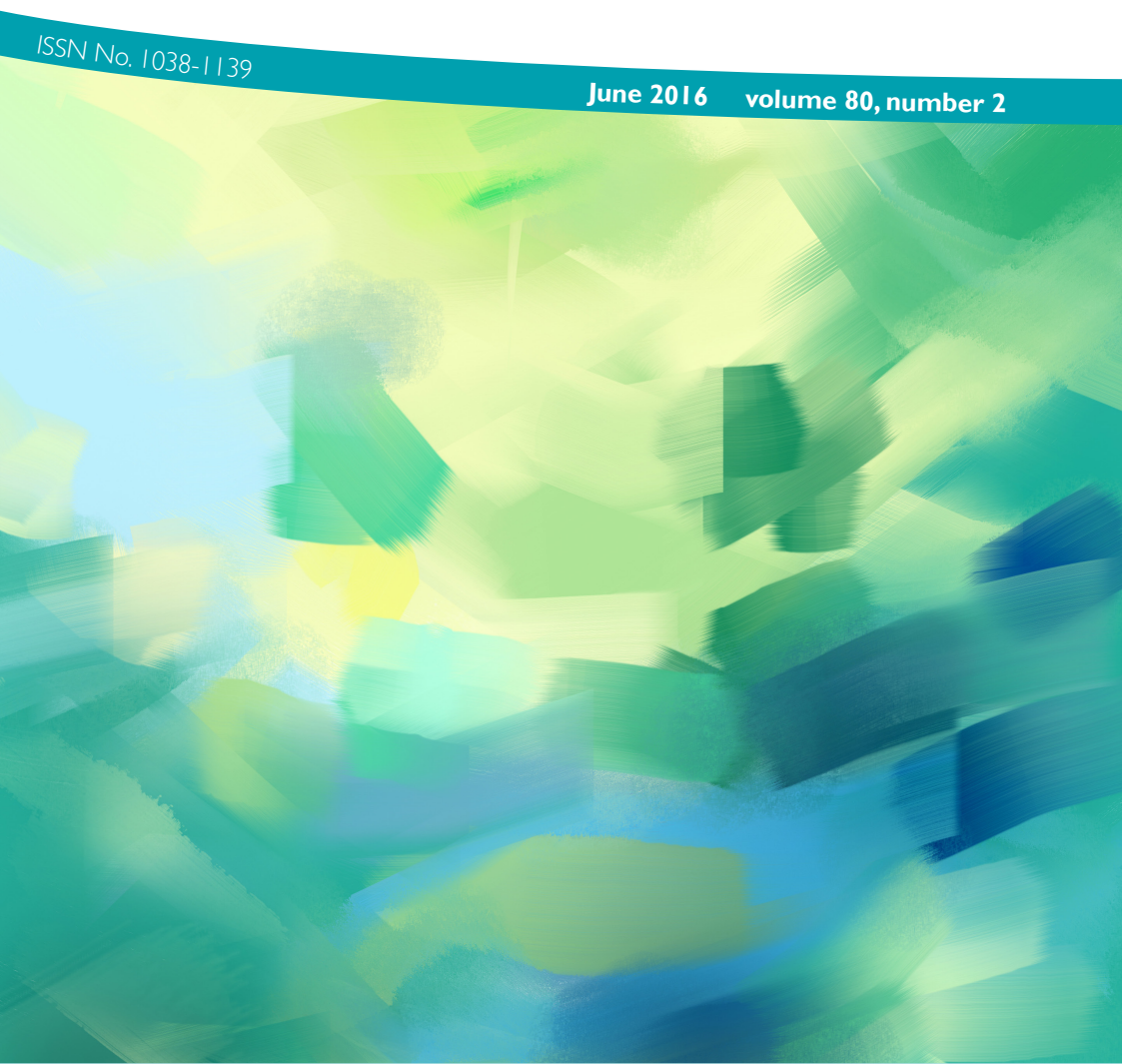


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INSIDE Interview with International President Tim Boyd
The Holy Grail in the Modern World
The Sacred Word Om
2016 Indo-Pacific Conference, New Zealand

INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS:

The Theosophical Society has its International Headquarters at Adyar, Chennai, India.

International President: Tim Boyd
International Vice-President: Chittaranjan Satapathy
International Secretary: Marja Artamaa
International Treasurer: K. Narasimha Rao

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS:

Level 2, 162 Goulburn Street, Surry Hills
NSW 2010

Phone: +61 02 9264 7056

Fax: +61 02 9264 5857

www.austheos.org.au

email: tshq@austheos.org.au

National President: Linda Oliveira

email: pres@austheos.org.au

National Vice-President:

Phillipa Rooke

email: phillipa@powerup.com.au

National Secretary: Dara Tatrav

email: natsec@austheos.org.au

National Treasurer: Beatrice Malka

Education Coordinator: Pedro Oliveira

email: edcoord@austheos.org.au

Editor: Linda Oliveira

email: pres@austheos.org.au

Editorial Committee: Janice Scarabottolo,

Olga Gostin, Dianne Kynaston, Patricia Ossenberg

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email: pres@austheos.org.au

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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 free to discover what it is for themselves, taking as guides whatever religions or philosophies they wish.

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The Three Objects of The Theosophical Society

- I. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
~
- II. To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.
~
- III. To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in the human being.

From the National President

Linda Oliveira



As a Society which inhabits a small but significant niche in the spiritual life of humanity, an important aspect of our work is to remind all who come through our doors (both physical and electronic) of the existence of the Sacred. All the more so, because many people seem to interpret things ‘Sacred’ remarkably loosely.

Take, for example, the Holy Grail. One article in this issue examines the origins of the term, mentioning that it can be regarded as the great cycle of involution and evolution culminating in the final goal of Enlightenment. The Grail has been depicted variously throughout the ages, right through to some some modern cinematic interpretations which have captured the imagination of millions.

But the Holy Grail has also fallen into some disrepute. By this, I mean that the term is used in all sorts of ways, e.g. with reference to various sports, the latest brain machine interface technology, or in general terms as the realisation of some great desire in a given sphere. It has been defined as something that you want very much,

but which is very hard to obtain or else achieve. ‘Holy Grail’ is even the name of a heavy metal band.

Another example of how the Sacred has been diluted is the use of the word ‘Om’. The word is uttered far and wide in so many different ways, at times somewhat irreverently. Another article in this issue helps reveal this term in depth, with particular reference to three important Theosophical texts.

The term ‘sacred’ derives from the Latin *sacer* - ‘holy’. In the everyday human world, the profane all too often eclipses the Sacred. So our ideal as a Society is to provide an environment with a difference. An effective TS gathering would convey a sense of what Sacredness implies, e.g. a genuine atmosphere of respect for all, a few minutes of silence together before a meeting, a sense of serious spiritual purpose – or else some combination of these; tempered with friendliness and perhaps a little humour.

Comments of up to 200 words on this issue are welcome and may be published.

Interview with Tim Boyd



Extract of an Interview by Linda Oliveira with Tim Boyd,
International President of the Theosophical Society
January 2016, Perth

LO: Where were you brought up? Would you like to share any particularly outstanding memories of your childhood?

TB: I grew up in New York City which was a great place, a very multicultural city with a little bit of everything going on. I was the second of four children.

My parents were not particularly religious people but they felt that religion was something you should be exposed to. Quickly I found that Sunday School was not something that really spoke to me. As life went on, I counted not having a religious background as a huge advantage. Theosophy is something that I've had to learn through my own eyes, rather than have it given to me from the perspective of another.

LO: Is there anything else about your earlier years that you would like to share?

TB: My Dad was a very international sort of a man. That kind of mind was transmitted. The fact of being born African American in the United States, at a time when the laws of the nation did not speak towards civil rights, was something that also shaped my perspective, expanded my view, being able to live inside of this while retaining something of the view from outside.

LO: Was there some specific thing that happened which triggered you to join the TS?

TB: I was not looking for it, and, given my personal life situation when I stumbled onto it, I wouldn't have thought it would have added much to my life, but had the good fortune to run into someone. I was a sophomore [second year student – Ed.] in college and it was time to take a Spring break. For a couple of years I had not seen a

cousin in Chicago. My father was going there and asked if I would like to come along. I said 'Yes', thinking about this cousin, who was always rather wild and crazy. But when I got there, he was behaving quite differently. For one thing he was talking sensibly and had started to meditate.

After a while I started to realise that some sort of shift had taken place. I said, 'You're a different guy, Barrett', and he said, 'Yes, Tim, you need to meet my teacher, the Old Man.' When he said that, my visions of this lovely Spring break collapsed. He brought me to a gentleman who was very charismatic and alive. I sat down. There were a number of us and he started talking. And because I really didn't want to be there, I listened, and he spoke about some interesting things. Afterwards, I said, 'Well, it's been very nice to meet you.' The Old Man, Bill Lawrence, looked me in the eye and said, 'You know – it's been nice to meet you too, son. I'll see you soon.' I told him, 'No I don't think so, I'm leaving early in the morning.' He just kept on smiling and said, 'I'll see you soon, son'.

As it happened, something I had brought from New York was missing. My cousin took me back to see the Old Man who looked at me and smiled.

Then he added, 'About the question that you came here to ask me – you will receive your answer when you get back to New York.' He then started talking about things I had never heard in my life. I sat down in the chair and listened as he spoke. Nobody had ever said those things but every single thing he talked about, I somehow knew. Eventually, he said, 'You know, son, you'd better get up and go.' It was about two o'clock in the morning – four hours had gone by without my perception.

I got back to New York and went to take a walk in the park, to think about the things he had talked about. He had shared many things including this mantra:

I know I am a spark from that
Eternal flame.
I am a grain of sand on this
beach of life.
I am related to a blade of grass.
Correlated to a leaf on a tree.
I am part of the universal All.
What can be denied me?

While in Chicago I had taken one of my cousin's books off the shelf which related to yoga and read a paragraph, which contained something about the breath. That one paragraph which flashed into my mind was about the rhythm of the breath. So I was breathing; I was walking; I was

thinking about a ‘grain of sand on this beach of life’ and what that can mean. And it was really that moment that led to this one. All of the sounds in the city park just died down. I came to the staircase and everything shifted; I lived in that kind of moment, probably for a couple of weeks.

A lot of things happened, but from that moment it became very clear that the catalyst for this experience was the connection with the Old Man; and that the basis for all of these things that were opening up was Theosophy.

Eventually I moved to Chicago for three months, I thought – it is going on forty-two years now.

LO: You co-founded a spiritual community in Chicago’s inner city. What actually led to that? Why did you become involved?

TB: While the process was going on, there was no concept of founding anything. When I came to Chicago, a group of us had gathered around the Old Man. He was the focus. We would study together, talk together, play together, and then we started to actually work on different things.

The widow of a former very high city official in the City of Chicago owned



two buildings right next door to where we were staying. However, they were badly managed in the sense that the manager was a very low-minded person. Gambling and other things were going on next door. It was a real problem in the community. The lady was elderly and we would do healing work on her. We talked to her about reincarnation, about all sorts of things. She had decided she was going to sell these buildings. We were very happy about it. On the day the lawyers were there to close this purchase, just as the money was going to pass hands, the lady jumped up and walked out of the room and told the Old Man: ‘Look, this

deal is off, call me when these people leave.’ We were all flabbergasted because all of us were looking forward to this change.

The Old Man called her after everybody left and she said:

You know something, Bill, I’ve heard you and your group talk about reincarnation and life after death. I’ve never heard anything like that in my life, but when I was sitting in that room right before we were going to sign those papers, I saw my husband just as clear as day and he said to me that those buildings are supposed to go to you and your group.

Her husband had been dead for probably twenty years.

The Old Man burst out laughing and said, ‘Well that’s very nice, but did your husband tell you how it is we’re going to pay for it?’ She replied, ‘I’m going to make it so you have to take it, Bill.’ And she was true to her word.

So we started working on these buildings, fixing them up. The younger people in the neighbourhood started to come around. We put them to work. A lot of them had no creative outlets. I was a College student and the others were in a similar situation, a couple of us had jobs and the ones who were working would pool what they had.

At that age you really don’t need much. After we started working on the buildings, within about six months the person who owned the building next door came to us and said: ‘Look, I’ve got this property my son doesn’t want any more. I see what you all are doing. Can I sell this property to you?’ So, on a college budget, within about six months, we owned half a city block and we then started to work on it. People gathered around. This was the formative stage of the community.

LO: What books have been significant to you as a TS member, in terms of your pursuit of Theosophy?

TB: There have been a lot of books. Early on, I found myself attracted to the writings of Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater. As time moved on, there was Annie Besant’s *In the Outer Court*. Then I started to become more familiar with HPB’s work. Books that come up again and again were works like *The Voice of the Silence* and *The Key to Theosophy*, which are a continual touchstone.

LO: When you think about Theosophy, is there any particular aspect with which you resonate a great deal?

TB: The One Life is a fundamental point for me – that all things are

If there is any merit to this conception of Oneness, it requires a certain way of behaving in the world. It requires a sense of kindness to others and it requires a sense of kindness to ourselves. Often the most overlooked and abused person in our life as a practitioner is our own self.

interrelated. But the practice and the application of this are probably the most important because, once you find yourself caught up in that particular thread, there is limitless application both personally, and in the world around us. If there is any merit to this conception of Oneness, it requires a certain way of behaving in the world. It requires a sense of kindness to others and it requires a sense of kindness to ourselves. Often the most overlooked and abused person in our life as a practitioner is our own self.

LO: There is one particular question which seems to be very difficult to answer throughout the Theosophical world. What is Theosophy? Of course, this word is undefined within the Theosophical Society. But what is your take on it?

TB: It is one of those unanswered questions, which is largely a good

thing. But it is also one of the biggest problems we have within the Theosophical world. For many people Theosophy is anything. It tracks back to this whole perception of the unity of all life. If that is a reality, then within it there is a place for every tradition.

Theosophy, to me, has no limits. It has not been created by some very smart, well studied or clever people. The scope of this Wisdom was allowed to be revealed at a particular time, to address a need that humanity as a whole was experiencing. Its real source goes right back to these Great Beings that we refer to as the Mahatmas, to the Masters of the Wisdom. For me, this is very expansive. The people I have known who have immersed themselves in this, and have embodied it in their own lives, are people with such scope. Those who get this are people who do not make idle and false distinctions among people, among races, among religions. Somehow or another they are big, big people.

LO: So in a sense, Theosophy is also an attitude.

TB: Yes, it is an attitude of mind and of heart, it is a study, it is an experience, it is a way of thought and it is a way of life, so it's very all-encompassing.

LO: There has been a certain decline in membership, particularly in the last six years or so in this country, but also elsewhere as well. What is your assessment of this?

TB: In some ways it is a concern. I should say at the outset that my particular concern is not with numbers. They have their importance, obviously. But the TS came into the world to bring the possibility of a certain level of understanding. In order to do that there had to be the creation of a vocabulary to even talk about these subjects, which did not exist in the Western world in the 1800s. Now it does.

As a result, there are countless groups in the world today that are operating in various sub-areas of this Theosophical view. So you have mindfulness, healing groups, groups focussed specifically on the seven bodies of the human being, emotional healing, all kinds of groups that have drawn on this Theosophical impulse. What you have, quite naturally, is a broad spectrum of different activities of a more or less Theosophical nature, which people may be drawn toward and which attract people. Back in the 1890s or the 1900s, if you wanted to know something authoritative about Tibetan Buddhism, the Theosophical Society was the one and only place

where you could get some sort of authentic information along that line. Fast forward to 2016 and there are Tibetan Buddhist Lamas in every major city of the world, teaching the tradition from the point of view of the Tibetan Buddhist, so that's not our function at this point. The people that might have been attracted here at one time have another place where they can find a home.

So a certain dip in numbers is to be expected, because Theosophy is a very specific approach. That said, many of the members of the Theosophical Society, like me, are getting grey hair. This is very often seen as an issue.

LO: You are about to attend an international youth forum in Brazil, so you are obviously very interested in encouraging younger people towards the Society and to help nurture their aspirations in this regard.

TB: If I had to come into the Society when I was nineteen, through the portal of the local lodge in Chicago, I wouldn't be here. Three things were particularly attractive about the situation I found myself in:

First of all, I was actively engaged in doing something. Activity is what a young person's mind and body are

created for. Sitting passively and receiving would not have appealed to me as a nineteen-year-old.

Secondly, I found something of real substance in Theosophy, through this setting of being around other active people like me

Thirdly, to have someone who was experienced and advanced in these matters meant so much to me. Through those three things, there was something magnetic.

At this point, some forty odd years later, of all of the people who were involved at the beginning of our community, I am the one who is still active in the Theosophical Society. Is that a bad thing? To a certain degree, this applies to the issue of numbers. But also to a certain degree, you have to ask yourself: What is it that constitutes success?

When can you say that an interaction is in fact successful? Is it when somebody signs a form, pays the money and stays for a certain amount of time? Takes on a role in the Lodge perhaps? That might be one definition of success.

In the US today, on average fifty per cent of those who join the Theosophical Society today will be gone two years

later. So in a sense, it is something of a revolving door. Is that a bad thing? Is it a bad thing for someone to be exposed to a genuine approach to spirituality and truth for two years, and then move on into the world to another place?

These are the sorts of questions that I end up asking myself. Obviously we want to be communicating so that something lights up in someone, enabling them to find that this is the place where they can serve. That's the best thing. But basically the business that we are in as Theosophists, and as the Theosophical Society, is not so much to teach people, because that approach somehow assumes we are giving them something that they don't already have, but creatively trying to remind people of the deepest knowledge that they already have resident within them and to figure out a way to kindle that.



The Holy Grail in the Modern World

Dianne K. Kynaston



Holy Grail digital art
Source: Wikimedia Commons

The ‘Holy Grail’ is a term used to refer to a sacred object that is to be reached or attained at the end of a journey beset with many trials and tests. Generally it is described as the ‘Cup of the Last Supper’ in relation to the Easter story of Jesus, but is a pre-Christian symbol that can be found in the myths and legends of many cultures.

In Ancient Greece it was pictured as a large dish which contained the ‘Matrix of Creation’, where all the forces of Life were kept in balance. In the Orphic Mysteries of Greece it was seen as the Cup of Dionysos. In Irish traditions it was the ‘Cup of Healing’, being one of the four treasures of the god Dagda. In Welsh tales it was associated with the goddess Ceridwen, sometimes portrayed as the cauldron that would produce three drops of Wisdom, or provide food for the brave and healing for the sick.

The medieval stories of the Grail refer to the cup used at the Last Supper in the Easter story. Whether one takes the Easter story as an historical event or looks at it as an allegory for deeper teachings, it is interesting to note that the crucifixion takes place on the hill of Golgotha. In Hebrew this word means the ‘skull’. Therefore the story, at an allegorical level, can be seen as an ‘inner journey’ which results in the opening up of the inner faculties of the top chakras – the ‘Risen Christ’ is the ‘Enlightened Being’.

The Holy Grail also emerged in the Christian world during medieval times as part of the many tales associated with King Arthur. The stories of Arthur were an oral tradition, but in the 8th-9th century a Welsh monk known as Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote a book based on these tales and called it the *History of the Kings of Britain*. The

book was very short on historical facts, but its imagery of the ideal king, and of knights who provided protection for all, captured the imagination of the people not just in Britain but across Europe.

This was a time of the emergence of the ‘Courts of Love’, when the troubadours (story tellers, poets and musicians) travelled from town to town to entertain the common folk, and convey ‘inner teachings’ of these stories to those who knew how to unlock their symbology.

Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote a book based on these tales and called it the *History of the Kings of Britain*. The book was very short on historical facts, but its imagery of the ideal king, and of knights who provided protection for all, captured the imagination of the people not just in Britain but across Europe.

A Frenchman, Chrétien de Troyes, wrote a number of these stories, introducing into the saga the French knight Lancelot. He wrote the first known version of the *Quest for the Grail*, but died before it was completed, and it was finished and further developed by a Frenchman named Robert de Boron.

Many other versions of the stories soon emerged, but the most famous is that of *Parsifal* by the German troubadour, Wolfram von Eschenbach. In this tale the Holy Grail resides at the Grail Castle, which is guarded by the Grail Knights and the Grail King, Amfortas, who has been wounded by the evil knight, Klingsor. As a result the land is slowly withering. A young man named Parsifal, who has been raised in the forest by his mother, and knows nothing of the world, then finds his way to the Castle with the help of the Grail Knight, Gurnemaz. He meets the dying king and witnesses the ‘procession of the Grail’, but does not understand the significance of the situation. He leaves the Castle and wanders the world, eventually finding himself in a magical garden inhabited by the seductress Kundry. He is nearly tempted, but suddenly realises that he is in the grounds of the castle of Klingsor, who he then battles and kills with the sacred spear. On doing so, he has an understanding for the situation in which Amfortas finds himself. Compassion is aroused, and a great yearning to return to the Grail Castle comes over him. He then embarks on a long journey and eventually finds the Castle. With the sacred spear he heals Amfortas of his wound, freeing him of his responsibilities. Parsifal then becomes the Grail King and conducts



Indiana Jones' grail diary, Hollywood Museum
Source: Wikimedia Commons

the ceremony of unveiling the Grail. (This is a very brief outline of a complex and mystical story.)

Down through the centuries many other versions of the Arthurian Tales have appeared, such as *Le Morte d'Arthur*, written by Sir Thomas Malory in the 15th century. In the 19th century many of the 'Romantic' poets and artists used these themes in their work, culminating in Richard Wagner's beautiful opera, *Parsifal*.

The Quest for the Grail Today

In 2013 the New York Metropolitan Opera Company staged a very modern version of *Parsifal* in which the knights were not dressed in medieval costume but in modern attire. As part of the production, the fact that Wagner

had become interested in Buddhism in the latter part of his life was presented. Therefore the production emphasised Parsifal's representation of the journey of the soul, and that at the completion of his journey Parsifal reached Enlightenment and became the Grail King.

Not only was the production modern in style, but modern technology was used to broadcast it live simultaneously across the U.S.A. and Europe, and then the recording was sent around the world to be played in cinemas – a six hour marathon. The power and the imagery of the Grail Quest encircled the world within a short period of time.

In our modern era the 'Quest for the Holy Grail' is still a valued ideal. In mainstream language the Grail is seen as a goal to be reached or a trophy to be obtained, from personal achievements to sporting successes. There are many books still being written about historical explorations of the Arthurian Tales or modern day books of sensation, such as *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* by Lincoln, Baigent and Leigh or *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown.

Comic parodies have also emerged in films such as *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, or in high flying adventure

tales such as *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

However, it is in the modern space tale of *Star Wars* that the universal quest has been given a new presentation. There is no cup or object to be obtained, but like the Grail Knights trying to keep some sort of order in the Withered Land, the Jedi Knights are trying to restore peace and harmony to the galaxy in which the dark side has imposed its will, and so bring the matrix of the Force back into balance.

The Significance of the Skywalker

Enter Luke Skywalker, who, like Parsifal, does not know his family background – he is innocent and naive. With the assistance of the master Jedi Knight Yoda he learns to work with the Force, and eventually conquers Darth Vader through the power of Love. The use of the name ‘Skywalker’ by George Lucas is interesting, and it is known that Lucas was greatly influenced by the mythological work of Joseph Campbell. Skywalker is used in Tibetan Buddhism to describe lamas who have developed certain skills which allow them to ‘walk in the sky’, from mountain to mountain. This reflects the fact that such Lamas have attained higher states of consciousness

and thus can move through time and space.

H.P. Blavatsky also used this term in *The Voice of the Silence*. Verse 40 reads:

‘Tis only then thou canst become a ‘Walker of the Sky’ who treads the winds above the waves, whose step touches not the waters.

Later, in the Glossary at the back of *The Voice*, she states:

Khechara or ‘sky-walker’ or ‘goer’. As explained in the 6th adhyāya of that king of mystic works the *Jñānesvari* – the body of the yogi becomes as one *formed of the wind*; as ‘a cloud from which limbs have sprouted out’, after which – he [the yogi] beholds the things beyond the seas and stars; he hears the language of the Devas and comprehends it, and perceives what is passing in the mind of an ant. (p.120)

The Voice of the Silence is about the requirements for those treading the Bodhisattvic Path to Enlightenment – the Bodhisattva obtaining the highest state of consciousness, but staying behind to help the world. Parsifal, by becoming the Grail King, also stays behind in order to spread the power and healing of the Grail out into the world. Luke Skywalker brings balance to the matrix of the Force in order to bring harmony and peace to the galaxy.

This concept of 'altruism' is illustrated in one of the versions of Parsifal in which he has wandered for a long time, but cannot find the Grail Castle. He suddenly realises that he doesn't have to find the Grail, but can instead do the work of the Grail. He decides to return to the mainstream of life and do all he can to help the people. However, on turning his horse around, he finds himself at the Grail Castle and enters therein. Finding the Grail means doing good deeds without the attachments of the ego and the desire to achieve.

HPB stated that Theosophy is Altruism. Therefore our studies in the Ancient Wisdom are not for selfish ends, but to learn to understand what Life is all about and in doing so, reach out to help others. This we can do through theosophical agencies such as the TOS, but most especially in the way we live our daily lives.

So the search for the Holy Grail can be seen as the great journey that all souls are embarked upon. It is the great cycle of involution and evolution, culminating in attaining the final goal of 'Enlightenment – the Holy Grail'. It belongs to ancient times, the modern era and to the future, for it is the Eternal Quest.

This culmination of the Quest is reflected in the powerful words that end *The Voice of the Silence*:

Behold, the mellow light that floods the eastern sky. In signs of praise both heaven and earth unite. And from the fourfold manifested powers a chant of love ariseth, both from the flaming fire and flowing water, and from sweet-smelling earth and rushing wind.

Hark! ... from the deep unfathomable vortex of that golden light in which the Victor bathes, ALL NATURE'S wordless voice in thousand tones ariseth to proclaim:

JOY UNTO YE, O MEN OF MYALBA
A PILGRIM HATH RETURNED
BACK FROM THE OTHER SHORE.
A NEW ARHAN IS BORN. ...
Peace to all beings. (p.108)

Reference:

Blavatsky, H.P., *The Voice of the Silence*, The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, 1968.



Dianne Kynaston served for eight years as General Secretary of the Australian Section, and editor of *Theosophy in Australia*. She has also served a term of three years as President of the Indo-Pacific Federation. Dianne is currently the State Representative for NSW and a member of the national Executive Committee.

The Sacred Word Om

Chittaranjan Satapathy



stone Om, Namjan Arminius
Source: Wikimedia Commons

The connection between divine wisdom and the sacred word ‘Om’¹ was explored in some detail by the author in an article titled ‘Brahmavidya and Om’ by examining references to the sacred word in various Upanishads, the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, the *Bhagavadgītā* and texts from other traditions. All these texts place great importance on the sacred and mystic word ‘Om’. The following references are illustrative:

- Om is Brahman.
(Taittiriya Upanishad, I.1.8)
- I am the holy word Om.
(*Bhagavadgītā*, IX.17)
- Om is His (Ishvara’s) designator.
(Yoga Sutras, I.27)

It is proposed to explore in the present article some selected Theosophical literature to examine the significance of this sacred word from a Theosophical perspective.

Om in the *Esoteric Instructions of HPB*

Esoteric Instructions by H.P. Blavatsky² has recently been published in book form, including three instructions issued by her during 1889-1890 and the notes taken from her oral teachings [see review on p.67 - Ed.]. HPB issued these instructions, which were meant for serious students of Theosophy, during the last years of her life. In these instructions she clarifies various deeper aspects of her teachings which could not be given out earlier in her published books and articles meant for the general public. As such, these instructions assume special significance for serious aspirants on a spiritual journey. The instructions as well as the notes contain several valuable references to the sacred word Om. The references are scattered

throughout her teachings and what follows is a collection of excerpts of these references.

HPB says that the word Aum or Om is in spiritual affinity with cosmic forces. Aum is the original of Amen³ which is not a Hebrew term but, like the word Hallelujah, was borrowed by the Jews and the Greeks from the Chaldee, the Semitic language of the ancient Chaldeans. Amen does not mean 'so be it' or 'verily', but signified in hoary antiquity almost the same as Aum. The Jewish Tannaim (Initiates) used it for the same reasons the Aryan Adepts use Aum. Both words mean the affirmation of the being, or the existence of the sexless Lord within us.

Pranava is a synonym of Aum in a mystic sense. Aum may be pronounced as two, three, or seven syllables setting up different vibrations. According to HPB, letters as vocal sounds correspond with musical notes and therefore with numbers and colours; hence with Forces and *Tattva*-s⁴. Since the universe is built up from the *Tattva*-s, power may be exercised by vocal sounds. When pronounced by a very holy and pure man, Aum will awaken not only the potencies residing in the planetary spaces and elements, but even his higher self, or the 'Father' within him. If pronounced

by an average good man in the correct way, it will strengthen him morally, especially if between two Aum-s he meditates intently on the Aum within him, concentrating all his attention upon the ineffable glory. HPB says that all esoteric students, if earnest in their endeavour to learn, are invited to pronounce the divine word before going to sleep and the first thing upon awakening.

When asked 'What is the correct pronunciation of Aum?', HPB said it should first be practised physically, always at the same pitch, which must be discovered in the same way as the particular colour of the student is found, for each has its own tone. Aum consists of two vowels and one semi-vowel, which (the latter) must be prolonged. In reply to another question, she said that Aum means good action, not merely lip-sound. One must say it in deeds. Elsewhere she says that if one whose nature is good sincerely strives towards the HIGHER SELF, which is that Aum, through one's higher Ego, which is its third letter, and Buddhi the second, there is no attack of the Dragon Apophis⁵ which it will not repel.

In the *Esoteric Instructions*, HPB dwells at length on the sacred invocation 'Om Mani Padme Hum' and says that its translation as 'O the Jewel in the Lotus' done by the Orientalists is

HPB asks who is Padmapani in reality? She answers: 'Each of us has within himself the "Jewel in the Lotus", call it Padmapani, Krishna, Buddha, Christ, or by whatever name we may give to our Divine Self.'

erroneous. According to her, not only does every syllable of this invocation have a secret potency, but the whole invocation has seven different meanings and can produce seven distinct results which depend on the intonation that is given to it. When rightly understood, these almost meaningless words 'O the Jewel in the Lotus' contain a reference to the union between Man and the Universe in seven different ways in seven planes of thought and action. She says the invocation means 'I am that I am'; 'I am in thee and thou art in me'. This invocation has infinite potency. HPB warns that these words should not be used in vain or when in anger.

The invocation 'Om Mani Padme Hum' is not a six-but seven-syllabled sentence, as the first syllable is double in its right pronunciation and triple in its essence, A-UM. It represents primeval triune differentiation, not from but

in the One Absolute, and is therefore symbolised by the 4, or the Tetraktys⁶. It is the Unitray or Atman. Atman is the highest spirit in man, which in conjunction with Buddhi and Manas, is called the upper triad, or Trinity. This triad, with its four lower human principles, is enveloped with an auric atmosphere making each individuality visible as an oval sphere. Esoterically, the sentence 'Om Mani Padme Hum' signifies 'O my God within me'. There is a God in each human being, for man was and will rebecome God. The sentence points to the indissoluble union between Man and the Universe, for the Lotus is the universal symbol of Kosmos as the absolute totality, and the Jewel is Spiritual Man, or God. In regard to the Tibetan belief that 'Om Mani Padme Hum' was given by Padmapani, the Tibetan Chenrezi⁷, HPB asks: 'Who is Padmapani in reality?' She answers: 'Each of us has within himself the "Jewel in the Lotus", call it Padmapani, Krishna, Buddha, Christ, or by whatever name we may give to our Divine Self.'

The above excerpts from HPB's *Esoteric Instructions* provide a glimpse of the importance of the sacred and mystic word Aum. However, to have a more complete understanding, an aspirant must refer to her detailed instructions in full. Incidentally, HPB



finishes her Esoteric Instruction No. 1 with the word Aum.

Om, the Logion⁸

Some years after HPB's *Esoteric Instructions* were issued, Bhagwan Das, a prominent Hindu scholar and Theosophist, wrote a book titled *The Science of Peace*⁹, extensively referring to the sacred word 'Aum'. Subsequently, he wrote another book titled *The Science of the Sacred Word* in three volumes.¹⁰ To him Aum means the *logion* and is important as an explanation and summation of the world process. The deepest and most illuminating interpretation of this triune sound is implicit. Aum includes within itself the Self, the Not-Self and the mysterious Relation between them. The first letter of the sacred word, 'A', signifies the Self (Atma); the second letter, 'U', signifies the Not-Self (Anatma); and the third letter, 'M', signifies the everlasting Relation

of Negation (Nishedha) by the Self, of the Not-Self.

Bhagwan Das discovers a justification for the Indian tradition which holds that all knowledge is summed up in the Veda-s, all Veda-s in the Gayatri, and the Gayatri in the Aum. He says:

The Self, the Non-Self and the Relation — these three, the primal trinity, the root-base of all the possible trinities, exhaust the whole of thought, the whole of knowledge, the whole of the world-process. There is nothing left that is beyond and outside of this primal trinity, which in its unity, its triuneness, constitutes the Absolute, which is the totality of the world-process — the world-process which is nothing else than the Self or Pratyagatma, the Not-Self, or Mulaprakriti, and their Interplay. (*The Science of Peace*, 3rd edn, Chapter VII, Page 111)

Dr Besant adds a significant footnote to the above to the effect that One Brahman gives rise to Two — Praty-

gatma and Mulaprakriti, and the Two become Three — the Relation between them becoming the third factor; then these Three are summed up as the Four — Brahman, the All, making the Tetraktys, or the abstract Quarternary. The book *Pranava-Vada of Gargyayana*, which helped him with the discovery, came to him orally from a young twenty-seven-year-old blind Brahmin scholar, Dhanaraj, who had a phenomenal memory.¹¹

Under the ancient method of *akshara-musti* or *akshara-mudra*, for expressing a profound truth a letter is assigned to each of its factors and a word is formed from the letters which may or may not have a meaning otherwise, but a sound. Such mystic words are found in different scriptures. Like Aum, another word, Satyam (truth), is constructed from three letters: ‘Sa’ is one letter, ‘ti’ is the second letter and ‘yam’ is the third letter in the Sanskrit word Satyam. ‘Sa’ represents truth and imperishable, ‘ti’ represents false and perishable, and ‘yam’ represents the relation that false and perishable is not truth and imperishable. As such, the third also represents the truth, and binds the first two together. Both in the *Chāndogya Upanishad* and in the *Brihadāranyaka Upanishad* Brahman is equated with Satyam. While interpreting Aum, Bhagwan Das says that ‘A’, or Self,



is a fact; ‘M’, or Negation of the Not-Self, is also a fact; but ‘U’, the Not-Self, is not a fact, it is only an appearance, an illusion. The three letters of Aum may be taken to say, ‘I this not (am) — Aham Etat Na (Asmi)’.

For a fuller understanding of the science of the sacred word, it is useful to read the books by Bhagwan Das referred to above, which at the time of their publication were popularised by Dr Besant who quoted from them in her talks.

Practical Significance of Om

Earlier, in the February 1882 issue of *The Theosophist*, a fairly long article titled ‘Om, and its Practical

As HPB says, the instructions should be spiritualised and not materialised, and a seeker must find the highest meaning possible. To the extent one approaches the material and visible in one's speculation on the instructions, that far one will be from the right understanding of them.

Signification' by N.C. Paul was published with two small editorial notes by HPB, who was then the editor of *The Theosophist*. In the introductory part, Paul refers to two possible origins of Om. One is traced to the Sanskrit word 'Evam' (thus) considering the fact that in earlier times Om was used as a form of affirmation or assent. Another possibility pointed out by him is that Om originates from 'Avman' which implies the notion of protection or salvation. He then mentions various references to Om in the Upanishads, the *Bhagavadgītā*, Manusmṛiti, and the like. Paul was the author of a valuable treatise on Yoga Vidya, which was earlier printed in *The Theosophist*. In this article, he dwells at length on shortening the length of the breath by the inaudible pronunciation of Om. The normal length of expiration is nine inches. It lengthens while eating, speaking, walking, running, in sexual

activities, and even when sleeping. According to Paul, inaudible uttering of Om can shorten the expiration resulting in spiritual progress. When the breathing becomes internal, the yogi attains Nirvana, free from hunger, thirst, and death. He becomes incapable of committing any sin in thought, speech, or deed. Paul provides a complete description of what can be achieved in stages by reducing the length of expiration by the inaudible pronunciation of the mystic word Om.

All the three Theosophical texts referred to in this article point to the great importance of the sacred and mystic word Om for a spiritual aspirant. While the text by Bhagwan Das deals more with the metaphysical aspects of the sacred word, the other two texts by HPB and Paul provide practical advice for a true seeker. Ultimately, one has to find out for oneself the value of such advice. As HPB says, the instructions should be spiritualised and not materialised, and a seeker must find the highest meaning possible. To the extent one approaches the material and visible in one's speculation on the instructions, that far one will be from the right understanding of them.

End Notes:

1. *Brahmavidyā*, Adyar Library Bulletin, 2012-2013, vol. 76-77, pp. 219-232.

2. Compiled by Michael Gomes with an introduction and footnotes, 2015, Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar.

3. The Arabic equivalent is 'Amin'.

4. The subtle elements — five exoterically, seven in esoteric philosophy — which are correlative to the five and the seven senses on the physical plane; the last two are as yet latent in humans, but will be developed in the later root races. (From HPB's *The Theosophical Glossary*, 1892, p. 322.)

5. Fiery serpent demon of darkness, storms and earthquakes.

6. The Pythagorean Four, or Tetraktys, is the symbol of the Cosmos, containing within itself the essentials of all forms.

7. In Sanskrit, Avalokiteshvara, Bodhisattva of Compassion.

8. A communication of Divine Origin. *Logia* in plural.

9. 1904, Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar.

10. A summarised English version of the *Pranava-Vada of Gargyayana*, 1910, 1911, 1912, Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar.

11. Dhanaraj could commit to his memory 1,000 slokas (verses) per day. As a young boy, he had learnt most of the Sanskrit works by heart.



Dr Chittaranjan Satapathy is the International Vice-President of the Theosophical Society. He has lectured in a number of countries and will direct one of the sessions of the School of the Wisdom at Adyar in December (see page 69). This article is reprinted from the July 2015 issue of *The Theosophist*.



The absolute Brahman transcends and includes all worship.
Bhagavan Das

Buddhist Meditation

Barbara Harrod



The following is a brief overview of the purpose, reasons and types of Buddhist Meditation, preparations and methods, and a little on distractions.

Purpose

Meditation can help us stay connected to the Sacred in ourselves. It is the instrument that we need in order to go inside ourselves to search for that which is yet beyond ourselves. We should meditate in order to develop our mind and attain an insight into our inner nature. This is useful if we are serious about finding ourselves or, as the Buddhists say, ‘searching for that which is illusive within’.

Some Reasons to Meditate

Meditation reflects the essence of simplicity. It:

- helps with clarity and serenity
- frees us from clutter and confusion
- gives us peace, calmness and awareness
- wakes us up and makes us more conscious

It also:

- slows down the monkey mind
- opens the heart
- enables us to become Enlightened

Buddhists also use meditation as a tool in solving human suffering, much of our suffering being created unnecessarily. When this is corrected the mind is freed from suffering and peace of mind is achieved.

Types of Meditation

Different types of Buddhist meditation could include natural walking, short auto [in *Awakening to the Sacred*, Lama Surya Das – Ed.] and natural light energy [e.g. Chogyal Namkhai Norbu – Ed.]. However, sitting meditation is the basis and foundation on which Buddhist practice is built. All meditation styles contain the two principles of concentration and analysis.

Preparations

In general, Buddhist meditation recommends keeping the eyes open

during meditation although different schools carry out the practices in their own way. Loose clothing is recommended, being more comfortable and less distracting. Clothes too tight or uncomfortable can lead the focus astray.

Before meditation begins a good clean life should be led for some time. Following the Eight-Fold Path would certainly be the best introduction to this meditation. An understanding of this Path would be beneficial and put one in the right frame of mind for meditating. For regular meditation to occur, discipline is needed. Discipline is part of the Path, which is made up of eight points grouped into three Dhamma (loosely translated as ‘duty’ or ‘teachings’) groups. These groups are moral discipline, mental discipline and wisdom. If they are mastered, the discipline needed for regular meditation should be easier to achieve.

Methods

As previously mentioned concentration and analysis are central to Buddhist meditation. Concentration is intent on calming the mind in order to create peace by focussing on one thing – be it an object, image or even a mantra. Analytical meditation tends to study the subject/object to realise the true

situation. Analytical meditation produces Wisdom. Bringing the two types of meditation together gives the focused attention with the clear discernment necessary for Buddhist meditation.

Distractions

Whenever a thought, feeling or memory occurs while you are meditating, let it go and don’t follow it. Simply bring back the attention by being mindful and alert.

References

- Das, Lama Surya, *Awakening to the Sacred*, Random House, New York, 1998.
- Rinpoche, Samdhong, *Buddhist Meditation*, Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, 2007.
- Om Mani Padme Hum*, Gyuto Monks of Tibet and Tibetans at Prayer, CD, cover notes by Sonam Rigzin.



Barbara Harrod is a long-time member of Canberra Branch. She gave this talk at the 2015 School of Theosophy.

Education



Theosophical Classics

Available for purchase at the National Headquarters:

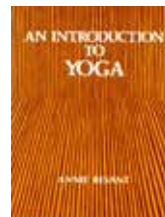


Published in 1885, *Light on the Path* is described as ‘a Treatise, written for the personal use of those who are ignorant of the Eastern Wisdom and who desire to enter within its influence’. It is a masterpiece in human psychology and human transformation, consisting of timeless rules that guide the student-aspirant towards Self-Knowledge and Self-Transcendence. \$6.50 (\$8.00 with postage)

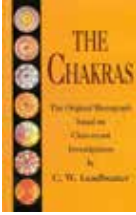


The last literary contribution of Madame Blavatsky to the world, *The*

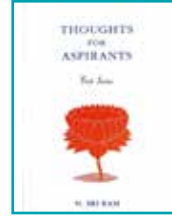
Voice of the Silence was published in 1889. It soon became an enduring classic of Theosophical literature. The book presents the teachings regarding the Bodhisattva Path – to reach Enlightenment only to rescue humanity from the shackles of ignorance and illusion. The instructions are presented through lofty and sublime poetry as well as through powerful metaphors. ‘To live to benefit humanity is the first step.’ \$5.00 (\$8.00 with postage)



An Introduction to Yoga records the lectures delivered in Varanasi, India, in 1907, during the thirty-second annual Convention of the Theosophical Society, by Dr Annie Besant. In them she explores the nature of yoga, both as a science and as a practice, as well as the obstacles to yoga and the capacities for yoga. This book provides the basis for a deeper study of the teachings of Patañjali. \$5.00 (\$8.00 with postage)



One of the bestsellers of Theosophical literature, *The Chakras* by C.W. Leadbeater has become a classic in its field. The word chakra is a Sanskrit word meaning wheel or disk. It refers to those centres in the superphysical bodies of the human being through which flow psychic energies and vital forces. They serve as a link between the physical, psychic and superphysical states of consciousness. In this book, first published in 1927, Leadbeater describes his research into the nature and functions of the chakras. \$8.00 (\$12.00 with postage)



Thoughts for Aspirants, compiled from the writings of N. Sri Ram, is a collection of profoundly inspiring thoughts on subjects of importance for those who are searching the meaning of life. They include Self-Realisation, Will, Truth, Wisdom, Love, Beauty, Unity, Individuality, Freedom, Reality, Harmony, Happiness, Peace and several others. A sample: ‘If you dig into yourself, you will discover how much of yourself is an amalgam of egoism and conventionality.’ \$5.00 (\$8.00 with postage)

National Website News

www.austheos.org.au

The Section’s first promotional video is now available to watch on the national website.

Four videos from the 2016 Convention held in Perth are also online.

All videos can be viewed at: <http://austheos.org.au/video-wp/>

Call for Nominations - State Representatives



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 (Gary Betts) and Western Australia (Franco Guazzelli) will expire at the appointment of new State Representatives towards the end of 2016. Accordingly, nominations are invited for the election of one State Representative for each of the named states. The serving State Representatives for WA and Victoria are eligible for re-election.

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 20 September 2016.

Copies of Form 8 may be obtained from the National Secretary:
natsec@austheos.org.au

2016 Indo-Pacific Conference New Zealand



Theme: The Purpose of the Theosophical Society

Special Guests:

International President **Tim Boyd**
and his wife, **Lily Boyd**



Venue: **Rose Park Hotel**

The Indo-Pacific Federation Conference will be held in Auckland, New Zealand from **14 to 19 October 2016**, starting with arrivals on Friday 14 October and 6:00pm dinner, and finishing with breakfast and departures on Wednesday morning 19 October.

Members from throughout the Indo-Pacific region are invited to explore and share the ageless wisdom in fellowship, meet old friends and make new ones. These conferences are full of learning and inspiration.

About the venue:

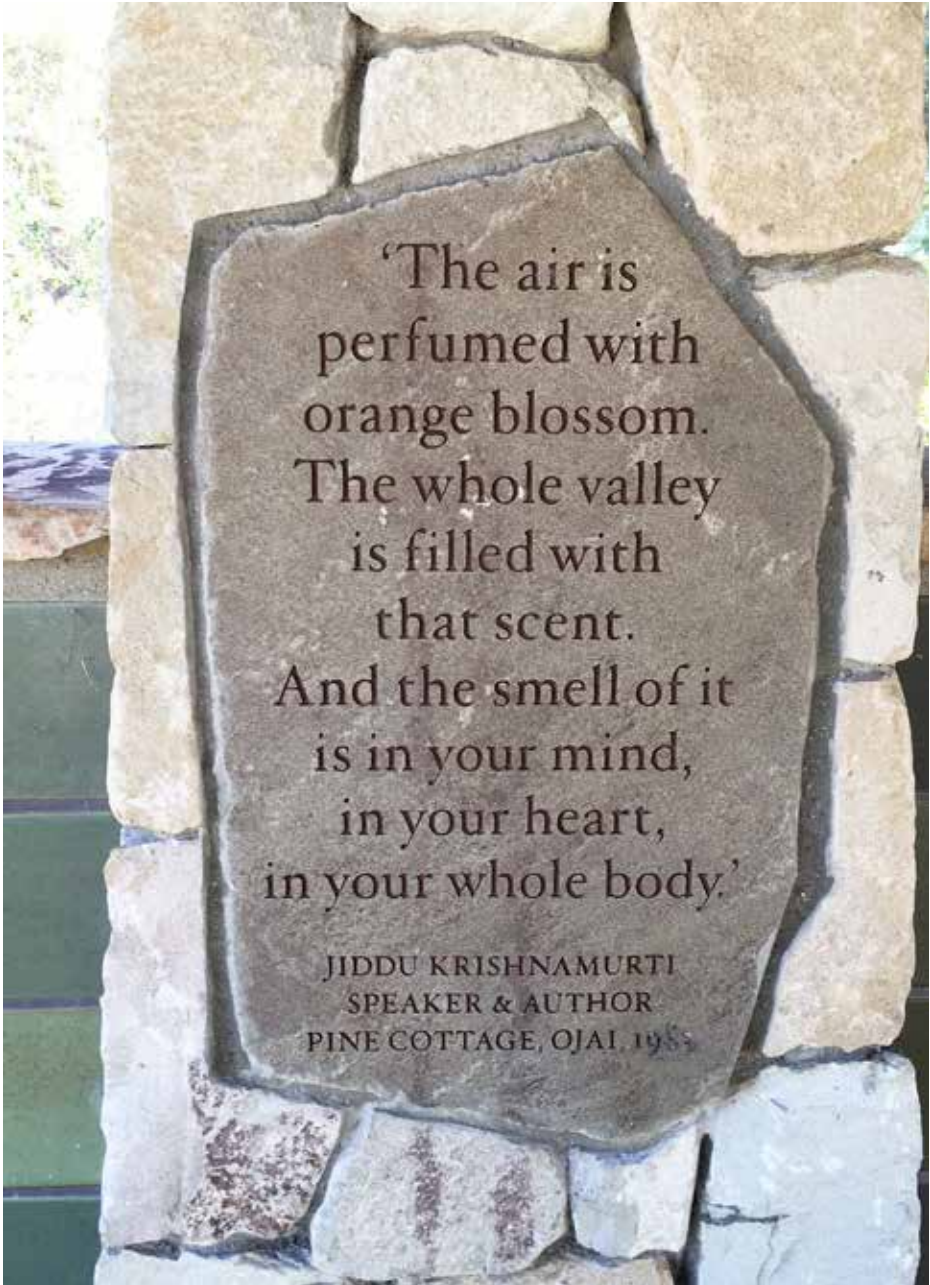
Rose Park hotel is located in Parnell, Auckland overlooking Sir Dove Myer Robinson Park, which incorporates the stunning Parnell Rose Gardens with attractive views over the Auckland Harbour. The location is close to central Auckland CBD with easy access to walks and harbour cruises.

See <http://www.aucklandroseparkhotel.co.nz/>

Registration: Please register online at <http://www.ipf-ts.org/>

All Enquiries: contact Renee Sell, Vice-President, New Zealand Section, at nvp@theosophy.org.nz

It is hoped that a good contingent of Australian members will be able to attend the Conference.



National Calendar of Events



Canyonleigh Centre, Bolitho House Tugalong Road, Canyonleigh, Friday 26 - Sunday 28 August 2016

Theme: 'The Four Yugas: Cycles of Unfoldment and Learning'

For TS members and non-members

Join us for an exploration of the vast ages of human evolution according to the Indian tradition and Theosophical studies.

Presenters: Linda Oliveira and Pedro Oliveira

Cost: members \$125 (twin share)/\$150 (single room)
non-members \$150 (twin share)/\$210 (single room)

All meals are included, from dinner on Friday until lunch on Sunday

Enquiries to: Education Coordinator

edcoord@austheos.org.au tel. 02 9264 7056 Mon-Thurs

National Convention, Hobart 21-28 January 2017

For TS members

The theme, cost and general information about the next National Convention will be announced soon and registration forms will be placed online. Watch the national TS website for updates.

It has been decided not to hold the usual national event at the Springbrook Centre in October this year, due to the proximity of the Indo-Pacific Conference in Auckland that month. Australian members are encouraged to attend the Conference and meet other members from around the region (see p.63).

Registration forms and further information about all events organised by the National Headquarters are at: www.austheos.org.au/what's on

Theosophical Order of Service



Welcome everyone to our first report for 2016. Since our last report TOS National received AU\$630 from the proceeds of our 2015 Cambodia Fund-Raiser Tour. This amount will be distributed amongst our national projects.

At our recent AGM in Perth the following beneficiaries were approved for our 2016 national projects:

Continuing support for the Qandeel home schools in Islamabad, Pakistan.
Support for the Adyar veterinary clinic at our International Headquarters.
Support for the Golden Link Colleges in the Philippines.

Delegates at our recent Theosophical conference were delighted to meet our new International President Tim Boyd

and his wife Lily on their first visit to Australia.

Tim is very approachable and we managed to have an unscheduled one hour conversation with Tim prior to the AGM. Tim highlighted that we are here on earth to help others and the power we have collectively to do good. He also stressed the importance of doing what needs to be done – that which is in front of us. We were uplifted by his many talks during the conference and his joyful approach to living.

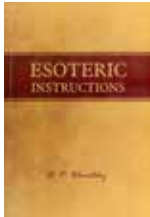
If you would like to join our electronic mail-outs and learn more about the TOS then please contact:
Jean Carroll, National Coordinator
tos.australia@gmail.com

TOS group during the TS National Convention in Perth.
Centre front:
Tim Boyd,
TOS President



Review

***Esoteric Instructions* by H.P. Blavatsky, compiled with an Introduction and Footnotes by Michael Gomes, The Theosophical Publishing House, Chennai, India, 2015, pp. xxvi + 356.**



Michael Gomes is a most distinguished historian, author and scholar in the field of Theosophical history, having published several books. In his latest work he presents the *Esoteric Instructions* that H. P. Blavatsky gave to her students a few years before her death in 1891. It deals with her teachings to members of the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society, started in 1888. The TS, she wrote, ‘had proved a dead failure on all those points which rank foremost among the objects of its original establishment’. The ESTS would be a body ‘of brave souls, a handful of determined men and



women hungry for genuine spiritual development and the acquirement of soul-wisdom’.

When President-Founder, Col. Henry S. Olcott, was opposed to the idea of creating such a body within the TS, he received a letter on his way to London in 1888, from Mahatma KH. In his letter the Master reminds him: ‘With occult matters she [HPB] has everything to do. We have not abandoned her; she is not “given over to chelas”. She is our direct agent.’ (*Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, First Series)

There has been, in certain quarters, recurrent criticism of Annie Besant’s edition of the ES Instructions published in 1897. In this regard the Compiler states:

In presenting what may be regarded as a student’s edition of H. P. Blavatsky’s *Esoteric Instructions* the various printings, editions, and versions have been compared. ... Annie Besant provided a useful template with her 1897 edition of this material. She had already edited parts of it for the versions sent out to members of the School. ...

Mrs. Besant's edited text of HPB's E.S. Instructions follows closely the 1891 printing ... Approved by HPB, this [1891 printing] may be regarded as the authoritative version of the text.

The Instructions deal with the inner constitution of the human being, with the law of correspondences and with other profound matters which

are the province of Gupta Vidyā, true Occultism. The Appendix includes two important articles by HPB on 'Practical Occultism' and 'Occultism Versus the Occult Arts', the Preliminary Memorandum of the ESTS and an Editorial Note by Eliphas Lévi.

Pedro Oliveira

News and Notes



2016 School of Theosophy

It was a great pleasure to welcome John Vorstermans (pictured centre front below) as the guest presenter for the 2016 School of Theosophy on the *Mahatma Letters*. John is the President of the

Indo-Pacific Federation as well as the current National President of the New Zealand Section. Renee Sell, the Vice-President of the New Zealand Section, was also present, along with a good sized group of Australian members.



2017 National Convention, Hobart

For preliminary information about the next National Convention, see page 65.

School of the Wisdom, Adyar



Information has been received about the School of the Wisdom sessions to be held at Adyar in late 2016/early 2017. They are:

The Neuroscience of Meditation

Directors: Dr Bhaskar Vyas
and Dr Rajni Vyas

21 November to 2 December 2016

Theosophy and The Upanishads

Director: Dr Chittaranjan Satapathy
5 to 16 December 2016

Self-Transformation and the Spiritual Life

Director: Mr Vicente Hao Chin Jr.
9 to 20 January 2017

Live Quantum, Be Happy

Director: Dr Amit Goswami
23 January to 3 February 2017

This information and more may also be viewed at:

<http://www.ts-adyar.org/content/school-wisdom>

A reminder has been given by the International Secretary, Marja Artamaa, that School of the Wisdom sessions are specifically meant for members of the TS. Applications for the School of the Wisdom need to be signed by the National President (contact details inside front cover) before they are submitted to the International Secretary's office.

The School of the Wisdom has inspired and benefited a great many people over the years. It is hoped that a number of Australian members will take up the opportunity of attending one or more of the forthcoming sessions of the School.

John Cooper Memorial Prize, University of Sydney



left to right: Dr Christopher Hartney,
Linda Oliveira, prize winner Giselle
Bader

Since 2000 the TS in Australia has awarded an annual prize to Studies in Religion at the University of Sydney. This is divided into an undergraduate and a postgraduate prize for research into the Perennial Philosophy in its Eastern and Western traditions.

The 2015 prizes were awarded to Giselle Bader for her undergraduate essay on the role of magic and religion in the domestic sphere of ancient Egyptian life, and Alan Boag for his Ph.D. thesis on the philosopher, J. Krishnamurti.

Dr Christopher Hartney, pictured on the previous page, has quite a

long association with the TS. In past years he brought interested groups of individuals to Blavatsky Lodge when it was located in Kent Street, Sydney, while leading visits to a number of spiritual groups around this city. He has also given some talks to the Lodge in the past.

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.

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 Level 2, 162 Goulburn Street, Surry Hills, NSW, 2010) 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 National Secretary

email: natsec@austheos.org.au

Tel. 02 9264 6404

Section Directory

Australian Section National Headquarters

Level 2, 162 Goulburn Street,
Surry Hills NSW 2010

Ph: 02 9264 7056 / 9264 6404

Fax: 02 9264 5857

www.austheos.org.au

Campbell Theosophical Research Library:

campbell@austheos.org.au

Australian Capital Territory

Canberra Branch, Chartered 17/7/1971:

Postal Address: c/- 27 Reveley Crescent,
Stirling ACT 2611

Meet: Friends Meeting House, cnr Bent
& Condamine Streets, Turner ACT 2612

7.30pm 1st Monday of month (Feb - May, Sep - Dec)

2.00pm 1st Saturday of month (June to Aug),

Emeritus Faculty ANU

Discussion Group 2.00pm 3rd Saturday of month,

Emeritus Faculty ANU

(Please confirm by email or telephone)

President: Dr Grahame Crookham

Tel: 0490147020

Email: tifcrook@tpg.com.au

Secretary: Tony Fearnside

Telephone: 02 6288 7656

Email: janton@netspeed.com.au

New South Wales

Blavatsky Lodge, Chartered 22/5/1922:

Postal Address: PO Box 319, St Leonards NSW 2065

Meet: Suite 8, 599 Pacific Highway, St. Leonards
NSW 2065 (entrance in Albany Street)

Telephone: 02 92676955 Fax: 02 9283 3772

Email: contact@tssydney.org.au

www.tssydney.org.au

Meet: 2.00pm Wednesdays

President: Howard Gregg

Secretary: Pamela Peterson

Newcastle Lodge, Chartered 3/12/1941:

Meet: Morrison Room, 29 Highfield Street,
Mayfield NSW 2304

7.30pm 2nd Friday each month from March 2016

<http://www.austheos.org.au/newcastle/>

President: Melanie Ball

Secretary: Dianne Kynaston

Tel: 02 4948 1733 - please leave message

Email: gnlodgetheos@gmail.com

Blue Mountains Group:

Meet: Senior Citizens Meeting Rooms

Upper level, Central Arcade

81-83 Katoomba Street, Katoomba

Meetings every Monday, 2.00pm

1st Monday of month - Public Meeting

Subsequent Mondays - *Secret Doctrine* Study Group

Coordinator: Donald Fern

Tel: 02 4757 1910

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

Email: marifraser256@gmail.com

Secretary: Roni Ostergaard

Telephone: 02 4358 1413

Northern Beaches Group:

Postal address: c/- The Manor,

2 Iluka Road, Mosman NSW 2088

Meet: c/- 22 Laitoki Road

Terrey Hills

NSW 2084

8.00 pm 3rd Friday each month

Coordinator: Dai Trandang

Tel: 0438 357 522

Queensland

Atherton Lodge, Chartered 27/4/1950:

Postal Address: 14 Herberton Rd,

Atherton QLD 4883

Meet: Meeting Room, Community Services

Tablelands, 38 Mabel St, Atherton

2.00pm 2nd Saturday of month except Jan.

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

www.theosophyqld.org.au

Meet: 7.30pm Fridays

President: Brian Harding

Secretary: Phoebe Williams

Sunshine Coast Lodge, Chartered 1/4/2004

Meet: Buderim Croquet Club,
Syd Lingard Drive, Buderim QLD 4556
7.00pm Thursdays
RSL/CWA Hall, 123 Poinciana Drive, Tewantin
7.00pm Fridays
President: Janet Blake
Tel: 0416 442962
Email: theosunshinecoast@gmail.com
Secretary: Joyce Thompson

Toowoomba Group:

Meet: 49 Lindsay Street, Toowoomba
1st Wednesday at 7pm and 3rd Sunday
at 2:30pm each month
(Meditation 1pm & Study Group at 1:30pm)
Annual Springbrook Retreat each winter
Coordinator: Gayle Thomas
Tel: 0438 331 885

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.austheos.org.au/adelaide>
Meet: Members Meeting 10.00am 4th Friday of every
month. Please contact Lodge for additional meeting
dates.
President: Kevin Davey
A/g Secretary: Marie Paul

Tasmania*Hobart Branch, Chartered 7/6/1889:*

13 Goulburn Street, Hobart TAS 7000
Tel. 03 6294 6195 (please leave message)
www.theosophicaltas.websyde.com.au
Meet: 8.00pm Mondays
President: Helen Steven
Secretary: position vacant
Email: helen_steven@live.com

Launceston Lodge, Chartered 12/1/1901:

54 Elizabeth Street, Launceston TAS 7250
Postal address: as above
email: launcestontheosophicalsociety@gmail.com
www.austheos.org.au/launceston
Meet: 1st and 3rd Wednesdays and if applicable
5th commencing 1.00pm for meditation followed
by meeting at 1.10pm / 2nd and 4th Wednesdays
commencing 7.20pm for meditation followed by
meeting at 7.30pm

President: Jenny Haslem

Secretary: Denise Frost

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@bigpond.com.au
Meet: Saturdays
President: Ken Edwards
Secretary: Edward Sinclair

Mornington Peninsula Group:

Meet: Mount Eliza Neighbourhood House,
Canadian Bay Road, 1st Sunday
of the month 1.00pm - 3.30pm
(meditation - lunch - Theosophy)
Coordinator: Daphne Standish
Tel: 03 9589 5439
www.austheos.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://www.tsp Perth.com.au>
Meet: 7.30pm Tuesdays
President: Harry Bayens
Acting Secretary: Anne Bower

Mount Helena Retreat Centre:

1540 Bunning Road, Mt Helena WA 6082
All enquiries to Perth Branch
Tel: 08 9328 8104

**Theosophical Education
and Retreat Centre, Springbrook, Qld**

2184 Springbrook Road,
Springbrook QLD 4213
Tel: Office/Hall 07 5533 5211
email: info@tsretreat.com.au
Caretaker: Kay Schiefelbein

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)*

