

PHILOSOPHY · SCIENCE · RELIGION · THE ARTS

TheoSophia

March 2024 | Volume 85 No. 1
AUTUMN ISSN 1177-8032

THE PRACTICE OF
INSPIRATION

THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE
Bringing the Heart Doctrine to the West

The Hidden Wisdom
Within the Human Being

*The Mysteries of Space,
Time and Purpose*

TheoSophia



FREEDOM OF THE SOCIETY

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

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

Resolution passed by the General Council of The Theosophical Society in 1949.

THE MISSION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Our Mission is to serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realisation of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation and the Unity of all Life.

July 2018 General Council meeting of the Theosophical Society.

TheoSophia is the official magazine of the Theosophical Society in New Zealand.

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TheoSophia is published quarterly and is received by members as part of their annual subscription. For further information and back issues, turn to page 31.

Published by: The Theosophical Society in New Zealand Inc.
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Disclaimer: The Theosophical Society in New Zealand is not responsible for any statement in this magazine. Views expressed are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the society or editor. Except where required by the context but especially in quotations from earlier literature, the word 'man' is to be understood in the generic sense.



Cover:
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9

THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE:
Bringing the Heart Doctrine to the West



20

THE HIDDEN WISDOM WITHIN
THE HUMAN BEING



22

THE MYSTERIES OF SPACE,
TIME AND PURPOSE



26

AWARENESS AND
INTROSPECTION

In this issue

THE HIDDEN SIDE OF THINGS

From the Editor's Desk	3
Poem: <i>Everyone's Wings Matter</i> by Valentina Teclici	3

FEATURES

<i>The Voice of the Silence:</i> Bringing the Heart Doctrine to the West	9
Nancy Reigle	
Living the Teachings	15
Benjamin Creme	
Comments	19
Annie Besant	
The Hidden Wisdom Within the Human Being	20
Barry Bowden	
The Mysteries of Space, Time and Purpose	22
John Sell	
Awareness and Introspection	26
Clara Codd	

BOOKS

Geoffrey Hodson Library	18
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THEOSOLOGY IN ACTION

Diary Dates	3
President's Perspective: <i>The Hidden Side of Things</i>	4
International President: <i>The Practice of Inspiration</i>	6
<i>Participants' Positive Feedback</i> from TSNZ Convention	16
Theosophical Order of Service	28
Vegetarians Today	30
<i>Freedom of the Society</i> statement	31
Resources	31
Directory	32
<i>Theosophical Worldview</i>	Inside back cover

NOTICES

TSNZ School of Theosophy	2
Freedom of Thought	2

TSNZ SCHOOL OF THEOSOPHY 2024

25-28 April

IMPEDIMENTS TO SELF-AWAKENING

*The spiritual world enfolds us,
but we are mostly unaware of it.
Understanding what we do and don't
do is what puts us out of harmony.
This creates a chasm that doesn't
allow consciousness to have access.
The school will explore impediments
to Self-Awakening*



Barry Bowden has been a National Lecturer for The Theosophical Society in Australia and is the Coordinator of the Toowoomba Group. He has toured New Zealand three times and spoke at a South American TS Convention.

Barry completed Clinical Pastoral Education at St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney and formed a deep connection with nature through many years of bio-dynamic farming. This has given him a practical understanding of life, illuminating the study of Theosophy.

Barry likes to discuss what wisdom is with people, no matter what the source, how a progressive understanding of evolution gives deep meaning to life and the beauty behind the plan. He is passionate about theosophy and tries to integrate it into daily life.

Check website for updates and details www.theosophy.nz

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

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

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

Opinions or beliefs neither bestow privileges nor inflict penalties. The Members of the General Council earnestly request every member of the Theosophical Society to maintain, defend and act upon these fundamental principles of the Society and also fearlessly to exercise the right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof, within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.

*Resolution passed by the General Council of The
Theosophical Society in 1924.*

The True Meaning of the Occult

The Hidden Side of Things, theme of this issue of *TheoSophia*, means in essence, 'the occult' as described in the *Theosophical Encyclopedia* as 'secret', 'mysterious', 'recondite' and 'not apprehensible by the mind'. We may also think of mystical or supernatural phenomena. These 'hidden' things have always fascinated humankind and we are drawn to discover more.

Discovery of more about the hidden side of things can be through writers in this issue such as Richard Sell (p.4), Tim Boyd (p.6), Nancy Reigle (p.9) and John Sell (p.22). Other luminaries who have contributed are Benjamin Creme (p.15), Annie Besant (p.19), Barry Bowden (p.20) and Clara Codd (p.26).

In January, TSNZ held its 127th annual convention in Christchurch which was a great success as reported and photographed by attendees on page 16.

The next special TSNZ gathering will be in April when Barry Bowden leads the School of Theosophy (see page 2). Register early for this inspiring and educational event.

As we move into Autumn, we hope you enjoy your copy of *TheoSophia* and discover further 'the hidden side of things'.

Pamela Zane

Editor

editor@theosophy.nz

Contributions of poems or articles are welcome. Articles will be considered if up to 1,500 words, and sent as an email attachment to the editor. Note that *TheoSophia* articles will also be used in part or whole on the website: www.theosophy.nz

TSNZ YouTube site: <https://www.youtube.com/@theosophynz>

Everyone's Wings Matter

We are born to dream that
everyone has wings
and can fly to reach the ridge
of our own ideals,
like the swallow flying in the spring sky
and always returning home.

We are born to hope
that the colour of the world
is a rainbow and we can fly freely
on the oxygen of diversity surrounding us.

We are born to learn
that black, white, brown and blood
are chapters of history,
opportunities of change.

The pain of inequality
can be healed and painted
with the colour of believing
that everyone's wings
are different, beautiful and matter.

Valentina Tecler



DIARY DATES

2024

April 25-28 School of Theosophy, led by Barry Bowden

August 3-4 Immersion Weekend

Theosophical Sundays – 'Exploring Consciousness' Series

June 9 Jude Currihan

June 16 TBA

June 23 Pablo Sender

June 30 TBA

July 7 Ravi Ravindra

July 14 Elena Dovalsantos

FUTURE ISSUES

Date	Theme	Deadline
2024		
June	Harmony and Tolerance	1 April
September	The Perfume of Theosophy	1 July
December	Theosophy, a Reconnection of all Life	1 October

Contact the editor at editor@theosophy.org.nz or
visit our website for the guidelines: www.theosophy.nz/

Check for updates and details of these events: www.theosophy.nz

National President of TSNZ, Richard Sell considers...

The Hidden Side of Things



The word *occult* can conjure up all sorts of images of magic and the esoteric supernatural. The term was originally used in relation to astrology, alchemy and natural magic around the 16th century. The word *occult* simply means 'hidden'. The question then becomes "What is hidden?"

This is an interesting question because such knowledge relating to religion, science and the natural world can be either exoteric (public, not confined to an inner circle of disciples or initiates) or esoteric (understood or known by a small group of people, mysterious, private). Such knowledge can at times, depending on circumstances in the world, be withdrawn or as most likely happens, it goes underground. During the Dark Ages (5th to 10th century) Ancient Wisdom knowledge was generally withdrawn as western civilisations declined and in the later Middle Ages (to about 15th century approximately), it was downright dangerous to be in possession of it – one could be burned at the stake for voicing contrary opinions to the establishment or introducing new knowledge which conflicted with the prevailing modes of thought at the time. This happened time and again in history when theological, scientific discovery or even healing methods were met with denial and condemnation. Witness the suffering brought on those who dared reach for something different or higher – Italian philosopher Giordano Bruno was put to the flame and the likes of Galileo faced the same if he did not back down with his 'heresy'. Thousands of women lost their lives after being accused of witchcraft, so it is little wonder that what was known became hidden.

Knowledge is not so esoteric nowadays, having made its way into mainstream. Some of what was taught in ancient mystery schools has been released, sometimes by seemingly rare finds or discoveries. This is as it should be, as humanity becomes ready and able to digest facts and theories in a more open way with a sense of enquiry. The benefits gained can then be applied to the betterment of humanity, both spiritually and materially.

Still, we need to differentiate between information that can be made public and that which cannot. There is no reason in general that information pertaining to the sciences cannot be made known when discovered – it simply has to navigate through that

particular field or profession's own set of standards. Think here of scientific discovery and progress in medicine. On the theological front, one's safety (in many countries) is not compromised by postulating theories and conjectures on scriptures and their interpretation. Generally, we are free to do this and explore these interesting realms. So, what is left that could be 'hidden'?

To start with, there is a mass of things we don't yet know and understand and have not discovered pertaining to our spiritual nature and our make-up as Spirit and Soul. Mainstream science does not yet accept the Etheric Body or the planes of nature such as the Astral Plane, what they comprise and who and what entities inhabit them. What is the Soul and what occurs after death? Unknowns abound everywhere. These are great discoveries hidden by nature waiting to be discovered. Yet there are other kinds of knowledge, some of which include the questions above, which are known and kept secret or perhaps, only some crumbs dropped for us to find and work with. In C. W. Leadbeater's book *Masters and the Path*, we find one evening CWL and friends on the roof at Adyar in the early days were visited by an adept teacher. Wanting to know more about the Rays, they enquired whether he would tell them all about it. Leadbeater writes "There was a twinkle in our Teacher's eye as he said 'Well, I cannot tell you all about them until you have reached a very high Initiation. Will you have what I can tell you, which will be partial and inevitably misleading, or will you wait until you can be told the whole thing?' Not unnaturally we thought that half a loaf was better than no bread, so we said we would take what we could get."

From this you can see we often only have part of the picture. Why won't the full answers be given? There are some sensible reasons. Firstly, some knowledge is incomprehensible to us without the proper interpretation given by one who knows. We can see this in the Christian Bible. The renowned theosophist and seer, Geoffrey Hodson, has provided esoteric meanings for us in his books such as *The Hidden Wisdom in the Holy Bible* and *Initiates, Initiations and the Path*. Here he explains how Biblical symbols encode esoteric truth. The true meaning was not clear to us from reading scriptures, so to us it is hidden, however we

can find some answers, if we search them out. After meditation and reflection a fuller knowledge may be gleaned.

Knowledge of Self is hard won through lifetimes of toil...

Then there is some knowledge that would not be given out at all. For example, as mentioned in *Masters in the Path* – it cannot be given until certain stages of evolution or consciousness are achieved such as noted in the mystery initiations. The candidate has not earned the right to the knowledge with the hard work of purifying one's nature, enquiry from an altruistic motive and possessing the understanding required to assimilate and use the knowledge correctly. Some knowledge is withheld for our own good. Take for example the one of *Kundalini*. This is a very powerful force used in the faculty known as clairvoyance. Much good can be achieved in healing and theosophical research by utilising *Kundalini*. However, for the unprepared, its rising is a serious business that can physically damage the human being but worse still may be the impacts on one's mental stability and moral compass – with some going mad or becoming demons of passions through misuse. These dangers have been spelled out categorically by Geoffrey Hodson and others, so here we can see a clear reason why we should not hold such knowledge before it is time to do so. Would we lightly give nuclear arms to those who could misuse them? In some things, a guide is needed and we are assured that when the time is right, the teacher will appear.

So much of the obscured knowledge and wisdom in the world cannot be expressed in words or writing that is readily understood – it must be experienced. For example, mystics have attempted to explain *Samadhi* or *Nirvana* but say they fail miserably. How can such experiences of consciousness which are so different from our everyday experience be conveyed fittingly in mere words? Attempts are nevertheless made by some poets and writers. Apart from knowledge given or won from diligent study, there is the greatest occult wisdom awaiting us called 'Self'. Our purpose is to know oneself and the Self-realised person can access knowledge of all and understands well beyond normal comprehension. For those multitudes now travelling the path of swift unfoldment, lifting the barriers to Self-knowledge is our work before us. Poet Kahlil Gibran who penned *The Prophet*, writes "The veil that clouds your eyes shall be lifted by the hands that wove it."

As we unveil more of our higher Self and the inner worlds of Spirit open before us, our perspective changes. The more we know,

the more we realise how little we know. This apparent paradox is expressed by Sir Edwin Arnold in the poetic interpretation of the life of Gautama Buddha, *The Light of Asia*:

Shall any gazer see with mortal eyes, or any searcher know by mortal mind, veil after veil will lift – but there must be, veil upon veil behind.

When we speak of the Hidden Sides of Things, the Occult, we may do no better than to focus on the most precious gem hidden within us, that which is our True Self. Knowledge of Self is hard won through lifetimes of toil, but it is the most rewarding 'knowing' of all because it leads to direct perception and insight which ultimately leads to the liberation of the Soul. Madame Blavatsky wrote on Self-Knowledge:

The first necessity for obtaining self-knowledge is to become profoundly conscious of ignorance; to feel with every fibre of the heart that one is ceaselessly self-deceived.

The second requisite is the still deeper conviction that such knowledge – such intuitive and certain knowledge – can be obtained by effort.

The third and most important is an indomitable determination to obtain and face that knowledge.

Self-knowledge of this kind is unattainable by what men usually call "self-analysis." It is not reached by reasoning or any brain process; for it is the awakening to consciousness of the Divine nature of man.

To obtain this knowledge is a greater achievement than to command the elements or to know the future.

Lucifer, Vol. I, No. 2, October 1887, p.89



THE PRACTICE OF INSPIRATION

Tim Boyd, International President of the Theosophical Society, looks at how we can be positively affected.

There is a familiar expression that we hear across cultures: “Practice makes perfect.” The theory behind it is that repetition tends to ingrain behaviours and if we repeat something sufficiently that behaviour becomes perfected. However, at least based on my personal experience, the idea is more nuanced than the simple expression implies.

Long ago, when my basketball-playing days ended, I had to switch sports and found myself playing tennis during one summer. Soon I realised that I could serve the ball very fast. So, I practised it, over and over. By the time the summer was ending my serve was getting weaker and my shoulder was hurting. Too late I discovered that my method of practice was not using proper mechanics, resulting in a damaged shoulder.

When I moved to Chicago from New York City I had the opportunity to meet some long-time, profound, spiritual students.

One man in particular was renowned for his knowledge of metaphysics. There came a time in his life when he ran into some difficulties. We invited him to come and live with us in our spiritual community. We felt it would be beneficial for him as well as for us young people to be able to imbibe a lifetime of wisdom and practice.

He was almost encyclopedic in his knowledge of various texts and spiritual matters. At that time, every morning we had a group meditation. Shortly we came to find out that this gentleman had no grounding in meditation. Even though all of his life he had been involved in study, his concept of meditation was nothing more than the repetition of affirmations. The whole process and practice of quieting the mind eluded him during a lifetime of practice; he was 80 years old. This opened my eyes that practice, in and of itself, does not make perfect; proper practice does.

The key for us is not the mere repetition of behaviours or ideas, but the proper choice and attention to those things. When we practise we are creating habits. It is a repetition of the body, emotions and mind that creates a certain habit. The difference between our ordinary living and focused practice is awareness and attention. The fact is that, rightly or wrongly, we are *always* practising.

During the course of each day, we are rehearsing patterns of behaviour; whether or not they are productive to our unfoldment is another issue. Often, we are practising our best methods to express our anger. Almost everyone who watches the nightly news has moments when they are practising awakening feelings of fear and anxiety. All of these are repetitive behaviours that we engage in unconsciously. It is the unconscious aspect that separates it from a viable approach to unfoldment.

Habit is overcome by habit. This is what we engage in when creating new or different habits. If we are honest, *any* habit, whether we call it good or bad, ultimately limits or restricts the consciousness. This is a paradox because although habit is limiting, also it is an avenue to freedom.

For instance, anyone who has been involved in learning to play a sport, music, cooking, or learning how to drive knows that it is an exercise in intense concentration. When I was trying to teach my daughter to drive there were moments when she would be gripping the steering wheel and even perspiring from having to concentrate on so many different things at the same time.

The concentration required is greatest in the beginning, as we are learning to develop a skill. Once we have reached a point where that skill is ingrained, it becomes completely unconscious. Any experienced driver can listen to the radio, have a conversation, watch the traffic, eat a sandwich, and still drive. So, concentration, the restriction of our attention, develops a capacity that leads to a greater freedom. Whenever our focus becomes the cultivation and unfoldment of consciousness this process becomes more pronounced.

H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) very frequently referred us to the Hermetic Axiom which says: “As above, so below; as without, so within.” We learn from observing and from the analogies of outer to inner processes.

An analogy with magnetism is familiar to most of us from science experiments in early years of school. Magnetism is a force that can be described scientifically, even though it is not completely understood. A magnet has the capacity to attract to itself ferromagnetic metals, which are strongly attracted by a magnetic force. This is so much so, that if a magnet were to touch a nail or an ordinary piece of iron, the nail would become magnetised and would attract metals as long as it is in contact with the magnet. Remove it from contact with the magnet, and its magnetism goes away.

This material example illustrates a process of the inner life — the process of inspiration and being inspired. To the extent that we are in contact with some magnetic or higher source, we also become similarly charged. When removed from the presence of that source, that inspiration fades. The analogy is also relevant when we consider what might be meant by a “practice of inspiration”. In those same childhood science experiments we find that not only does contact with a magnet temporarily convey magnetic properties, but that a nail, or other suitable ferromagnetic piece of metal, can become *permanently* magnetised.

If a magnet is repeatedly drawn in one direction along the length of the nail, the materials in the nail are realigned, making the nail a magnet in its own right. Although nothing new is added, the act of regularly exposing ourselves to ‘higher’ forces brings the materials of our personalities into an

altered alignment.

There is a foundational principle underlying this whole subject of practice. It is that consciousness is universal. All matter, at whatever level, is conscious and capable of responsiveness. According to the degree that attention is focused on this matter, currents of energy are generated that affect the structure and composition of the material object, whether it is physical, emotional, or mental matter.

Nowadays we are quite aware of this. Not so long ago, people like HPB, Annie Besant and others would make pronouncements about the effects of such things as meditation, regular exposure of the mind and emotions to higher levels of activity, saying that regularity of intelligent practice results in unfoldment of dormant capacities. The science of their day was not yet able to demonstrate these things experimentally.

In our time, many studies have been done about the effects of meditation practice. It has been studied in a variety of ways, largely through brain imaging, and has been found to have a dramatic effect on the brain. For example, over a very short period of regular meditation practice, the physical structure of the brain is altered. The synapses, the web of linkages between the neurons in the brain, increase. With long-term meditators, specific areas of brain matter become denser and more enriched, particularly those related to open thought and compassionate response.

It has also been observed that a physical structure within the brain called the amygdala shrinks as a result of long-term meditation practice. The amygdala is a structure of the ancient, reptilian brain involved in the expression of conditioned fears and anxiety and the “fight or flight” syndrome we engage in when we are fearful.

Our response to stressors is altered. All of these and more are demonstrable outcomes of meditation practice. So, in many ways the practice we engage in has very definite results in terms of physical brain structure and our capacity for higher emotions and other aspects such as healing. All this has been observed.

Before considering the Practice of Inspiration we should start with asking ourselves: “What is

inspiration?" The root of the word means "breathing into". *Spiritus* is breath; it also means spirit. So, inspiration is the process of being filled with a life force. Everyone has had the experience of being inspired so it is not difficult for us to draw on our own memories and experiences. Depending on our temperament, our moments of inspiration are associated with our contact with a person, an idea, or an encounter with beauty, art, or poetry.

The avenue through which this light shines into our world is what we then experience. It has a twofold aspect. In the presence, in the moment of the experience, we would describe ourselves as being inspired *by* something, by the poetry, by the words of the Dalai Lama, or by a variety of inputs that create this moment of inspiration. So, we are inspired *by*. One of the effects of this condition of inspiration is that we are also inspired to express it, to transmit it, to actualise it in our own lives. So, it has this sort of twofold aspect.

In *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, in writing about the advance of a popular understanding of the Ageless Wisdom, it is said that "science will be our greatest ally." Recently, in some outlying corners of the scientific community, there has

been work done on the nature of inspiration from a scientific point of view. In order to describe what qualities are related to inspiration, in one particular scientific study they developed a threefold way of analysing the practice of inspiration.

The first aspect these scientists talk about is that the inspirational experience is "evocative". It is not something we call down at will, or that is controlled by the one who experiences it. This is what we find is true for the times that we have actually been inspired. We can say in hindsight that "this is what occurred in the presence of that person", or "because I was reading that poem", but we cannot invite it at will.

At different times I have been in the presence of people of power, people with an ongoing connection to some spiritual source. Always, it has been fascinating to me how strange things happen in the presence of these people. For us, normal, undeveloped people, we may meet someone, greet them, say a few words, and then they walk away pretty much unchanged. But on a number of occasions I have seen things that shed light on the transmission and source point of inspiration.

..... ❖❖❖



Tim Boyd, International President of the Theosophical Society was born in New York City and studied at Brown University then at the University of Chicago. In Chicago Tim joined the TSA in 1974 and co-founded a Theosophical spiritual community in Chicago's inner city. They held classes on the Ageless Wisdom, meditation and healing and formed a business which helped stabilise neighbourhoods through the training and employment of local youth and creation of affordable homes. Tim has been involved in Theosophical work at many levels: from lodge member, to TSA president and president of the Theosophical Order of Service USA. He has spoken across the USA and every continent except Africa. Tim's articles appear in journals around the world.

The right motive for seeking self-knowledge is that which pertains to knowledge and not to self. Self-knowledge is worth seeking by virtue of its being knowledge and not by virtue of its pertaining to self. The main requisite for acquiring self-knowledge is pure love. Seek knowledge for pure love and self-knowledge eventually crowns the effort.

H. P. Blavatsky
Practical Occultism

THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE

Bringing the Heart Doctrine to the West

Nancy Reigle presents a scholarly discussion of this revered work, including notes to extend our enquiry.

Among the many works that Madame Blavatsky brought before the public, *The Voice of the Silence* was unique in its appeal to the heart and spirit of humanity. Throughout, it repeatedly demands the greatest compassion that one is capable of towards one's fellow man and woman.

According to Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence* comes from "The Book of the Golden Precepts" which "forms part of the same series as that from which the 'Stanzas' of the *Book of Dzyan* were taken, on which the *Secret Doctrine* is based."¹ She says that "The Book of the Golden Precepts ... contains about 90 distinct little treatises", 39 of which she had memorised.² Three of these she translated into English for us in *The Voice of the Silence*, which we know as the "Three Fragments." One can surmise that she studied these treatises under the tutelage of her Adept teachers during her stay in Little Tibet and Tibet proper, to which she makes reference in her writings.³

Boris de Zirkoff, in preparing an edition of *The Voice of the Silence*, yet unpublished, wrote an informative Introductory titled "How *The Voice of the Silence* Was Written", which has been published in two places.⁴ Here he cites some interesting accounts given by several people who visited H.P.B. at some point during her writing of *The Voice*, much of which took place in Fontainebleau, France during July of 1889. Several visitors were asked by H.P.B. to read portions of *The Voice* while the manuscript was in progress, and they all had a similar reaction: they were deeply moved by the beauty and depth of compassion this work evoked.⁵ G. R. S. Mead said, "It was the grandest thing in all our theosophical literature."⁶

In their Foreword to the Peking edition of *The Voice of the Silence*, Alice Cleather and Basil Crump convey the Panchen Lama's endorsement of this work as the "only true exposition in English of the

G.R.S. Mead said, "It was the grandest thing in all our
theosophical literature."

As Blavatsky
says, “Thou
canst not travel
on the Path
before thou hast
become that
Path itself.”

Heart Doctrine of the Mahâyâna and its noble ideal of self-sacrifice for humanity.”⁷

What is the Heart Doctrine spoken of by the Panchen Lama? In *The Voice of the Silence* H.P.B. distinguishes between the Head Doctrine and the Heart Doctrine in Fragment Two titled “The Two Paths” where she says:

Learn above all to separate Head-learning from Soul-wisdom, the “Eye” from the “Heart” doctrine... even ignorance is better than Head-learning with no Soul-wisdom to illuminate and guide it...⁸

“Great Sifter” is the name of the “Heart Doctrine,” O disciple... True knowledge is the flour, false learning is the husk...⁹

The Dharma of the “Eye” is the embodiment of the external, and the nonexisting. The Dharma of the “Heart” is the embodiment of Bodhi (True, divine Wisdom), the Permanent and Everlasting.¹⁰

In Mahâyâna Buddhism, the tradition of which the Panchen Lama is a major representative in Tibet,¹¹ the Heart Doctrine is extremely well-developed. Here we find it in the teaching of the Bodhisattva and the Bodhisattva Path; that is, the Bodhisattva – a spiritual being dedicated to alleviating the suffering of humanity; and the Bodhisattva Path – the course of action tread by a Bodhisattva to eliminate this suffering. In fact, within the Mahâyâna tradition there is an entire lineage which emphasises the culture and development of a Bodhisattva. This ‘compassion lineage’ was inspired by the writings of Maitreya.¹² This is complemented by a corresponding ‘wisdom lineage’ inspired by the philosophical writings of Nâgârjuna.¹³ These two lineages of wisdom and compassion are not intended to be developed in isolation from one another, but instead function as complementary parts of a unified whole.

These two lineages have together produced entire treatises delineating 1) the course of action of a Bodhisattva, and 2) the stages of the Bodhisattva Path.¹⁴ Among these, the most popular and widely read is a Sanskrit work known as the *Bodhicaryâvatâra*. Its title literally means ‘Entrance into the Conduct of the Bodhisattva’, or ‘A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life.’¹⁵ It was written by Śântideva, a Buddhist monk who lived in India during the eighth century.¹⁶ So here in Mahâyâna Buddhism we find works that serve as guides for our own training in the same noble ethics and compassion that H.P.B. urged us to practise in *The Voice of the Silence*. As Blavatsky says, “Thou canst not travel on the Path before thou hast become that Path itself.”¹⁷

Although there are differences in style and genre¹⁸ between *The Voice of the Silence* and the *Bodhicaryâvatâra*, they are similar in that they each serve the same function in their promotion of altruism. For comparison, let us look at some passages from each.

The Voice: Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance. (p. 14)

Bodhicaryâvatâra: Wherever the heart’s desire of those who perform virtue goes, there its own merits honour it with an offering of its results. VII.42.

The Voice: Give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim, and seek out him who knows still less than thou; who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a Teacher, hope or consolation, and – let him hear the Law. (p. 37)

Bodhicaryâvatâra: May I be a protector for those who are without protectors, a guide for travellers, and a boat, a bridge, and a ship for those who wish to cross over. May I be a lamp for those who seek light, a bed for those who seek rest, and may I be a servant for all beings who desire a servant. III.¹⁷⁻¹⁸.

The Voice: And then, O thou pursuer of the truth, thy Mind-Soul will become as a mad elephant, that rages in the jungle... Beware, lest in forgetting SELF, thy Soul lose o’er its trembling mind control, and forfeit thus the due fruition of its conquests. (p. 62)

Bodhicaryāvatāra: Untamed, mad elephants do not inflict as much harm in this world as does the unleashed elephant of the mind in the Avīci hell and the like. But if the elephant of the mind is completely restrained by the rope of mindfulness, then all perils vanish and complete well-being is obtained. V.2-3.

The Voice: The fearless warrior, his precious life-blood oozing from his wide and gaping wounds, will still attack the foe... Act then, all ye who fail and suffer, act like him; and from the stronghold of your Soul, chase all your foes away – ambition, anger, hatred, e'en to the shadow of desire (p. 63)

Bodhicaryāvatāra: Let my entrails ooze out and my head fall off, but by no means shall I bow down to my enemies, the mental afflictions (such as ambition, anger and hatred). IV.44.

The Voice: Now bend thy head and listen well, O Bodhisattva – Compassion speaks and saith: "Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?" (p. 71)

Bodhicaryāvatāra: When fear and suffering are equally abhorrent to others and myself, then what is so special about me that I protect myself but not others? VIII.96.

Now we have seen some of the similarities and differences in presentation between these two works. Because *The Voice of the Silence* is filled with references to the self-sacrificing nature of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, as well as to the Pāramitās, its Mahāyāna Buddhist character was easily recognised.¹⁹

In *The Voice of the Silence*²⁰ H.P.B. takes the spiritual seeker through the Three Halls of the Probationary Path; the choice between the Two Paths – Open and Secret, the Secret being the path of the highest altruism of a Bodhisattva; and then on through the Seven Portals, which are the Pāramitās or Perfections of Mahāyāna Buddhism.²¹

The *Bodhicaryāvatāra* extols the virtues of Bodhicitta, which is the altruistic intention to become enlightened in order to benefit all sentient beings, encourages the spiritually-minded person to take up the path of unselfish service to others, and warns of the dangers in turning back once one has set out. Four of the Pāramitās are each represented by a chapter in this work: Kṣānti, Vīrya, Dhyāna, and Prajñā, by chapters 6–9, respectively. Throughout, the Pāramitās or Perfections are cited as virtues to be cultivated, in the same way as the Seven Portals of *The Voice* are the gateways of virtue leading to the path of highest altruism and compassion. As H.P.B. says, "To live to benefit mankind is the first step. To practise the six glorious virtues is the second."²²

The *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, representative of the Heart Doctrine, has enjoyed a long history of popularity dating back to the eighth century when it was composed. Soon after, it was translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan and continues to the present day in an unbroken tradition. Its popularity flourishes today as it is promoted by H. H. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama in public teachings,²³ and new translations of it are produced.

In comparison with its Mahāyāna Buddhist counterpart, *The Voice of the Silence* has a relatively short public history, beginning in 1889.²⁴ After it was published, Blavatsky said in a letter to her sister, "*The Voice of the Silence*, tiny book though it is, is simply becoming the Theosophists' bible."²⁵

By the 1960s the editor of the Buddhist magazine *The Middle Way* had commented that *The Voice of the Silence* was such an exquisite work, why hadn't the Buddhist community embraced it?²⁶ Unlike the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, a text whose Sanskrit original has a 1200-year unbroken tradition, we don't have an original language manuscript for *The Voice of the Silence*. It has come to us as a translation of a 'secret' work, unknown to the public. It is no doubt true that if such an original of *The Voice* did exist, *The Voice of the Silence* would reach a much greater audience, just as the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* does.

Help Nature and
work on with
her; and Nature
will regard thee
as one of her
creators and
make obeisance.

...the Seven Portals of *The Voice* are the gateways of virtue leading to the path of highest altruism and compassion.

Although the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* has this long-standing tradition and *The Voice* doesn't, it was *The Voice of the Silence* that first brought the Heart Doctrine to the English-speaking Western public. We know that *The Voice of the Silence* was originally published in 1889. At about the same time, the original Sanskrit text of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* was also first published.²⁷ The first English translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* was published in 1909, though somewhat abridged.²⁸ Since 1970, when the first complete English translation of it was published, interest in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* has greatly increased in the West.²⁹

In contrast, *The Voice of the Silence* has not received widespread public interest. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that we have no original language manuscript for *The Voice*. Having one, *The Voice of the Silence* would gain the acceptance of scholars, and thereby the widespread attention of the public. In the meantime, it is only those who have the eyes to see, the ears to hear, and the heart to respond that can truly appreciate *The Voice of the Silence* and its sublime message of compassion. And for that, we are deeply indebted to Madame Blavatsky who first brought us that treasure of the Heart Doctrine which we know as *The Voice of the Silence*.

The foregoing paper was written by Nancy Reigle and presented at The Works and Influence of H. P. Blavatsky Conference, held in Edmonton, Alberta, July 3-5, 1998. It was published in *The Works and Influence of H. P. Blavatsky: Conference Papers*, Edmonton: Edmonton Theosophical Society, 1999, pp. 106-112; and reprinted in *Blavatsky's Secret Books: Twenty Years' Research*, by David Reigle and Nancy Reigle, San Diego: Wizards Bookshelf, 1999, pp. 139-148. This online edition is published by Eastern Tradition Research Institute, copyright 2004.

Taken from www.Theosophy.world



Nancy and her husband David Reigle have been students of Theosophy since 1973. They started studying Sanskrit in 1977. A three-month-long trip to India in 1978-1979 provided key research on Senzar, the alleged pre-cursor of Sanskrit, and the alleged language of the mysterious 'Book of Dzyan'. Research, including seven articles and papers listed under the topic heading, "Studies in the Wisdom Tradition," has been posted on their Eastern Tradition Research Institute website, www.easterntradition.org.

NOTES

1. *The Voice of the Silence*, by H. P. Blavatsky, London: The Theosophical Publishing Company, Ltd., 1889; New York: W. Q. Judge, 1889; Peking: The Chinese Buddhist Research Society, 1927, p. vi. The Peking edition is reprinted from the original, retaining the same pagination, with notes and comments by Alice Leighton Cleather and Basil Crump. All further references are to the Peking edition.
2. Ibid., p. ix.
3. *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. VI, ed. Boris de Zirkoff, Wheaton, Ill. Theosophical Publishing House, 1954; 2nd ed., 1975, p. 272: "... I have lived at different periods in Little Tibet as in Great Tibet, and that these combined periods form more than seven years..."
4. Boris de Zirkoff's "Introductory: How *The Voice of the Silence* Was Written" was published in *The American Theosophist* 76:9 (Nov./Dec. 1988), pp. 230-237, and as the Introduction to *The Voice of the Silence*, Wheaton, Ill.: Theosophical Publishing House, 1992, pp. 11a33a. A copy of Boris de Zirkoff's manuscript edition of *The Voice of the Silence* with Introductory has been kindly provided by Dara Eklund. All further references to Boris' Introductory are from this manuscript edition.
5. Boris de Zirkoff, "Introductory: How *The Voice of the Silence* Was Written," pp. 6-9. Herbert Burrows and Annie Besant were among those who read portions of the manuscript of *The Voice of the Silence* while in progress. Of this work Annie Besant said: "It moves us, not by a statement of facts gathered from books, but by an appeal to the divinest instincts of our

nature ... " (p. 9)

6. Ibid., p. 14.

7. Editorial Foreword, May 1927, to *The Voice of the Silence*, (unnumbered), Peking: The Chinese Buddhist Research Society, 1927.

8. *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 25.

9. Ibid., pp. 27-28

10. Ibid., p. 29.

11. The two highest representatives of the Tibetan Buddhist hierarchy are the Panchen and Dalai Lamas. Buddhism flourished for a millennium in Tibet, until the Chinese takeover in 1959.

12. The writings attributed to Maitreya are said in the Tibetan tradition to be written down by Ārya Asaṅga. See: *The Door of Liberation*, by Geshe Wangyal, New York: Maurice Girodias Associates, Inc., 1973, pp. 26-27. For the story of Ārya Asaṅga, see pp. 52-54.

13. For the story of Nāgārjuna see: *The Door of Liberation*, pp. 44-46.

14. These include the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*. There are several English translations of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, many of which are listed below. (See notes 15, 23, 28, and 29.) There is no complete English translation of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*.

15. The latter is the title of a new translation: *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life (Bodhicaryāvatāra)*, by Shāntideva, translated from the Sanskrit and Tibetan by Vesna Wallace and B. Alan Wallace, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1997. The verses that follow are cited from this translation. The word "Bodhi" in "Bodhicaryāvatāra" is understood to mean "Bodhisattva," which is spelled out in full in the title of the Tibetan translation of this work.

16. There is an interesting story of how Shāntideva brought the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* before the world. Thinking he was lazy, his fellow monks at Nālandā challenged Shāntideva to recite a text from memory. Shāntideva asked if he should recite an existing work or a "new" one. The monks replied, "a new one," and Shāntideva then began reciting his own composition, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Everyone was amazed. As he neared the end, he rose up into the sky. After disappearing, he continued to recite until the text was completed. (Adapted from *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism in India as retold in: A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*, p. 12.)

17. *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 12.

18. In an interesting lecture given by Bhikshu Sangharakshita, he discusses the two broad divisions of Buddhist literature, *sūtra* and *āśtra*; *sūtra* being the words of the Buddha, and *āśtra* their explanatory treatises by others. Here, he likens *The Voice of the Silence* to the *sūtra* class of literature: "*The Voice of the Silence*, though it does not claim to be the utterance of a Buddha, is nevertheless akin to the *sūtra* rather than to the *āśtra* group of texts. Like the longer and more celebrated discourses, it seeks more to inspire than to instruct, appeals to the heart rather than to the head." (*Paradox and Poetry in "The Voice of the Silence"*, by Bhikshu Sangharakshita, Bangalore: The Indian Institute of World Culture, 1958, p. 1.) In contrast, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, being written by Shāntideva and expounding the Path through reasoning, is a *āśtra*.

19. Boris de Zirkoff, "Introductory: How *The Voice of the Silence* Was Written," pp. 15–16: "Much has been said and written about the nature of the teachings contained in the 'Voice.' Their general trend as well as many specific thoughts and ideals contained in this work have been the basis for identifying it with the vast realm of teachings and precepts known as Mahāyāna Buddhism, and this can hardly be denied or set aside."

20. A. J. Hamerster has outlined the contents of *The Voice* in his Introduction to the 1939 edition of *The Voice of the Silence*, Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1939; reprint 1953.

21. The six Pāramitās and their cultivation are a major feature of the Mahāyāna tradition. They are: dāna, śīla, kṣānti, vīrya, dhyāna, and prajñā. In *The Voice of the Silence* an additional pāramitā has been added to the traditional list of six, that is, virāga – "indifference to pleasure and pain, illusion conquered, truth alone perceived." (*The Voice*, p. 48.) Here, Virāga becomes the fourth Portal, making a total of seven.

22. *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 33.

23. "It is the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* which supplies the ideals and practice of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who so frequently cites as his highest inspiration *Bodhicaryāvatāra* 10.55:

"As long as space abides and as long as the world abides, so long may I abide, destroying the sufferings of the world."

– from the General Introduction by Paul Williams in: *The Bodhicaryāvatāra*, trans. Kate Crosby and Andrew Skilton, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, p. ix.

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24. See: Boris de Zirkoff, "Introductory: How *The Voice of the Silence* Was Written," p.15.
25. As cited from *The Path*, December 1895, in: *HPB: The Extraordinary Life & Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement*, by Sylvia Cranston, New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1993, p.397.
26. From an entry titled "The Voice of the Silence," in *The Middle Way*, vol. XL, no. 2, August 1965, p.90: "For reasons we have never understood Buddhists in England seem reluctant to accept this exquisite small work as part of the literature of Buddhism."
27. By I. P. Minayeff in *Zapiski Vostochnogo Otdeleniya Ruskogo Imperatorskogo Archeologicheskogo Obschestva* (*Transactions of the Oriental Section of the Royal Russian Archaeological Society*), vol. 4, pp.153-228. Volume 4 of this journal was published in 1890, although the individual issue containing the *Bodhicaryâvatâra* may have been published in 1889.
28. *The Path of Light*, trans. L. D. Barnett, London: John Murray, 1909. It was earlier translated into French: *Bodhicaryâvatâra: Introduction à la pratique des futurs Bouddhas, Poème de Çântideva*, trans. Louis de La Vallée Poussin, Paris: Librairie Bloud et Cie., 1907; and later into German: *Der Eintritt in den Wandel in Erleuchtung (Bodhicaryâvatâra) von Çântideva*, trans. Richard Schmidt, Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1923, *Dokumente der Religion*, vol. 5.
29. *Entering the Path of Enlightenment*, trans. Marion L. Matics, New York: Macmillan, 1970, from the Sanskrit. The first English translation from the Tibetan followed shortly in 1979: Acharya Shântideva, *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, trans. Stephen Batchelor, Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, 1979.

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Benjamin Creme shared his thoughts on...

Living the Teachings

...I have found this over and over again when people talk about their problems, their problems nearly always result from the fact that they are running away from the very thing they should face. Everyone is fine so long as life feels easy, we are making progress, we can see results – especially seeing results. But comes a time when we do not see results, when we are meeting what seems to be a big obstacle or difficulty in life, the tendency of many people is to run away from it, not to face and overcome it. We do not realise that these obstacles are put there to bring out from us the strength to overcome them.

We never will become a Master if we do not have the strength to overcome what we are faced with, however unpleasant or difficult, however a challenge to our self-esteem. Our Being will never demonstrate itself to any great degree until we put it to work in overcoming such obstacles. The obstacle might be practical, on the physical plane. It might be purely psychological – nearly always it is psychological in advancing people – but even on the physical plane, whenever an obstacle is met, many people run away from it. They think, “If I am over there, it will be better than here and I will not have to face this particular problem.” Until they face it, however, it will keep coming back, especially a psychological challenge, because they have not dealt with it, not equipped themselves to deal with that problem whenever it arises. If we are equipped to deal with it, it tends not to arise, or if it does, it is no longer a problem...

The bigger the obstacle, the bigger the challenge faced, the more we are fitted to become an initiate and eventually a Master.

It is the only way. We have to do it because as a Master we are alone... We have to learn to tap into our potential and not ask other people what to do... Unless we face the problem, unless we make our own decisions, we will never grow. We will never become a Master.

Taken from *The Great Approach* by Benjamin Creme



Benjamin Creme was a lifelong student of the Ageless Wisdom teachings, studying works by H. P. Blavatsky and later by Alice A. Bailey. Until his 90s, Creme lectured throughout Europe, North America and the Pacific Rim and was regularly interviewed on radio and television. His books have been translated and published worldwide. Benjamin Creme died in October in 2016.

Members report valuable experiences and learnings from the 127th TSNZ Convention held in Christchurch

PARTICIPANTS' POSITIVE FEEDBACK

The convention opened with the Prayers of the Religions, the words of diverse pathways powerful and most respectfully and equally presented. This produced a sense of wholeness and unification, the common threads of thought and intent deeply moving and energetically evocative. In this vein, the days of sharing wisdom, knowledge and matters of the heart unfolded. So began my first experience of attending a convention in Theosophy. – Suzanne Vesty

The January Convention was the first one I have attended and it was a real source of enlightenment for me. I experienced TS's objectives in action, as well as the concept of harmony. The proposed theme, the structure of the program, the diverse, meaningful and inspiring presentations, the connections made with other participants led me to feel lifted, 'at home' and belonging to the theosophist family. Congratulations to the organizers, presenters and all who attended. – Valentina Teclici

Words don't convey even remotely the gentle yet profound magic of the convention. So, I've instead chosen the Celtic wisdom of John O'Donohue to express the deep sense of kinship, belonging and friendship experienced at the conference: "Real friendship or love is not manufactured or achieved by an act of will or intention. Friendship is always an act of recognition."

At our five days shared at the TSNZ convention the recognition in each other of divine energy was revealed through such friendship. And it's truly miraculous.

Ngā mihi. – Caroline Williams

What a fabulous event.

So much information, getting to know people and experiencing new thoughts.

For example, John Vorstermans shared a parable about fire. The gist of the talk was to be aware of trying to change people's beliefs. Our perspective alters the way we see reality, and this is true for everyone. Some worshipped the person that the fire was given to, the priests who held the information as sacred. Some worshipped the fire itself, holding it as sacred. Some worshipped the tools of making fire, but never actually made fire. Some worshipped the person or prophet who brought the fire, but never actually used the fire. Some shared the fire with everyone, the knowledge was open for all who wanted to know.

My take away from this was each one of us has the ability to use the information shared with us, however we don't always understand the power we have in our hands. Having the knowledge of a topic or thing like how to create fire without the capacity to teach it or share it in a way it will be heard is not the same as knowledge with capacity.

This year's convention covered a lot of different facets of the journey of our soul. They all intertwined and connected with each other. I loved the meeting of similar minds. – Linda Codlin

Although I have studied Theosophy for many years in the UK and Europe, this was my first TSNZ convention. It was such a wonderfully immersive experience. The calibre of presentation was outstanding and the level of conversation an absolute joy. It was a privilege to be among so many incredible minds and to be able to launch into conversation without preamble was a delight. It felt like a home-coming. I would like to commend Richard Sell, Renée Sell and the Team on such a tremendous achievement. Thank you once again. – Nicola Haines



Attendees at the 127th TSNZ National Convention held at the Scenic Hotel Cotswold, Christchurch



Invited international speaker
Barbara Hebert from the USA



TSNZ National President
Richard Sell



Canterbury hosts,
Robin de Mandeville and
Susanna Roskilly,
and from Whangarei Paul Henderson
and TSNZ Vice-President
Melanie Closs



Richard Sell, National President
introducing Barbara Hebert



Renée Sell from Auckland with
Edward Staats from
Canterbury branch



Susanna Roskilly &
Alastair Murray (Canterbury)



Kirsty Morton – Whanganui and
Chair of the Governance Board



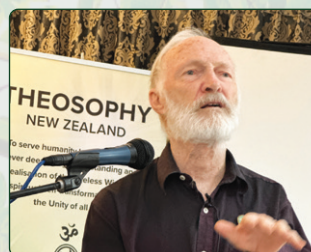
Wendy Rapp (Auckland)



Helen Sussmilch (Palmerston North),
Jim Scrivener & Donna Willard-Moore
(New Plymouth)



Sue Harrison (Hawke's Bay) &
Carole Van Weede (Auckland)



Murray Stentiford (Auckland)



Canterbury Branch members
enjoying the convention:
Bryan and Susan Kaschula



Susanna Roskilly on the right
with talented musical guest for
the closing



Fun Night

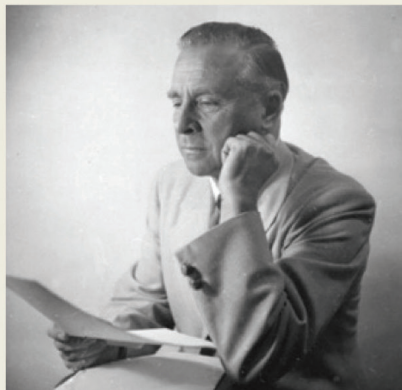


Fun Night



Fun Night

The Geoffrey Hodson Library



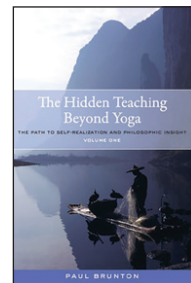
Make 2024 your year to commit to reading and studying more theosophical literature. The Geoffrey Hodson library at National Section's Vasanta House has the widest range of spiritual, theosophical and esoteric material available in New Zealand, all of which is free for members to access. For those outside of Auckland who are unable to access the library in person, borrowing is still a breeze. Simply make your selections from the catalogue online, <https://tsnz-library.theosophy.org.nz> and email us at library@theosophy.org.nz to have them posted to you.

Obtaining more knowledge and understanding of who we are and how to best make meaning and use of this life are some of the most important things we can do for ourselves, for others, for the planet, and for all living beings that are connected to one another in the ever-expanding universe. Reading is foundational, let's commit ourselves to keep on learning.

The Hidden Side of Things

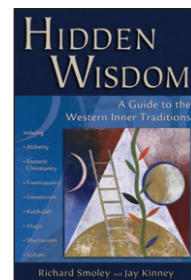
► THE HIDDEN TEACHING BEYOND YOGA by Paul Brunton

A step-by-step guide to actually experiencing the spiritual truth that reality is formed within our consciousness rather than outside us in the world of material things.



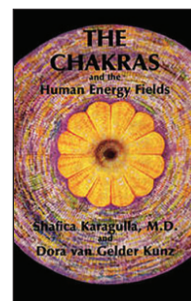
► HIDDEN WISDOM by Richard Smolley and Jay Kinney

Contemporary seekers long for a deeper spirituality that, while rooted in Western tradition, will reconnect them with the hidden wisdom that lies beneath all mystical teachings. For decades, our modern society has looked to the East for spiritual guidance and renewal. Here is a guide much closer to home that will lead to a refined and renewed spiritual path and help people rediscover their deeper selves – a true connection of the body, mind, and soul.



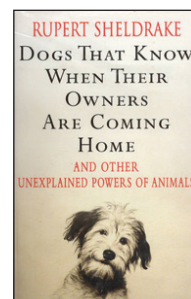
► THE CHAKRAS AND THE HUMAN ENERGY FIELDS by Shafica Karagulla and Dora van Gelder Kunz

A presentation of experimental evidence that illness can be seen in the subtle energy fields of the body. Fascinating case studies of actual patients show that clairvoyant observation can diagnose disease and even reveal potential illness before it manifests in physical symptoms.



► DOGS THAT KNOW WHEN THEIR OWNERS ARE COMING HOME by Rupert Sheldrake

After five years of extensive research involving thousands of people who have pets and work with animals, Dr Sheldrake proves conclusively what many pet owners already know: there is a strong connection between humans and animals that defies present-day scientific understanding. Sheldrake compellingly demonstrates that we and our pets are social animals linked together by invisible bonds connecting animals to each other, to their owners, and to their homes in powerful ways.



► MAN VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE by C. W. Leadbeater

This esoteric classic examines the invisible bodies of humans, showing how the colours of the aura change with different emotional states.



Esteemed early theosophical leader, **Annie Besant** claimed that it is not our words that influence people so much as our lives; that our lives if they are unselfish, pure, loving and helpful are the best promotion of theosophical ideas; for it is no good to talk theosophy, she said, unless we live what we talk. She also commented on religion...

COMMENTS

The multiplicity of religious beliefs would be an advantage, not an injury, to religion, if the religions were a brotherhood instead of a battlefield. For each religion has some peculiarity of its own, something to give the world which the others cannot give. Each religion speaks one letter of the great name of God, the One without a second, and that name will only be spoken when every religion sounds out the letter given it to voice, in melodious harmony with the rest. God is so great, so illimitable that... no one religion, however perfect, can express His infinite perfection.

All the great truths of religion are common property, do not belong exclusively to any one faith. That is why nothing vital is gained by changing from one religion to another. You do not need to travel over the whole field of religions of the world in order to find the water of truth. Dig in the field of your own religion and go deeper and deeper, till you find the spring of the water of life gushing up, pure and full.

Religions are not rivals and should not be haters of each other. They are children of a common parent, giving out for the benefit of mankind the truths they have learned in the ancestral home. There is a real brotherhood of religions and all who study the religions of the world must recognise the identity of their teachings. To a comparative mythologist, all religions are equally false and are outgrowths of ignorance. To a Theosophist all religions are true, and are the outgrowth of the WISDOM. Each religion has an equal right to every truth, and none may claim aught exclusively...

There is one Religion – the knowledge of God, and all religions are branches of that stem, the Tree of Life... so one Self shines in every heart. There is only one blasphemy – the denial of God in man. There is only one heresy – the heresy of separateness, which says... 'we are not one.'

The Brotherhood of Religions (1913) Adyar Pamphlet No. 24



Many people, mistaking what religion means and seeing the quarrels, the controversies, the hatreds, the strifes that have risen out of it, say that we should be better off without religion and that we should throw religion aside for it breeds mischief, dissension, quarrel and hatred. But it is useless to say to mankind, 'Throw religion aside.' Man is so constituted in his inner nature that there is an inextinguishable thirst within him which nothing but the knowledge of God can satisfy. For a time, especially in his youth, he is easily satisfied with the outer things of life, but when the difficulties of life have to be met, when the laws of life are experienced, when sorrow wrings the heart and disappointment breaks the courage, then it is that in man awakens the thirst for God, and it was truly said by St Augustine that 'man can never find rest until he finds rest in Thee.'

The Place of Religion in National Life (1918) Adyar Pamphlet No. 87

When a man feels devotion to the Supreme, he has turned his back on evil and has turned his face to the goal; he may stumble, stray, even fall, but his face is turned in the right direction, he is going homewards; he must needs become dutiful by the force of his devotion.

The Value of Devotion (reprinted 1911) Adyar Pamphlet No. 10



Annie Besant (1847–1933), second President of The Theosophical Society from 1907 to 1933, was described as a 'Diamond Soul', for she had many brilliant facets to her character. She was an outstanding orator of her time, a champion of human freedom, educationist, philanthropist and author with more than 300 books and pamphlets to her credit. She also guided thousands of men and women all over the world in their spiritual quest.

THE HIDDEN WISDOM WITHIN THE HUMAN BEING

Barry Bowden is leading the TSNZ School of Theosophy in April.

Here we have a glimpse of some of his wise thoughts...

Human beings carry within us the wisdom of the universe, yet it lies out of reach of most people today. We live in a world dominated by self-centred consciousness and a me-first attitude.

To make the necessary changes in ourselves so that we can access this wisdom, we need to develop a very honest attitude towards our own faults and shortcomings. The thought of this is generally enough to stop many from progressing. The reason for self-honesty is that we, as people, have blind spots that we don't see in our nature.

The questions of why and how are equally interesting. Where does our blindness come from? Our consciousness is one with the higher, even though we are blind to it (more on this later). Our emotional reactions are not us. They are reactions in the emotional body formed through many lives driven by the recent development of the lower mind.

When we react strongly, the mind is not there to witness it because it is swamped by the emotions we identify with causing us to go with the reaction, thereby losing consciousness of what really happened. The experience of negative emotions belongs to the personality not the Self – it strengthens the personality and is only a growth tool. A very effective tool it is too, if we identify with it. In other words, we take it personally and get involved in the party that is happening at the time.

Awareness of this process, has given rise to a personal tool I use today – which is not to take things personally. It doesn't stop you from feeling what is happening, however there is no need to join in with the reaction. Rather to be aware of it and let it run its natural course and let it go. This is entering into 'witnessing'.

The term 'witnessing' cannot be fully understood until you are actively practising it most of the time. It involves the two almost seemingly opposite actions to the lower mind: surrender and concentration. To practise witnessing one cannot be the participant in what is happening. This technique is not taken from book reading but from daily experience of surrendering to the reaction that is happening. This is necessary.

In other words, one stops all resistance to the reaction.

One surrenders and gives up all fight to the reaction.

Some words that fell into my hands recently from the book *The Land of the Gods* (p.21) by H.P.Blavatsky are where she quotes her adept teacher:

Your will is strongest if you have no will of your own, but remain in all things obedient to the Law.

Surrender allows the universal to operate through us in this act and everything is then in perfect harmony with the universe, it is the universe. This technique is learned through years of practice rather than by just studying.

Where then, does concentration come in? One must keep awareness of the reaction at the time, either emotional or mental. To carry this on when doing something else or having a simple conversation takes concentration to stay with it. This, I know, sounds complex and to the worldly mind, it is. However, the higher mind can do this without any problem after years of practice. It can, at times, become almost effortless. The higher mind is the 'witness' that is, its natural state; it is not bound by the rules of the lower and finite world.

With this practice, many of the ordinary problems of life become a learning ground. For example, when impatience appears, instead of going with the feelings, one perceives (sees) the commotion in action – as a witness. The practice shows the impatience to our inner senses and preserves it as emotional disharmony. However, the mind is the instigator. When one is in surrender, it allows the universal to operate and restore harmony to the lower world. Many of life's problems reveal themselves to us in this way. This state is also devoid of analysis and comparison. There is no movement of the mind at all in this process. It is always still. There are questions that arise with this practice, this notion of developing our inner senses as opposed to the outer senses (which we take for granted and which generally take us towards ignorance, not wisdom). It would seem obvious that if there is an inner life, then there must be inner senses that are impersonal and not the servants of the personal.

Personal life is often made up of disharmony and disputes with ourselves, even though we will see them as disputes with others. Such is the nature of the dream world of the mind. When one begins to wake, we are waking from the dream of the mind and its identity problems of the personality. The lower mind creates a false 'I' and the higher dissolves it. The whole notion of the lower mind is strengthened by pain. It is the pain that makes it seem real. Pain produces suffering and this is generated by resistance to feeling pain. As the renowned psychiatrist, Carl Jung said, "What you resist persists".

Resistance is generated by the mind, which is the seat of the personality. This in turn, allows pain to stay and become suffering. Surrender, being opposite to resistance, painlessly allows pain to dissolve. This can bring us to a problem in terms of not applying effort. This is both true and false. True in the higher mind and false in the lower. It takes effort and discipline to practise surrender during daily life. I urge you to try this during the night when some problem keeps you awake!

The problems of understanding disappear with discipline and effort. They begin to reveal their actions through observations. It takes effort to develop concentration, to bring the lower mind to rest on one thing and not struggle. When surrender is practised with discipline, it begins to awaken the inner senses.

With stability of practice, the effort needed slowly becomes less and the higher mind can gradually take over this action. It can at times, be almost effortless.

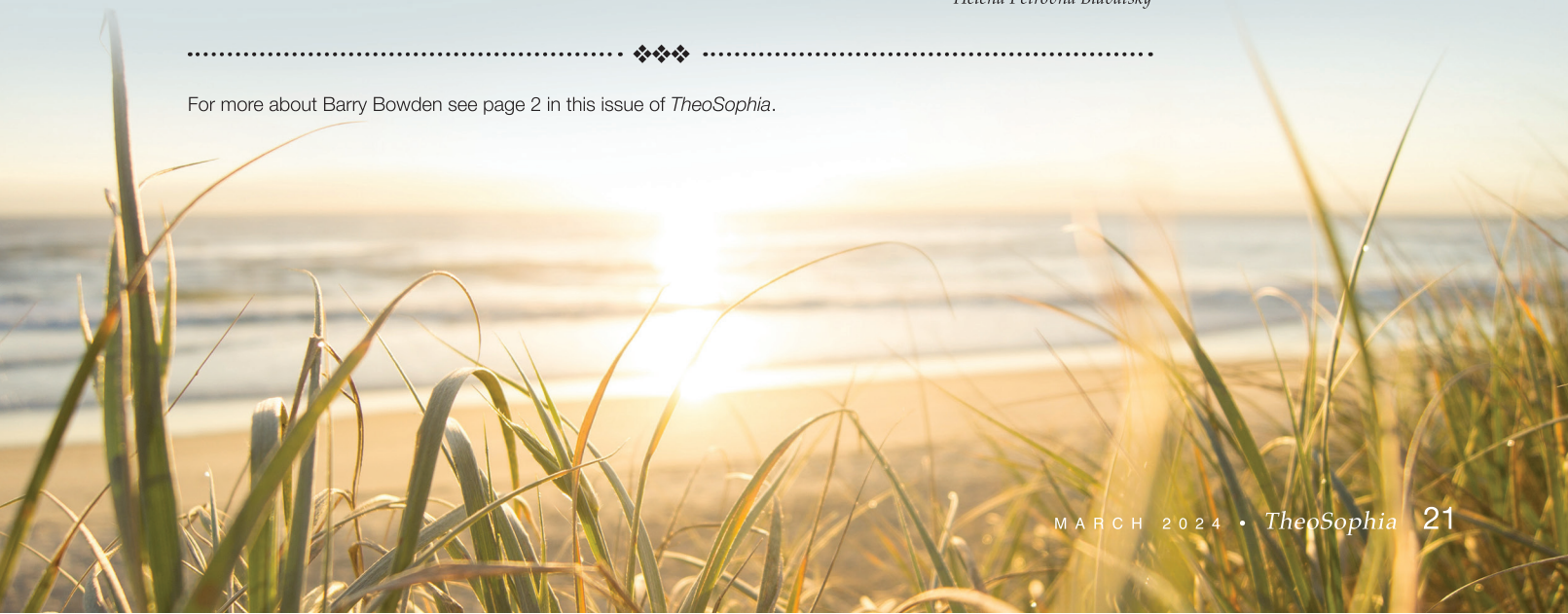
The Path that leadeth on is lighted by one fire - the light of daring burning in the heart. The more one dares, the more one shall obtain.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky



For more about Barry Bowden see page 2 in this issue of *TheoSophia*.

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The Mysteries of Space, Time and Purpose

Deliberating on this topic as part of the vast body of knowledge known as Theosophy, John Sell presents some of his ideas here, in two parts.

Part One

In one sense, Theosophy, which means Divine Wisdom, has always existed though it was in the Third Century AD that the Eclectic Theosophical Society appeared. However, it was in 1875 that the Theosophical Society as we know it today was started by H. P. Blavatsky and a lawyer called Colonel Olcott.

The major topics discussed here are Space, Time and Purpose, involving such ideas as:

- What is the true nature of humans?
- Why are we born on Earth?
- Is there a purpose to our living, a direction or goal?
- Are there other spaces and dimensions?
- Have we lived in far-off times and will we again live in some far-off future?
- Do human beings have powers that can overcome the limitations of Space and Time?

One of the fundamental questions we can ask and see what teachings are given in Theosophy, is: What is a human being? Without knowing this we cannot understand the Mysteries of Space and Time.

Is a human being just an animal or just a superior computer i.e. a machine, or a person who possesses a Soul as Christians teach? Theosophical teaching is quite the opposite of the last statement. It teaches that a person is fundamentally a Soul, and that the Soul possesses a body. Thus, our inner nature, our real Self, our Soul is Us and we inhabit a body and in fact many bodies. The bodies are like clothes that we can discard and when all are gone, we the Soul are left. Consciousness then is fundamental.

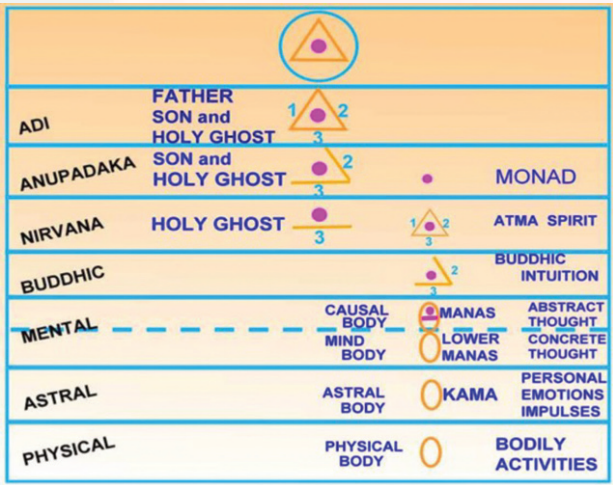


Figure 1: Planes of Nature (*Practical Spirituality* by John Sell).

The kind of question that arises here is as follows. If I am the Soul can consciousness leave the brain and exist apart from the body? Put differently, are there other spaces or dimensions where people can consciously exist?

This whole subject is being studied experimentally in para-psychological laboratories but I would like to give you one case history to illustrate what I am referring to. I quote from the book by Benito F. Reyes, *Scientific Evidence of the*

Existence of the Soul:

This time I was ready. The same preliminary circumstances occurred; the physical rigidity, the buzzing sound, the lightness on the shoulder regions. When I felt I was slipping out of my body, I steadied myself so that instead of suddenly rushing out I was able to go out gradually. Then I felt and knew myself outside the body. I was hovering over my body but I could not see it... then I saw my body. I saw it lying in bed and I was not it. The realisation that I was not the body suddenly made me think I was dead, but only for a time. The next realisation was one of peace. To know you are not the body but the soul. To know that even if the body dies, you do not die; to know that you are something spiritual and therefore, essentially indestructible; to know yourself apart from the pains of the body, its illness, its death; to know these things, and to know them not through reading or hearing, but through actual experience – this was the realisation that gave me peace.

So, it seems human consciousness can exist in other spaces or dimensions for there are hundreds of cases like this recorded.

The human being has many bodies and these in addition to a physical body. What is this world like, that they exist in? Something about this inner world of light is to be found in the book *Psychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain* by scientists Lynn Schroeder, Sheila Ostrander.

A spectacular panorama of colours, whole galaxies of lights, blue, gold, green, violet, all shining and twinkling. An unseen world opened before my eyes. Whole luminescent labyrinths, flashing, twinkling, flaring. Some of the sparks were motionless, some wandered

against a dark background. Over these fantastic galaxies of ghostly lights there were bright multi-coloured flares and dim clouds.

It's indescribable! Electric flames light up, then flares or crowns of blue and orange. Great channels of blazing violet, fiery flashes. Some lights glitter constantly, others come and go like wandering stars. It's fantastic, alluring, a mysterious game – a fire world!

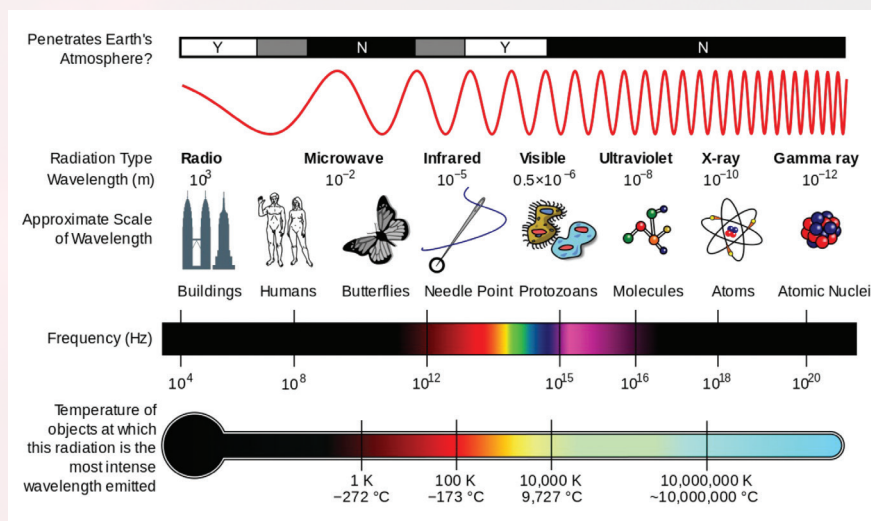
Like summer lightning... 'craters' erupted – not fiery lava, but radiance like the aurora borealis!

A question which arises now is whether these inner bodies, these auras are capable of being photographed. Some Russian scientists believe so and under the title Kirlian photography, they show us pictures which they claim represent these fields of energy, these auras of ours – see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kirlianphotography>

What kind of a world do human beings live in? Or to put it another way, where do these other bodies exist? If human beings possess various bodies what is the matter of these bodies made of and where is this matter? I would like to describe the Theosophical model. So, the question is, where are these other spaces and dimensions?

Please note:

1. Chart of the Spectrum which shows what we can and cannot see
e.g. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spectrum>
2. Where are they? One example is a sponge which contains more than just solid mass – it contains water/liquid, and air bubbles or gases, all interpenetrating and using the same space.
3. Chart of Planes of Nature. See Figure 1 (above).



...we may say
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many bodies...

To sum up so far, we may say that a person is a Soul who possesses many bodies, which exist in several different states of matter which constitute different worlds or dimensions and spaces. These interpenetrate each other, we can exist and function in this matter and space. Now, we may consider another mystery – that of purpose.

What is the purpose of human life on Earth? Is there a goal to which human beings are moving towards i.e. why are we born on Earth at all? So, we are now about to consider another mystery – The Mystery of Purpose. What then is our goal? Is it to exist a brief instance of 70 years in an infinite darkness before birth and after death?

Theosophical teaching gives us a logical coherent reason when it tells us that just as there is a physical evolution that has been going on, on earth for millions of years, so there is a parallel spiritual evolution of human consciousness or of the Soul. Study the consciousness of a caveman and contrast it with the consciousness of a Plato, or an Einstein, a Beethoven or a Michelangelo.

The answer to our question then, of what is a human being's purpose – is that they are evolving towards *perfected* humanhood – the perfection of all their bodies physical, emotional, mental, Intuition and Spiritual and the mastery of all the interpenetrating worlds in which they live. We find this same idea in Christianity. 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect' (Matt. 5:48) and also in the phrase 'Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:' (Eph. 4:13). Now if human beings are evolving, then, in an infinitude of time there must be those who are far ahead of us and many who have reached the goal of the perfect human. Thought brings us quite naturally to another major idea put forward by the Theosophical Society i.e. the concept of a Spiritual Hierarchy of Intelligent Beings. In one way this idea is well known for the great leaders of major religions such as Jesus, the Buddha, Krishna and so on.

Logically this concept of a Hierarchy of Great Intelligences makes sense for many successful functioning organisations have a series of graded ranks of people such as the army, government, big business, or university. This view has been well put by the joint discoverer of the Theory of Evolution, Alfred Wallace, who presented this great theory at the same time as Darwin. Wallace pointed out that what was not accounted for in terms of natural selection was the extraordinary nature of three transition points in evolution: the change from mineral to vegetable life, from vegetable to animal and the change from animal to human. He reasoned there must be an unseen world of spirit which causes changes to take place in the world of matter and 'evolution on this planet must be directed and aided from outside, by superior and invisible intelligences to which man as a spiritual being was susceptible' (*Insights for the Age of Aquarius*, 184).

The late Leslie Weatherhead, one of Britain's leading ministers wrote about this concept in the book *Insights for the Age of Aquarius* by Dr Cerminara Ph.D. who specialises in Parapsychology and General Semantics:

My mind is attracted to the idea that He, Jesus, may be one of a Hierarchy of divine beings who, either by direct creation and endowment or by attainment through many incarnations, or by both, have achieved what we call 'divinity', for lack of any better word, and that, seeing the plight of man on earth, he volunteered to take our flesh and become our Saviour. From such a Hierarchy there may have proceeded other saviours on other planets, all 'Sons of God'. 186.

So, the purpose of our living is psychological and spiritual evolution to perfection aided and guided by others who have already achieved this goal.

Now the question that most people ask themselves at this point is, how is it possible to attain perfection in one life; in the short span of 70 or 80 years? The answer is that it is impossible. The answer to this question is also wrapped up with another question.

Why are there inequalities and injustices in life? Why are millions born blind, deaf, diseased, defective, ugly, with no opportunities and who live a painful fruitless life, and then die in loneliness?

The two answers usually advanced are, that it shows that the world is ruled by chance or that God has caused it. Neither of these answers satisfy a person's reason or deeper needs. We have now come to one of the Great Mysteries of Time itself. The Theosophical teaching is, that the answer to this question, and the question as to how we can reach Perfection, are both answered by the Concept of Reincarnation or Rebirth. That is, that we have lived on earth many, many times before. Just as we go to school for a day, learn a lesson and go home, so we live a life, learn some earthly lessons and go home. We come back to earth the next day, so to speak, and learn another lesson and so on. This idea is not new and in fact the number of poets, philosophers and scientists that have either taught, believed or were sympathetic to the idea are many. We would find such names as: Plato, Pythagoras, F. Bacon, I. Kant, Thomas Edison, Thomas & Julian Huxley, Carl Jung, Benjamin Franklin, Lloyd George, Albert Schweitzer, Longfellow, Shelley, Wordsworth, Rider Haggard and Sir Walter Scott to name just a few.

This idea of rebirth explains a great many of the great problems of existence. For example, it explains the mystery of child geniuses. Many child prodigies have shown great aptitudes in music. These include Mozart, who composed minuets before he was four; Beethoven, who played in public at eight and composed works which were

published when he was ten; Hummel and so on. The Rebirth explanation is that many lives of effort, in one specialised field, flowers at a very early age.

The Theory of Rebirth also explains how people can instinctively love or hate each other. They have known each other in other lives and so in this life they resume their relationships.

A case history which gives an idea of what these memories may be like, is Shanti Devi's case in a small book *Evidence for Survival from Claimed Memories of Former Incarnations* by Dr Ian Stevenson MD who was a Psychiatrist and Chairman of the Department of Neurology and Psychiatry, School of Medicine, University of Virginia. Shanti Devi made at least 24 statements about her past life that were matched against the facts. These included recognising people in a crowd from her past life accurately. No instances of inaccurate facts were recorded. This case is also found in Stevenson's book, *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation*.

To be continued in *TheoSophia*, June

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Twenty cases suggestive of Reincarnation, Professor Ian Stevenson



While at boarding school in New Zealand, John Sell received from his father in India, a copy of the *Bhagavad Gita*. John thought it the most wonderful book he had ever read. Later a friend gave him a book on Theosophy. He joined the Theosophical Society at 18 and Theosophy became a life-long study which he endeavoured to apply and make practical.

John was a trained psychologist and teacher. He developed a four-year study course, ran workshops, gave talks, wrote a book and many articles for the Society's magazine. John Sell helped people wherever he went and devoted his life to Theosophy.

The Theory of Rebirth also explains how people can instinctively love or hate each other.

Dedicated theosophist, Clara Codd imparted thoughts and research which are relevant today.

AWARENESS AND INTROSPECTION

There is a very interesting statement by Krishnaji (Jiddu Krishnamurti) in his Ojai and Sarobia talks for 1940. Someone had asked him to define the difference between awareness and introspection. He said that there is a danger in watching thoughts and feelings. People have become nervous wrecks trying to do that. Perhaps the Master's advice to C. W. Leadbeater to "forget yourself, but to remember the good of other people" is better. Self-absorption imprisons a person in a very small world. It is dangerous because the motive behind is personal. Krishnaji says:

Introspection is a kind of self-analysis in which thought is measuring its own action and its results, according to pleasure and pain, reward and punishment, thus forming a pattern, a judgement... that is, thought is occupied with a result. Awareness is different. For example, if I ask the question, do I believe in God? In the very process of asking I can observe, I am aware, what it is that is making me ask that question.

He says that "awareness is immediate observation without any sense of praise or blame, any sense of I, or me or mine. Quite impersonal, in fact. It is personal implications that are dangerous. Introspection seems to be self-analysis from the personal point of view, judging or praising self, whereas awareness is getting to understand what makes us tick," first from a superficial level, and more from the deeper, subconscious levels, with an entire disregard for the result to self. This is borne out by all the great scriptures. Says the *Bhagavad Gītā*: "Thy business is with the action only, never with its results." And *Light on the Path*: "Desire to sow no seed for your own harvesting: desire only to sow that seed the fruit of which shall feed the world. A man may refuse to allow himself to think of reward. But in that very refusal is seen the fact that reward is desired. And it is useless for the disciple to strive to learn by checking himself. The soul must be unfettered, the desires free. But until they are fixed only on that state wherein there is neither reward nor punishment, good nor evil, it is in vain that he endeavours." And here are the words of *The Voice of the Silence*: "Shun praise, O devotee. Praise leads to self-delusion. Thy body is not self, the SELF is in itself without a body, and either praise or blame affects it not."

Reality is beyond all the 'pairs of opposites'. 'God' is beyond good and evil, being neither. So the Lord Buddha exhorted his people to "...rise above love and hate, tyranny and oppression, wealth and want" and to regard their own fate "with impartial calmness and perfect tranquillity."

I believe it was an Adept who once told William Q. Judge to learn to look on himself with the complete impersonality of an utter stranger and not to be led into either anxiety or remorse. Anxiety and remorse are serious leakages of inner power. Anxiety is the flowing of force towards some imaginary event in the future; remorse is the flowing of force towards a past event. They deplete a person's courage and strength to deal with the NOW. Remorse is rooted in egotism. An ancient writing says: "Regret nothing; never be sorry, but cut all doubts with the sword of knowledge." "Kill in thyself all memory of past experiences: Look not behind or thou art lost," says *The Voice of the Silence*. To have all our forces concentrated upon the present moment is the duty of the occultist. Complete attention is the beginning of the power of meditation and contemplation. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

So, awareness seems to be the intelligent discovery of why we are doing this or thinking that. And it must

be without any sense of praise or blame to ourselves. To castigate ourselves is no more praiseworthy than to castigate others. It means passing personal judgments and all personal judgments are imperfect. When the Christ told us not to judge, he also said that if he judged it would be just. Why? Because he came not to do his own will, but the will of Him that sent him. A true judgment can only be made by the Divinity behind us, and until that is realised the Master's advice is to "err on the side of mercy." Of that Eternal One, *Light on the Path* says: "He is thyself... yet infinitely wiser and stronger than thyself... thou art but finite and liable to error. He is eternal and is sure. He is the deep sea in every one of us, calm and unperturbed by any waves and storms that afflict the surface." H. P. Blavatsky (H.P.B.) writes: "The eyes of wisdom are like the ocean depths, there is neither joy nor sorrow in them. Therefore, the soul of the occultist must be greater than joy and stronger than sorrow."

We should look on our three-fold selves, body, emotions and thought, as a good workman looks on his tools. He does not think he is his tools. If he has no time, he does the best with them as they are. If he has time, he sharpens and polishes them. All this gears in with the acquirement of 'virtues'. The acquired virtue is not really one. The truly virtuous person is quite unconscious of anything of the sort. Virtues, said H.P.B., are really the outcome [not the cause] of wisdom, for benevolence, sympathy, justice, etc., arise from intuitive identification with others, although unknown to the personality. Virtues produce future happiness, vices future pain. But, both of them, if identified with the personality, bind; the one with chains of gold, the other with chains of iron. So say the Tibetan scriptures.

Egocentricity seeks results, compares itself with others, is anxious to get on. This is the forcible passion for personal stature which hardens so many good people. There is no enemy upon the path which leads to our immortal bliss except this same Ahamkāra, the sense of I-ness, of me and mine. When we remove it from earthly ideals, it still grasps at heavenly rewards and joys, which is even more disastrous. It is a thousand-headed hydra. Again and again must it be slain. Not by opposition which vitalises it, but by a calm, dispassionate understanding of its nature. Do not let us make the mistake of blaming ourselves for possessing it. It is necessary protection, like the shell of an egg which protects the growing chick. It enables an imperishable centre of individuality to be established which, when the hour is ripe, can be broken and the centre yet remain a centre without a periphery. Then dawns the All-consciousness, the Cosmic sense. But do not let us imagine that we can picture it. It has never yet been experienced, a path which leads out of all human experience, and which is utterly beyond human perception or imagination.

The personal desires have no place there, for a soul grows like a flower. The flower does not desire to be or to achieve anything. It is the dimly felt beauty of the sun and the air that draws forth its growth. So must we press forward to open our souls to the Eternal. We must go on from here. There is no other spot from which to start. We cannot do otherwise.

Taken from *Awareness and Introspection*, an article on the website: www.theosophy.world



Clara Codd (1876 – 1971) was a British writer, suffragette, socialist, feminist and theosophist. She went to jail for the suffragettes and devoted her life to the Theosophical Society.



'A Union of those who Love, in the service of all that suffers'



Greetings from TOS New Zealand. The annual report gives us insights into the work done to help others this last year.

We have recently returned from the TSNZ convention held in Christchurch where members from around New Zealand supported the fundraising efforts of TOS NZ. It was heartening to see members bring all sorts of items such as books, cushions, beautiful clothing and wedgewood pottery to be sold on the TOS Table. We raised in excess of NZD \$1000 during the convention for our projects.

Carol Collier shared an update during the TOS session and highlights from the TOS 12-monthly report are:

- International TOS Secretary Nancy Secrest was the overseas invited guest for the TSNZ Convention in 2023 at Whanganui.
- Child Sponsorship programmes in Pakistan and India have a total of 50 students sponsored. Sue Harrison oversees this programme now.
- Two Qandeel School Literacy Centres are supported in Pakistan.
- Copies are still available of *Poems of Contemplation*, the poetry book by Elizabeth and John Sell with illustrations by Elizabeth Sell. This book was produced and gifted to TOS for fundraising. We will send a free copy of this book to any TOS group around the world on request.
- Regular fundraising activities continue as we sell second hand books and raffle donated items at National Events and local groups. Thank you to those who support the various activities and help make these possible.
- Over the past 12 months, emergency appeals were held for the Hawkes Bay flood relief, Pakistan requests through massive flooding and TS Ukraine appeal.
- Hawke's Bay member and mixed media artist Helen Dynes, donated a signed artist proof titled 'Joy'. The successful recipient of the silent auction was Paul Henderson of Whangarei. Thank you Paul for your support.
- Clive Conland from Wellington, was the winner of the raffle of pet blankets donated from TOS supporter Barbara Zanarb. Thank you both.
- TOS has a visual presence at the convention, the School of Theosophy and the Immersion weekend.
- Quarterly TOS articles and updates appear in TSNZ *TheoSophia* magazine.
- This past year our theme for the magazine was 'Service' and there were various invited contributors who wrote on this. We also share articles and updates plus photos from projects supported locally and overseas.
- The Waikato TOS Group in the Sanctuary on Marama coordinated by Carol Collier, have also undertaken various activities.

NEW ZEALAND

TS branches in New Zealand and our own TOS group in the Waikato participate in fundraising activities each year to support sponsored children, support TOS national projects and undertakings within their own local branches.

THE WAIKATO TOS GROUP IN THE SANCTUARY ON MARAMA

- Hosted four Guest Speakers who all presented interesting and informative talks on core Theosophical principles. Topics covered included 'The Three Fundamental Propositions', 'Cycles and Re-Incarnation', 'What Does It Take To Have World Peace', 'Our Thoughts and Patterns'. These presentations were held in the Chapel at the University of Waikato. Bill Keidan was hosted in the Sanctuary on Marama over six nights, during which he gave seven presentations on Geoffrey Hodson to members and non-members of the TOS and the TS. Grateful thanks to Renée Sell, John Vorstermans, Murray Stentiford, Ben Upton and Bill Keidan for supporting us here in the Waikato. Much appreciation for the love and kindness for the TOS and the TS.
- Buddhist teacher Venerable Tenzin Chosang continues to give a dharma talk and meditation weekly, and once a month silent meditation day.
- Continuing to support various persons in need both short and longer term in the Sanctuary. This offers an opportunity to grow together and learn from one another in a safe and caring environment.
- We continue to share an open space for groups with similar ethos.
- Currently supporting the Waikato Women's Refuge and the He Puaawai Teen Parent Unit who both do amazing work for Waikato women and children.
- We are currently supporting an initiative to start up an after-school Children's Art Club in Hamilton. Its founding Director Shona Hammond-Boyes believes "Art is the foundation tool in the promotion of healthy, beautiful, peaceful, creative communities. We need to provide creative nests for our children."

APPRECIATION AND THANKS

As always there are many to thank, who support TOS New Zealand, we could not do this without the assistance and their generous help.

Special thanks to TSNZ national president Richard Sell, vice-president Melanie Closs and treasurer Graham Eden from the

NZ Section for their continued support. Thanks to the editor of *TheoSophia* magazine Pamela Zane for her unstinting support and assistance of the TOS NZ pages.

Thank you to the TOS liaisons overseas who keep in touch with us on projects and sponsorships that we support.

Thanks to the TOS team in NZ, Renée Sell, Vicki Jerome, Sue Harrison and Graham Eden who are very much appreciated for all the work they do to keep the TOS moving here.

Vicki Jerome is retiring from the sponsorship liaison role that she has looked after for over 20 years. Vicki has been a dedicated and hard-working server for the TOS for many years now and has processed sponsorships for hundreds of children over the years, helping each one on their own unique life journey. We really appreciate Vicki's hard work. Heartfelt thanks to Vicki for all you have done under the TOS umbrella. We wish Vicki well going forward and for the next steps on her journey.

Thank you to Sue Harrison for picking up the reigns of the sponsorship area more fully and being willing to take on the TOS Sponsorship Coordinator role.

Special thanks to Renée Sell who has accepted the role of TOS Secretary. Your love and compassion for the TOS is boundless and I deeply appreciate all the support you have given to me.

We are very grateful as always to both Nancy Secrest TOS International Secretary and Tim Boyd as head of TOS International. Both work tirelessly for the *One Work of Humanity*. Nancy and Tim are stationed in Adyar, India, and we send our love and heartfelt wishes to them both.

THANK YOU as always to the many members and friends who support the NZ TOS projects and activities. It is most appreciated that you have chosen to serve humanity in this way.

May prayers be our words and practice be our life!



Richard Sell TSNZ National President with TOS National Director Carol Collier and silent auction recipient winner Paul Henderson from Whangarei



Quality gifts, kindly donated to TOS for fund raising

TOS in NZ

To help contact:
CAROL COLLIER

Phone:
027 668 4554

or

Email:
tos@theosophy.org.nz

The Theosophical Order of Service encourages
self-forgetful service,
and is the natural counterpart
of the Theosophical Society's work
to guide people to wisdom.

Radha Burnier

Vegetarians Today

From the New Zealand Vegetarian Society, Margaret Johns urges us to consider our environment as well as our well-being.

With continuing concern about climate change, global warming and sustainability and the UN Climate Change Conference (COP28) in December last year which agreed (again) to “end the fossil fuel usage era...”, it’s time to look again at how we live and what we are eating.

Concerned researchers and conservationists report, for example, that Auckland’s Hauraki Gulf is no longer able to sustain and feed that sea life, and snapper have been caught that are suffering from malnutrition. Humans damage the earth with their greed, selfishness, thoughtless and ruthless destruction of habitats but fortunately there are some working to combat this devastation, most are volunteers, giving hundreds of hours of their time to improve the health of both the sea and the land.

Now there is also more open discussion in the media about cutting down the amount of meat consumed, looking towards a more plant-based diet. Growing our own food cuts down our

carbon footprint. It can increase the nutritional content of food because we control how it is grown. It can help financially and reduce stress by giving us a greater connection to nature. We don’t need big spaces to grow plants; pots and containers are easily accessible and give great satisfaction as plants become ready for harvest.

If you would like to improve your own health and that of those around you, ask what you are eating, where it comes from and how it is grown. How can you improve it? The NZ Vegetarian Society is still running its 21-day plant-based challenge (<https://www.vegetarian.org.nz/veg-living/21-day-plant-based-challenge>) and if you need some fresh recipes check out our website <https://www.vegetarian.org.nz/veg-living/recipes>

Here’s a delicious recipe to try from Alison Holst’s *Meals Without Meat*.

ZUCCHINI AND MUSHROOM LOAF

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • 1 med-sized onion, diced | • 2 cloves garlic, crushed. |
| • 2 Tbsp oil | • 200g mushrooms, sliced |
| • 500g zucchini, grated | • 2 cups fresh wholemeal breadcrumbs |
| • 2 eggs | • 1 cup grated cheese |
| • 1 tsp salt | • 1 tsp basil |
| • ¼ tsp thyme | • black pepper |
| • 2 Tbsp dried breadcrumbs | |

DIRECTIONS

Dice onion and garlic, then sauté until soft in the oil. Add sliced mushrooms and cook until soft and beginning to darken. Grate zucchini coarsely and squeeze to remove as much liquid as possible. Put zucchini in a large bowl and add onion-mushroom mixture, then add remaining ingredients, except ¼ cup cheese and dried breadcrumbs. Mix well.

Transfer mixture to well-greased (lined) loaf tin and top with remaining cheese and dried breadcrumbs.

Bake at 180°C for 1 hour or until middle feels firm to touch, covering with foil during first half of the cooking.

Unmould and leave for 5 minutes before slicing.

Note: To make a Carrot and Mushroom loaf: just replace 500g zucchini, 2 cups of fresh wholemeal and 1 cup grated cheese with: 3 cups (400g) grated carrot, ½ cup dry breadcrumbs and ¾ cup grated cheese. Sprinkle paprika on top.

**If you would like a copy of the Cookbook, contact info@vegetarian.org.nz*

More recipes, information and the NZVS revised and updated *Home Tried Favourites* recipe book, are now available from www.vegetarian.org.nz



Vasanta House Library



Books can be ordered from the library at TSNZ national headquarters by using the postal facility available and contacting the librarian at email: library@theosophy.org.nz or 18 Belvedere St, Epsom, Auckland 1051, or telephone 09 523 1797 (Saturday afternoons).

Cost to members is the return postage, non-members may join for \$50.

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Casual accommodation is available at TS National Headquarters, Vasanta House in Epsom, Auckland. There is a range of rooms: single, double and bunk rooms with and without en-suite plus kitchen and laundry facilities. We welcome those in sympathy with the TS Objects and willing to abide by vegetarian, smoke-free and alcohol-free requirements. For bookings and more information please contact the office 09 523-1797.

MEDITATION

Meditation is to be aware of every thought and of every feeling, never to say it is right or wrong, but just to watch it and move with it. In that watching, you begin to understand the whole movement of thought and feeling. And out of this awareness comes silence.

Jiddu Krishnamurti

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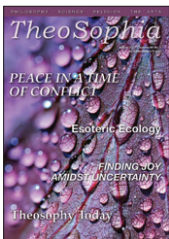
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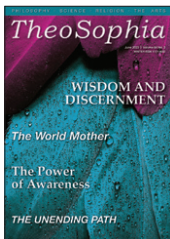
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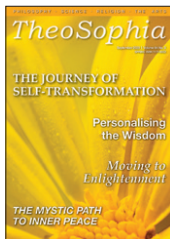
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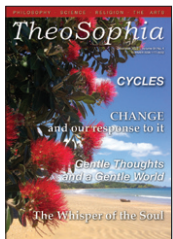
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Theosophy

Theosophy is the body of truths which form the basis of all religions, and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any. It offers a philosophy which renders life intelligible, and which demonstrates the justice and the love which guides its evolution.

Theosophy puts death in its rightful place as a recurring incident in an endless life, opening the gateway to a fuller and more radiant existence. It restores to the world the science of the spirit, teaching one to know the spirit as oneself and the mind and the body as one's servants.

Theosophy literally means divine wisdom: *theosophia*. Theosophy illuminates the scriptures and doctrines of religions, by unveiling their hidden meanings; thus justifying them at the bar of intelligence, as they are ever justified in the eyes of intuition.

Members of the Theosophical Society study these truths and theosophists endeavour to live them. Everyone who is willing to study, to be tolerant, to aim high and to work perseveringly, is welcome as a member and it rests with the member to become a true theosophist.

From *Exploring the Mysteries of Existence* published by The Theosophical Society - <http://theosophy.nz>

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Graphic Design Kelly Bassett
Chocolate Fish Design

Printed by H&A Design & Print, Whanganui
Telephone 64 6 345 3145

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Theosophical Worldview

The Theosophical Society, while reserving for each member full freedom to interpret those teachings known as Theosophy, is dedicated to preserving and realising the ageless wisdom, which embodies both a worldview and a vision of human self-transformation. This tradition is founded upon certain fundamental propositions:

The universe and all that exists within it are one interrelated and interdependent whole.

Every existent being – from atom to galaxy – is rooted in the same universal, life-creating Reality. This Reality is all pervasive but it can never be summed up in its parts, since it transcends all its expressions. It reveals itself in the purposeful, ordered and meaningful processes of nature as well as in the deepest recesses of the mind and spirit.

Recognition of the unique value of every living being expresses itself in reverence for life, compassion for all, sympathy with the need of all individuals to find truth for themselves, and respect for all religious traditions. The ways in which these ideals become realities in individual life are both the privileged choice and the responsible act of every human being.

Central to the concerns of theosophy is the desire to promote understanding and unity among people of all races, nationalities, philosophies and religions. Therefore, all people, whatever their race, creed, sex, caste, or colour, are invited to participate equally in the life and work of the Society. The Theosophical Society imposes no dogmas but points toward the source of unity behind all differences. Devotion to truth, love for all living beings and commitment to a life of active altruism are the marks of the true Theosophist.

www.theosophy.nz



The boundaries we erect to divide heaven
from earth, mind from matter, real from unreal
are mere conveniences. Having made the
boundaries, we can unmake them just as easily.

Deepak Chopra



March 2024