Beingness of God. ✧

Reference

1. Robert Ornstein, *The Psychology of Consciousness*, Viking Press; and article by the present writer, (*British Research Centre Journal*, 1973).

Because he has no high opinion of himself, (the sage's) mind is luminous; not caring for status, he becomes illustrious; being without pride, he achieves success; unassertive, he is supreme. Because he does not strive, no one in the world can vie with his supremacy. There is an old saying: 'The imperfect becomes whole'. How true that is! To become whole and return [to the Source], one must be ever in accord with nature. . . . There is nothing in the world as weak as water, nor anything strong enough to overcome it. . . . The man of great wisdom is like water which, though benefiting all things, never strives. . . . That which is strong and hard gets cut down; that which is pliant and supple is exalted. . . . As low ground forms a foundation for the high, so does humility form the foundation of regard.

Tao Te Ching

Fragments of the Ageless Wisdom

THEOSOPHY is the eternal Ocean of Wisdom. Our literature, our great Theosophists, the various movements and philosophies which have, or have had, connection with Theosophy or with the Theosophical Society, ourselves with our own individual Theosophies and their resultant activities, if any — all are no more, at the most, than channels through which various modes of Theosophy flow into the outer world. Some particular channel may exclusively appeal to an individual temperament. But the Ocean remains, and must ever be guarded as the source whence all fields of individuality shall be able freely to draw the quality of water they need for the kind of crops they are respectively growing. We must not label the Ocean with the name of any channel — person, book, movement, or philosophy.

George S. Arundale
Freedom and Friendship

A Day in the Life of Adyar

PEDRO OLIVEIRA

IT is still quite dark. The roaring of the ocean engulfs the space surrounding the Adyar beach. Although it is still dark some fishermen are preparing their catamarans for their daily journey into the sea. Others walk towards the Adyar river. A number of their children study in the Olcott Memorial High School and come from the many 'kuppam' or fishing villages nearby.

As dawn silently unfolds its grace upon the compound many birds begin their daily activities, an important one among them being singing. Crows, kingfishers, mynahs, a variety of wrens, pigeons and many others announce to all and sundry that a new day has come. Much before she has had her breakfast the President is busy, in the early hours of the morning, feeding three dogs, three cats as well as the visiting mongooses and crows. All these animals have adopted her, unceremoniously, and flock around Parsi Quarters.

As dawn gives way to the gentle morning light dozens of walkers pour into

the compound for their daily exercise and delight in the hallowed grounds. They include senior citizens, judges, businessmen and women, teachers and others from many walks of life. Often new applications for walking permits are received.

At seven o'clock begins the working day of a number of workers on the compound, including the sweepers who help in keeping the main road clear and clean. Workers are also active in the vast area of the Coconut Grove and in other parts of Adyar as well. Bhojanasala, our Indian style canteen, is busy supplying Indian breakfast to various homes and to regular boarders. Soon Leadbeater Chambers' staff will be busy preparing lunch for workers and eventual visitors.

When the Founders moved to Adyar, in December 1882, they not only established it as the International Headquarters of the TS, they also started here wide-ranging humanitarian and philanthropic initiatives that continue to this day. The philanthropic work of the TS at Adyar is done through the coordination of the

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

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Olcott Education Society. It has under its administration the following activities: Olcott Memorial High School, HPB Hostel, Social Welfare Centre and Besant Memorial Animal Dispensary.

The HPB Hostel, located in Besant Gardens, houses twenty-five boys from poor, mostly fisher families, in the age group of 10 to 16 years. They are provided with nutritious food and are given clothes. All of them undergo periodical medical check-ups. Their daily activities include yoga, meditation, exercise, games, prayer and listening to edifying stories. The boys do the gardening work and watering plants around the Hostel building regularly. They go for outings and picnics and also try their hand in painting. They also do social work like beach cleaning periodically. In the Hostel they watch television educational programmes as well as children's films.

The Olcott Memorial High School gives completely free education and is a co-educational school having 550 students. The medium of instruction is Tamil. Students are also given every day nutritious breakfast and the noon meal. Uniforms, notebooks and textbooks are also given. Students come from nearby fishing hamlets and also from the families of daily wage earners, housemaids and unskilled labourers. The school has computer facilities, a well-equipped library, English language learning, an audio visual room, a resource room and a science laboratory. In the craft section students learn tailoring, embroidery, art, screen printing and bookbinding.

In sports, Kabaddi, Kho-Kho and volleyball are played by both girls and boys and football by boys only. Students of the School after passing out of the 10th standard go on to complete two years of pre-university and about 70% go on to complete their graduation. They normally do not have difficulty in getting a job and settle down well in their life. This year the pass rate of 10th standard students at the School has reached an all time high of 87% compared to the state average of 84%. One of the reasons for this year's success is the dedication of teachers in supporting students with their studies through supplemental after school classes. Through the Tamil Nadu Science Projects the students also learn about organic farming, termites, medicinal plants and the ecological effects of introduced tree and plant species.

The Social Welfare Centre reaches out to the poorest sections of the people in the neighbourhood and helps children and womenfolk to grow into healthier and happier human beings. About one hundred children in the age group of 2 to 6 years are assisted on a daily basis at the Centre. A large open space is provided for children to play and spend happy hours under the cool shade of trees and amidst clean, well-cared-for surroundings. Well-ventilated class rooms, clean toilets and a dining hall provide for these children a healthy home away from home.

The Day Care Centre is committed to look after the physical, emotional and psychological needs of the children when

their mothers are at work. It also provides training in vocational skills for adolescent girls and young women on the threshold of their working lives. There are a variety of play activities, including rhymes and songs, art and craft, storytelling and acting. For the older children between the ages of 4 and 5, the kindergarten offers the development of motor skills through use of paper and clay, the nourishment of observation, listening skills and an informal introduction to the wonders of language and number.

A qualified doctor is in attendance every day for an hour. Children are taken on outings to picnics, sightseeing tours, the zoo and the children's park. Nutritious food is given in the morning and noon and also multivitamin tablets as well as some fruit, buttermilk or juice and occasional sweets. Educational and vocational training is given for women and girls who drop out from school. They are trained in tailoring, embroidery and weaving, and paid for the work they do.

Although animal welfare activities have been part of the work at Adyar for more than a century, the Besant Memorial Animal Dispensary, located in Besant Gardens, was inaugurated in July 2000. It has three veterinarians and treats an average of thirty-five animals per day, including dogs, cats, a variety of birds including parrots, pigeons, poultry, but also cattle and buffaloes. On rare occasions the Dispensary has treated a camel, an elephant and a pony. Approximately 2,000 minor surgeries are done every year, which include animal birth

control ones. Animals are also vaccinated against rabies. Approximately 10,000 animals are treated every year.

The Dispensary also conducts an important Outreach Programme to treat many different animals in distant villages, in a radius of one hundred kilometres from Chennai, which have no access to regular veterinary help. Two veterinarians with their two attendants normally leave at 5.30 a.m. and reach the village concerned at around 7.30 am. They usually ask the villagers to get their animals to a common place, usually a courtyard or the vicinity of a temple or church where they are treated. They also vaccinate cattle and sheep against Foot and Mouth Disease. Around 12,000 animals have been treated by the Outreach Programme since its inception. The Dispensary needs to instal X-ray and ultra-sound machines and, in the near future, to replace its road-weary van.

The Adyar Library and Research Centre, founded in 1886 by Col. Olcott, is a haven of quiet, erudition and scholarship. Besides its large collection of books and manuscripts, its spacious reading room displays a number of periodicals dealing with Indological studies as well as publications devoted to different religious traditions like Buddhism, Jainism, Hinduism and its different schools of thought, amongst others. It also includes Theosophical journals and magazines from around the world. The next issue of the Library's Bulletin, *Brahmavidyā*, is under preparation. The Library also has a distinguished

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catalogue in the field of Indology and Sanskrit studies, and recently brought out two reprints: *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya* of Ksemarāja and *Studies on Some Concepts of Alamkāra Śāstra*.

The Theosophical Publishing House continues to help in the dissemination of Theosophical teachings far and wide and in attracting the attention of more publishers, both in India and abroad. Its recent reprints include *Gāyatri* by I. K. Taimni, *Viveka-chudāmani* translated by Mohini M. Chatterji and *The Astral Body* by Arthur E. Powell. The Editorial Department is finalizing the text of a new book, *The World around Us*, containing the editorial notes by Mrs Radha Burnier in *The Theosophist* for the period of 1980 to 2007. Also in preparation is *The Science of Peace* by Bhagavan Das.

The School of the Wisdom, which was started by Mr C. Jinarājadāsa in November 1949, will be completing sixty years of continuous activity with a special programme next November: a silent retreat with the Buddhist teacher Venerable Ajahn Sumedho. It will be followed by a course with Dr Satish Inamdar on 'Brain, Consciousness and Transformation' and one with Prof. C. A. Shinde on 'Human Evolution and Spirituality'. The second session of the School starts after the International Convention, in January 2010, with a course by Mr Colin Price on 'Theosophy and its Practical Implications'. The School usually attracts a number of students from different parts of the world and many from India for they realize the

special opportunity of delving deeper into the perennial Wisdom Teachings in the beautiful and uplifting atmosphere that reigns at Adyar.

Many visitors, both from abroad as well as from India, come to the compound every day. Their perambulations take them to the Banyan tree and its stately dignity, the different shrines, including the Buddhist temple which together with the bodhi tree creates a unique atmosphere which is conducive to silence and deep introspection. Some also stop on their way back at the Headquarters Hall and gaze at the many symbols of religious traditions, both living ones as well as those from the hoary past.

In the late afternoon the several offices close, workers go home and a new wave of walkers comes into the estate. Some of them walk right through the compound and, proceeding by the river path, reach the beach gate and are welcomed by the boundlessness of the sea and sky. The animal life at Adyar, following the movement of Nature, also begins to retire and a vast spirit of quiet and peace descends on the whole compound. Walking alone through the coconut grove or on the main road one can feel engulfed by curtains of blessedness. When the night falls all is quiet. The gentle breeze that blows is like a sweet chant that speaks of profound harmony and oneness, the certainty that 'the Soul of things is sweet'. Another day at Adyar has come to an end while the compound is pervaded by unending blessedness for all. ✧

Karma and Consciousness

C.V. K. MAITHREYA

‘TO KNOW’ implies ‘to be at peace with oneself’ because there is ‘full union between the Knower and the Known’. In this state the operation of Karma ceases. Until then one is faced with the vast, incomprehensible picture which the Law of Karma presents. Madame H. P. Blavatsky says:

To give the merest outline of the States of Consciousness is the most difficult thing in the world, since the Universe is embodied Consciousness, and a knowledge of the States of Consciousness means a knowledge of the Planes of the Universe, and of all correspondences in the Cosmos, the Solar System and Man.

Let us not merely dwell on the didactic and theoretical aspects, but rather consider the practical aspects of our journey towards self-realization. The complex and sometimes inexplicable ways of the Law of Karma cannot be understood by the uninitiated and the laity. Yet it is by carefully following the path of self-denial that one transgresses the *mayavic* world of the psyche and ascends into realms that leave no footprints on karmic sands which need to be revisited to face

retribution at a later time, on a later day and, perhaps, in a later life.

There are said to be three kinds of Karma: Sañchita Karma, Prārabdha Karma, and Āgāmi Karma.

1. Āgāmi: Bodily actions good and bad — done after the acquisition of discriminative knowledge.

2. Sañchita: Actions formerly done, serving as seeds to grow in countless births; the store of former actions preserved.

3. Prārabdha: The actions of this body (i.e. birth) which give pleasure or pain in this life alone.

The Theosophist (vol.X, p.235) says:

Sañchita-karma includes human merits and demerits accumulated in the preceding and in all other previous births. That portion of the *Sañchita-karma* destined to influence human life in one or the present incarnation is called *Prārabdham*. The third kind of karma is the result of the merits and demerits of the present acts. *Āgāmi* extends over all your words, thoughts, and acts. What you think, what you speak, what you do, as well as whatever results your thoughts, words, and acts produce on yourself, and on those affected

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by them, fall under the category of the present karma, which will be sure to sway the balance of your life for good or for evil in your future development.

Man operates in the phenomenal world using his mind or *manas*. Creation of karma depends largely on the motive that propels action. Madame Blavatsky says: 'The law of Karma is a moral law, and where no moral responsibility exists, there can be no application of the law of Karma.' This means that action without either good or evil motive, can create no Karma. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in the *Bhagavadgītā* explains further and clarifies this aspect.

We find the instruction or exhortation that we should aim to reach the state of consciousness which is beyond the reach of Karma and beyond the mind. The more we try to comprehend what this plane of consciousness or state of being may be, the more we are led to understand that it is not personal but universal and is actually the 'centre of life' and of consciousness.

Mme Blavatsky says: 'Every transgression in the private life of a mortal is, according to Occult philosophy, a double-edged sword in the hand of Karma; one for the transgressor, the other for the family, nation, sometimes even for the race, that produced him.' Nirvāna too should not be exclusive.

J. Krishnamurti, the mystic philosopher, declared:

So, your consciousness, with which you have identified yourself as your 'individual' consciousness, is an illusion. It is the consciousness of the rest of mankind.

You are the world and the world is you.

Please see the responsibility that is involved in it. You have struggled all your life, as an individual, something separate from the rest of humanity, and when you discover that your consciousness is the consciousness of the rest of mankind, it means you are mankind, you are not an individual. You may have your own particular skill, tendency, idiosyncrasy, but you are actually the rest of mankind, because your consciousness is the consciousness of every human being.

What does this mean? In a cut-throat world where the rat race escalates into war and finally, terrorism, we need to find this oneness, this spirit of universal brotherhood. We have been taught that the only secure foundation for universal morality is universal brotherhood. This cannot be where there is the motive of self. It cannot be where the mind is closed. It cannot be where the thoughts and motives of human beings are impure. Apart from the fact that thought influences one's own action, thought influences others' thoughts and actions as well. We should dwell on this aspect, from the point of view of not only what mystics and philosophers have said, but that of what scientists have to say today.

Annie Besant says (*Thought Forms*):

It is our earnest hope — as it is our belief — that this little book will serve as a striking moral lesson to every reader, making him realize the nature and power of his thoughts, acting as a stimulus to the

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noble, a curb on the base. With this belief and hope we send it on its way. . . .

Telepathy, clairvoyance, movement without contact, though not yet admitted to the scientific table, are approaching the Cinderella-stage. The fact is that science has pressed its researches so far, has used such rare ingenuity in its questionings of nature, has shown such tireless patience in its investigations, that it is receiving the reward of those who seek, and forces and beings of the next higher plane of nature are beginning to show themselves on the outer edge of the physical field.

Her words written almost a century ago have proved prophetic; today many an enlightened and inspired scientist's work is moving rapidly from what can be called fringes to what modern exact science accepts as verified fact. However, this is a long journey and an arduous task for the earnest scientist who seeks the spiritual. It would be important to mention some of the interesting work being done by some of these scientists. Their work has an impact not only on the scientific world, but also on the moral and spiritual worlds.

Rupert Sheldrake, the so-called controversial biologist, declares:

The morphic fields of mental activity are not confined to the insides of our heads. They extend far beyond our brain through intention and attention. We are already familiar with the idea of fields extending beyond the material objects in which they

are rooted: for example magnetic fields extend beyond the surfaces of magnets; the earth's gravitational field extends far beyond the surface of the earth, keeping the moon in its orbit; and the fields of a cell phone stretch out far beyond the phone itself. Likewise the fields of our minds extend far beyond our brains.

In an interview with Mathew Cromer, Rupert Sheldrake states the view that science is a method and not a position. This indeed embodies the spirit of inquiry.

Moving on to other researches, we find amazing discoveries of interconnectedness between two living beings. *Dream Telepathy*, a book co-authored by Montague Ullman MD and Stanley Krippner PhD with Alan Vaughan, gives details of the work of the dream research team at the Maimonides Medical Center in New York City. Over a ten-year period, they conducted pioneering scientific experiments in telepathic dreaming. We are told that the team investigated how one person could transfer thoughts to another while the second person was sleeping and thereby influence the second person's dreams.

They accord with what is written in *Distant Mental Influence: Its Contributions to Science, Healing, and Human Interactions* by William Braud:

Concisely stated, the evidence compiled in this volume indicates that, under certain conditions, it is possible to know and to influence the thoughts, images, feelings, behaviours, and physiological and physical activities of other persons and living

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organisms — even when the influencer and the influenced are separated by great distances in space and time, beyond the reach of the conventional senses. Because the usual modes of knowing and influence are eliminated in these studies, their success reveals modes of human interaction and interconnection beyond those currently recognized in the conventional natural, behavioural, and social sciences. Besides indicating areas of incompleteness and misapprehensions about such phenomena that exist in current scientific theories, these distant mental influence findings have important implications for our fuller understanding of consciousness, health and wellness, our typically untapped human potential, and the spiritual aspects of our lives.

There are other valuable researches such as these. The symbiotic relationship between human beings is nothing new. It is an indisputable and immortal fact that Mother Nature has bound us all

together in bonds of brotherhood and ties of sympathy.

Mumukshutva is sometimes interpreted as ‘a state of intense desire for liberation’. Our teachings constantly remind us that it is indeed the opposite of selfishness. It is a state of Compassion or Love. This love encompasses all sentient beings and all life. When Patañjali speaks of performing *samyama* on the path of *kaivalya*, it is not an ‘exercise’ or process that is referred to. Most practitioners only look at *āsana* and *prānāyāma* when talking of Yoga. It is unravelling of the mystery of consciousness that reveals to us that, whether it is Karma or Nirvāna, it is not just individual but collective. He who perceives this not, is but blind.

Since there is hope for man *only in man*
I would not let *one* cry whom I could
save! . . .

These words ring in our ears. All we can do is invoke the Highest with them.

The only decree of *Karma*, an eternal and immutable decree, is absolute Harmony in the world of Matter as it is in the world of Spirit. It is not, therefore, *Karma* that rewards or punishes, but it is we who reward or punish ourselves, according as we work with, through and along with Nature, abiding by the laws on which harmony depends, or breaking them.

H. P. Blavatsky
The Secret Doctrine

The Path of Goodness

ERICA L. GEORGIADES

A FEW days ago I arrived from Greece, where there was much tension. We lived through many days of savage vandalism in Athens, where hundreds of shops, cars and properties were burned and destroyed. India, which is mourning the victims of the terrorist attack in Mumbai, is filled with tension trying to find ways to prevent future terrorist attacks. These situations show the chaos which is growing all over the world, and remind one of the prophecy in the *Vishnu-purāna* about the Kalki Avatāra which, among other things, says:

There will be rulers reigning over the Earth who will think of themselves as modern and superior; they shall rule through leaders of nations, and these leaders shall be men of vulgar, corrupt disposition, having a violent temper, and ever addicted to falsehood and evil. They will inflict death on women, children and animals . . . The people of various countries, influenced by the propaganda of their leaders, will follow the example of their leaders, and the barbarians of materialism . . . In all nations, wealth and spirituality will decrease day by day until the entire world will be corrupt, crooked and depraved.

We are witnessing day by day the prophecy of the *Vishnu-purāna* becoming true. We know we are only in the beginning of Kali Yuga, and things will get worse. The winter into which humanity is entering promises to be a dark and very cold one. But we Theosophists have a mission, which we must try to carry on from generation to generation, and this is to try to keep the *spiritual truths* alive. To stand against materialism, to stand against barbarism, to stand against violence is part of our work. But how can we do this?

The promotion of our three Objects is a step in this direction, but not the major one. The major one is to make Theosophy a living force in our everyday life. There is nothing that can cause more impact in the world than becoming a living example of the force of Theosophy. We Theosophists should work towards this. This implies an inner commitment, which is to begin treading a certain path — the *path of goodness*. Here we may ask: what is the nature of goodness and how can we express it in our everyday life? How can we become a living and inspiring example of the force of Theosophy?

Mrs Erica L. Georgiades is a member of the Theosophical Society in Greece. Talk given at the international Convention, 2008.

The Path of Goodness

In order to reply to this question we must first have a look at the definition of the Hellenic word *theosophy*. It has two compounds: *Theos* (God-Divine) and *Sophia* (Wisdom). In ancient Greece *Sophia* was one of Plato's four cardinal Virtues. According to Plato, Wisdom was an inner condition which is an expression of the energy of the soul.

When we talk about Theosophy, we refer to the energy of the soul. Consequently, we refer to something that can be known only from within. Theosophy is truth, and there are no words in any language to express the great truth of Theosophy, which is Divine Wisdom. You may learn by heart all the systems presented in the works of Blavatsky and in the works of others; you may write, debate, teach, and affirm this knowledge is Theosophy, but you will still be trapped by intellect, and consequently unable to know what Theosophy is. In order to become a living example of Theosophy we must look not only at books and to those things that are outside us, but to that which is closest to us, our inner self.

Our search for truth is the search for our real nature, our divine nature. It is the longing for a conscious union with the divine. The divine that we long for is in fact so close to us, so accessible to us, that we cannot see it. We keep searching for it in everyone else, except where we have to look. Plato once said there is nothing closer to us than our soul, and if we do not know that which is so close, what is the meaning of knowing things that are far? The one who truly focuses on

knowing his own self and truly comprehends it, is the one who will have the ability to tread the Path of Goodness. He, and only he, is a real *Theosophos*.

A question still remains open: what is the nature of goodness? We may say good actions are the result of actions without attachment, actions without attachment to ideas, to things, to the *great heresy* which is the attachment to our illusory and transitory personality. The major lesson taught in Hellenic mythology is that *the temple of virtue is within us*. The virtues we express depend on the virtues we have cultivated within us, for we know the mind is to be found where we have sent it. Pythagoras taught this to his disciples when he advised them to reflect upon the virtues they wanted to acquire. Because when reflecting upon the virtues that one aspires to acquire, such virtues will gradually become a reality in the life of the aspirant. What better definition of virtue than the one Lao Tzu gave us: 'I am good to people who are good, I am also good to people who are not good, because Virtue is goodness.' Virtue is goodness. And the nature of goodness is selfless action, without attachment.

The path of goodness is not a lethargic path, but a path of action. To act with goodness we need to act without attachment; only the fruit of such actions can bring great goodness to humanity. In the *Bhagavadgītā* (III.25) we read the following: 'As the ignorant act from attachment to action, so should the wise act without attachment desiring the welfare of the world.' There is nothing that justifies

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suffering except our own ignorance. Attachment is born out of ignorance. By performing actions without attachment we reach the Divine as Lord Kṛṣṇa said in the *Bhagavadgītā*: ‘Therefore without attachment, always perform action which should be done; for by performing action without attachment, man reaches the Supreme’ (III.19).

We must also remember that even if the opportunities for great deeds should never come our way, opportunities for good deeds can be renewed day by day. The thing for us to long for is goodness, not glory. There is a saying that goes: Yesterday is history, tomorrow is mystery

and today is a gift. Let us realize that today’s ‘gift’ is a *divine gift*. Let us keep in mind that we are united here today, in the Theosophical Society, for we all have a common interest, the good of mankind, to maintain the spiritual truths alive, to stand against materialism, violence, barbarism and fanaticism. And what is the better way to do it? What is the noblest way to do it? It is by transforming our everyday life into an example of goodness. In this process, we discover the real nature of Theosophy. Voltaire once said: ‘Every man is guilty of all the good he did not do.’ Let us not be guilty of the good we did not do. ✧

When the earth is shaken with her earthquake
And the earth yields up her burdens,
And man says, ‘What ails her?’
That day she will relate her chronicles
Because your Lord inspires her.
That day mankind will issue forth in scattered
groups to be shown their deeds.
And whoever has done good, an atom’s weight
will see it then,
And whoever has done ill, an atom’s weight
will see it then.

Holy Qur’an 99

Brotherhood

S. RAMU

WE are all partakers of brotherhood. That is how Annie Besant, the best known President of the Theosophical Society, described men and women. She said: 'It must be seen that brotherhood is a fact in nature, rooted in one life, whereof we are all partakers. Wherever God is immanent, there brotherhood exists.' She also said that 'brotherhood is, in very truth, a law in nature'. It takes a lot of insight to realize these truths, or realize these obvious facts of nature as fundamental truths.

What is the basis for brotherhood being a fact in Nature? The Mahatma Letters say that in the empire of Nature, 'all things are linked together by magnetic sympathy; therefore there is a connection even between a distant star and a man or woman on this earth'. This enormous, perhaps limitless, breadth of relationships is the basis for the statement. We do not have to invent brotherhood or believe in it; we have only to recognize that the cosmos itself is linked together 'by subtle threads of magnetic sympathy'. By such recognition we spontaneously become more and more filled with the spirit of brotherhood.

The infinite universe is in itself an organism, which we can name as an organism of brotherhood and we, as partakers or its constituent sub-organisms, are united in the parent. Therefore, brotherhood is a fact, not only amongst human beings, but in its broadest and all inclusive sense (for there can be no exclusions) amongst all that exists, including, plants, animals, minerals, and so on. So William Wordsworth wrote of 'a brotherhood of venerable trees'.

Annie Besant spoke and wrote inspiringly on the recognition and actualization of the truth of brotherhood. Annie Besant's energy flowed in many directions, but there was a unity of purpose in all the work she undertook. That purpose was the betterment of humanity which can only be achieved through promotion of peace and goodwill. These in turn are made possible through the spirit of universal brotherhood.

Religions were the most terrible cause of strife in her time. Men were divided on the basis of this division which undermined the spirit of brotherhood. Sharing her pain she said 'what mockery it seems . . . to prate of the Brotherhood

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of Religions', because there is very little brotherhood in the religions. She said that in the early days of each religion, a spirit of brotherhood prevailed, and therefore the first expression of a religion seems to be brotherhood.

The basic teachings of all religions are the same, and all the great saints and sages have spoken of the divine principle of the unity of all life, and the possibility of good and benevolent values flowing from the real spirit of brotherhood. From that understanding it should be possible to 'spread that spirit of knowledge and love which shall blend all nations into one Brotherhood of Humanity, and merge all religions in the Universal Wisdom'. In the little booklet entitled *Theosophic Life*, the main points in life on which brighter light shines out include the first object of the Theosophical Society — to be a nucleus of brotherhood, and helping everything that makes for brotherhood. Annie Besant also said that spiritual consciousness always speaks for unity, for brotherhood, for service, and for sacrifice. Brotherhood which is universal, is the surest foundation for morality and order, because it will dissolve the conflicting interests of men on the material plane. When I do not accept another living being as a part or

partaker of universal brotherhood, I am admitting another divine source or God, because brotherhood is in every truth a law in nature, and a law proves itself by the destruction of that which disregards it, and by the support of that which is harmonious with it. Nation after nation, state after state, have fallen into ruin by ignoring brotherhood, as also organizations and institutions. As Besant said, where the strong oppresses the weak, instead of protecting them, where the rich exploit the poor, instead of aiding them, where the learned despise the ignorant, instead of educating them; there the inexorable finger of nature writes over the civilization: Doomed. Only when brotherhood is practised can civilization endure.

The Theosophical Society admits that universal brotherhood is undefined and unlimited. We are saved from the task of having to define it! In the brotherhood of humanity, there is naturally a common basis of morality, which Annie Besant states succinctly: 'That which by establishing harmonious relations makes for unity is right; that which divides and disintegrates, which makes for separateness (or division) is wrong.' This perhaps is both the definition and a pointer to the practice of brotherhood. ✧

Men are intended to meet their fellow-men in an understanding spirit and be interested in one another and learn to cooperate in different ways for their mutual enrichment and good.

N. Sri Ram

Privilege Creates Responsibilities

MERCEDES VILA ROBUSTE

THEOSOPHY in its central aspect is essentially the science of Life, its nature, potentiality and action. *Manas* — being a central principle of man, not the highest, but what really constitutes man, the thinker — can affiliate itself either to the highest point in its constitution or the lowest. Man is an entity who unites in himself the highest Spirit and the lowest matter. The word ‘lowest’ in this context means that in the gradation that separates Spirit from matter, it is the lowest grade of matter, just as the highest point corresponds to the highest quality of Spirituality.

Similarly, there are differences in tones and forms, movements, ideas, qualities, etc. Also, in the mind there can be extraordinarily subtle movements, each with its quality, like a musical note, each distinct from the other, distinctions between one idea and another, and different kinds of feelings and emotions. Such mental processes as reason, judgement, quickness of mind, are acting when dealing with different vibrations. These qualities, including the capacity to act with

precision, promptness and skill, arise from the relationship between mind and matter.

The nature of the mind consists of both thought and action. When one wants to understand the nature of something which is a whole, most of the time one judges it from what he knows of the parts. But it is quite different when there is awareness, which enfolds the whole and at once can experience the nature of the unity. The whole, when it is real, has a quality of beauty which cannot be seen in the parts.

The aspect of consciousness which is spiritual, and which we call *Buddhi*, always functions in terms of a perfect whole, and in its creations it expresses the nature or the beauty of the inner side. Such manifestations take place without effort and show each time perfect creation. Its action is very much like the flowering of a plant in physical Nature, which constitutes the extraordinary side of life, a divine aspect.

According to Theosophical teachings, at every point in space there are both matter and Spirit. They coexist, they are

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both eternal, but in every expression the beauty, the wonder, belongs to the Divine manifestation of forms, and form is an expression of life. To be more or less conscious of the beauty of all that happens in our daily life, if we try to purify our vehicles and understand that our being has to work to polish the personality, all these considerations and work can be found as a privilege, as a result of having the teachings of Theosophy at our disposal.

The more one realizes that a person can go through a transformation with the quality of love, love that does not mean possessiveness, all other virtues will follow or will be included in that love. Then the person will notice a kind of regeneration which comes from his inner being.

Life, which is unique energy, expresses its true and inner nature in complete spontaneity, offers us a feeling of responsibility, because all that we learn, feel and think has to be used to serve, to act harmoniously, with understanding towards others, with dedication to the work. Part of our work is to unfold all that is best in ourselves, and with such unfoldment we can really be better helpers and more responsible in what life presents us every day. We also need a certain understanding before we can act rightly and assume more responsibility.

All that has to be realized in a state of freedom. The quality of freedom is necessary to discover the truth in ourselves. It is not only a discovery but an experience, and then we know it is truth in the real sense, which belongs to the inner nature of man. To come to this truth there has to

be a certain seriousness. We should find out how we live our lives. There has to be a change, and it will be possible if human beings change, which means that there must be individuals who take up the task of transforming themselves.

Contact with Theosophy and the Theosophical Society has brought about some changes in the lives of many members. Perhaps we have become more open-minded, kinder and less superficial, which means to be more responsible about all that we have learned. At the same time, it is a privilege to give or put into practice such learning whenever the occasion arises. We have to continue changing, and even at a more fundamental level in the present, if one feels the need.

In the midst of many activities there is the problem of how to live and act, how to speak and think correctly. Action is a duty and includes speech, emotion, thought and all that takes place in the conscious and unconscious mind. As the *Bhagavadgītā* says: 'Not for an instant can we be free from action.' Even if we do nothing outwardly, there is action from within, a continuing interaction with everything that surrounds us.

To develop spiritual qualities means that first one has to go through a long process of experiences and evolution to come upon the fact that the law of cause and effect is in operation. Everyone will see this in a different way, but the truth of the great law is acting in life, and cannot be stopped because it is going on in an infallible way.

Theosophy offers us the teachings of

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these important facts. It depends on us to see the depth of these teachings and to test how Theosophy works in one's life and in relation to others. To know all this and much more, when we will be prepared for it, we can consider that knowledge as a privilege. All we understand has to be experienced, which means to have more responsibility, so that later on we can apply that understanding in the form of service for the benefit of others, and spontaneously, naturally, sharing it with care,

and sometimes even in silence.

All we discover or learn is for the progress of humanity as a whole, and it is a privilege to be part of the Brotherhood of man, which means to think, feel and act in a responsible way, being conscious of the Laws and Truth of Life. To end with some words of HPB:

'Our aim as members should be not merely to work for the Theosophical Society as such, but to work for mankind through the Society.' ✧

The ancients who wished to manifest their clear character to the world would first bring order to their states. Those who wished to bring order to their states would first regulate their families. Those who wished to regulate their families would first cultivate their personal lives. Those who wished to cultivate their personal lives would first rectify their minds. Those who wished to rectify their minds would first make their wills sincere. Those who wished to make their wills sincere would first extend their knowledge. The extension of knowledge consists in the investigation of things. When things are investigated, knowledge is extended; when knowledge is extended, the will becomes sincere; when the will is sincere, the mind is rectified; when the mind is rectified, the personal life is cultivated; when the personal life is cultivated, the family will be regulated; when the family is regulated, the state will be in order; when the state is in order, there will be peace throughout the world. From the Son of Heaven down to the common people, all must regard cultivation of the personal life as the root or foundation. There is never a case when the root is in disorder and yet branches are in order.

Great Learning, *Confucianism*