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**Editor**

**PRADEEP H. GOHIL**

## **A STEP FORWARD**

Most of us must have heard the word “renunciation” at some time or other. One can come across it in studies of Buddhism and Jainism. Basically, renunciation is an act or instance of relinquishing, releasing, abandoning, repudiating or sacrificing something, as a right, title person or ambition. For example, the king’s renunciation of the throne means that he has decided not to accept the seat of a king.

We learn in theosophy that a human being is an immortal soul, living not one life but many lives on earth, growing through the experiences which he or she gains in them. According to this theory, the purpose of life is not to achieve a stable condition of happiness for any individual, but rather to train the person to work in a plan of an ideal future, and find in that work an ever-changing and ever-growing contentment.

From the standpoint of a Theosophist, all men are indeed working for a destined or predetermined ideal future. But they are working at different stages, according to their differing capacities. Recognition of these stages, and the laws of life appropriate to each, makes life less complex. There are three broad stages on the path of bliss which lead to the highest good, and they are happiness, renunciation and transfiguration. Out of these, let us discuss the practical implications of renunciation for those who want to practice spirituality.

It is not easy to live as a renunciant or a true *sanyasi*. Our law books put a number of restrictions on people who take up *sanyas* as a way of life. For example Gautama proposed that a renunciant should not keep any possessions, must remain unmarried, should not change his residence during the rainy season or enter any village except for begging late in the day after people have finished eating. Other proponents of Hindu laws declare that renunciants should not entertain any desire, including the desire for tasty food like pizza or burgers, nor should they wear any clothes except a small rag to cover their nakedness. The Bhagavadgita suggests that those who desire liberation should live in a secluded place, renouncing desires, and practice meditation, with their minds fixed upon the Self or God.

Most people are not ready for the austere and rigorous life of renunciation. They are also not meant to be, since it is part of nature’s design to ensure the order, regularity and continuity of the world. However, until that resolve becomes firmly established in the mind, one can cultivate an attitude of renunciation and purify the mind and body. As a householder or a student, one may have many obligations. Yet, living one’s normal life, one can bring the ideals and principles of renunciation into daily practice by infusing them into one’s thinking and behaviour. In this regard the following suggestions are worth remembering :

### **1. Spend time with yourself**

When you are deeply involved with the world and people, you will have little opportunity to introspect or find the sanctuary of peace within you. You may be habitually accustomed to finding happiness, comfort and assurance in others. Actually, you are your best sanctuary. You can find peace and happiness within you by going beyond your surface thoughts. Withdraw from whatever that keeps you busy and look within to clarify your thoughts, know yourself or find solutions to your problems. When you are alone or disturbed, use those moments to focus upon yourself and find peace within yourself.

### **2. Become your own person**

From your childhood, you are influenced by numerous people, ideas, opinions, values, groups, institutions and authority figures. As you become deeply attached to them, you do not bother to check whether you have the right knowledge or understanding of anything, including yourself. If you want to bring out your uniqueness and cultivate your authentic self, you must free your mind from irrational beliefs, conditioned thinking and unverified knowledge. It is possible only when you mentally renounce your blind allegiance to authority figures and subject them to scrutiny, reason and reality check. When you free your mind from all mental and emotional crutches, you will be less prone to perceptual errors, irrational beliefs and thinking errors.

### **3. Learn to let go of the possessions and accumulations**

Ownership is a burden although in worldly life it gives you certain power, prestige, status and control. Anything that you claim as yours, be it knowledge, an opinion or a material possession, is a potential

cause of conflict and sin which settles in your mind, consciousness or memory and with which you form an attachment or a feeling of ownership, is an accumulation, a burden or an obstacle. It not only limits your freedom to be yourself and think for yourself with an open mind but also draws you into the objective world and keeps you involved and bound to the things that you like or dislike. Think of all the things which you think you own or possess. Mentally, give up your attachment to them so that you can set your mind free.

#### **4. Peel off all labels and identities that define you.**

You are always someone or something to the world. They not only define you but also create expectations from you and in you. In the process, you do not know who you truly are. You become lost in such labels. However, have you ever thought what you are if you had none of those labels? Finding your pure self or true identity (who am I?) beyond all names and forms by renouncing them and peeling them off is the essence of *sanyasa*.

#### **5. Give up the urge to promote or protect yourself.**

In worldly life, defending or protecting yourself and those who seek your protection is considered a virtue and an obligatory duty. However, in spiritual practice, it is not encouraged since it is a sign of egoism and selfishness. Spiritual people are expected not to defend themselves or engage in any form of emotional or violent actions to promote, protect or preserve their name, reputation, status, identity or individuality. They may express their opinions or contradict those of others in a *sattvic* way. They respond to everything with silence. The attitude of renunciation enjoins that you respond to criticism with tolerance and avoid forcing your opinions upon others, particularly when you are not the top leader. You should remain indifferent to what the world thinks about you or how it judges you.

The Bhagavadgita expects God's devotees to live like householders but think like renunciants. By that it brings the wisdom of ageless traditions into daily practice. In today's world, such an approach is even more appropriate for people who want to pursue their material goals without losing their minds or peace and happiness. If one practices this approach of renunciation, it will certainly be a step forward in one's spiritual progress.

TIMBOYD

## **A LIFE WITHIN A LIFE**

IN the *Tao Te Ching* Lao Tzu makes the statement: "The person who seeks knowledge grows more and more each day. The person who seeks the Tao (the Way) grows less and less each day." Our focus today is on growing less, what that might mean, and how it is we might involve ourselves in that level of seeking.

When I was very young I met a truly great lady, Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt. She was quite well known and active on the world stage. She was the wife of former President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, who navigated the country through the Great Depression and World War II.

Mrs Roosevelt was a person in her own right, she had her own identity with her own views, and was extremely active on behalf of a variety of different causes. I was seven or eight years old when she came and spoke to a group of us. I remember my impression of her at that time was that she was a very sweet, nice, old lady. Perhaps it was one or two years before she actually passed away. It was only later that I came to understand something of her greatness, not just of the greatness of her ideas and her work, but of the sacrifices that were required for her to do the things that she did.

She was an activist for civil rights in the US at a time when that was unpopular. It was on the wrong side of the sentiments of the nation. She stood up for women's rights and workers' rights. She was the first delegate from the United States to the United Nations (UN), and was instrumental in the UN's founding. She chaired the committee that drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which incorporates a great deal of theosophical thinking. Among those thoughts is that people should have four freedoms: of speech and worship, and from want and fear — big ideas.

When I first met her I was a child, not knowing any of that. But during her visit she said something that stuck with me. It was a statement

about the life of the mind. To her the mind was what was all-important, what enabled all other things in life. She spoke to us young people about a direction that we might want to consider for our growth, our becoming. She laid out three categories of mind, saying: there are small minds, and “small minds talk about people”. It is the idea that when we are at our smallest, we are picking and gossiping about others. Then there are average minds, and “average minds talk about events”, things that happen in the world. And then she said, “Great minds talk about ideas”. So this was her hierarchy of mind; and to a large degree, this is useful.

But there is another quality of mind that gets less attention. It relates specifically to the idea that there is such a thing as a life within — qualitatively different from our normal, outwardly-turned way of living. In Zen Buddhist practice, there is an expression: “To the mind of the expert, there are few options. To the beginner’s mind there are many options.” The trained mind, conditioned through its expertise, its association with specific streams of information, and knowledge becomes limited, blinded to options for what might be described as reality.

I think we can all go back to a time of a beginner’s mind — a time when we were open, as yet unconditioned. To that mind that is learning something new, or seeing something for the first time, with fresh eyes, the possibilities are many; we could even say limitless.

So, what I would really like to talk about is intuition. Not specifically *the* intuition, but an intuitive approach to something fundamental to all people. There is a universally shared intuition. It is not a theory per se. It is not something that has the stamp of scientific approval, but it is a universally shared deep knowing that, each of us is a part of something more; something greater. We could call it a greater life. Whether it is proven scientifically or not, an Inner Life is undeniable.

All of us think, feel, see, and hear. But we think, feel, see, and hear at different levels, in different ways, to different degrees. In a

family we have brothers, sisters — each one exposed to the same things, but seeing the world from a different perspective and responding accordingly. For some, the balance of their attention is rooted in the world of the senses — taste, smell, or touch — the material world. That is the focus — the place where people feel at home and make their home. Then there are others who live in a different world. They “hear the beat of a different drummer” and live in a different world — parallel — but a differently sensed experience.

During the course of my life, I have known some people who have been deeply clairvoyant, which is not saying that they are infallible or 100% accurate, no more than you would say that someone looking at something with normal eyes is infallible and sees every aspect. Clairvoyance, literally, means “clear seeing” — people who see much as we do, but at a different level, in a slightly different dimension.

Each of us dreams, whether we remember our dreams or not. We close our eyes, our consciousness retreats from its involvement in the day-to-day world, and we dream. In those dreams there is an unquestioned sense of their reality. There are some people who even have the habit of what is described as lucid dreaming, which is to say, that they are fully awake, and aware in the dream — that it is a dream — and yet, still participate in the unfolding story and activities that go on in this other reality. We use the same language to describe a dream as we do to describe a trip to the grocery store.

Each of the world’s spiritual traditions has scriptures. And those scriptures use the same language we use in talking about day-to-day things to try to describe things that are so far beyond our current perception, that we would think there can be no possible connection. I am fond of stories from various spiritual traditions. Stories are a way of connecting us to a deeper wisdom that is unavailable in recounting information or sharing knowledge.

There is a distinct difference between information, knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. Sometimes we feel as if knowledge is the gateway to all other things. And, while it has deep value, it has been

said that we can become knowledgeable from someone else's knowledge, but we cannot become wise from someone else's wisdom. Wisdom is of a completely different order than knowledge. Wisdom is a perception of reality that so many spiritual teachers have come to try to communicate to us using the language of their time. So we have the Bible, the Mahâbhârata, the *Bhagavadgîtâ* — all using stories to try to touch something within us, to try and lead us to some deeper experience.

In *The Stanzas of Dzyan* — the basis for *The Secret Doctrine* of H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) — there is this statement using the language of fairytales: “The eternal parent, wrapped in her ever invisible robes, had slumbered once again for seven eternities.” It is a beautiful image similar to the “once upon a time” stories that we share with children. But this is an image symbolizing something that is indescribable. It points to a state prior to the formation of universes, prior to the manifestation of everything that we think of as real. “The eternal parent” — asleep, wrapped in the robes that would ultimately become the material of future universes. It is a language used to describe something deeply, deeply interior — interior to the point of not even being in existence, as yet.

Even though we all share aspects of both of these inner and the outer dimensions we find that our effectiveness in speaking across this divide is challenging. Where does the outer life become the Inner Life? There is a quote from HPB, which speaks to this idea. The question is: How is it that we all can see things so differently, living in the same world? How is it that there are so many different points of views? She states: “Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane, are for that time, the only realities.”

If our mind is rooted in the world of matter, things, and jobs, while that is our focus, and the plane of consciousness in which we are active, that is what is real. Close your eyes, go to sleep, live in a dream — that is what is real. There is also the possibility spoken of in the spiritual traditions of the world that through our own efforts we can shift our centre of gravity to other, more interior planes of

consciousness. The idea of this practice is not that we remove or separate ourselves from the world, but that it is possible to create an untroubled space that can become constant. It is an intuitive approach to being.

There is an example of the hurricane or cyclone in Nature. They are huge, organized patterns of weather. They spin and all around them everything is in motion, but at their centre there is always the “eye of the storm”. From the human point of view hurricanes are quite destructive, but when someone is in the centre of the storm, they look up at the sky, and it is clear, unclouded, completely calm. This is the possibility that the spiritual traditions of the world speak to.

There is the well-known story from Plato about the dwellers in a cave, who have been chained, and all they know are shadows. Because this is the only reality to which they have been exposed they have built a very structured — and very real, to them — way of viewing shadows and interpreting them. The story is about the awakening and deepening of consciousness. One of them is gradually led out of the cave, to the upper world, where the sun, in all of its brightness, and all of its intensity, can now be seen as the source of all light. The process of adjusting to the vision of this light is what is described. It is about dwellers in two worlds, the worlds of the intuitive mind, or spiritual mind, and the darkened world rooted in viewing and interpreting shadows. The two are not separate. When he finally sees the sun, he is standing on the same earth that he was standing on in the cave, but from a different “location” in consciousness.

There are people we know who have seen a different vision of reality, and then come back and have to deal with it. Anyone who has a son or daughter, or who themselves have been involved in war, the war ends, but that person has seen something that changes them. Their way of seeing humanity and the world, shifts to another perspective, not shared by someone who has not had that experience.

(To be continued)

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## WISDOM: THE INSPIRATION OF THE FOUNDER'S CHALLENGE\*\*

The foundation of the Theosophical Society took place in New York, USA, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November, 1875, from the inaugural address of its first President, the North American Colonel Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907), as confirmed in the Letters of the Mahatmas (BARKER, 1993, p. 124). Previous meetings had taken place at the home of a Russian woman, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891), with only “[...] sixteen or seventeen persons joined HPB [Blavatsky] in her rooms at 46 Irving Place [...]” (CRANSTON, 1994, p. 143). Those meetings had taken place to elect the Society’s first board of directors and approve its by-laws. In this way, the participants of these previous meetings are considered as the founders of the Theosophical Society, although it is traditional to give more prominence to those who remained in it, such as Col. Olcott and Helena Blavatsky, and their first Secretary, an Irishman named William Quan Judge (1851-1896). Blavatsky considers that the Theosophical Society preserves the same ideas of Neoplatonism and philosophical and religious Eclecticism as the ancient “Eclectic Theosophical School” (BLAVATSKY, 1968, p. 3) of Alexandria.

With Olcott and Blavatsky’s trip to India in 1879, the international headquarters was established in 1882 in Adyar, Chennai (former Madras), capital of the state of Tamil Nadu, in Southeast India. This trip was then essential for the Society’s survival, and for the natural welcome that India offered to the founders and their philosophy, which is obvious from one of its original objects: “To study Aryan literature, religion and science” (HARRIS, 2006, p. 632). The situation of the chosen place remains until today, and from this international headquarters the work of the Theosophical Society has expanded to more than fifty countries.

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\*\*Talk delivered on the occasion of the 146th Foundation Day of the TS. The programme was organized by the Indian Section, TS, on 17 November 2021.

The Theosophical Society currently has three objectives that have the following formulation:

- (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; and
- (iii) To investigate [the] unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man. (HARRIS, 2006, p. 632).

Although not directly mentioned in its objects, the study of Theosophy, from which the name of the Theosophical Society originates, has been encouraged in this environment of freedom of thought. As Blavatsky states: “The [Theosophical] Society has no wisdom of its own to support or teach” (BLAVATSKY, 1868, p. 57). This means that the Theosophical Society, according to Blavatsky, is not the possessor or the only bearer of Theosophy, since the sources of “Theosophy”, which she considers synonymous with “Divine Wisdom” (BLAVATSKY, 1978, p. 328), already millennia existed before the foundation of this Society. And the author coherently concludes: “It [the Theosophical Society] is merely the channel through which more or less of truth, found in the accumulated utterances of humanity’s great teachers, is poured out into the world” (BLAVATSKY, 1868, p. 57).

It is opportune to consider something from the historical context and thought at the time of the founding of the Theosophical Society. In the nineteenth century, there seemed to be a strong influence of Empiricism, especially the Positivism of Auguste Comte (1798–1857), which was against metaphysics and considers that “[...] the highest or only form of knowledge is the description of sensory phenomena” (BLACKBURN, 2016, p. 370). Probably, the importance given to psychic powers and spiritualistic phenomena, at this time, sought to offer an answer to this preponderant Positivism through observable experiences and verifications to find laws of Nature, which contributed to, then, expressing a need for approximation between religion and science, as presented in the aforementioned ideal of Scientific Religion. The concern with the verifiability of the possible existence of the immortal soul or spirit, as the case may be, is part of the beginnings of the Theosophical Society. However, such research, as in any science,

depends on impartiality and freedom of thought in order to be carried out under favourable conditions.

It was from the interest in psychic powers – which the *Yoga-Sûtra* calls *siddhis* – or their relationship with paranormal phenomena, as they are called today by modern parapsychology, that two main founders of the Theosophical Society, Helena Blavatsky, who was endowed with certain psychic powers, and Col. Olcott met on the Eddy farm on October 14, 1874, in Chittenden, Vermont, United States (CRANSTON, 1994, p. xiv). There were taking place innumerable spiritualist phenomena that attracted the attention of several newspapers, as there was a great public interest in the subject. Col. Olcott, who was also a journalist, had been sent by *The Daily Graphic* of New York. His meeting with Blavatsky – this meeting that gave rise to the Theosophical Society – was narrated by the writer Arthur Conan Doyle in the work *History of Spiritualism* (DOYLE, 1999, pp. 218, 223).

Blavatsky begins her general definition of “Spiritualism” as “[...] the belief in the constant communication of the living with the dead” (BLAVATSKY, 1978, p. 307). It is speculated that one of the probable causes of the expansion of Spiritualism at that time that followed the Civil War in the United States was the desire of many families to communicate with their loved ones lost in battle.

In this context of nineteenth-century materialism, the Chohan, one of the highest Mahatmas, mentioned: “It is time that Theosophy should enter the arena” (BARKER, 1993, p. 478). Theosophy is the wisdom of the Mahatmas and the great inspiration of the founders.

The word “Mahatma”, in Sanskrit *Mahâtman*, literally meaning “Great spirit, [...] great soul [...]” (MACDONELL, 1954, pp. 220-221), can be translated, by Western similarity, as “Perfect Man”, to use the biblical ideal proposed by St. Paul (Eph 4:13). Henceforth, the word “Mahatma” is considered with this specific sense used by Blavatsky of a human being who reached Liberation and completed the human cycle of “[...] their spiritual evolution” (BLAVATSKY, 1978, p. 201). Blavatsky often seemed to prefer to call the Mahatmas simply “Masters”, but such a simplification could be confusing with the common usage of the word. Perhaps one can speculate why the foundation of the Theosophical Society, in order to better create this

way in the world for the work of the Mahatmas, should start in the West and, later, to be able to create a bridge with the East.

The Theosophical Society was not founded by chance. Blavatsky considered his meeting with Olcott on the Eddy farm to be no accident, but the Mahatmas had an intention to create a pathway in world for the Their work. As found in one of Their letters: “We sent her [Blavatsky] to America, brought them together [with Olcott] – and the trial began” (BARKER, 1993, p. 125). As if carrying out orders from the Mahatmas, Blavatsky reports:

I was sent to America on purpose and sent to the Eddys. There I found Olcott in love with spirits [...] I was ordered to let him know that spiritual phenomena without the philosophy of Occultism were dangerous and misleading. I proved to him that whatever mediums could do through [so-called] spirits, others could do at will without any spirits at all; that bells and thought reading, raps and physical phenomena could be achieved by anyone who had a faculty [...]; and I had that faculty ever since I was four years old, as all my family know. (BLAVATSKY *apud* CRANSTON, 1994, p. 122).

Perhaps it is opportune to consider Blavatsky’s recognition of Spiritualism, in this common point of her combat against materialism, since she “[...] applauded the scientific investigations of spiritualism [...]” (CRANSTON, 1994, p. 120). Furthermore, it can be considered that that meeting between Blavatsky and Olcott was due to the spiritualist phenomena reported on the Eddy farm. Blavatsky’s earlier attempt to found a Society to study Spiritualist phenomena, in 1871, in Cairo, Egypt, indicates that she perhaps considered Spiritualism as a kind of first step, when people did not yet know something wider than the world. of the dead, also called the astral plane. Thus, out of gratitude and compassion, she submitted to sacrifice “[...] even [...] to be regarded for a time as a helpless medium” (CRANSTON, 1994, p. 106), but she explained: “[...] it does me no harm - for I will soon show them the difference between a passive medium and an active doer” (CRANSTON, 1994, p. 106). Blavatsky saw problems or even dangers in the medium or characteristic faculty of the medium, particularly when passive. She defines the medium as: “[...] the passive instrument of foreign influences [...]” (BLAVATSKY, 1982, v. 2, p. 588) exposed to the influence of any entity (of the world or plane) that

is in the vicinity. It is usually unconscious; he doesn't know what is done through his organism or who does it; he does not remember anything upon awakening from his kind of sleep. So, mediumship practised in these days is an undesirable gift (*Ibidem*, v. 1, p. 488)

Blavatsky was concerned about these sessions of spiritualist phenomena, because “[...] they are too dangerous and I am not practised and strong enough to control the wicked spooks that may approach my friends during such sittings” (BLAVATSKY *apud* CRANSTON, 1994, p. 106). Therefore, she did not encourage the general development of mediumship, but preferred to indicate meditation and mastery of the mind, the predominant practice of Rāja-Yoga, aiming at liberation from suffering and conquest of Self-knowledge.

Patañjali wrote, approximately in the 2nd century BC, the *Yoga-Sūtra* (YS), the great treatise on Rāja-Yoga, with the intention of freeing the human being from suffering. It is important to emphasize that not only Patañjali (PATAÑJALI, 1996, II: 3-9, p. 111-126), but many ancient sages converge or agree in the diagnosis that ignorance is the cause of evil or suffering. Like Patañjali, it can be mentioned, for example, that Buddha (OLCOTT, 2006, p. 68-69), Śankara (ŚANKARĀCĀRYA, 1973, 171, p. 69) and Kṛṣṇa (BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ, 2005, IV: 42, p. 55) using generally the same Sanskrit term “*avidyā*”, usually translated “ignorance”, to designate the cause of evil or suffering.

Similarly, the following passage is attributed to Christ in the Bible: “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John VIII: 32) It is important to emphasize that when so many ancient Sages and Masters of Wisdom were agreeing in one essential point of comparative study of religion and philosophy then this point shows itself as an expression of Theosophy or the Ageless Wisdom. This also means that only wisdom can definitively free the human being from suffering.

It is necessary to emphasize that the seeming separation between the human soul (*jīvātmā*) and the Super-soul (*Paramātmā*) is only subjective. Patañjali points out that the cause of sorrow or evil is *avidyā* (YS, II: 4), usually translated as ignorance, not exactly the lack of intellectual knowledge or erudition, otherwise it could not generate effects or sufferings that could affect even the learned or the wise (YS, II: 9), but rather the lack of spiritual wisdom caused by a kind of cognitive confusion between opposites, as Patañjali states: “*Avidyā* is

taking the non-eternal, impure, evil and non-*Ātman* to be eternal, pure, good, and *Ātman* respectively” (PATAÑJALI *apud* TAIMNI, 2010, II: 5, p. 140).

Perhaps, it is only through the experience of death, for example, that the most people will be able to discriminate between the eternal and the non-eternal, spirit and matter, which seem to be the first step on the path of Discrimination. Or to be simpler, as Mabel Collins put it: “The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour has no limit” (COLLINS, 2000, p. 161).

Therefore, Self-knowledge is the purpose of life, as Patañjali considers, as well as the development of the powers that are latent in consciousness and matter of the bodies in which consciousness coats itself, when he states: “The purpose of the coming together of the *Purusa* [spirit] and *Prakṛti* [nature or matter] is gaining by the *Purusa* of the awareness of his true nature and the unfoldment of powers inherent in him and *Prakṛti*” (PATAÑJALI *apud* TAIMNI, 2010, II: 23, p. 191).

Perhaps because Yoga is a predominantly practical science, Patañjali does not seem to have bothered to present, in the *Yoga-Sūtra*, the origin of the first *kleśa*, which is ignorance (*avidyā*) or “lack of awareness of Reality” (PATAÑJALI *apud* TAIMNI, 2010, II: 3, p. 130). Blavatsky also practically, and from a more individual point of view, defines *avidyā* as “Ignorance which proceeds from, and is produced by the illusion of the senses or *viparyaya* [misjudgment, false concept]” (BLAVATSKY, 1978, p. 45). Taimni, from a more cosmogenic point of view, considers it important to comment that ignorance (*avidyā*) is “[...] this fundamental lack of knowledge of its Real nature [of the human being], which begins with the evolutionary cycle, is brought about by the power of *māyā* [illusion], and ends with the attainment of Liberation in *kaivalya*” (TAIMNI, 2010, p. 141). This power of *māyā* (illusion) is related to the process of manifestation as considered in Vedānta. Blavatsky states that *māyā* (illusion) is “[...] the cosmic power which renders phenomenal existence and the perceptions thereof possible” (BLAVATSKY, 1978, p. 211). Taimni emphasizes: “This deprivation of knowledge of his true nature [*avidyā*], which involves it [*the purusa*] in the evolutionary cycle is brought about by a transcendent power inherent in the Ultimate Reality which is called *māyā*, or the Great Illusion.” (TAIMNI, 2010, p. 140). The Vedānta philosophy considers that “The word *māyā* was used in the Rg-Veda to denote a kind of magic power” (ŚANKARĀCĀRYA, 1987, p. 51).



Patañjali considers ignorance (*avidyā*), the first affliction (*kleśa*), as the cause of evil or suffering, and selfishness (*asmitā*) as another affliction (*kleśa*): second in the list of afflictions that begin with ignorance. On the other hand, the question naturally arises as to how long it would take from ignorance (*avidyā*) to arise “selfishness” or a sense of selfishness (*asmitā*), or even how this happens. Taimni states that both “are simultaneous” (TAIMNI, 2010, p. 143) because “[...]the moment the veil of *Avidyā* [ignorance] falls on consciousness its identification with its vehicles results immediately, though philosophically *Avidyā* [ignorance] must precede *Asmitā* [“I-am-ness”, egoism]” (TAIMNI, 2010, p. 143). Therefore, *avidyā* (ignorance) is considered by Patañjali to be the first *kleśa*, while *asmitā* (“selfhood”) is the second.

Another alternative would be to attribute the cause of evil or suffering directly to egoism (*asmitā*) or self-centeredness, as Ksemarāja, sage of monism of the Shaivism school of Kashmir, which has similarities to the monism of Advaita Vedānta, in his *Pratyabijñā Hṛdayam*, seems to emphasize: “The essential nature of bondage in the unreal world of manifestation is being infatuated with one’s own limited individual power owing to lack of awareness of that Reality which is the source of all power”\* (KSEMARĀJA, [10—] *apud* TAIMNI, 2004, p. 40).

Perhaps, Indian philosophy with its harmonized six philosophical systems or *darsanas* represents the deepest manifestation in this search for awareness of that omnipresent Ultimate Reality. India is an example to the world of tolerance and perception of complementariness of these six different points of view of the Ultimate Reality as follows: the logic approach of Nyāya, the atomistic approach of Vaiśeṣika, the dualistic approach of Sāṃkhya, the experimental approach of Yoga, the ritualistic approach of Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā and the monistic approach of Vedānta. The richness of theosophical literature and the harmony of theosophical work also require a holistic view or perception of complementarity in its three-generation message: the manifestation of psychic powers or *siddhis* in its first generation, the description of them in the second, and their overcoming in the third, seeking only Self-knowledge or *Ātma-Vidyā*.

\*“[...] *tad aparījñāne svāuktibhir vyāmohitatā samsāritvam*” (KSEMARĀJA, [10—] *apud* TAIMNI, 1986, p. 40).

Perhaps, is the importance of this Indian example to the world of tolerance and perception of complementariness of philosophies and religions which can show the essence of Theosophy and is strategically perceived in the Chohan’s letter: “Oh, for the noble and unselfish man to help us *effectually* in India in that divine task [the cause of Brotherhood of Humanity]. All our knowledge past and present would not be sufficient to repay him...” (BARKER, 1993, p. 480). Therefore, the founders chose India to establish their International Headquarters to radiate Theosophy or *Brahma-Vidyā* to the world.

Furthermore, it is opportune to take as a working hypothesis Blavatsky’s idea about Wisdom-Religion or Theosophy as a perception of underlying unity or complementariness of all religions, when she declares the central intention of her work *Isis Unveiled* by stating:

What we desire to prove is, that underlying every ancient popular religion was the same ancient wisdom-doctrine, one and identical, professed and practiced by the initiates of every country, who alone were aware of its existence and importance (BLAVATSKY, 1982, v. 2, p. 99).

*The Theosophical Encyclopaedia*, based on this Blavatsky’s hypothesis, mentions at least three connotations for the word Theosophia, which could be called a “theosophical hypothesis” that tries, didactically, to organize Blavatsky’s hypothesis, namely: “Modern Theosophy [...], Traditional Theosophy [...], Primordial Theosophy” (HARRIS, 2006, p. 636). It is important to mention that, perhaps with the intention of demonstrating her hypothesis or already taking it for granted, Blavatsky and some of her followers often used the word “Theosophy” without the technical concerns of defining these three connotations, because as it was considered, “The term ‘theosophy’ is often used in the writings of Modern Theosophy with intentional ambiguity among those three senses” (HARRIS, 2006, p. 636).

The third connotation of theosophy is the “primordial theosophy”, eternal and universal, which is that “Wisdom-Religion”, the very essence of the aforementioned hypothesis of Blavatsky: “[...] [it] is something whose historical development cannot be traced and which can be known only by gnosis or through its reflection in forms of traditional theosophy” (HARRIS, 2006, p. 640).

One can also point to two other connotations, according to

another classification criterion, namely, the relationship of Theosophy with truth (BLAVATSKY, 1978, v. 1, p. 48; BURNIER, 1985, p. 24). First, it is important to emphasize Blavatsky's statement that "[...] Theosophy is not a religion, but a philosophy at once religious and scientific [...]" (BLAVATSKY, 1990, v. 8, p. 268). Theosophy is more characterized by a search for truth through direct experience. This truth can be, pedagogically, divided into two classically recognized aspects (LINDEMANN; OLIVEIRA, 2011, p. 34-35): (i) absolute truth (*Pâramârhika Satya*) or "primary Theosophy"; and (ii) relative truth (*Vyâvahârîka Satya*) or "secondary Theosophy". According to Blavatsky, in its aspect of absolute truth or primary or primordial Theosophy, it is a universal and experiential wisdom: "[...] true Occultism or Theosophy is the 'Great Renunciation of the self', unconditionally and absolutely, in thought as in action – it is Altruism [...]" (BLAVATSKY, 1987, p. 43-44). And she adds: "Theosophy is synonymous with Eternal Truth" (BLAVATSKY, 1968, p. 304), Divine, Absolute, *Pâramârhika Satya* or *Brahma-Vidyâ*, which are their much older equivalents in Eastern philosophy (BLAVATSKY, 1968 pp. 1-2).

Due to its pale image, reflected in the sphere of limited human thought, the word "Theosophy" acquired a later meaning, called "Secondary Theosophy". This Secondary Theosophy, which it would be preferable to call "Theosophical Thought" or "Esoteric Philosophy", comprises a series of teachings, the practice of which logically leads to Primary Theosophy. The definition of this Theosophical Thought, attributed to Annie Besant, presents it as being constituted "[...] of that body of truth that forms the basis of all religions and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any one" (LINDEMANN; OLIVEIRA, 2011, p. 35). The work *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, which is about letters compiled by Jinarajadasa (1973), presents a kind of formula to find the "Primary Theosophy" or Esoteric Wisdom common to all religions from "Secondary Theosophy" or Theosophical Thought:

"Once unfettered and delivered from their dead-weight of dogmatic interpretations, personal names, anthropomorphic conceptions and salaried priests, the fundamental doctrines of all religions will be proved identical in their esoteric meaning"  
(JINARAJADASA, 1973, v. 1, p. 5).

Regarding the word "esoteric", the prefix "eso", of Greek origin, means "inside, internal" (HOUAISS; VILLAR, 2001, p. 1220). It is, therefore, in its esoteric or internal meaning that different religions are more likely to have something in common, as their external, exoteric and ritualistic aspect often highlights the apparent differences that arise from their origins in different times, places, cultures etc.

In this sense, it is perhaps possible to summarize the project of conciliation between Primary Theosophy or absolute truth, and Secondary Theosophy or relative truth, also known as Theosophical Thought, as a consistent interpretation of the second objective of the Theosophical Society: Theosophy is that Esoteric Wisdom common to all religions, which is in accordance with the logic of philosophy, and the facts and Laws of Nature studied by science.

There is a classical progressive practice or method to assimilate wisdom mentioned in the *Bṛhadâraṇyaka Upanisad*: "Verily, by the seeing, of, by the hearing of, by the thinking of, by the understanding of the Self, all this is known" (BRHADÂRANYAKA UPANISAD, II.iv.5 *apud* RADHAKRISHNAN, 1990, p. 197). This classical progressive practice is usually summarized in three steps or stages, namely: *śravaṇa* (hearing), *manana* (reflecting), and *nididhyâsana* (meditating) (RADHAKRISHNAN, 1990, p. 197). The first step in gaining this knowledge that leads to Liberation, as Tiguait explains, is called *śaravāna*, which means hearing the truth through the saints and persons of authority or studying the scriptures. The second step, *manana*, means reflecting or pondering for oneself that one has heard, learned, or read. The third, called *nididhyâsana*, means meditating or concentrating and contemplating the soul, confirming that knowledge, "[...] and practice that truth in his life [...]" (TIGUNAIT, 1983, pp. 97-98). Dasgupta considers that, in this way, based on the *Upanisads*, this philosophical perspective "[...] includes all the Yoga processes of concentration, try to realize the truth as one" (DASGUPTA, 1922, p. 490). In fact, the Classic Indian Philosophy course at the University of Calicut considers that the "[...] realization of supreme happiness is the end, and *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyâsana* are the means – in almost all Schools of Indian Philosophy" (PRABHAKARAN, 2011, p. 12).

A summary of Secondary Theosophy or Theosophical Thought, which is that only fragment of Theosophy that can be communicated

in words, is presented by Mabel Collins, inspired by a Mahatma in *The Idyll of the White Lotus*:

“There are three truths which are absolute, and which cannot be lost, but yet may remain silent for lack of speech.

[I] The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour has no limit.

[II] The principle which gives life dwells in us and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen, or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

[III] Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

These truths, which are as great as is life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man. Feed the hungry with them.” (COLLINS, 2000, pp. 161- 162).

Bishop C.W. Leadbeater, starting from these three inspired truths, dared to make what could be considered the ultimate synthesis of Theosophy in just one line as follows: “God is good, man is immortal, and whatsoever he sows, that shall he also reap” (LEADBEATER, 2019a, p. 256).

I think it is possible to experience a little of what the founders experienced when entering a city that does not yet have theosophical activity, to try to start such activity or to found a group for theosophical studies. To give a lecture is to begin the process of *svavana* (hearing) in our environment. That’s what Chohan requested: “[...] we have to preach and popularise a knowledge of theosophy” (BARKER, 1993, p. 477). As stated by Dr. Taimni in his magnificent book *Principles of Theosophical Work* (1991): “The formation and growth of a new lodge is really like the planting of a tree” (TAIMNI, 1991, p. 84). It takes at least nine lectures, one each month, to allow time for roots to grow and bonds between people to be formed. But we no longer need to cross India in ox carts, as was the challenge of the founders. Today, we have the support of the internet to gratefully honour our founders by doing what they did in an inspired way: alleviating humanity’s suffering by bringing wisdom.

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## NEWS AND NOTES

### Bombay

Bro Arni Narendran, Hon Treasurer of Blavatsky Lodge, was a special Christmas invitee at the Theosophical Society (Adyar) Moscow Lodge. He delivered a talk on 'Demystifying Patanjali Yoga Sutra'. The meeting was attended by about 60 attendees on a Christmas Day from Belarus, Ukraine, Brazil, Philippines, United Kingdom India, and Russia who interacted with an array of Q and A. The talk was translated in Russian by Bro Svetoslav Lipsky. Sr. Isis Resende from Brazil was a co-host of the event. Bro Alexey Bas Putin, President of the Lodge, welcomed the gathering and also complimented Dr. Rajam Pillai, member of Blavatsky Lodge, for publication of the 'Synergy' magazine'.

Bro. Arni Narendran, conducted 'Guided Meditation' for planetary Healing at the 146th International Theosophical Convention of Adyar, Chennai, which was held virtually.

### Annual Conference:

The 90th Annual Session of Bombay Theosophical Federation was held on 22-23 October 2021. The opening session conducted by Bro. Taral Munshi had a novelty of his touch with 'Kala ki Udaan Har Disha'. There were special Annual Session Invitation flyers and the Banner prepared by Bro. Taral in honour of the Chief Guest Ms Sonal Murali. With his warm introductory words the curtain was raised with display of inspiring pictures for Bhajan 'Tera Mangal, Mera Mangal, Sabka Mangal'. The Universal Prayer was recited by Blavatsky Lodge's President Sis. Kashmira Khambatta.

Federation's President Bro. Vinayak Pandya said in the opening session 'We are passing through the toughest time of Pandemic. However, Pandemic has inspired us to adept to change and here we are meeting virtually for the second time for our Annual Session. BTF has reached out to 52 College / University Libraries with subscription of five Years for 'The Theosophist' sponsored by Bro. Ram Kalra'. Then, Bro. Pandya welcomed International, National & Federation dignitaries who had virtually joined as delegates in the Annual Session.

BTF Secretary Sis. Mahazaver Dalal conveyed the Greetings of Indian Section President Shri Pradeep Gohil, International Vice-President Dr. Deepa Padhi, International Lecturers Bro. C. A. Shinde and Shri Shikhar Agnihotri, Ex-General Secretary of the Indian Section Bro. S. Sundaram, National Lecturer Shri U. S. Pandey, Federation

Presidents / Secretaries, TOS Secretary Sis. Parinaz Gandhi and Bro. Fali Engineer of TS Lodge Huston, USA.

Sis. Dr. Rajam Pillai was invited to share her Theosophical Journey. During her active participation at Mani Bhavan she learnt about Dr. Annie Besant, which inspired her to come to Blavatsky Lodge. With her zeal to spread Theosophy, her 'Synergy' publications containing articles on Theosophical & Spiritual topics are sent from Japan to USA. A special Theosophical Calendar created by International Lecturer Shri Shikhar Agnihotri of Pragya CS Studio was also printed and distributed. She even distributed Volumes of *Dhammapada* compiled by Shri H. K. Sharan to University, some colleges and other Public Libraries.

Sis. Archana Munshi introducing the Chief Guest Ms Sonal Murali said that she, a Postgraduate in English with a Gold Medal, joined the Theosophical Society while in college. She came to Adyar as a young volunteer and served for many years working closely with Radhaji for theosophical publications. She was Secretary of 'New Life for India Movement' and Editor of its magazine, 'Wake Up India'. While at Adyar, she founded the Chapter of 'Beauty without Cruelty – Chennai'. Ms. Sonal is a passionate educator interested in exploring a compassionate way of living. She worked for Krishnamurti's school for a decade. A gold medalist for Creative Methodology in teaching learning process, returned to Adyar to set up a theosophical school - Adyar Theosophical Academy as the Director under the guidance of Bro Vic Hao Chin, Jr. of Philippines. As a National Lecturer she has given talks on Triveni Tuesday Meets also.

Ms Sonal Murali had prepared special Power Points for her both the talks for the Annual Session. Her Opening Day Presentation was on '*Learning and Growing through transformative Education*'. Quoting the great Educationists, she conveyed that students absorb from Nature and experience sense of wonder. They learn through doing things. What they need is a Holistic approach, not fragmentation. What they need is Approval and not disapproval. Make them realize, e.g., how food comes to table. Make them realize that they are part of one earth and part of one community starting from home, school to community. Students & Teachers are co-learners. Their relationship is unique. Environment is the Teacher. Students are capable of extra-ordinary things. Entering a classroom the child becomes aware of the world around him. He learns to walk together and also starts realizing what he wants to be. Sense of accomplishment is important for him. Today a lot is taught but little is understood. They

should be encouraged to make experiments, have experiences, and keen observations. Learning, sharing, and caring are important for the development of child.

Ms Sonal Murli sharing Teachings at ATA – Adyar Theosophist said that it is a magical experience with inspiring gratitude from within and making kindness visible. She showed slides of the project they had for little children on '*Where I would like to be as a drop of water*'. Their caring, gratifying observations were from their hearts. The song '*The Way I see Water*' they sang had a beautiful message to appreciate and care for water.

While answering to one of the questions about – 'How to handle unmanageable child?' she said, that she would try to understand home background and would start with counselling Parents and members of the Family. Bro Vic Hao Chin, Jr. sharing his experience of a student of his Golden Link College narrated how he gave an opportunity to a student who was to be expelled from school and how the student responded to his firm but positive expectations.

Bro. C. A Shinde added that Teacher's role is very important. He must guide and help the children to develop good qualities like honesty, appreciation of beauty etc.

Bro. Navin Kumar proposed Vote of Thanks and said that as per HPB 'All are Your Teachers & Life is a School'. The programme on the first day ended with his recitation of a Sanskrit Prayer.

The programme on the second day started with a devotional song rendered by Bro. Taral Munshi with photos of Religious symbols leading to TS Symbol to convey oneness of One Reality. The Universal Prayer was recited by the Lodge's President Sis. Kashmira Khambatta.

Dr. Ajay Hora was requested to share his '*Theosophical Journey*'. He shared his nostalgic memory of 70 years of Theosophical Journey.

'The Golden Glow – TOS in Mumbai' a video created with great difficulty under Pandemic was an inspiring surprise for all. Sis. Thrity Dalal, President of TOS, Mumbai, said that this presentation honours 50 Golden Years of Humanitarian Service of TOS Mumbai Region. The video was filmed at Blavatsky Lodge tracing the History of TOS in Mumbai with photos of founding pillars Rusi & Homai Toddywalla and greetings of Sis. Freny Toddywalla, President Sis. Thrity Dalal, Secretary Sis. Parinaz Gandhi, Senior Members Bro.

Umesh Kashikar, Bro. Parvez Gandhi, Sis. Meherangiz Baria and many more. On youth front Sis. Rashna Jehani, Farhad Dalal and quite a few young members & volunteers shared their experiences. Video also covered TOS Educational & Service projects and Colloquiums held at Deolali. Sis. Parinaz Gandhi, Secretary, added that on-line Education of students was sponsored even under Pandemic. She urged to support TOS financially and with helping hands by becoming Patron, Life or Ordinary Members.

Sis. Meherangiz Baria lucidly introduced the Chief Guest Ms. Sonal Murali whose talk with PPT was on “*Education for Life: A Theosophical perspective*”. Explaining what Education is, she said that “*the Knowledge of the World is not Education; the Knowledge which liberates is Education.*” As J. Krishnamurti says, “*Education is to create human beings, who are integrated and free to flower in Love & Goodness*”. According to Annie Besant, “*the child is an immortal individual, who needs to be understood and tenderly helped to develop insight and intuition. A child has a great potential. He has to be encouraged to reflect on things and even to write down to become aware of his thoughts and feelings. A child has to be given a larger picture of time and should be prepared to cross the bridges by his own effort, he should enjoy learning. A Teacher / Parents are custodians of culture and not owners. They are the giver of culture to child.*”

Mindfulness is to be developed with art of Looking, Listening & Learning. As Lord Buddha says Awareness has to be developed and as Aurobindo says Body, Mind & Soul should be united. Yoga helps in this process. A child should be related to environment in holistic way, which will help him to take care of all creations and he will be elevated to higher feelings from within.

Unconditional mind gives freedom and frees one from fear. To develop character with right values & behaviour and to nourish higher mind of child is most needed. Ms. Sonal Murali ended her presentation with a video of three girls rendering a song with a message of caring, gratitude and invoicing Bliss.

The talk was followed by Q & A in which Ms. Sonal gave guidelines regarding the problems related to ‘Labeled Child’, ‘Siblings’ problems’ and ‘Hyperactive Child’. Bro Vic Hao Chin, Jr. added, that what is relevant to one child may not be relevant for another child. Add fun & happiness in the life of child. Creativity unfolds and develops their potentials. Love and appreciation they need, but firmness is important. Then, Bro. Navin Kumar read out from Khalil

Gibran’s book ‘*Prophet*’ about children and the role of parents.

BTF President Bro. Vinayak Pandya greatly appreciated the discourse and said it was full of Theosophical Values. Bro. Arni Narendran profusely thanked the Chief Guest Ms. Sonal Murali and the distinguished guest Bro Vic Hao Chin, Jr. for their insight into Education for Life. He wished that ATA is opened in Mumbai also. And then, the Annual Session came to a close with recitation of the Universal Prayer.

### **Foundation Day at Blavatsky Lodge**

Brethren had gathered in the Green Room for Hybrid physical-cum-virtual meeting on 17 November 2021. It was heartening to have the meeting after about two years, The Prayers of All Religions were recited by the members at Blavatsky Lodge. Lodge’s President Sis. Kashmiri Khambatta welcomed all and said that the Foundation of the TS was according to the Divine Plan when materialism was at its peak in the world. Bro. Arni Narendran paid tributes to Light Bringers Madam H. P. Blavatsky and Col. H. S. Olcott. He also remembered co-founder William Q. Judge. Dr. Rajam Pillai shared a poem about Foundation Roots of Tree with Divine Energy and it being nurtured by sublime Mother earth. Similarly there should be gratitude for our Founders. Sis. Aban Patel quoted HPB, ‘*First you become a student before teaching*’. and read her Golden Stairs. Sis. Meherangiz Baria said that the Masters had given special responsibility to HPB & HSO to reveal Truth to humanity. Sis. Mahazaver Dalal paid homage to endurance and dedication of HPB & HSO for doing service assigned to them by the Masters for the good and welfare of humanity. Sis. Archana & Bro. Taral Munshi from Thane and Sis. Aban Amroliwalla from Canada were happy to be there to pay their homage. Bro. Navin Kumar said that the Masters had told the Founders to shift to India to present and convey wisdom hidden in Ancient Religions of India to the West in English. Bro. Arni Narendran with Meditation invoked the Energy and Blessings of the Great Ones and the Founders. The meeting ended with the recitation of a Sanskrit Prayer by Bro. Navin Kumar.

### **Gujarat**

Shri Harjivan Lodge of Village Kadoli, Taluka- Himatnagar, Dist, Sabarkantaha has started a ‘*Satsang*’ programme on every Thursday with the help of women folk living there. Besides, the members have worked out a plan for the distribution of butter milk on every Monday. They are also thinking to provide medical facilities, and also to organize workshop and seminar for the members of the Lodge.

Recently, about 35 new members have joined the Lodge and now the total number of the members is 50.

### **U.P. & Uttarakhand**

Bro. U.S. Pandey delivered a talk on 'The Golden Stairs' in the meeting held under the auspices of Dharma Lodge, Lucknow, on 13 January. Sis. Vasumati Agnihotri spoke on 'Emotions' on 19 January. Bro. B.K. Pandey's two talks were on 'Future Progress of Humanity' and 'Emanation and Evolution of Man on Earth' which were held on 5 and 26 January respectively. All the aforementioned talks were held in the on-line meetings of the Lodge.

Nirvan Lodge, Agra held a physical meeting on 06 January in which a talk was delivered on 'Convention Diary' by Bro. Gyanesh Kumar Chaturvedi. In the three on-line meetings of the Lodge held on 13, 20 and 27 January, talks were delivered on the topics 'Life and work of HPB', 'Dharm and Secularism' and 'Different modes of consciousness' by Sis. Pratibha Sharma, Bro. Devendra Bajpai and Bro. Harish Sharma respectively.

Pragya Lodge, Lucknow, organized the following two talks in its on-line meetings in the January- Bro. R. Mathurnath (of Adyar) delivered a talk on 16 January on the topic 'The Astaral Body'. The other talk was given by Sis. Angels Torra Buron (of T.S. Spain) who spoke on 'Theosophy: Revolution or Evolution' and it was held on 23 January. Besides, an on-line devotional meeting was organized by the Lodge on 30 January.

The on-line meetings of Sarvahitkari Lodge, Gorakhpur were held on 09, 23 and 30 January. Talks in these meetings were delivered on the topics 'Significance of Winter Solstice- Christmas, New Year's Day and Makar Sankranti', 'Self-Purification', and 'Service to Humanity'. The speakers were Bro. U. S. Pandey, Bro. S. S. Gautam and Bro. L. S. Shukla respectively. Besides, the following two short talks were organized by the Lodge in the on-line meeting held on 16 January. Bro. Bipin Kumar spoke on 'Makar Sankranti and Astrology' and the subject of Bro. S.B.R. Mishra's talk was 'Swami Vivekananda and Theosophy'.

A short presentation was made on the topic 'Rhythm of Life' by Sis. Mridula Naik and Shrestha Panda in the on-line meeting of Prayas Lodge, Ghaziabad, held on 09 January. During other meetings, study of the book "*Commentaries on Living*" by J. Krishnamurti was conducted when its chapters 6 and 7 were covered on 02 January by

Sis. Mridula Naik; Ch. 8 and 9 on 16 January by Sis. Archana Munshi; Ch.10 and 11 on 23 January and also Ch.12 &13 on 30 January by Sis. Kritika Goel.

Sis. Suvralina Mohanty conducted on-line study class for children and youth. The subjects covered by her on every Sunday in January 2022 were 'Observation and Self-Review' and 'Planning for a new beginning in new year.'

NOIDA Lodge, held on-line meetings on 02 and 16 January in which study of the the book "*The Voice of the Silence*" was continued by Sis. Lalita Khatri. Sis. Vibha Saxena had delivered a talk on 'Centre everywhere: Circumference nowhere' during the Indian Section Convention. She presented a summary of this talk in the on-line meeting of Noida Lodge on 2 January.

Bro. S.K. Pandey delivered a talk on 'Unity of consciousness and its mechanism' and Bro. Shivbaran Singh spoke on '*Atm-Anusandhan*' in the on-line meetings of Chohan Lodge, Kanpur, held on 2 and 9 January respectively. Besides, Bro. S.S. Gautam continued group study of the book *A Study in Consciousness* in the meetings of the Lodge held on 16, 23 and 30 January.

Anand Lodge, Allahabad, held meetings through WhatsApp on every Sunday in the month of January and members listened to these pre-recorded talks on the topics 'Human Regeneration', 'Science and Occultism', 'The Golden Stairs', 'Light on the Path-some verses' and 'Essence of The Bhagavad Gita'. Matters for talks were recorded by Sis. Ranjana Srivastava, Bro. Sudeep Mishra, Sis. Sushma Srivastava, Sis. Ranjana Srivastava and Bro. Navin Kumar respectively.

U.P. and UK Federation Programme: The Federation has planned a series of on-line talks on "Basics of Theosophy". Second talk in this series was delivered on the topic 'Reincarnation' by Bro. S. K. Pandey on 09 January. It was followed by close interaction with the participants.

Two short talks were delivered on "Life and teachings of Krishna" in an on-line programme organized by an on-line group 'Satsang' activated by Shri Vijay Pratap Singh of Gorakhpur in his personal capacity. These were held on 15 and 16 January 2022. Besides, a talk on "Self Purification" was delivered by him with power point presentation in an on-line meeting organized by Sarvhitkari Lodge, Gorakhpur, on 23 January 2022.

**Contribution in other Federations:** On invitation by Shankar Lodge, Delhi, Sis. Vasumati Agnihotri delivered a talk on the topic ‘Asthavakra Gita’. It was held on 15 January 2022.

Sis. Suvralina Mohanty delivered a talk on the topic “Significance of Jagannath Dham” on 18 January. She spoke in English and Sis. Kritika Goel summarized the content of this talk in Hindi. This was held in a joint programme of three Lodges- Jyoti Lodge (of Bombay Federation) and Rewa and Rohit Lodge (of Gujarat Federation).

**Contribution to the Indian Section work/ Programme:** Bro. S. S. Gautam translated the journal “*The Indian Theosophist*” of January 2022 in Hindi and then it was published by the Indian Section.

**Contribution in the events of other Forums:** Young Indian Theosophists Group: Sis. Suvralina Mohanty conducted study sessions on ‘Reincarnation’ from Ch.7 and 8 of the book “*The Ancient Wisdom*”. Sis. Kritika Goel moderated these study sessions which were held on 09, 16, 23 and 30 January.

**Programmes in villages:** Some members of the Lodge in Gorakhpur organized a session on telling ‘Spiritual Stories’ in village Sarahari on 02 January. Bro. S.B.R. Mishra delivered a talk on ‘Purushottam Ram and Spirituality’ in a village near Bansgaon on 24 January 2022.

### National Lecturer

On invitation by Shankar Lodge, Delhi, Bro. U. S. Pandey delivered a talk on the topic ‘Divine Wisdom and Science’ on 01 January 2022 and Bro. S.K. Pandey delivered a talk on the topic ‘Concept of Absolute’ on 08 January 2022.

Sis. Vibha Saxena conducted study of the book “*The Seven Principles of Man*” by Annie Besant in two sessions on 23 and 30 January. Besides, she presented the summary in English of the talk delivered by Dr. Leela Joshi on 25 January on the theme ‘Importance of Satsanga and Bhakti in Ramcharitmanas’.

Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri conducted study of Mahatma Letter No.11 in two sessions on 21 and 28 January. He delivered a talk on the theme ‘Follow the Homing Signal Within’ organized by Belgium Section of T.S. on 22 January 2022.

### Obituary

Bro. C.V.K. Maithreya (Diploma No. 50851) passed to peace on 17.1.2022. He joined the Theosophical Society in the year 1968 when he was only ten years old. He belonged to a theosophical family, both his parents were members of the TS. Bro. Maithreya was one of the young Theosophists, who visited the British museum, to study and refer to the original Letters received from the Masters of the Wisdom; was a good student of Theosophy and one who studied *The Secret Doctrine* at a young age, when he was in college.

Bro. Maithreya lectured on theosophy in India and abroad and travelled on his own to U.S.A., East and Central Africa, Europe, Israel, Australia, Newzeland and Singapore. He served as President of the Vasanta Youth Lodge and Adyar Lodge. Besides, he was President of the Madras Theosophical Federation for some years. He was an active member of T.O.S.; was an ardent Co-freemason, and an active member of Round Table.

Dr. N. C. Ramanujachary (Diploma No. 44170) passed to peace on 26.1.2022. During his high school education, he was living with his Maternal uncle, Sri. M. Krishnamacharyulu, who was a member of the Theosophical Society. There he had access to the theosophical literature. He joined the Theosophical Society (Vijayawada Lodge) in the year 1958.

NCR was a prolific writer of short stories in Telugu. He was a government officer, in the State Electricity Board of the State of Andhra Pradesh, till the year 1966. He shifted to Bangalore to work for M/ S BEML. But left that lucrative job and came to work at the International HQ of T.S. at Adyar, in 1979. He continued living there and did whatever work was assigned to him till he breathed his last.

Bro. Ramanujachary served the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society as National Lecturer, Director of Studies, and as the Joint General Secretary. He has written some books and articles on theosophy which were published in various journals. He conducted many study camps, workshops and training camps for workers.

Smt. Archana Agarwal (Dip.73749) of Satyamarg Lodge Lucknow passed to peace on 27 January 2022.





**INDIAN SECTION HEADQUARTERS - THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY**

**GURUBAGH ROAD, KAMACHHA, VARANASI - 221 010 (UP)**

(Subject to Varanasi Jurisdiction)

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

Affix photo

Date of Application.....

**Objects of The Theosophical Society**

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

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

**Third** To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

Having considered the three objects of The Theosophical Society, having read the Constitution, Rules & Regulations of the Indian Section and being in sympathy therewith, I hereby apply for admission as a member of the Society, and agree to abide by its Constitution and Rules.

**FORM TO BE FILLED IN BLOCK LETTERS ONLY**

First Name

Middle Name

Last Name

House No

Land Mark

Name of Road

Village/Town

City

Taluka & District

Pin Code State

Mob. No.

Aadhar Number

Email Address

Gender (Tick) Male Female Age Date of Birth

Name of Lodge

Name of Federation

Village/City Tick if Unattached(✓)

Signature of Member → Signature of Guardian →

Date Date

Tick mark one YES if the monthly journal, The Indian Theosophist is required English Yes No Hindi Yes No

Were you ever a member of the Theosophical Society?.....If so, when..... To what Lodge and Federation were you attached?..... Diploma No. ?.....

Name of Lodge Secretary Name of the Federation Secretary

Signature of Lodge Secretary → Signature of Federation Secretary →

Date Date

**(To be filled in at the President's Office of the Indian Section)**

Date of Application Yearly No.

Date Appl. Recd Diploma No.

Serial No. Diploma Date

Signature of President of Indian Section →