



THE BOMBAY THEOSOPHICAL BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF
THE BOMBAY THEOSOPHICAL FEDERATION

Volume 92



No.5



February - 2023



ADYAR DAY

17th February is a day to remember and give thanks to those who walked before us, who dedicated their lives to Theosophy and who gave us the very special gift of ADYAR.



MISSION OF TS

To serve humanity by cultivating an ever deepening understanding and realization of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation and the unity of all life

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**BTF BRETHREN AT THE 147TH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, ADYAR
31st December 2022 to 4th January 2023**



Bro. Taral Munshi with International President Tim Boyd at HQ Office

BTF President Bro. Vinayak Pandya, Bro. Taral Munshi & Sis. Archana Munshi had represented BTF. On Adyar Day 17th February 2023 at Blavatsky Lodge they will share 'Impressions of the 147th International Convention' with video by Bro. Taral.

Acting Editor – Sis. Mahazaver Rustom R. Dalal **Cover Page by:** Sis. Kashmira Khambatta
Editorial Committee – Sis. Mahazaver Dalal (Reporter & in charge of Mailing List), Sis. Kashmira Khambatta, Sis. Aban Patel and **Ex-Officio:** President Bro. Vinayak Pandya. **Note:** News, Notes and Programs to be printed in the Bulletin be forwarded by e-mail to kashmira.khambatta@gmail.com latest by 16th each month. Readers' Views are invited.

MAITREYA ROUND TABLE ‘Christmas Ceremony’ in Besant Hall decked up with Christmas trimmings by Sis. Navaz Dhalla was Inspiring Christmas morning.

Sis. Parinaz Gandhi writes - Joy, love, peace, fraternity that are associated with the festive season were experienced on Christmas Day, December 25, 2022, when the members of the Maitreya Round Table performed the Christmas Ceremony in the presence of the Bombay Theosophical Federation President Bro. Vinayak Pandya, some members and friends. With some Christmas Carols and the message of Lord Jesus Christ the ceremony was brought to a close after which the congregation partook of the Christmas cake. It was gratifying to see some onlookers show an interest in enrolling as Round Table members.

Thereafter the ‘HEALING GROUP RITUAL’, written by Dr. Geoffrey Hodson, was jointly performed by the members of Unity Youth Lodge, the Blavatsky Lodge, BTF and Theosophical Order of Service. Led by Sis. Niyosha Gandhi, the gathering jointly endeavored to be channels of the Great Ones and invoked and radiated divine blessings to give strength and solace to those in distress throughout the world.

JAMSHED MEHTA LODGE Meeting of 5th January 2023 had the Guest Speaker Mr. Kiran Doshi, who spoke on ‘Experienced Wisdom as Ambassador to various Countries’. He shared his experiences of tackling situations as a Diplomat in foreign lands and also his observations of India’s pluses and minuses for India to be one of the Key Leaders of the World. He urged that beginning has to be made with opportunity to learn more than 3 Rs with value-based education especially in Rural India. Bro. Kevin Marshall as Moderator conducted the meeting and discussion following the talk. The meeting was hosted by Bro. Noor Baig in his home with Tea and Light Dinner.

DITINGUISHED VISITORS AT BLAVATSKY LODGE MEETING of Friday 6th January 2023: Shri Narendra Shah, General Secretary of East & Central Africa TS Section and Prof. Aniel Missier of Amsterdam. It was an evening to share thoughts in continuation of spirit of the 147th International Convention Theme *'Our Responsibility in the Interconnected World'*. **Blavatsky Lodge Vice-President Bro.Navin Kumar** opened the meeting with the Universal Prayer and welcome to all. BTF President **Bro. Vinayak Pandya** spoke about how with the grace of Invisible Helpers two distinguished visitors passing through Mumbai after the Convention were at Blavatsky Lodge and how Jamshed Mehta & Ghatkopar Lodges were revived, and Centenary Lodge was made vibrant.

Shri Narendra Sah spoke about Inner Spiritual Growth. He added that to join Theosophical Society is a Landmark of One's Life. TS is like a school with exposure to understanding of all Religions, Philosophy and Science. Theosophical Society gives Freedom for individual's thinking. The latest invention of Telescope has opened the vistas of scientific knowledge for Galaxies. International President Tim Boyd with his innovative vision has brought many changes to strengthen TS. His focus on environment & plant kingdom has added beauty & serenity to Adyar. *One has to start the change within from one's own level.*

Prof. Aniel Missier said Theosophy gives knowledge to elevate our soul. To reject or imbibe knowledge is one's own choice. Giving an example of steering a car, he said that Theosophy helps to go through challenges and blocked of life. One has to come out of programmed and pre-conditioned minds. The beginning has to be made with Young Minds of children & young in spirit.

Interactive thoughts of Members with Speakers conveyed that *like Adyar Theosophical Academy School there should be no punishment and competition for children. Their minds and feelings should be opened up to sensitivity, sharing, compassion*

feelings should be opened up to sensitivity, sharing, compassion to all Creations – Mineral to Human Kingdoms.

The meeting had ended with recitation of Sanskrit Prayer by Bro. Navin Kumar.

Fragrance of the Ageless Wisdom

Courtesy: The Theosophist August 2021

What the Theosophical Society has hitherto done – its great merit in the eyes of some, and its terrible fault in the estimation of others – is *to make people think*. No one can for long belong to the Society without beginning to question *oneself*. We begin to ask: “How do I know that?” “Why do I believe this?” “What reason have I to be so certain that I am right, and so sure that my neighbours are wrong?” “What is my warrant for declaring this action, or that practice, to be good, and their opposites bad?” The very air of Theosophy is charged with the spirit of enquiry. It is not the “skeptical” spirit, nor is it the “agnostic”. It is a real desire to know and to learn the truth, as far as it is possible for any creature to know it who is so limited by their capacities and so biased by their prejudices as is a human being. It is *that* which has raised the Theosophical Society above the level of all other aggregations or organizations of people, and which, so long as its Fellows abstain from dogmatizing, must keep it on an altogether higher plane.

H. S. Olcott

Applied Theosophy and Other Essays

Prayer is not a ‘Spare Wheel’ you pull out when in trouble.

It is

a ‘Steering Wheel’ that Direct the Right Path throughout Life.

Courtesy: ‘University Women’ Issue No.4 of April 2017

Rainbow in the Sky

Presentation at

The International Theosophical Youth Centre (ITYC) Adyar



John Coats-Past President of
the Theosophical Centre and
Founder-ITYC



Co-Founder-ITYC Nathaniel
Altman-



Arni Narendran –
Coordinator-ITYC

Tributes to Adyar, The Masters' Home
Arni Narendran

Manager of the ITYC at the International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Madras during 1976 and presently Honorary Treasurer of the Blavatsky Lodge Mumbai.

In the early seventies I was living in an apartment by the sea on Elliots Beach at Adyar in the city of Madras, now known as Chennai. The Beach was famous in my day as a parking Bay for motorized caravans travelling by road from Scandinavia and the hinterland of Europe to Australia via Port Kelang in Malaya. These caravan Series were bartering spots for emerging “New Age” music that was not available in the city. On the far end of Elliot Beach was a huge sylvan stretch of land within an enclosure, which was the International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society, standing on the southern

banks of the Adyar River meeting the Bay of Bengal on the Coromandel Coast. For years I would pass by the gates of the Theosophical Society on my way to college downtown, oblivious of its existence until a chance meeting with an Australian writer and music composer Bro. Peter Glasson. Now living in Brisbane, Peter opened a new pathway in my life which to this day continues to illumine my world: the Light of Ancient Wisdom. He introduced me to the fascinating world of Theosophy through a book that he presented to me – *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett* - on 6th November 1974.

I was at a crossroads in my life, not unlike many other youths of the early seventies. During this turbulent time in history, the young were confused and disillusioned by war, poverty and global inequality and were seeking empowerment. The era was well defined in Stephen Spender's book *The Year of the Young Rebels* (incidentally an autographed copy of the book was presented to me by the late International President of the Theosophical Society, Bro. John Coats) on the student uprisings in Prague, Sorbonne and Berkeley during the 1960s. Tom Hayden and Regis Debray were the new avatars, and the protest poems of Allen Ginsberg were read at college squares. The student movement crystallized from antiwar protests and a new community of enquirers and seekers emerged: this has been variously described as “flower children” and “The Woodstock Generation.”

For the first time in recorded history the young broke away from rigid system of authority and became independent enquirers and seekers, with California becoming the hotbed of this counterculture movement. This was articulated in their music and lyrics by the icons of the age, led by Bob Dylan, Joan Baez , Jimi Hendrix, and many other stars that spangled in the skies. At the same time, another segment of youth romanticized armed resistance for social change inspired by Marxist philosophy and Mao's *Little Red Book*. Their heroes were Che Guevara and Fidel Castro.

Although most of the happenings were in the West, the fallout of this new social revolution was felt the world over and Madras was no exception. **At college, a few of us produced a magazine called “Assymetric,” which reflected the happenings and mood of the times. It was at this juncture that Theosophy came into my life as a whiff of fresh air, clearing my mind of the smoke screen and quagmire of Maya and illusion.**

Bro. Peter introduced me to the President Of the Theosophical Society, Bro. John B.S. Coats, who was a magnet to the young wherever in the world he visited. He was a larger-than-life Scotsman in his physical frame and hailed from a family which had distinguished itself in the global textile industry. He became attracted to Theosophy at a very young age and served as a President of the World Federation of Young Theosophists. The organization was renamed **the World Theosophical Youth Federation in 1979, with Bro. John Coats as Honorary President** and Bro. Arnaldo Sisson Filho, a native of Porto Alegre in Brazil as the Coordinator. Incidentally **I was made the first member of this reconstituted entity.** Bro. John was endearingly called “Papa John” in South America where he was hugely popular. Bro. John was one big reason why many joined the Society, as he was affable and would converse with novices with equal seriousness as he would with veteran students of Theosophy. He was instrumental in bringing a lot of young people to visit or work in Adyar and many of them remain till this day to serve the Society. Sister Isis Resende, Bro. Nathaniel Altman and Bro. Arend Heijbroek are some of the Theosophists that come to mind. Bro. John was a great host and together with his wife Betsan always would find an excuse to invite the young for a gathering at his seaside home, Olcott Bungalow (formerly a hunting residence of the Nawab of Arcot).

1975 was an eventful year for the Theosophical Society and more so for the Adyar Headquarters: it was the Centenary Year of the

Society, and Adyar attracted the largest gathering of Theosophists from all over the world. It gave me a wonderful opportunity to meet spiritual seekers from all over-from Colombia to New Zealand; Echo warriors, yoga practitioners, pacifists, Sufis, sub-altern poets, psychedelic pop artists, philosophers and intellectuals of all hues and followings. **The Dalai Lama happened to be the Guest of Honour and he talked extensively on love and compassion.** I had a chance to walk the talk with this great soul along with a few others, as His Holiness walked to his lodgings.

After the centenary convention, many young people remained at and near Adyar, having made such a long journey. Some of them wanted to visit the Ramana Ashram at Thiruvannamalai and Auroville at Pondicherry. Other than the occasional talks that were arranged at the Adyar campus and the Vasantha Youth Lodge meetings, they hardly had a chance to interact with each other. It was against this backdrop a decision was made to set up **an International Theosophical Youth Centre (ITYC) at Adyar, a brainchild of Bro. John Coats** with Nathaniel Altman (who at that time was writing a book on Ahimsa) at the helm and a driving force. **I was entrusted the role of Manager of the Centre** and Christina Clough, the President's secretary, offered her valuable time and advice. My letters were translated into Portuguese and Spanish by a Brazilian of Lebanese descent, who was in Chennai for academic pursuits. The Youth Centre was entrusted with the task of creating a directory of Young Theosophists both within India and all over the world. Airmail- presently classified as "snail mail"- was the only means of communication because telephone calls were prohibitively expensive. The effort was a rewarding endeavor, and the ITYC soon became a single contact point for the young. Within six months, invitations to address the young members of the T.S. came from various part of the country and I visited the Calicut Lodge as well as the Bangalore Lodge, where a large number of young people interacted. Queries from abroad would

be passed on to the President who addressed these young members during his overseas tours.

To facilitate personal interaction within the Adyar campus, a coffeehouse was started which was housed on the premises of the World Federation of Young Theosophists opposite the music hall, where Sister Norma Shastri would invite anyone interested to listen to classical Western music. The coffee house became a gradual incubator of activity and attracted both residents and non-residents of Adyar. We had started the Society's first yoga workshop under Bro. Marc Ablon, who is now teaching somewhere in France. An English professor gave lessons in T'ai Chi, and Christina Clough gave classes in acupressure. There were talks from theosophists and non-theosophists on Theosophy and related subjects. Asko Suttinen, a Finnish member, displayed his artwork; there were also concerts on Zen flute and Ray Angona's lectures on the Kanchi Shankaracharya - he was a researcher with a Swiss grant- were memorable. There were also readings from the *Old Diary Leaves* by H.S. Olcott, along with readings from other books on Theosophy as well as poetry readings. I cannot forget the patronage of Bro. Finn Stall, a travel agent from Crete in Greece: he would make it a point to visit us during his India tours. Bro. Paul Boesson from Denmark spoke on the Christiania commune experience in Copenhagen. He also played recorded talks on a sleek tape recorder by the Danish philosopher Rasmus Neilson. Jean and Dominique Vallon (a theatre artist who has since married a theatre director at a company at Anesse, France) from Lausanne, Switzerland spoke to us about their emotional impact of westerners who visit India: they stayed at the Taj in Mumbai and during their evening promenades would be appalled by the sight of children living on the streets by the side of the hotel.

On some days, my task was to take Bro. Dick Balfour Clarke, a private tutor of Bro. Jiddu Krishnamurti, by bicycle to his beach house after his story hour at the coffee house. Bro. Dick often talked

about JK's experience at the Penathur Subramania Iyer High School where he started his initial education before being taken to Europe by Dr. Annie Besant. He also talked about Krishnamurti's breakaway from the Theosophical Society in 1929. JK may have walked away from the Theosophical Society, but the Society never walked away from him. After a hiatus of forty years JK paid a visit to Adyar, some say at Radhaji's (International President Radha Burnier's) behest, while others say it was to assuage his own pain of separation from the TS.

Those living at the Adyar campus those days included Sister Joy Mills, the International Vice President, whose lectures were considered erudite. I also remember Sister Jean Raymond, a Singaporean of Australian descent who was the affable and endearing Recording Secretary of the T.S. and ardent dog lover. Tragically, she was bitten by her pet dog and passed away on account of rabies. The Secretary of the T.S. at that time was retired Army Colonel Gopalaratnam, who tirelessly worked for the Society; one could see him the whole day inspecting all the departments at all hours of the day. Bro. Rajkumar, a student of pharmacology, was steering the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) activities at the Kuppams; he left for Ireland having married a co-worker from that country. An enterprising Sinhala family from Colombo gave their best as well: the father was in charge of horticulture, the mother was the Manager of Leadbeater Chambers and the daughter, Vinodhini, was a piano teacher. I can't forget the Stillingers from Oregon: Michael and Kathy were a great help in running the coffee house. Dick Powell, a South African living in Alberta, was another great support.

Mr. Ranjan, who worked at the Sri Lankan embassy in London, was also regular at the coffee House whenever he was in Madras. Uwe Wagnor from Essen, a student of *mridangam* (percussion), was a cheerful frequenter. He lived in a beach house, and was a neighbor of Bro. Colussi, an Italian language instructor who taught at Alitalia on

Mount Roading the City and authored an Italian book on reincarnation. An Icelander called Rudolf often spoke about his inspiration from Adyar for his fantasy novel in Icelandic. A native of Hawaii was writing about his experience of meeting a nomadic sadhu at Thiruvannamalai: as if by prophecy, the sadhu became popular in the name of Yogi Ram Sarath Kumar years later. Bro. John deGiri , a French planter from Vietnam was also a regular.

Another important event during this time was witnessing a very historic moment at the Adyar campus, when emissaries from the Janata Government in Delhi visited Sister Rukmini Devi Arundale seeking her candidature for President of India, which she politely declined in all humility. It was Sister Pupul Jayakar who they say proposed her name.

A magazine known as “Phoenix Rising” was started at the ITYC. The Coffee House was a place to meet with like-minded brethren from within the campus of the International Headquarters and the neighboring districts outside our gates. The irony about the coffee house was that no coffee was served - only herbal tea (predominantly mint tea) with cookies from the Adyar Bakery.

Unfortunately, I could not continue my work at ITYC as allowances from my father had dried up. As the President put it in his testimony “in seeking a secure future” that indeed was true. I had to leave an oasis of spiritual abundance and descend into an embattled world of the corporate jungle. After I left my post at the ITYC, Ms Tomi Stewart from Australia took over. Several years later, it was closed forever.

My attempt to climb the Golden Stairs might have struck a roadblock but being exposed to Theosophy gave me a confident kick-start in my life. I began looking at the Bigger Picture instead of the petty benefits, to work in sync and become proficient in conflict resolution. I also learned to build up a positive mental framework that enabled me to

excel within my own capacity in whatever I did. The lessons learned by my Theosophical experience- **which I call the Adyar Experience – is that a spiritual seeker is always creative and uses his resources for the benefit of others, pushing self-interest to the rear of his goals while putting his best foot forward unmindful of rewards or accolades.** He also enjoys the journey as he moves forward in executing his mission- be it personal or professional. Now, as I look back at having been exposed to Theosophy at the age of twenty-two, my experience certainly enriched my life and gave me the wisdom to live a life of contentment. I am grateful for the Adyar Experience. *The International Theosophical Youth Centre may have appeared and disappeared like ‘A “rainbow in the sky’, yet it remains part of Adyar’s indelible history.*

APPLIED THEOSOPPHY - ADYAR

H. S. Olcott

Extracts - Courtesy: The Theosophist February 2022

The real Theosophical Society (TS) is an indivisible unit, animated by an individual life! Its soul is the love of truth, its vital principle is kindness, and it dwells in a world above the material, where no enemy can touch it. It depends for its manifestation on Earth upon an appropriate vehicle, and the first condition necessary in that vehicle is that it shall be a *united whole*. The TS is an ideal power for good diffused over the whole world, but it requires material conditions, and the most important of these is a material centre, from which and to which the efferent and afferent [outgoing and incoming] forces shall circulate.

This is a condition of the life of all organizations, and of all organisms, and the TS is both; **it is an organization on the material plane, an organism on the spiritual. A common centre, therefore, is as necessary for spiritual as for physical reasons. “Adyar” is not a place only, it is a principle.** It is a name which ought to carry

with it a power far greater than that conveyed by the name “Rome”. ADYAR is the centre of the theosophical movement – not “7 Duke Street, Adelphi”, or “Post Office Box 2659, New York”.

ADYAR is a principle and a symbol, as well as a locality. ADYAR is the name which means on the material plane the headquarters of an international, or, more properly speaking, worldwide society of persons who have common aims and objects and are imbued with a common spirit. It means on the supra physical plane a centre of life and energy, the point to and from which the currents run between the ideal and the material. Every loyal fellow [TS member] has in his heart a little ADYAR, for he has in him a spark of the spiritual fire which the name typifies. ADYAR is the symbol of our unity as a Society, and so long as it exists in the hearts of its Fellows the powers of the enemy can never prevail against the TS.

We have seen that it is not by making the Society itself an instrument on the physical plane that its power can be utilized for good; but that its influence must be a moral one, consisting of the combined and united thoughts and wishes of the whole Society, focused upon any individual point, and acting through the personality of its individual Fellows.

We have seen that all that is necessary to make such a united power manifest is that its existence should be acknowledged and felt by the Fellows themselves; and that to acknowledge and feel it, and thus bring it from the latent to the active condition, the Fellows must perceive that **the TS is a living entity, “ideal” if one chooses to call it so, but an entity *one and indivisible* alike upon the material plane and on the**

supra-physical plane. We have also seen that the visible Centre of the Society, “ADYAR,” is symbolical of the principle of unity, as well as of the material life of the Society, and that in every sense

loyalty to “ADYARA” means loyalty to the Objects of the Society and to the principles of Theosophy.

The Applied Theosophy is surely a possibility; and that it consists of the moral influence brought to bear upon the practical evils of life by the exertions of individual Fellows who have behind them, severally and collectively, the spiritual power created by unity of purpose, of ideas and of loyalty to the truth; a power for good of which the terrestrial ADYAR is the physical centre and Headquarters; while **the spiritual ADYAR is the channel by means of which powerful influences from a higher sphere, unseen but not unfelt, enter the Society through the hearts of each and all of its Fellows, thence to be outpoured upon the whole world.**

BTF & LODGE PROGRAMMES FEBRUARY 2022

BTF jointly with BLAVATSKY LODGE
Friday 17th February 2023 at 6.00 pm
Adyar Day Celebration

with video on ‘Impressions of The 147th International Convention’ by Bro. Taral Munshi and sharing of Impressions by BTF President Bro. Vinayak Pandya and Bro. Taral Munshi & Sis. Archana Munshi. New Members will be welcomed with Presentation of Diplomas.

BLAVATSKY LODGE: 7 – French Bridge, Mumbai 400007
 Tel:23685026 (M):9821459504 (M):9819334333

DAY	TIME	DETAILS
Tuesday 7th, 14th, 21st, & 28th	6.00 pm	Study of ‘Theosophy Explained with Questions & Answers by P. Pavri’ conducted by Bro. Arni Narendran
Friday 3rd, 10th & 24th	6.00 pm Hybrid	Study of ‘Inner Life _-Series II’ by C. W. Leadbeater conducted by Sis. Aban Patel
Sunday 26th	10.45am	Maitreya Round Table

JYOTI LODGE: c/o Bro. Taral Munshi, Goregaon, Mumbai 400065

DAY	TIME	DETAILS
Tuesday 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th	6.30 to 8.00 pm	TRIVENI Meet Virtual on Zoom with Three Languages, Three Speakers, Three Lodges / Federations on Theosophy / Spirituality Hosted by Bro. Taral & Sis. Archana Munshi

VASANTA LODGE: c/o Bro. Vinayak Pandya, Santa Cruz (E), Mumbai 400055

DAY	TIME	DETAILS
Wednesday 1st, 8th,15th, & 22nd	6.00 pm	GURUDEV GOSHTHI virtual on Zoom to study Gujarati books on Theosophy & Spirituality hosted by Bro. Vinayak Pandya and Sis. Archana Munshi

VIMADALAL BILIA / GANESH LODGES: Family House, Dadar Parsi Colony, Mumbai 400014

DAY	TIME	DETAILS
Thursdays Fortnightly	6.00 pm	Theosophical & Religious Talks

JAMSHED MEHTA LODGE: C/o Bro. Noor Baig, 43 – Shangrila, colony entrance next to the Church, opp. Colaba Post Office, Colaba, Mumbai 400005

DAY	TIME	DETAILS
Third Saturdays	5.30 pm	Learning Theosophy from Life Experiences

Human beings, vegetables, and cosmic dust, all dance to the tune of an invisible piper. – Albert Einstein

Courtesy: The Theosophist April 2021

Price Rs.1/-

Annual Subscription: Rs.10/-

Bombay Theosophical Federation, c/o Blavatsky Lodge, 7 – French Bridge, Chowpatty, Mumbai – 400 007. (Tel: 23685026) and printed at Vijay Copy Centre, 48/A, Saidunnisa Building, Sleater Road, Opposite Grant Road Station (West), Mumbai-400 007.