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Latent in the Human Being

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The Wellspring of Art

Animals and
their Spiritual Qualities

The Placebo Effect or
the Effect of Belief

Euthanasia



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Freedom of Thought

As the Theosophical Society has spread far and wide over the world, and as members of all religions have become members of it without surrendering the special dogmas, teachings and beliefs of their respective faiths, it is thought desirable to emphasise the fact that there is no doctrine, no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none of which any member is not free to accept or reject. Approval of its three Objects is the sole condition of membership. No teacher, or writer, from H.P. Blavatsky onwards, has any authority to impose his or her teachings or opinions on members. Every member has an equal right to follow any school of thought, but has no right to force the choice on any other. Neither a candidate for any office nor any voter can be rendered ineligible to stand or to vote, because of any opinion held, or because of membership in any school of thought. Opinions or beliefs neither bestow privileges nor inflict penalties.

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

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

Freedom of the Society

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

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

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

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The Theosophical Society welcomes students or seekers, belonging to any religion or to none, who are in sympathy with its Objects. The motto of the Society is 'There is no Religion higher than Truth'. The word Religion in this statement is a translation of the Sanskrit *dharma*, which among other things means practice; way; virtue; teaching; law; inherent nature; religion; and that which is steadfast or firm. The word Truth in the motto is a translation of the Sanskrit *satya*, meaning among other things, true, real and actual. It derives from the root *sat*, sometimes translated as boundless unconditioned existence.

Theosophy is not defined in the Constitution of the Theosophical Society, or in any official document. It literally means divine wisdom, *theosophia*, but members of the Society are left to discover what it is for themselves, taking as guides whatever religions or philosophies they wish.

The Three Objects of The Theosophical Society

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

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

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

From the National President



Linda Oliveira



Why are TS events and lodge/branch meetings important? Why does the TS not become a permanently virtual Society, with all its activities online? We need to use modern technology well, and must do so, but a recent newspaper item can also give some perspective to these questions.

The article concerned commenced with a description of a group of people at a table in a restaurant (*Guardian Weekly*, 4th May 2012). They all appeared to be deep in prayer—their heads bowed, their eyes hooded and their hands in their laps. Yet on closer examination the writer realised that all concerned, young and old, were gazing at a handheld phone! He observed that these days emailing, texting, messaging, posting and tweeting are ubiquitous. Psychologists have identified this phenomenon as ‘fear of conversation’, giving us pause for thought.

What has happened to verbal phone interaction today, let alone face to face interaction? Social mores change rapidly, with popular trends soon becoming viral once a critical mass is reached. A number of factors may be involved. There is no denying that it can be socially more pleasant to be in a public environment in which people are writing messages to each other via phone or social media, rather than speaking loudly on mobile phones. However, many people may want to keep up with the latest trends without much thought, simply copying others. Then again, writing a quick message can be a convenient, easier option than the effort of engaging in personal conversation.

Much is made of the importance of connectivity, with technology helping us in many ways. But tellingly, the writer mentioned above observed that ‘there is no time for the thesis, antithesis,

synthesis of Socratic dialogue, the skeleton of true conversation’. Reference is made to the illusion of companionship without the demands of relationship; that human friendship requires ‘patience and tolerance, even compromise’. What is the name of the article concerned? It is: ‘Everyone’s connected, but no one is talking’, which conveys volumes.

But there is hope, because mention is also made of the ‘post-digital’ phenomenon, a new craving for live experience which includes more congregation in parks, beaches et cetera. The medieval pilgrimage has even been revived. At the end of the day, what does this tell us? True relationship runs deep and there are unfulfilled dimensions of human life which need to be nurtured—this should come as no great surprise to TS members. I would suggest that the TS has a significant role to help remind the world of the authentic meaning of connectivity.

While the use of technological media by the TS is essential, I believe that our first and primary Object is worked out best in the company of others. We can gain much through dialogue, listening and shared projects. Lodges and branches need the physical presence of their members to better bring this Object to life. Then again, gatherings such as national Conventions are a marvellous opportunity to enjoy leisurely interactions with others of like mind. They provide ‘glue’, as well as dynamism (fohat), which help to strengthen and energise the Society. I have heard members speak in similar terms before. This issue includes a few presentations from our successful January Convention. Members are warmly encouraged to come to our next Convention in Melbourne. Why not plan to attend, especially if you have not been to a Convention before? More information appears on page 59.

Know Thyself

- the real power latent
in the human being

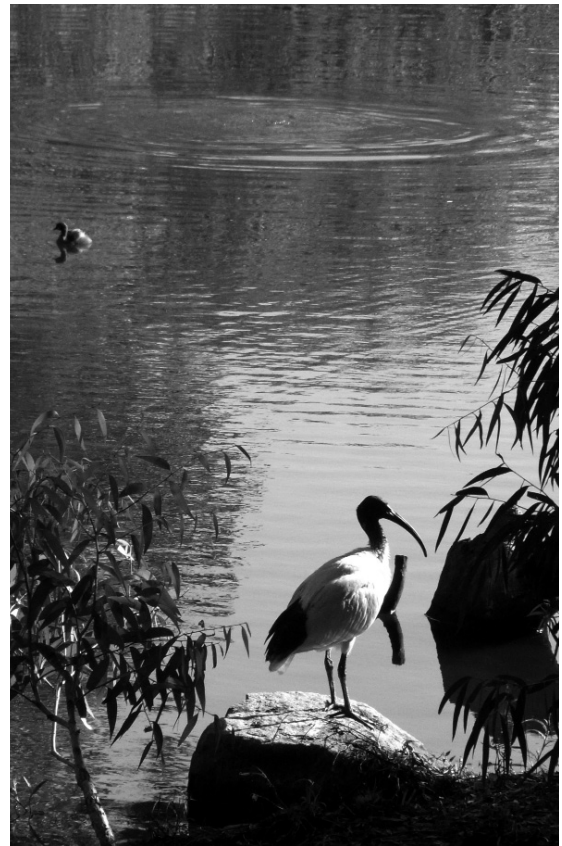
Noel Bertelle

Know thyself! How often have we been attracted, even fascinated by the appeal of those two simple words: ‘know thyself’? Yet how often have we been inclined to just nod our heads wisely in agreement with their intent, and with that action unconsciously dismiss the likelihood of ever doing the necessary work to truly get to know and understand our individual capability — *the real power latent in the human being*? We may have agreed with the idea but, in agreeing, assumed that understanding alone was sufficient to do the job and thus we may have neglected the hard yards.

There are those of course who go ahead and undertake the necessary preparation and then the work of attaining Self-knowledge, and as a result learn through their practice to understand the necessity of taking such a vital first step towards living the intent of the Third Object.

And then there are those who, when the notion of ‘powers latent in the human being’ is raised, immediately think psychic powers like ESP, telepathy, clairvoyance and such, in preference to getting to *know themselves* first. As a result, they find any investigation they make into the correct understanding of the aim of the Third Object is impaired by the intrusion of personal issues tending to take prominence in one way or another.

There are also those who simply look for an intellectual framework which tends to suit their actions and their thoughts and then follow that direction regardless of consequence — not to



mention those who are attracted by the different sounding, the exotic or the miraculous, all of which upon examination may be seen as idle and selfish pursuits.

The Third Object – a Shift in Emphasis

And yet it is clear through our studies that down through the ages the Great Sages have counselled against seeking powers or *siddhis* for their own sake, advising that at best they become distractions from the real work, and at worst destructive, both to ourselves and those around us. I should perhaps concede that some of these powers were in mind when the Third Object was formulated. But there has been something of a shift in emphasis since then as thoughtfully observed by Hugh Shearman, who stated:

What was unexplained and latent in the early days of the Society is today explained and patent; and we must perpetually move on as human

knowledge and understanding extend their range.¹

Yes, I do know he wrote that around fifty years ago and many things have changed dramatically since then. Nevertheless he made reference even then to the point that psychic powers in man need *not* be regarded as unexplained and latent because they had been ‘copiously explained’.² He considered therefore that they were ‘no longer a major concern of the Theosophical Society’.³ He also felt that the Society had a different responsibility which he nominated as:

... to go deeper, to seek an experience and understanding of more fundamental laws of nature and more profound capacities of human consciousness, and to leave ... commonplace topics (like) clairvoyance (and such) largely to those other organisations which are publicising these subjects so freely...⁴

Though noting this, he then went on to suggest the Society should nevertheless continue to try to uncover ‘deeper implications’ of meaning behind such powers, and by doing so help ‘to save people from the grave dangers that lie in pointless, incoherent or sensational pursuits of these subjects’.⁵

And he said that because he firmly believed that:

... the ‘powers latent in man’ ... are what may broadly be described as moral powers, those latent capacities of perception and character which enable their possessor to be unselfish and stable, to accept and express truth accurately and to give love and service to mankind.⁶

With those words I believe Hugh Shearman set up a reasonable challenge for anyone seeking a genuine purpose in life; a clear direction which may be gainfully followed — after, of course, diligently undertaking the necessary work of Self-discovery mentioned earlier. And it provides an extremely helpful method of training oneself to transcend the material mind and its distractions, to seek out those moral powers which will endow the bearer with the fantastic ability to *know* Truth in their life, to see *clearly* and to then go on to give love and service to humankind.

The Power of Self-Transformation

Although it may seem that I have tended to dismiss other powers like telepathy, clairvoyance, ESP and such rather disdainfully, I certainly acknowledge and concede as mentioned earlier, that perhaps some of those powers were in mind when the Third Object was formulated. I would suggest, however, there is a far deeper meaning to the notion ‘powers latent in the human being’ than chasing after what may appear on the surface to be appealing distractions; a meaning that is far more pertinent to the theosophical student, to the true seeker of Divine Wisdom. After all, what greater purpose is there than the power of Self-transformation, the power that converts man into his divine potential? You may remember that we are reminded in *The Voice of the Silence*: ‘Thou art thyself the object of thy search.’⁷

If we can follow that advice and come to know *who* we are and come to know *what* we are, we will be able to take our rightful place in the Divine Plan — in the rightful scheme of things. Once we do so then everything else will fall into place and we will gain perspective, clarity, discernment; the ability to distinguish reality from illusion as we remove that ever-present and indeed ever-pressing hindrance, the veil of ignorance. And although there may be (dare I say it) in *many* of us a resistance to looking within, it is clearly the only undistracted way to see Truth. Although of vital importance it does not mean that it is *all* we do; we should nevertheless bear in mind that it will affect everything we do today, and into the future.

And if we fail to do this, if we fail to sincerely ask the question urged by Ramana Maharshi, ‘Who am I?’, then we will not have the power to understand and to see with clarity.

Think. No matter how we individually perceive the world — whether it be predominantly through our physical senses or even heightened psychic senses; our intellect, highly developed or otherwise; as informed by the latest scientific theories or the reading of great philosophical works — it is *not* through our physical senses, as filtered through our intellect, or even through

our cultivated theories, that real understanding comes. Truth is always perceived at a far deeper level of consciousness.

But if we place too much emphasis on these more mundane levels of knowing, then our understanding will be limited and distorted. The quest for Truth requires a far deeper investigation of the very instrument of our knowing, that is, ourselves.

Our Perception — neither Clear nor Unadulterated

Let us take this a step further. Even though, upon examination, we might *admit* to having a limited perception, we may still be inclined to believe that it is unadulterated and clear – if only because it is *our* understanding. So, why is that? Perhaps it is because we innately sense the existence of a deeper, purer Consciousness from which ours descends and in this way assume that all of our seeing, all of our doing, is somehow pure and unadulterated – and yet we know from experience that all of our seeing and doing is often far from being clear and unadulterated.

Of course, this is not to say that our awareness does not ultimately stem from this deeper, purer Consciousness. But it *is* to say that we must be aware of the difference and make the effort to go beyond the limitations of the more mundane aspects of our being, meeting ourselves (as it were) in the very ground of our Being. It is only then that we can come to know Truth, when we finally develop the necessary perspective. And it is then, perhaps, that we become the veritable instrument needed to unlock the mysteries of the cosmos. This is the real power latent in the human being – the power of Self-knowledge.

Christ said ‘seek ye first the kingdom of God.... and all these things shall be added unto you.’⁸ He also said that ‘the kingdom of God is within you’.⁹ Translate that as you may, but to my mind those words suggest that it is when we truly know ourselves, our Divine potential — when we can rest in our true nature — then, and only then, can we place ourselves in the correct position to view Reality. And if we can so correctly place ourselves, then we can

achieve the power which will unlock the secrets of the cosmos, the ever so fundamental power that must be of prime interest to all theosophical students.

It might seem like I have placed a lot of emphasis on ‘knowing the Self’ as the key to knowing all things – but that is perhaps because this point has so largely been lost in the West, where the knower is seen as some kind of objective and neutral thing, who does not enter into the calculation, so to speak. Even though recent developments in physics, for example, have started to question this, it seems from my very limited understanding that the focus still rests on what this means in terms of the so-called ‘world out there’ and not for what it may say about the observer, or the relationship between the two.

“ we innately sense the existence of a deeper, purer Consciousness from which ours descends and in this way assume that all of our seeing, all of our doing, is somehow pure and unadulterated – and yet we know from experience that all of our seeing and doing is often far from being clear and unadulterated. ”

How interesting it will be if physics shifts its focus even a little towards a more mutual and even-handed understanding of the relationship between the observer (ourselves) and the observed world. But although on the face of it that might appear to be only a short step in terms of recent developments, I suspect that in practice it would actually require quite a cataclysmic leap from the world of objective science to the deeply subjective world of the mystics. Not being an expert, I offer this simply as food for thought.

In saying all of this, I am not trying to claim that any exploration of the world out there, the world of forces and effects, is not without value; it certainly is. I am simply emphasising the point that until we understand the nature of the very instrument we use to gather knowledge,

which includes its relationship to that world, then any knowledge we have of the latter will be incomplete, and limited.

So then in order to realise what *is* — and I suggest it is Self-knowledge, clearly the real power latent in the human being — we must turn again, as Theosophy always must, to that great lineage of sages both ancient and modern, for the necessary guidance to start our journey. Indeed, this is why it is called the Perennial Wisdom. For it is still those ancient yet modern practices of meditation, contemplation, devotion and altruism to which we must turn.



And it is through such teachings and practices that we may come to know our own inherent divinity and so then gratefully rest in our true nature. Swami Yatiswarananda advises that ‘The main task of man’s life is to assert his potential divinity.’¹⁰

The Lures of the Material Age

It is worth repeating that *the main task of man’s life is to assert his divine potential!* And so it is that the real journey is not an outward one, it never has been. But if it happens that we take that path, we should perhaps be particularly careful not to be seduced by the seemingly compelling effects we may come across, and will tend to see all around us. Of course it is true that we live in a grossly material age and simply because of that great care is needed, perhaps now more than ever, to discern the real from the ephemeral. Conversely it has been said of our age that we live in a time when opportunity is at its greatest. Nevertheless we must be quite sure when we are faced by an abundance of choice that we select the opportunities which will not only benefit ourselves, but all of humanity. If we can do that then we can start to unlock the real power latent in the human being.

We can of course be sidetracked, because our concept of what is real depends on how we see

ourselves, and thereafter whatever we accept as real will affect our way of looking at all things, we must therefore accept that at that time ‘our whole being responds to this reality’.¹¹ At the same time we must remember that ‘the more our consciousness expands, the more we see the Divine in all people and the more spiritual we become’.¹²

Our First and Major Task

To re-emphasise the point, understanding *ourselves* is clearly the first and major task before us, as everything we think and do — if we are to move forward to a new level of consciousness — depends on the absolute clarity of understanding of *ourselves* and this surely will reflect upon all around us and beyond.

Perhaps, then, if we see the need we can start today, as I note the statement in the Rules of the Theosophical Society in relation to Conventions that after ‘study and practice of Theosophy and allied subjects [we should] discuss ways and means of spreading the knowledge of Theosophy’.¹³

Yet how do we adopt that worthy aim with any real accuracy if we neglect to take the appropriate step of getting to know who and what we are; to *Know Oneself* as it were? Because

surely without this inner knowledge, without Self-realisation, what we hasten to discuss and ultimately to pass on to enquirers will simply be based on our memory of what we have read or heard, not on our true understanding. As Krishnamurti emphasises:

It is *understanding* that is creative, not memory. ... Understanding is the liberating factor, not the things you have stored up in your mind. ... What is important, then, is not what you know, not the knowledge or the experience you have gathered, but to see things as they are and to understand them immediately; because comprehension is immediate, it is not in the future. When experience and knowledge take the place of understanding, they become deteriorating factors in life.¹⁴

As we Self-realise we start to really know what lies within and such inner knowledge leads to a deep understanding, not only of oneself, but – to paraphrase our International President — it is also connected with the understanding of the laws and of the forces at work. And knowledge of the laws is power to accelerate progress. The Third Object implies study, not only of nature in its outer manifestation, but of the relationship of all things.¹⁵

And so it is that our first duty as seekers of Truth is to understand the meaning and purpose behind that inspirational quote from *The Voice of the Silence*: ‘Thou art Thyself the object of thy search.’ If we are to aspire to its fulfilment then we are certainly obliged to turn to and put into practice the arts of meditation, contemplation, altruism, devotion and such. We must in all consciousness be prepared to do all the preparatory inner work that will be of such great assistance in our quest for higher knowledge. And that, I hasten to add, must be done before we investigate the unexplained laws of nature, as stated in the Third Object. We must learn to ‘Know thyself’, which is the real power latent in the human being.

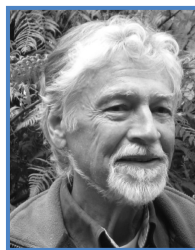
I conclude with these fitting words from *The Light of Asia*:

We moan for rest, alas! But rest can never find;
We know not whence we come, nor where we float away.
Time and again we tread this round of smiles and tears;
In vain we pine to know whither our pathway leads,

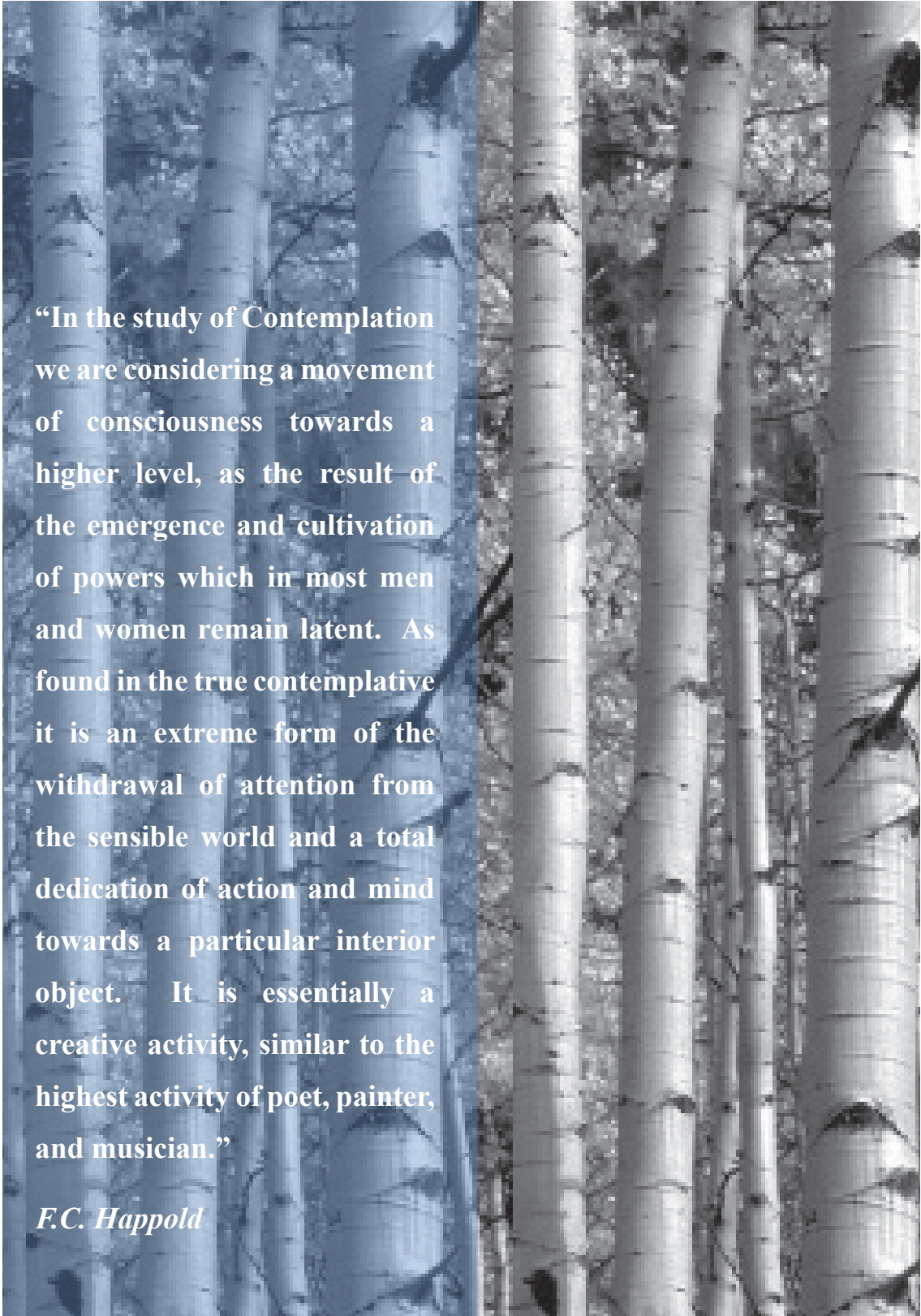
And why we play this empty play.
Rise, dreamer, from your dream, and slumber not again!¹⁶

Endnotes

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16. Cited in *Meditation and Spiritual Life*, op. cit., at 9, p. 1.



Noel Bertelle is an immediate past President, and current Vice-President of the Brisbane Lodge of the Theosophical Society. He is also a national Supporting Lecturer for the Theosophical Society in Australia. Noel has a deep and ongoing interest in the study and practice of ‘*Theo-Sophia*’ (Divine Wisdom), with a particular devotion to the primacy of meditative practice in leading the spiritual life. He gave this talk at the 2012 National Convention.



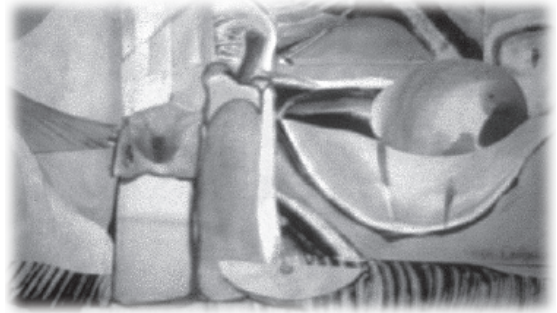
“In the study of Contemplation we are considering a movement of consciousness towards a higher level, as the result of the emergence and cultivation of powers which in most men and women remain latent. As found in the true contemplative it is an extreme form of the withdrawal of attention from the sensible world and a total dedication of action and mind towards a particular interior object. It is essentially a creative activity, similar to the highest activity of poet, painter, and musician.”

F.C. Happold

From the Archives: The Wellspring of Art

Theosophy in Australia,
June-Aug 1944

Florence Pulsford



Creative art is probably the highest achievement of mankind. Other great ways of human expression such as religion, science, and philosophy, have power to uplift and to arouse feelings of wonder and awe, but this can be done without rising above the higher mental level, though of course each in its true essence has its roots in pure spirit. Art that is truly creative, however, belongs to the *Buddhic* or intuitional plane, and while the beholder need not necessarily have attained that level, the artist must be able to tune in to it for his inspiration. The *Buddhic Plane* is the source or wellspring of all Art.

It is here that the divine archetype or image of perfection formed in the mind of God is held in keeping, and the artist catches glimpses of divine things. Here also it is that individualism ceases, and the artist can be aware of his oneness with all things – with, therefore, the object of his inspiration. His task is to attempt to translate these archetypal glimpses into a language which can be grasped by the ordinary man, by means of form, line, colour, sound, words, or any other medium of expression, to create the ‘thing of beauty which is a joy for ever’.

All human experience goes to swell the fountain of inspiration. Great art is frequently born of suffering, and the poet proverbially lives poverty-stricken in a garret. Some of Beethoven’s greatest works were composed after he lost his sense of hearing, while many blind people produce works of real art. This proves that art is not dependent on the physical

senses. Browning wrote of ‘the many years of pain that taught me art’. On the other hand, art may result from intense joy.

It is of absorbing interest to read what great artists have said or written about the source of their inspiration, and to note how well it fits in with the theosophical teaching of *Buddhi*.

In the musical field, many great composers have said that inspiration comes in the form of a motif or theme, while others describe it as a strong mood out of which music flows. Mozart said that he heard musical themes not in succession but all at once, then drew on what he had accumulated in his mind to shape the composition as a whole. He regarded this ability to remember his inspiration as ‘the most precious gift with which God had favoured him’. Schumann in a dream heard Schubert playing a melody. He wrote it down and polished it up, and it is included today among his works as the *Theme in E Flat Major*.

Musical Inspiration

Tartini went to bed one night troubled by an elusive theme which he was unable to develop. While dreaming he heard the Devil playing it on a violin. He wrote down what he heard and called it the *Trillo del Diavolo*. When asked how he composed the impressive passage in *The Apostles* depicting the suicide of Judas, Elgar said, ‘I saw Judas in the extremity of his remorse putting what he hoped would be an end to himself, and heard it on the muted horn’. Beethoven, Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Berlioz and many other master musicians have

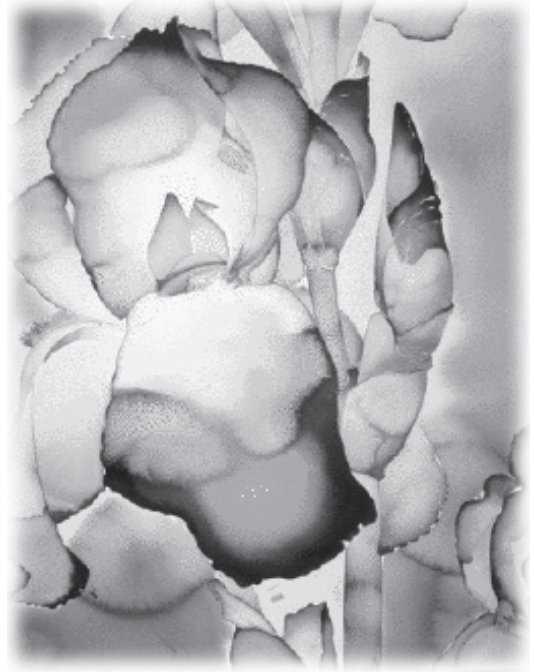
received the germs of their compositions in a flash of inspiration, sudden, unexpected, and fleeting, from a source other than their normal consciousness. It was usually followed by much heart-rending labour as the work was developed and perfected.

Inspiration in Literature

Turning to literature, many writers have testified to the reality of inspiration; among others we have Goethe, Keats, Browning, Dickens, Black, George Eliot, Coleridge, and George William Russell ('A.E.'). Of these, let us take Browning and A.E., as they have told us a great deal about the subject, the latter even having written a book about it. In one of his poems Browning writes of the thoughts of a musician pondering over the origin of his music:

But here is the finger of God—the flash
of the Will that can!
Existent behind all laws, that made them,
and, lo, they are!
And I know not if save in this
such gifts be allowed to man
That out of three sounds be framed,
not a fourth sound, but a star!
Consider it well: each tone of our scale
in itself is nought;
It is everywhere in the world—loud,
soft, and all is said.
Give it to me to use. I mix it with
two in my thought;
And then! Ye have seen and heard.
Consider, and bow the head!

A.E. was convinced that his inspiration came to him in a realm of consciousness underlying the dream state. Indeed he believed that all poetry was born there. He knew four states of consciousness—waking, sleeping, dreaming, and one which he describes as 'deep being', beyond sleep and dreams. In moments of creation he was aware first of this state of being, then of a succession of images, finally of images translated into words. He could never compose verse without this inner guidance, which it was impossible to force. He tells us that W.B. Yeats also experienced this fourfold consciousness. A.E. was completely absorbed in a love of beauty, and says that he was never able to place the good above the beautiful. Of the origin of poetry he writes:



I think all true poetry is conceived on the Mount of Transfiguration, and there is revelation in it and the mingling of heaven and earth. The Mount is a symbol for that peak of soul, when, gone inward into itself, it draws nigh to its own divine root, and memory and imagination are shot through and through with the radiance of another nature.

The strange lines of *Kubla Khan*, the uncompleted poem of S.T. Coleridge, are said to have been given to him while he lay in a trance induced by an opiate. He was aroused by a business call in the midst of the poem, and it was never finished.

The Painter and the Architect

Two brief examples of the inspiration of the painter must suffice for this branch of art. The great mystic, writer, and painter, William Blake, said, 'You have only to work up imagination to a state of vision, and the thing is done'. It sounds easy, but there is really a profound truth in his statement. A painter nearer to the present day, van Gogh, said that he experienced 'a terrible lucidity at moments when nature is so glorious that I am hardly conscious of myself, and the picture comes to me later in a dream'.

The sculptor undoubtedly draws on the wellspring of art in the same way as other artists, and the manner of his working through his chosen medium of stone or marble is beautifully illustrated in the story of Pygmalion and Galatea. The awakened intuition of Pygmalion was able to discern in the block of marble the lovely form of Galatea—he simply chipped away the superfluous matter.

Architecture has been described as ‘frozen music’, and the clairvoyant tells us that music builds stately edifice-like forms in the finer grades of matter. We saw this clearly depicted in the inspired film *Fantasia*, when to the strains of Schubert’s *Ave Maria* the trees of the forest melted into the Gothic arches of a dim cathedral. Incidentally, in an attempt to trace the source of the statement about frozen music, I found it attributed to no less than four different people, with references given in two cases. I wonder who said it first!

I have not been able to find any statement by an architect as to how his ideas actually arise, but no doubt they come in the same way as those of other artists. Architecture appears to have a strong affinity with music, and Ruskin considered that the architect who was not also a sculptor or a painter, was merely a framemaker.

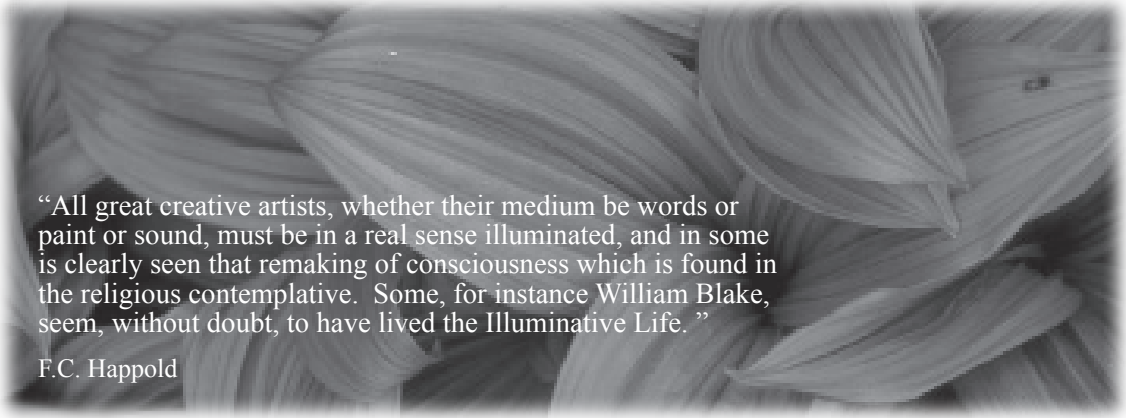
Art and *Buddhi*

We are taught that the astral plane is an inverted reflection of the Buddhic, or as has been said, ‘The astral is *Buddhi* dirtied’. I believe that this

accounts for much of the distortion and ugliness which today masquerades under the name of art. I think that the artist has ability, but is not able to rise to the level of true artistic inspiration, but does contact and express the strange images of the lower astral.

The sadness of Art is the incapacity of the artist to translate perfectly the ideal of the vision to physical form. Michelangelo said that the ‘true work of art is but a shadow of the divine perfection’. The artist is never content with his own work. We may exclaim over its beauty and splendour, but he, knowing what he tried to do, realises how far it falls short of the sublime vision which inspired him. It is pleasant to read in our theosophical literature of the heaven world in which all are able to fulfil the best that is in them, without the frustration and failure which is the lot of so many great souls on earth—‘On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven a perfect round’.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed
of good shall exist;
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty
nor good nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each
survives for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of
an hour.
The high that proved too high, the
heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to lose
itself in the sky ...
And what is our failure here but a
triumph’s evidence
For the fullness of the days ...



“All great creative artists, whether their medium be words or paint or sound, must be in a real sense illuminated, and in some is clearly seen that remaking of consciousness which is found in the religious contemplative. Some, for instance William Blake, seem, without doubt, to have lived the Illuminative Life.”

F.C. Happold

Animals and their Spiritual Qualities

Pedro Oliveira

The Internet has made it possible for us to have glimpses of the extraordinary intelligence and kindness which are inherent qualities in animals. While neuroscientists are still struggling to understand the nature of consciousness at the human level, considered by them as ‘the hard problem’, a commonly held view among them in relation to animals speaks about the probability that many animals experience at least simple levels of consciousness. Not surprisingly, the prevailing scientific view about animal consciousness is a mechanistic one.

However, increasing evidence now available on the Internet shows that animals from different species and locations are not only interacting with other animals in a gentle and compassionate way, but also expressing a profound understanding of the different situations they are in. Let us see some examples.

Understanding and Compassion in Animals

Reuters reported that a giant tortoise and an orphaned baby hippo forged an unusual friendship after the far-reaching effects of the 2004 tsunami in southeast Asia. Mzee, a 130-year-old Aldabran tortoise, became a surrogate parent and inseparable friend to hippo Owen who was washed out to sea off the coast of Kenya, rescued by villagers and taken to a wildlife park where the tortoise lived. They used to sleep and play together, but also created a language of their own in the form sounds unique to hippo or to tortoise and used gentle nods and pushes to communicate with one another.



Hawkeye, a faithful Labrador retriever, was photographed lying down next to the casket of Navy SEAL Jon Tumilson, killed in Afghanistan, throughout his memorial service in Rockford, Iowa, on 19th August 2011. Is it possible to measure the depth of the link between a human being and his or her dog? What made that particular dog lie down next to his best mate during the whole duration of the memorial service?

Tom Satre told the *Sitka Gazette* in Alaska that he was out with a charter group on his sixty-two foot fishing vessel when four juvenile black-tailed deer swam directly toward his boat:

Once the deer reached the boat, the four began to circle the boat, looking directly at us. We could tell right away that the young bucks were distressed. I opened up my back gate and we helped the typically skittish and absolutely wild animals onto the boat. In all my years fishing, I’ve never seen anything quite like it! Once onboard, they collapsed with exhaustion, shivering. Once we reached the dock, the first buck that we had been pulled from the water hopped onto the dock, looked back as if to say ‘thank you’ and disappeared into the forest.

How did the distressed deer know where to find help?

To continue these examples, a dog and an orang-utan became very good friends in a zoo in

California. A dolphin rescued beached whales in New Zealand by staying next to them for some minutes, as a result of which the whales initiated movements to swim back into the open sea. A hippopotamus rescued an impala from being killed by leopards in Africa by allowing the impala to climb onto his back, then swimming to the centre of a river. A dog refused to walk away from his mate who was run over and killed in a busy motorway.

What Makes Animals Special

Let us consider some thoughts from well-known writers about what makes animals the special creatures they are.

Martin Buber, the celebrated author of *I and Thou*, said that ‘an animal’s eyes have the power to speak a great language.’ Perhaps because they are free from the constant cerebration and fretting that characterises us as humans, their eyes can express more poignantly states of attention, curiosity, fear and profound observation, as well as affection.

Albert Einstein wrote that ‘our task must be to free ourselves ... by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty.’ Untold cruelty and suffering has been perpetrated by humanity on countless species, quite a number of which have been made extinct by our callous action. All creatures, the tiniest as well as the largest, deserve our care, attention and kindness for in them the ineffable glory of the Uncreated Spirit is also being progressively manifest.

‘Until one has loved an animal, a part of one’s soul remains unawakened’, wrote Anatole France. Millions of human lives are better and different as a result of the love of their pet or pets. The trust displayed by pets to humans is almost beyond explanation. It is a relationship that heals, inspires and, sometimes, saves. Dedicated love and care for an animal can indeed awaken a deeper dimension of our souls for it initiates us, so to speak, into the mysteries of giving.

‘The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated’, declared Mohandas Gandhi. How many people

would maintain their lifestyle if they were given a chance to visit a battery farm or an abattoir? Yet, the packaged ‘product’ in supermarkets seems more palatable to some. Stray dogs and cats in countries of the developing world face a dire existence. A recent denunciation in Brazil revealed that many stray animals were being rounded up in a truck and sold to a Korean vessel, as a result of which they would become meals! By Gandhiji’s benchmark, our moral progress in such areas is indeed quite slow and, for the animals, terrifying.

Benjamin Hoff, author of *The Tao of Pooh*, once remarked that ‘lots of people talk to animals. Not very many listen, though. That’s the problem.’ Animals have an extraordinary capacity for listening. When one really observes them, one can see that they listen with their whole body, not just with a part of themselves. One of the possible reasons for this is that for animals listening is an integral part of the process of survival. They have been trained by evolution to pay close attention to their environment. It was reported that minutes before the 2004 tsunami hit the beaches in Thailand some elephants, which were carrying tourists, stopped, became temporarily agitated and then ran for the nearby hills, thereby saving a number of lives. They were clearly aware that something of great proportion was about to happen and displayed extraordinary sensitivity.

Do Animals Have Rights?



Abraham Lincoln once stated: ‘I am in favour of animal rights as well as human rights. That is the way of a whole human being.’ His statement

was not only prescient but it anticipated a debate that is here to stay: Do animals have rights? Is it ethically sustainable to use animals, like rabbits and others, for testing cosmetic products in laboratories? Is the meat industry a real necessity or the by-product of age-old callous and entrenched habits? Are chickens supposed

to live in very small boxes and be treated as egg dispensing machines?

The European Union, in a bold and welcome initiative, has recently banned animal testing for the production of cosmetics. But much, much more needs to be done in order to profoundly change the plight of animals in the world. In this connection, it is a very encouraging sign to see organised campaigns led by PETA – People for Ethical Treatment of Animals – and other groups, which have captured the imagination of thousands of people around the world. We have a solemn duty to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. As Ashley Montagu wrote:

The indifference, callousness and contempt that so many people exhibit toward animals is evil first because it results in great suffering in animals, and second because it results in an incalculably great impoverishment of the human spirit.

Below are a few animal inspired statements by some well-known people. They are worthy of pondering on. Let us learn to see in every animal we meet a gift which comes from the heart of life and let us help each and every animal in its journey through life. In doing so we may discover that we have been the recipient of a great blessing.

Animal Inspired ‘sutras’ for Meditation

‘Animals are reliable, many full of love, true in their affections, predictable in their actions, grateful and loyal. Difficult standards for people to live up to.’ (Alfred A. Montapert)

‘Any glimpse into the life of an animal quickens our own and makes it so much the larger and better in every way.’ (John Muir)

‘The worst sin towards our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them. That’s the essence of inhumanity.’ (George Bernard Shaw)

‘If you have men who will exclude any of God’s creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who will deal likewise with their fellow men.’ (St. Francis of Assisi)

‘The animals of the planet are in desperate peril. Without free animal life I believe we will lose the spiritual equivalent of oxygen.’ (Alice Walker)

‘Each species is a masterpiece, a creation assembled with extreme care and genius.’ (Edward O. Wilson)

‘I like pigs. Dogs look up to us. Cats look down on us. Pigs treat us as equals.’ (Winston Churchill)

‘There are two means of refuge from the miseries of life: music and cats.’ (Albert Schweitzer)

‘Horse sense is the thing a horse has which keeps it from betting on people.’ (W. C. Fields)

‘Animals are my friends, and I don’t eat my friends.’ (George Bernard Shaw)

‘Time spent with cats is never wasted.’ (Sigmund Freud)

‘Life is as dear to a mute creature as it is to man. Just as one wants happiness and fears pain, just as one wants to live and not die, so do other creatures.’ (His Holiness The Dalai Lama)

Reference:

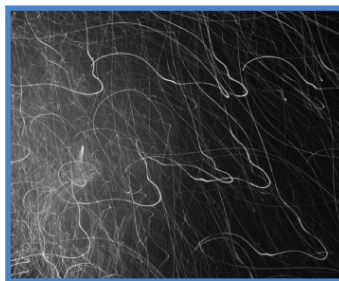
<http://www.petsinpastel.com/quotes.htm>



Pedro Oliveira is a former International Secretary of the Theosophical Society and a former Education Coordinator of the Theosophical Society in Australia. Currently he is a Supporting Lecturer for the Australian Section.

The Placebo Effect or the Effect of Belief

Victor Gostin



The word placebo is Latin for ‘I will please’, as mentioned in Wikipedia. It was first used in a medicinal context in the 18th century, and in 1811 was defined as ‘any medicine adapted more to please than to benefit the patient ...’.

Today, a placebo can be defined as ‘a substance or procedure ... that is objectively without specific activity for the condition being treated’. Under this definition, a wide variety of things can be placebos and exhibit a placebo effect. Pharmacological substances administered through any means can act as placebos, including pills, creams, inhalants, and injections. Medical devices such as ultrasound can act as placebos. Pretend surgery, sham electrodes implanted in the brain, and pretend acupuncture, either with sham needles or on fake acupuncture points, have all exhibited placebo effects. (This is not to invalidate the effects of traditional acupuncture.)

Strong Belief in a Cure is the Key

The physician has even been called a placebo; a study found that patient recovery can be increased by words that suggest the patient ‘would be better in a few days’, and if the patient is given treatment, that ‘the treatment *would certainly* make him better’ rather than negative words such as ‘I am not sure that the treatment I am going to give you will have an effect’.

Those *who think a treatment will work* display a stronger placebo effect than those who do not, as evidenced by a study of acupuncture. An expensive pill works better than a cheap one; two pills are better than one; and more frequent

doses and using popular brand names give improved results.

The ‘ceremony effect’ of knowing that one is being treated raises expectations, so injections are more effective than pills. But it is also true that red, orange, warm-coloured pills, work best as stimulants; blue, green and other cool colours work best as depressants. Familiar rituals known to the patient can be effective. And interestingly, children seem to have greater response than adults to placebos.

How does our mind actually affect our health?

I refer to a book by Dylan Evans, *Placebo: Mind over Matter in Modern Medicine*. Evans first shows good evidence that placebos are effective in relieving pain including headaches and post-operative pain, reducing inflammation, curing ulcers, reducing anxiety and even depression. However, little scientific evidence exists so far for placebos reversing cancer or curing schizophrenia; although isolated cases of such cures do exist.

Motivation may contribute to the placebo effect. Thus our active goals and heightened expectations of improved health are important factors. We must really believe, and expect, the pill or procedure to work.

Pain and Placebos

Evans then shows how a common thread exists that explains the effect of placebos mentioned above. He explains how nature has evolved our immune system and brain to produce the immediate acute phase response, followed later

by the acquired immune response. This quick-acting acute phase response, or inflammation, is usually accompanied by lethargy, apathy, loss of appetite and increased sensitivity to pain (that is, sickness behaviour).

So, of what use is pain, inflammation et cetera? Feeling pain is a vital defence mechanism. Swelling is also a defensive process as immune cells migrate into the damaged area. Higher body temperature reduces the rate of bacterial growth and speeds the growth of immune cells. In order to save energy, the body generates feelings of lethargy and reduced appetite.

In contrast, the power of the placebos is to suppress this natural acute phase response. This occurs by the brain releasing natural painkillers or endorphins — endogenous morphine. Details of the acute phase response are complex but involve the hypothalamus, pituitary and adrenal glands. Since 1978 it has been known that the effect of placebos depends upon the release in the brain of endogenous opioids or endomorphins. The release of endorphins by the pituitary allows the brain to exert some control over pain and the inflammatory response (Evans, p.58).

Are there limits to the placebo effect?

The placebo response appears limited to suppressing the acute phase response, but it does not include bacterial and viral infections. These are attacked by the slower acting acquired immune system.

Conditioning is a kind of learning in which one event comes to be associated with another. Immune conditioning is when the conditioned response results in some kind of immune activity. Conditioned enhancement and suppression of the immune system have both been demonstrated on humans (Evans, p.104). Animals also respond to conditioning, as discovered through Pavlov's dog, et cetera.

Evolution of Immune Conditioning

It turns out that the immune system is far more ancient than the brain! It was the first 'system' to evolve. It is found in the most primitive

multicellular creatures (Evans p.106). Sponges, for example, have phagocytes (specialised cells that digest foreign material) which recognise bacteria and participate in healing wounds. These primitive immune cells defend sponges against infection and tissue damage without help from any nervous system or brain. In molluscs, neurons are scattered throughout the body, and communicate freely with the immune cells. In the first chordates (followed by vertebrates) the neurons linked up to form a continuous web—the nervous system, but the old connections with the immune system have remained. The signalling molecules are called neurotransmitters or immunotransmitters.

The immune system indeed functions like a sixth sense, enabling us to detect the presence of tiny invaders that constantly attack us from within and without. Perhaps it is more correct to call the immune system the 'first sense', being much older than sight or hearing. It may be classed as a form of touch (Evans, p.107).

What do modern brain scans reveal?

Using modern brain scans, scientists have determined that the area in our brain driving the placebo effect is called the *nucleus accumbens*, which is that area responsible for our expectation of reward. The placebo (that is, a strong belief) causes a dopamine boost mainly from this *nucleus accumbens*.

Those of us with the most active *nucleus accumbens* have the highest placebo effect, so training our minds to believe and expect a positive result is the best attitude we can develop, that is, a particular type of intent. Clear positive visualisation and effective meditation have long been a popular topic among theosophists, and modern research has supported these activities.

Finally, in the *Dhammapada*, Gautama Buddha mentions (500 BCE):

All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him.

References:

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Niemi, M.B., 'Placebo Effect: A Cure in the Mind', *Scientific American Mind*, 2009; 25th February.

Scott et al, 'Individual differences in reward responding explain placebo-induced expectations and effects', *Neuron*, 2007; v55: 325-336.



Associate Professor Victor Gostin, recognised in his field of geology and planetary astronomy, is currently Hon. Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Adelaide. He has been a member of the Theosophical Society since 1959 and belongs to Adelaide Lodge. Victor is also the Coordinator of the Theosophy-Science Group in Australia. He gave this talk at the 2012 Annual Convention.

“We have to venture outside the materialist arena and turn the materialist metaphysics upside down. Instead of saying that consciousness is a brain phenomenon, we have to posit that consciousness is the ground of being, rich with quantum possibilities, of which material possibilities are a component. This underlying reality we cannot experience.”

Amit Goswami, Ph.D.

The Nature of Wisdom

Ralf Schrub



During the past days we have studied Wisdom and explored many ideas surrounding it. We have tried to define Wisdom, we have compared it to knowledge and we have looked at the Yoga of Wisdom. However, one thing we have not really touched upon has been the nature of Wisdom. So what is its nature? I quote N. Sri Ram who concludes at one point that we may not know what Wisdom is in its true nature.¹ So we could stop right there, couldn't we? Yet I am sure that we can know certain of its characteristics.

Undefined: As we have seen during the lectures there are a lot of different definitions of Wisdom. But in the end we had to accept, and agreed, that we cannot truly define it. This is the first property of Wisdom which I would like us to keep in mind – that it is indefinable.

Synthesising: Another possibility is to reflect upon what Wisdom is associated with. Is it associated with the body, with the mind, with the emotions? Probably not, according to the majority of opinions; rather, with the soul or the heart. N. Sri Ram says in another place that 'Wisdom is an expression of one's being; we cannot separate it from the way we think or feel, our behaviour, tastes or action.'² I therefore suggest a second quality of Wisdom — that it is synthesising.

Undogmatic: Thirdly, I assume we know from experience, and from what we have heard here, that Wisdom is not so much past-orientated as more future-orientated. I am thinking of the story we have been told about the Buddha

and this one female disciple-to-be, who was looking at the past when she wanted an answer regarding the death of her son. The Buddha's answer was not based on any laws, like the law of suffering. But he made her turn around and helped her look into the future. I would call this characteristic of Wisdom undogmatic.

So these are three aspects of the nature of Wisdom: that it is indefinable, synthesising and undogmatic. I am convinced that when we do not acknowledge the nature of Wisdom we cannot be wise. So, if we dogmatically define it in reference to only one part of our life, we cannot be wise. That leaves us with the question: Where (in which setting) do we (you and I) not appreciate the nature of Wisdom?

Endnotes:

1. N. Sri Ram, *Seeking Wisdom*, The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, 1969/1989, p. 42.
2. N. Sri Ram, *ibid.*, p. 34.



Ralf Schrub completed degrees in theology and civil/structural engineering in Germany. He works in an engineering consultancy in Dunedin, New Zealand. Ralf is Vice-President of his local Lodge and his

emphasis is on linking spiritual theosophical tenets with our everyday life. He presented these thoughts at the 2012 Australian School of Theosophy.

Euthanasia

A number of questions were raised by members during the very popular question and answer session which was held during the Annual Convention in January. Responses from the panel regarding a question on a theosophical perspective on euthanasia appear below. The Theosophical Society has no official view on euthanasia, of course. Without doubt, members in this country hold a range of views, a few of which are reflected below. While not a legal practice in Australia at this time, euthanasia has engendered much public discussion in the wider Australian community. The questioner, Travis James (Adelaide), cited the case of a woman with a locked-in stroke who could only move her eyes and two fingers.

Phoebe Williams, Brisbane:

This question comes up quite often in TS circles. Why should people have to bear situations such as a full-blown stroke resulting in long-term or permanent disability? As a homeopathic practitioner, I hear sad stories all the time. It might be someone who is lending a hand to a very sick person who comes to you for treatment for depression, or some aspect of their own health, when they are not coping. We all have to wonder what sort of karmic action is manifesting in the family and why a person has encountered a particular situation. I have seen a lot of people in very difficult situations blossom into the most extraordinary people, time and time again. I have seen it in the TS many times too. Who is to say that a person who is very ill is not actually providing an opportunity for other people to become the people they can truly be, to go on and do marvellous things? I know this sounds very idealistic, but have seen it happen. Our spiritual Self is capable of many things.



Harry Bayens, Perth:

I inspect disabled facilities. It is heartbreaking to see many people in situations which the media does not pick up on, and who are powerless to do anything about it. First of all, we should not judge any particular person's situation. As theosophists, we should encourage open and frank discussion of the facts and not get too caught up in the emotion. The media picks up on the emotion of euthanasia and tries to create conflict rather than informed debate. Also, we do not know what is happening to a very ill person on a deeper level. Families of severely disabled people are affected and should be supported by social networks.

Simon O'Rourke, Sydney:

Regarding the philosophical aspect of this issue, if a person understands the nature of karma, they can also deal with some of these problems. For many of the issues that arise are not just physical – they are also emotional and mental. Telling someone that it is their karma when something serious actually happens to them is not the best time. But trying to pervade the community with this knowledge can at least give some people a little bit of philosophical comfort.

Euthanasia is an extremely large question. It is very difficult to judge every situation accurately so as to know whether or not someone should be allowed to die. Part of the problem of euthanasia is not whether somebody dies. The

real question is whether a person is going to take the responsibility to end someone else's life. As this is such a great responsibility, it should not be entered into lightly.

In one of the old texts of Sir Thomas More, five hundred years ago, he actually discusses a Utopian idea of euthanasia. His suggestion was that because the person in pain is affected so personally, it would be best if they are not part of the decision making process, although they could request that somebody look into their case, with an investigation and decision carried out by a panel. There should be some sort of impersonal process to make sure that nobody is taken advantage of, and nobody has to suffer afterwards through feeling they have taken a life unnecessarily. Many people have mentioned that at some point they wanted to end their lives, but found afterwards that there was much greater value in being alive. We have to be very careful with the whole process of the ending of life.

Dr Olga Gostin, Adelaide:

Situations like this (reflecting limited lifestyle choices) do not necessarily occur only at the tail end of life. Recently there was a heart rending story of a mother who found that her autistic son was so violent and in need of her constant care that her showering had gone down to five to ten seconds and her sleeping at night to twenty snatched minutes because the child was absolutely out of control. After a marriage break-up and giving birth to a second child, and in the absence of adequate support from social services, in desperation she decided that the only solution was to give away her son to an institution where he would have twenty-four hour care. Then her daughter would be able to experience a mother's love. Yet just before Christmas the little girl said to her mother: 'Are you wishing what I'm thinking for Christmas?' The mother asked what she was thinking. 'That we will get our brother back home again.'

One does not have to go as far as euthanasia, but only hold up the mirror to see what a lacking society we have, that a woman has been driven to abandon her son because there were not enough supportive facilities to care for him at

" In one of the old texts of Sir Thomas More, five hundred years ago, he actually discusses a Utopian idea of euthanasia. His suggestion was that because the person in pain is affected so personally, it would be best if they are not part of the decision making process, although they could request that somebody look into their case, with an investigation and decision carried out by a panel."

home. Serious issues like this do not just relate to the end of life. They can occur at any time and involve whole families.

Do you have a view on euthanasia which you would like to share? Submissions of up to 200 words may be emailed to the Editor and will be considered for publication. Some answers to other topical questions raised during this Convention session will appear in future issues.
– Ed.



The Theosophical Society in Australia Minutes of the 2012 Annual Convention Business Meeting



The Convention Business Meeting of The Theosophical Society in Australia commenced at 7.30 pm on Saturday 21st January 2012 at St. John's College, University of Queensland, Brisbane.

CONVENTION CHAIR

The Meeting was chaired by the National President, Dara Tatray.

ROLL-CALL OF VOTING DELEGATES AND PROXIES

In accordance with Rule 15(2) of the National Rules, the named voting delegates and the votes of the Lodges/Branches certified on Form 4 of the National Rules had to be received by the National Secretary by 31st December 2011 in order to be valid. The roll call of the voting delegates for Lodges/Branches was read out as follows: Blavatsky Lodge – Stephen McDonald, 5 votes; Canberra Branch – Peter Fokker, 1 vote; Launceston Lodge – Kevin O'Dea, 1 vote; Newcastle Lodge – Dianne Kynaston, 1 vote; Perth Branch – George Wester, 3 votes. No forms were received from Adelaide, Hobart or Sunshine Coast by the due date. The Chair noted that the form submitted by Atherton Lodge was dated 4th January and thus invalid.

OBSERVERS

Ms Vicky Jerome, Vice-President of The Theosophical Society in New Zealand, was admitted as an observer.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE 2011 CONVENTION BUSINESS MEETING

The Meeting noted that the Lodges/Branches had voted at Lodge/Branch Convention Meetings to confirm the Minutes of the 2011 Convention Business Meeting held at 484 Kent Street, Sydney, on 14th January 2011, as published in

the June 2011 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2011

It was noted that the National President's Annual Report for the Year ended 31st August 2011 as published in the November 2011 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*, had previously been voted on and accepted in the Lodge/Branch Convention Business Meetings. The meeting expressed its appreciation and thanks to the National President for her Annual Report with acclamation.

NATIONAL TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2011

It was noted that the National Treasurer's Report for the Year ended 31st August 2011 as published in the supplement to the November 2011 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*, had previously been voted on and accepted in the Lodge/Branch Convention Business Meetings.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2011, AND AUDITOR'S REPORT THEREON

The Financial Statements, Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st August 2011 and the Auditor's Report thereon were noted. It was noted that the Lodges/Branches had voted to accept the Balance Sheet, Income and Expenditure Account and the Auditor's Report as published with the November 2011 issue of *Theosophy in Australia* at their individual Convention Business Meetings.

BUDGET FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2012

It was noted that the National Council previously approved the Budget at its meeting in June 2011, and had authorised the Executive Committee to approve any subsequent necessary minor

amendments after the completion of the annual accounts. The Budget for the current financial year, as published with the November 2011 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*, was received at the Meeting.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

The Chair reported that, following the recommendation of the National Council, Storey Blackwood, Chartered Accountants of Sydney, were reappointed as Auditors for 2012. The above six items were each also accepted by vote at the meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEWLY APPOINTED OFFICERS

January 2012 National Council Meeting:

The Chair reported that at its meeting of 19-20 January 2012 the National Council had appointed the following people to their respective offices for 2012:

National Vice-President – Geoffrey Harrod
National Treasurer – position declared vacant, see item under Other Business
National Secretary – see item under Other Business
Assistant Treasurer – Beatrice Malka
Editor of *Theosophy in Australia*
– Linda Oliveira

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BALLOT RESULTS – State Representatives for Queensland, Tasmania and South Australia/Northern Territory:

The National Secretary reported that as two valid nominations were received for South Australia/Northern Territory, a ballot was held. The following member was elected to office:
South Australia/NT: Travis James

As there was only one candidate for each of the Electoral States of Queensland and Tasmania, the following were re-elected unopposed:
Queensland: Geoffrey Harrod
Tasmania: Denise Frost

The results of the Election were published in the November 2011 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*.

VOTE ON NOTICES OF MOTION

No Notices of Motion were received.

PLACE AND TIME OF NEXT CONVENTION

The Chair reported that the 2013 Convention would be held in Melbourne (venue yet to be determined) commencing on 20th January 2013. The next Convention Business Meeting will be held during that Convention.

RESOLUTIONS OF GOODWILL

The Chair reported that postcards would be made available during the Convention for signing and sending to members from various places who would not be in attendance.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Executive Committee:

The Chair reported that the following were appointed as members of the national Executive Committee for 2012: Linda Oliveira - National President, Dara Tatray – Acting National Secretary, (both ex officio) together with Beatrice Malka, Dianne Kynaston, Ken Edwards, Dai Trandang and Marlene Bell.

National Council Meeting:

National Secretary - The Chair reported that a number of difficult issues had been discussed at the January meeting of the National Council surrounding the possible continuation of Zehra Bharucha's appointment as National Secretary, following a period of more than six months' medical leave.

The Chair read an extract from the relevant Section Rule:

(7) Notwithstanding any provisions elsewhere in these Rules, a person shall not be eligible for election or appointment as an Officer or Member of the National Council or Executive Committee or shall cease to hold Office or to be a Member thereof, as the case may be:

(b) If the person ... has become physically or mentally incapable of performing the functions of an Officer or Member of the National Council or of the Executive Committee for a prior period of six months.

There had been extensive discussion on this matter at the Council meeting. Finally, the National Council unanimously agreed that it would not be possible to continue the appointment of Zehra Bharucha as National Secretary. For one thing, Ms Bharucha had not, when requested, provided the National Council

with any form of medical clearance to suggest that she was fit to return to work. It was a difficult and regrettable decision. An advertisement for the position would be placed in the March 2012 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*. Donald Fern having declined reappointment as Acting National Secretary, a position that he had held since July 2011, the National Council appointed Dara Tatray as Acting National Secretary for a period of six months or until a new appointment is made.

National Treasurer - The Chair reported that Donald Fern had declined to be appointed as National Treasurer for 2012. The position had consequently been declared vacant by the National Council and a new National Treasurer would be sought. Those present unanimously expressed their sadness at his decision not to continue and commended his tremendous work for the Australian Section for the past seventeen years.

General Council Meeting:

The Chair reported that she had attended the General Council meeting at the International Headquarters in December 2011. She briefly outlined what had taken place at that meeting, indicating that a policies document is close to being adopted. The National President (the Chair) expressed concern about the running of the General Council meetings and some aspects of the running of the international headquarters, including the low wages paid to workers. This matter was one among several things raised on behalf of the Australian Section at the General Council meeting.

Proposed Sale of Theosophy House, Sydney and Purchase of Mezzanine Floor, Bathurst Street, Sydney:

The Chair reported that Blavatsky Lodge had been experiencing serious financial difficulties and, at its December 2011 Annual General Meeting, its members had agreed to the sale of Theosophy House, 484 Kent Sydney. The building is owned jointly by Blavatsky Lodge (75%) and the Australian Section (25%), with the National Headquarters occupying one floor.

The President of Blavatsky Lodge, Stephen McDonald, mentioned various factors which had led to a further decision at the Lodge's 2011 Annual General Meeting to close the Adyar bookshop. These include the global

crisis in book trading as the result of increasing online sales.

The Chair mentioned that discussions had taken place about the possibility of the Australian Section purchasing the bookshop premises in Sydney city from the Lodge at a mutually agreeable price as a new home for the National Headquarters. The price would be at cost plus the interest Blavatsky Lodge would have earned had the money been invested with Maple-Brown Abbott for three years. Some questions were asked about comparative market values and were answered by the Chair, who indicated that the price was reasonable compared with market rates. Blavatsky Lodge would seek alternative premises.

After some discussion a motion was passed 'that we sell 484 Kent Street' (George Wester/ Kevin O'Dea, 1 abstention - Canberra).

A motion was also passed 'to authorise the purchase of [the Mezzanine floor of] 97-99 Bathurst Street by the Australian Section Theosophical Trust' (George Wester/ Kevin O'Dea).

[Additional Note: Under Section Rule 18(2) the Executive Committee has full powers over the funds and property of the National Society, subject to the provisions of Rule 24. The Executive Committee subsequently passed motions to the effect of the two items mentioned above, which may therefore be taken as a general indication of the agreement of the Convention Business Meeting to the sale and purchase concerned.]

Vote of Thanks to National President:

The National President was thanked for all of her work during the past three years.

Inauguration of Incoming National President:

The new National President was inaugurated by the outgoing National President. Linda Oliveira thanked Dr Dara Tatray for her kind cooperation and assistance with various arrangements to help the transition of the national work to proceed as smoothly as possible. She spoke of the challenge of creating a spirit of enquiry into Truth, and the need for collective solidarity as a Section to help us leave elevating and worthwhile footprints in today's world.

There being no further business the new Chair closed the Meeting at 9.43 pm.

Snapshots - 2012 Annual Convention



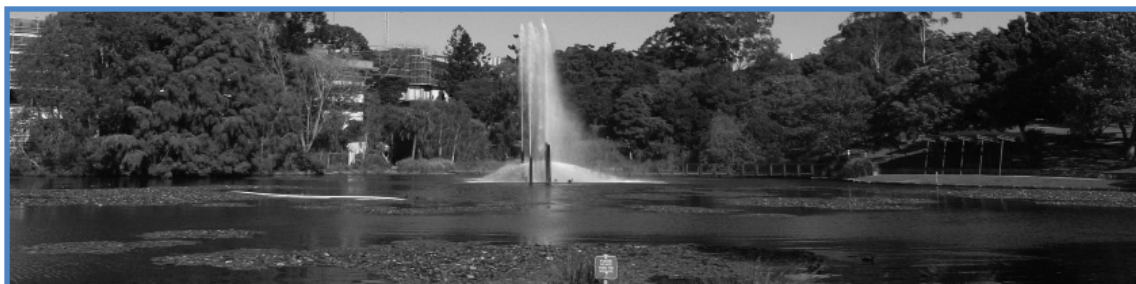
Group photo



TOS session



*Members from Perth, Melbourne and
Tasmania around the dining table*



The Convention venue - tranquil campus, University of Queensland



Stephen McDonald, President of Blavatsky Lodge



Linda Oliveira



Day outing - members from Sydney, Adelaide and Melbourne



Members from New South Wales, Switzerland, Queensland and New Zealand in the dining hall



Day outing - a visit to Brisbane Lodge



Phillipa Rooke, President of Brisbane Lodge, our Convention hosts

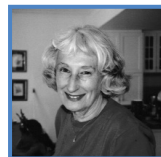
National Calendar of Events ...



Springbrook Centre, 2183 Springbrook Road, Springbrook, QLD
Fri 26th October (arrivals) to Tuesday 30th October (departures)
FOR MEMBERS AND THE PUBLIC

Theme: 'Soul Nourishment'

Featured Presenter: Beverley Champion,
former National President, the Theosophical Society in Australia



Additional presenters to be announced in due course.

Overview: Join us for a variety of creative sessions to help nourish the soul including drawing on the right side of the brain, the myth you are living, creating mandalas, creative writing, a nature walk and meditation, among others. Have you ever said 'I am not at all creative', or 'I cannot draw a line', or wondered about the various roles you play in one day? If so, these enjoyable sessions, and more, are designed for you.

Canyonleigh Centre, Bolitho House, Tugalong Road, Canyonleigh, NSW
Fri 23rd November (arrivals) to Sunday 25th November (mid-afternoon departure)
FOR MEMBERS

Theme: 'Theosophy in the Light of Truth and Love'

**Presenters: Supporting Lecturers Barry Bowden
and Simon O'Rourke**



Barry's interests include an interest in classical Theosophy - how it relates in a practical way to daily life and also illuminates the path before humanity as a whole and in part. Simon's interests include the theosophical teachings and ideals touched upon by the Secret Doctrine literature, letters from the Masters and other key authors within the theosophical movement.

Overview: Sessions will include Love records no wrong; Truth in relation to life and natural law; Love as a dynamic force in the world; On meditation, its practice and use; Dharma as truth in practical living; and Discussion of cyclic law as it relates to daily life and eternal life.

2012 National Convention – St. Mary's College, University of Melbourne
Saturday 19th January (arrivals) to Saturday 26th January (departures)
FOR MEMBERS

Theme: 'Theosophical Insights and the Contemporary World'

Key Speakers: Professor Richard Silberstein and Dr Jenny McFarlane
See advertisement on opposite page.

Registration forms for Springbrook and Canyonleigh events:

On Section website: [www.austheos.org.au/ what's on](http://www.austheos.org.au/what's%20on).

Also available from the National Headquarters (pres@austheos.org.au / 02 9264 7065).

Registration forms for 2013 Convention:

On Section website: [www.austheos.org.au/ what's on](http://www.austheos.org.au/what's%20on).

Also available from lodges/branches around the Section.

The Theosophical Society in Australia 2013 ANNUAL CONVENTION

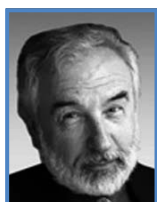
Theme: *Theosophical Insights and the Contemporary World*

Sat 19th January (arrivals) to Sat 26th January (departures)

St. Mary's College, Melbourne

**MEMBERS ARE WARMLY INVITED TO JOIN US
FOR THE 2013 ANNUAL CONVENTION.**

Key Speakers:



Dr Richard Silberstein: professor of neuroscience at Swinburne University, Melbourne, where he served as founding Director of the Brain Sciences Institute and previously as head of the Department of Physics. He has a long standing interest in functional brain imaging and is the inventor of 'Steady State Topography' (SST), a technique for mapping rapid changes in human brain activity. He is also Chairman and CEO of Neuro-Insight Pty Ltd, a company offering SST based brain imaging consulting services to the communication services industry.

Dr Jenny McFarlane: freelance art historian, writer and curator for the ACT Legislative Assembly and Canberra Hospital.

Full programme: will appear in the November 2012 issue of this magazine and will include talks, workshops and cultural activities as well as a mid-week group outing day.

Earlybird Registration Fee (non-refundable): \$20 per person for day and live-in registrants to be received no later than Friday 31st August by the Convention Secretary.

Regular Registration Fee (non-refundable): \$40 per person for day and live-in registrants if received after Friday 31st August by the Convention Secretary.

Registration Forms:

On Section website: www.austheos.org.au/ what's on

Also available from lodges/branches around the Section.

Cost: \$89 per night including all meals, as well as morning and afternoon teas

Note: The nightly cost for all delegates has been subsidised by the Australian Section for many years in order to help members attend Conventions. The actual cost per day for meals, refreshments and accommodation will be \$97, in addition to which there is a cost to the Section for meeting rooms and facilities hire.

Early Deadline for Payment: Full payment for accommodation must be received at the National Headquarters by Friday 5th October in order to secure a room. This earlier than usual deadline applies as St. Mary's College requires final numbers in October.

Scholarship: Members of Hobart, Launceston, Canberra, Newcastle and Atherton Lodges may enquire at their local TS centre to receive the Edna Jenks Scholarship. Applications should be received at the National Headquarters by Friday 31st August.

Further Enquiries: Jennifer Hissey, Convention Secretary, TS National HQ.
Tel: 02 9264 7056 (Mondays to Fridays 9.00am – 3.30pm)
email: jennifer@austheos.org.au

Theosophical Order of Service



The Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) was founded by Dr Annie Besant not only with the goal of helping the underprivileged, but also as an avenue for members of the Theosophical Society to live Theosophy and use service as a spiritual practice. Today the TOS is a worldwide organisation that focuses on education, social welfare, the environment and animal welfare.

TOS Australia currently supports the following international programmes: the SEE Programme in India (Seeing Eyes for Everyone), Literacy Home Schools in Pakistan, Famine Relief in Kenya and the Heart Babies Project in Tanzania. On the national level our groups provide services for their local communities and organise events to raise funds for the domestic and international projects.

Membership Drive

Did you know that we have over 1000 members in the Theosophical Society in Australia, yet barely over 100 in the TOS? There is no extra cost to join the TOS if you are already a TS member. Some service-oriented people choose not to be TS members and simply join the TOS. For this there is an annual fee of \$7. If you would like to receive our newsletter keeping you up to date on the variety of services we do

both domestically and internationally, please either contact your local TOS coordinator or me directly. Our newsletter is delivered both electronically or by Australia Post.

This year Carolyn Harrod retired as Coordinator after 7 years of dedicated service. It has been a pleasure for me to take on my new role. Carolyn has left everything in such impeccable order and her willingness to assist in this transitional period is an attitude of one truly dedicated to TOS — fortunately Carolyn will remain as our Treasurer.

Contacts for 2012 are:

National Co-Coordinator

Jean Carroll,

10 April Ct

Maroochydore Qld 4558

tos.australia@gmail.com

National Secretary

Marie Walton

National Treasurer (address for donations)

Carolyn Harrod

26 Lytham Street,

Indooroopilly Qld 4068

“The Law of Sacrifice ... is the Law that rules the universe as well as the hearts of men, the Sacrifice which is a faint reflection of the Divine Sacrifice by which the worlds were made.”

Annie Besant

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS
FOR THE ELECTION OF STATE
REPRESENTATIVES**
FOR EACH OF THE ELECTORAL STATES OF
NSW/ACT, VICTORIA, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

In accordance with Rules 17(1)(c) and 19, the current terms of office of the State Representatives for NSW/ACT (Dianne K. Kynaston), Victoria (Kari Torgersen) and Western Australia (George Wester) will expire at the appointment of new State Representatives towards the end of 2012. They are all eligible for re-election

Nominations are invited for the election of one State Representative for each of NSW/ACT, Victoria and Western Australia. Nominations may be made by a Lodge (Branch) in the relevant Electoral State, or by any two Members resident in the relevant Electoral State who have been Members in Good Standing for the last two years prior to the nomination.

To be eligible for election as State Representative, the candidate must be resident in the relevant Electoral State, must have been a Member in Good Standing for the last three years, and have served for at least one year on the Executive Committee of a Lodge (Branch) by the time of the election.

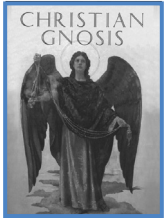
The State Representative elected in each State will represent the Lodges (Branches), Groups and Members in that State in all meetings and affairs of the National Council. They shall also liaise with all Lodges (Branches), Groups and National Members in their Electoral State and shall represent their views to the National Council and to the National Society Officers, as appropriate. As well, they shall receive and deal with representations from individual Members within their Electoral State, and shall refer the representations where requested or deemed necessary.

A photograph of the candidate, curriculum vitae, relevant biographical data, and a personal statement by the candidate, which may be edited as necessary for distribution in consultation with the candidate, must accompany all nominations. All nominations should be on Form 8, endorsed with the consent of the Nominee, and reach the National Secretary no later than close of business on 20th September 2012.

Copies of Form 8 can be obtained from the National Secretary, The Theosophical Society in Australia, 4th Floor, 484 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000, or from your Lodge/Branch President or Secretary.



Review



Christian Gnosis
C.W. Leadbeater
Quest Books, USA
2nd Edition 2011

*Available through online bookstores
and select booksellers*

It may surprise many people to see a ‘new’ book from C.W. Leadbeater, but here it is!

Originally compiled and published in 1983 by Bishop Sten von Krusenstierna of the Liberal Catholic Church, this book is an amalgamation of sorts. It is based on an unfinished manuscript written by Leadbeater in the early 1920’s. Leadbeater intended for the completed work to be the basis of a theology for the Liberal Catholic Church.

However the manuscript was put aside and left uncompleted until Bishop von Krusenstierna discovered it amongst Leadbeater’s papers in the 1970’s. Von Krusenstierna then edited and expanded the manuscript with some of Leadbeater’s articles from *The Liberal Catholic*, plus some of his unpublished talks and sermons. Thus the present volume was born. This updated edition has been edited by Richard Smoley, a noted scholar of the Western Esoteric Traditions, who has added additional footnotes to the original.

The reader should be made aware that this book is not about ‘classical’ Gnosticism as we now use this term. Rather, it is an examination of Christian theology and the Sacraments from a theosophical perspective, although Leadbeater does occasionally look at Gnostic ideas as they were then known.

The book is divided into three sections covering ‘The Divine Plan: Evolution’, ‘The Inner Teachings of Early Christianity’ and a miscellaneous section titled ‘Various Subjects’.

Part One is basically a summary of Leadbeater’s previous theosophical writings, covering such concepts as the nature of the Divine, Involution/ Evolution, Karma and Dharma et cetera. Some Christian concepts are examined in the light of these principles. For example, the concept of ‘salvation’ is seen as the successful ongoing evolution of people to a higher plane or ‘life wave’. This is very different from the standard Christian understanding of that concept.

In Part Two, Leadbeater turns his attention to the main topic of the book, outlining his interpretation of the Christian teachings regarding God, Jesus Christ and His ministry on earth. Leadbeater examines these topics systematically, with allegorical or theosophical interpretations of these subjects. For example, God is not seen as the Creator of the Universe, but as the Logos or manifested life force of our Solar System. Jesus is seen as a human teacher who was inhabited by an entity known as ‘the World Teacher’, a manifestation of the Solar Logos. According to Leadbeater, the World Teacher has inhabited various great teachers and sages throughout history to advance the Divine plan for humanity, Jesus being but one of those teachers. (Leadbeater believed that the latest incarnation of the World Teacher was in Krishnamurti.)

Part Three is a miscellaneous collection of essays examining diverse subjects such as the nature of the Sacraments, the Angelic hierarchy and the Virgin Mary.

This book is a fascinating peek into C.W. Leadbeater’s understanding of Christianity and will be of interest not just to members of the Liberal Catholic Church, but to anyone interested in a theosophical interpretation of Jesus Christ and Christianity.

Richard Larkin

News & Notes

Presentation – John Cooper Memorial Prize, University of Sydney

John Cooper (1930-1998) was a significant figure in the modern theosophical movement who often gave talks for the Australian Section. He was a deep student of Buddhism who studied with Tibetan lamas, Zen masters and Hindu swamis during his life. John was a lecturer at the University of Sydney on subjects such as Gnosticism. Although not a member of the Theosophical Society, John Cooper was a good friend to many of us. In his memory the TS in Australia instituted an annual prize in 2002, with parameters which are broadly in sympathy with the work of this organisation. On 3rd May the National President attended the prizes and awards ceremony at the Department of Letters, Art and Media at the University of Sydney to present the John Cooper Memorial Prize to the two winning students for 2011 in the area of Studies in Religion. One was an undergraduate prize and the other a post-graduate prize. Winning essays are chosen by faculty members at the University and copies are placed in the Campbell Theosophical Research Library at the Australian Section's National Headquarters.

National Website – What's New?

Readers are encouraged to check out the Section's national website which has a fund of fascinating resources including a search index of theosophical periodicals and a comprehensive set of links to many online theosophical texts. Both facilities are valuable contributions to the theosophical world as well of being of interest to researchers in the field. New to the site are several mp3 files of talks given at the January 2009 Annual Convention. Further audio talks will be added gradually.

School of Theosophy, April



An interesting group of students attended this year's School of Theosophy held at the Springbrook Centre in late April. We were pleased to have with us students spanning an age range of some fifty years, including three members from the New Zealand Section. There was plenty of participation during the classes and the emphasis was not so much on the imparting of information, but on encouraging exploration.

Theosophy Science Seminar, New Zealand

A Science and Spirituality Seminar will be held in New Zealand from 5th - 7th October 2012. Guest speakers will include:

Professor Richard Silberstein, well known for his expertise in Brain Science, holding a PhD from the University of Melbourne in Neurophysiology and a BSc (Hons) majoring in Physics from Monash University. **Professor Neil Broom**, Department of Chemical and Materials Engineering, University of Auckland, speaking on a number of themes from his recent book, perhaps best summarised by the question, 'Does science point to a transcendent dimension?' **Rosanne DeBats**, a registered psychol-

ogist in Adelaide who has spent many years in public policy research. **Dr Olga Gostin**, an anthropologist who is currently an adjunct senior lecturer at the David Unipon College of Indigenous Education and Research, University of South Australia. **Assoc Professor Victor Gostin**, recognised in his field of geology and planetary astronomy, currently Hon. Visiting Research Fellow, University of Adelaide.

Cost: NZ\$325. Early bird special, NZ\$275 if paid in full by September 5th - lunches and dinners included.

Registration: Full programme and registration form: <http://www.theosophy.org.nz> or after 1st June email: hq@theosophy.org.nz or phone New Zealand (09) 523 1797.

Further information is included in the latest issue of the *Theosophy-Science Newsletter* (email Victor Gostin: victor.gostin@adelaide.edu.au).

Newcastle Lodge

From time to time lodges have to move house. Newcastle Lodge is now meeting in new premises which are proving comfortable and suitable for the Lodge's activities. The venue is the house next to the Uniting Church and is actually part of its property. The Church seems happy to have the Theosophical Society meetings in its premises, which is good to know.

Adelaide Lodge – Sunday at the TS

The President of Adelaide Lodge, Sheryl Malone, reports that their monthly 'Sunday at the TS' days are proving to be a very good introduction to the TS for members of the public. Themes for the day for April, May and June this year are 'Art and Spirituality', 'Dispelling the Fear of Dying' and '*The Bhagavad-Gita*'. More information about this will be shared in a coming issue of this magazine.

Theosophical Schools

Today, some theosophical schools are run in countries such as India and the Philippines. In the first part of the nineteenth century some theosophical schools were started by

TS members within Australia. The Morven Garden School in Sydney is an example. Recently news has come to hand of a delightful new website about another theosophical school which was run in New Zealand, the Vasanta Garden School. The site includes information about its history, photographs and other material. For those interested in things historical, or in education, it is worth a look: www.vasantagardenschool.weebly.com

Gifts and Bequests to Further the Work of the TS in Australia

The Theosophical Society in Australia as we know it today is a product of well over a century of impressive service by volunteers and officers, as well as the more tangible gifts and bequests received from both members and non-members. All gifts and bequests are used carefully and responsibly to further the work and the Objects of the Theosophical Society in this country.

The following form of words is provided for those members who wish to make gifts or bequests in their wills to The Theosophical Society in Australia:

"To The Australian Section Theosophical Trust (whose registered office is 4th Floor, 484 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000) to be held in trust for The Theosophical Society in Australia".

The latter is a company formed to hold monies, investments, real or personal property in trust for The Theosophical Society in Australia, which is not incorporated.

Further Enquiries:

Please contact the Acting National Secretary
email: natsec@austtheos.org.au
tel: 02 92646404



The use of one gender to cover both genders is avoided as far as possible in this magazine. However, quotations from writings in which one gender is used in this way are printed as originally written. This applies both to older writings and some contemporary ones.

Section Directory

Australian Section National Headquarters

4th Floor, 484 Kent Street,
Sydney NSW 2000
Ph: 02 9264 7056 / 9264 0163 / 9264 6404
Fax: 02 9264 5857
www.austtheos.org.au
Campbell Theosophical Research Library:
campbell@austtheos.org.au

Australian Capital Territory

Canberra Branch, Chartered 17/7/1971:
Postal Address: PO Box 7418,
Fisher ACT 2611
Meet: Friends Meeting House, cnr Bent &
Condamine Streets, Turner ACT 2612
8.00pm 1st Monday of month
(Please confirm by email or telephone)
President: Peter Fokker
Tel: 02 6236 3170
Email: fokkerbakker@gmail.com
Secretary: Tony Feamside
Telephone: 02 62887656
Email: janton@netspeed.com.au

New South Wales

Blavatsky Lodge, Chartered 22/5/1922:
2nd & 3rd Floors, 484 Kent Street, Sydney
NSW 2000
Telephone: 02 9267 6955 Fax: 02 9283 3772
Email: contact@tssydney.org.au
www.tssydney.org.au
Meet: 2.00pm Wednesdays
Members Meeting: 2.00 pm 2nd Saturday
each month
President: Stephen McDonald
Secretary: Pamela Peterson

Newcastle Lodge, Chartered 3/12/1941:

Meet: Morrison Room, 29 Highfield Street,
Mayfield NSW 2304
8.00pm 2nd Friday each month
(excluding January)
Study group (members) confirm dates with
Lodge
President: Danny Boyd
Tel: 02 4937 4225

Blue Mountains Group:

Meet: 1st Floor, 122 Katoomba Street,
Katoomba NSW
2.00pm 1st Monday each month
Coordinator: Kirk Holst
Tel: 02 4759 3160

Gosford Group:

Meet: The Neighbour Centre,
Pandala Road, Narara NSW 2250
8.00pm 2nd Tuesday each month
Coordinator: Marianne Fraser
Tel: (02) 4339 7118, 0400 713 273

E-mail: marifraser256@gmail.com

Secretary: Roni Ostergaard

Telephone: 02 4358 1413

Northern Beaches Group:

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

Queensland

Atherton Lodge, Chartered 27/4/1950:

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

Brisbane Lodge, Chartered 21/1/1895:355

Wickham Terrace, Brisbane QLD 4000
Tel: 07 3839 1453
Email: brisbanelodge@theosophyqld.org.au
President: Phillipa Rooke
Secretary: Angela Read

Sunshine Coast Lodge, Chartered 1/4/2004

Meet: Buderim Croquet Club, Syd Lingard
Drive, Buderim QLD 4556
7.00pm Thursday
President: Penny Houghton
Tel: 07 5453 7595
Email: penny26@tpg.com.au
Secretary: Joyce Thompson

Toowoomba Group:

Meet: 49 Lindsay Street, Toowoomba
1st Wed at 7pm and 3rd Sunday at 2:30pm of
each month (Meditation 1pm & Study Group
at 1:30pm)
Annual Springbrook Retreat each winter
Coordinator: Barry Bowden
Secretary: Julie Murphy
Tel: 0427 751 464
Email: murphyj@usq.edu.au

South Australia

Adelaide Lodge, Chartered 26/5/1891:

310 South Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000
Tel: 08 8223 1129
Email: president@tsadelaide.org.au
http://www.austtheos.org.au/adelaide
Meet: Members Meeting 1.00pm 4th Friday
of every month. Please contact Lodge for
additional meeting dates.
President: Sheryl Malone
Secretary: Audrey Brimson

Tasmania

Hobart Branch, Chartered 7/6/1889:

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

Launceston Lodge, Chartered 12/1/1901:

54 Elizabeth Street, Launceston, TAS 7250
Postal address: 66 Flinders Street, Beauty
Point, TAS 7270
email: rmholt@gmail.com
www.austtheos.org.au/launceston
Meetings: Wednesdays commencing
7.00 pm for meditation, followed
by meeting at 7.30 pm
President: Tony Harrison
Secretary: Ruth Holt
Tel: 0448 397 246

Victoria

Melbourne Lodge, Chartered 9/12/1890:

126 Russell Street, Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel: 03 9650 2315 Fax: 03 9650 7624
email: meltheos@netspace.net.au
Meet: 2nd, 3rd and 4th Tuesdays, 6.00pm
President: Dorothy Darby
Secretary: Ken Edwards

Mornington Peninsula Group:

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

Wodonga-Albury Group:

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

Western Australia

Perth Branch, Chartered 10/6/1897:

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

Mount Helena Retreat Centre:

1540 Bunning Road, Mt Helena WA 6082
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