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INSIDE Science, Scientists and Scientism
Atlantis in Northern Europe
The Neuroscience of the Creative Brain
The Cosmogogenesis and Modern Cosmology
The Integration of Theosophy with Modern Science

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The Theosophical Society welcomes students or seekers from all walks of life, belonging to any religion or to none and who are in sympathy with its Objects. It was formed to assist in showing to people that Theosophy exists, and 'to ascend towards it by studying and assimilating its eternal verities'. Wisdom is known by a mind that is completely open. Therefore freedom of thought and open enquiry are given special emphasis in the Society. **Theosophy** essentially refers to 'Divine Wisdom', Sacred Knowledge, which is a transcendent state of consciousness. In a secondary sense, Theosophy is an ancient yet distinct stream of enquiry, exploring and interpreting the truths of existence in terms suited to particular ages, e.g. in the teachings of ancient India, ancient China, Platonism, Neoplatonism, and, since 1875, through the contribution of the TS. At the core of Theosophy is the principle of indivisible Unity underlying the diversity of forms.

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Mission Statement of the Theosophical Society

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

From the National President

Stephen McDonald



The second object of the Theosophical Society (TS) is to ‘encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science’. We are neither a religion nor a scientific organization, however, our founders realized that both these fields are areas of concern for seekers of truth. With a platform of freedom of thought, many scientists have felt comfortable joining the TS because of its lack of dogma and sense of open-mindedness. Fulfilling our third object, ‘to investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in the human being’, relies in large part on the ability of science to explore new avenues of thought and to produce tangible descriptions for the phenomena of the world around us.

With this in mind, the September edition of *Theosophy in Australia* has been devoted to articles produced by Australian scientists, both past and present. Some of these pieces have been reprinted in edited form from previous Theosophy-Science Newsletters. I did this because most of you have probably not had the opportunity to

read them before. Not all of the articles I received could be included in this edition and some of them will appear in subsequent issues of the magazine.

Our lead article (the only one not written by an Australian author) is by our International President, Tim Boyd. Tim provides a perspective on bridging the division between science and consciousness. He discusses what he calls ‘scientism’, which he describes as a mindset adopted by many scientists based on a belief that the spiritual side of life is not measurable and cannot be rationally explored, and should therefore be ignored.

Fabled Atlantis has captivated the minds and psyche of humans since the time of Plato and the tales that arose in the literature of Renaissance writers, such as Francis Bacon and Thomas Moore. The stories that emerged from these tales gave rise to pseudoscientific speculations about a lost civilization. Madame Blavatsky gave great credence to Atlantis as a progenitor to later civilizations, but many members have relegated the

stories to mythology, rather than fact. Recent evidence, however, may at least support the ideas of a large area of lost land in Northern Europe. Victor Gostin provides an update on some of that evidence in this issue.

Richard Silberstein's article about the nature of creativity and consciousness is in line with our Third Object. Transcribed from a talk he gave at a national convention, his examination of the evidence of the nature of the creative brain and its relationship with consciousness opens a fresh view on parapsychology, a field of science that has long been dismissed as unorthodox. The methods and instruments for this exploration are now becoming better able to investigate this field and as scientific knowledge advances breakthroughs may be at hand.

Some of the basic concepts of the universe expounded by H.P. Blavatsky are taken up by Kevin Davey in his article on cosmogenesis and the modern ideas of cosmology. He looks at a selection of paragraphs from *The Stanzas of Dzyan* and compares them with contemporary scientific findings about the origins and nature of the universe. This is not to say that Kevin takes the concepts in *The Secret Doctrine* literally. He strongly warns against trying to interpret allegory and symbolism as facts. What he does point out is that there is a wisdom within the

text, which may reflect the discoveries made by modern science.

Finally, we return to an article penned by one of our best-known scientists in Australia. Hugh Murdoch, who was a life-long member of the Theosophical Society and served as National Treasurer for many years, wrote about the integration of Theosophy and science in 1955, and its sentiments are still relevant today. His keen observations as a young man, before being awarded his doctorate, were similar to the ideas he suggested later in life. Hugh tries to put into a modern context the concepts about scientific materialism that Blavatsky railed against in the latter part of the 19th century. He sees a nexus between the fundamental tenets of Theosophy, such as the oneness of life and scientific findings of the 20th century; a possible meeting ground on which a rational discourse can be had.

For lovers of art, the Covid crisis has caused another casualty. The Hilma af Klint exhibition at the Art Gallery of NSW had to close shortly after opening. However, if you would like to see af Klint's paintings, here are two excellent documentary links:

https://youtu.be/Qt_kTt_dveE

<https://youtu.be/iQs31HjOeII>

Science, Scientists, and Scientism

Tim Boyd



There is a movement in the world today that promises something special for our future. It embraces the idea that the apparent chasm between Science and Consciousness can be bridged. Since taking on the role of the Theosophical Society's international President, I have done a good deal of travelling and everywhere I go I find people who feel that we are on the cusp of something significant.

There are very few people these days who do not have the sense that something of vast proportions is imminent in the world today—that something great is on its way. This can be a good thing, but, like everything else, it can express itself in two ways. Although many people are expecting something great, when they try to formulate it in their minds the only thing that they have to build their image upon is popular media, or the nightly news. This should be a disturbing thought for us, given the focus of normal news media on wars, violence, and all forms of antisocial behaviours. For people who adopt that

point of view, what is this great thing that we are sensing within us going to look like?

We cannot be too critical of this way of thinking. It is not mere imagination that there are strong crises facing us in the world. It is not untrue that all around the planet we are at war with ourselves. There is an American Indian expression: 'No tree is so foolish as to have its branches fight among themselves.' But as a collective humanity, we are. Statistics tell us that right now sixty-four wars are taking place around the planet, and that 600 different groups are involved in those wars. I do not understand it. With so many different groups in the fray, how does one even know who to shoot at? In addition to wars world-wide, there are deserts spreading where there used to be fertile land. The air, soil, and water are massively polluted. This is not fiction; it is all happening right in front of us.

The year 2008 brought a landmark in human history which will necessarily change the way we live on the planet

for both good and ill. Regardless of educational level, few people were even aware of this remarkable event. In that year for the first time in human history the world's population became pre-dominantly urban—more than fifty percent of the people on earth now live in cities, and that percentage is rapidly increasing. This condition

manner of seeing the world through the eyes of an awakening consciousness. It is something that will enable changes in the way that we behave towards one another—a restoration of the natural order.

Years ago I used to think that what we were facing in terms of pollution and



City by Gerd Altmann - Pixabay

has consequences that will necessarily accelerate many of the crises now facing us. So someone who looks at the world and says: ‘This great thing that I sense is something that I must fear’, is in tune with a strong current that is afoot in the world right now.

On the other hand, we have a perspective that groups around the world, such as IONS (Institute of Noetic Sciences) and others of its kind, are embracing. This is the idea that we are standing on the cusp of a breakthrough in terms of the way that we are able to see and interact with this world in which we live—a new

so on was a terrible thing because my poor daughter was going to have to live through all of the consequences.

I was sorry for her because according to the scientific opinion of that time I would be dead and gone by the time these crises matured. Of course, science has progressed since then, and they have upgraded those computer models. Now we are being told in no uncertain terms that unless action is taken now the consequences will be experienced during our lifetime. It is no longer only our poor children, but us. Will we be able to right this ship and behave in those most natural ways that are both respectful to each other

and to the planet in time to avert a catastrophe? I do not know. It is my hope that we will. It is my day-to-day effort to try to stimulate and awaken this consciousness. But I do not know that this consciousness will be born in time.

During World War II Pearl Harbor was bombed and the United States of America went to war. It took a total of three days for the entire nation to be put on a footing to face this crisis. In extreme and demanding situations we are forced to respond. Although it is always better to respond from choice than from compulsion, the latter is another avenue by which crises can be faced. A great scientist, Robert Oppenheimer (best known for the work he did in overseeing the project that produced the atom bomb), had a number of great quotes. One of them was: 'The optimist thinks that we are living in the best of all worlds; the pessimist fears that this is true.' We have two options, and no matter which way the scale tips, we can be sure that Science, in whatever form it comes to take, is going to be one of the leading influences guiding us into this new world that we will come to inhabit. One way or another, we need to figure it out and make our peace with Science.

Often in speaking about the scientific community, it is easy to focus on its

limitations, particularly the almost religious dogma that confines reality to that narrow band we perceive as the material world. But Science itself is such a wonderful thing. It is progressive, always moving ahead by disproving itself from stage to stage. We used to live on a flat Earth that was the centre of the universe, with the stars and the heavens revolving around it. This was the scientific wisdom of the past, but all of those ideas have been superseded. Our problem is, as with many other things, that we are passive recipients. Science is for the experts, and in the words of a Zen saying: 'To the mind of the expert there are few options, but to the beginner's mind there are many.' The beginner's mind is the mind that we seek to apply to all things. We are consumers of science: we like the results, we enjoy the cell phones and the other toys, we like the little technologies, but for us it is a somewhat distant process than it is for those who are versed in such things. This is a mistaken idea and an unhealthy model to base our life on or to deal with the world.

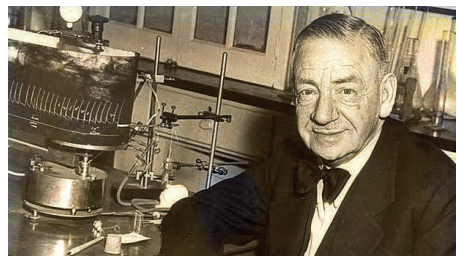
I tend to focus on the spiritual dimension of life, although often I choose not to talk about it in those terms. This is because it is often difficult for people to see the difference between spirituality and religiousness. Nowadays I talk more about con-

sciousness, because, like spirit, it is universal. Consciousness pervades all just like in the religious conception the Divine pervades all. Consciousness and spirituality tend to be the focus that is important to me because they are universal and therefore shared by all. Whether we acknowledge it or not, consciousness is the overarching, shared dimension of our being.

When we talk about science and about scientists, we should ask ourselves who are these scientists who are leading the thought of humanity? Basically we are talking about women and men, people who have hopes, fears, who sleep and dream, who have peak experiences of joy, happiness, and intuitive insight, people just like the rest of us. The difference being that in order to be viewed as a contemporary scientist there is a very specific high level of training that goes into that process. What has become unfortunate is the fact that the same sorts of inner experiences that are the heritage of every living person, are denied any scientific validity within the culture that has developed into 'scientism'.

This means that if we are dealing with something that is measurable (which consciousness is not), something that can be known by our senses or instruments that expand them, we can discuss it. But the elephant in the

room, consciousness, the one thing that everybody shares and that is required to perform any experiment or to even breathe, is the one thing that a practising scientist must avoid examining professionally, or their career will be damaged. There is something fundamentally wrong with this; particularly because even though it is something that is rarely spoken about, it is common knowledge that some of the greatest scientific breakthroughs have occurred as a direct result of dreams, intuitive awakenings, and visions. Anyone who ever had to take chemistry probably heard of Mendeleev. When sleeping he had a dream based on which he created his own version of the periodic table of elements, used it to correct the properties of some already discovered elements and to predict eight elements yet to be discovered. Niels Bohr, the famous quantum physicist, dreamt about the structure of the atom. The person who is described as the father of neuroscience, Otto Loewi, had a dream indicating that nerve impulses were



Otto Loewi - Wikimedia Commons

being passed by chemical means, not electrical. He had the dream, woke up, and forgot it two nights in a row, but on the third night he captured it. That is what got him his Nobel Prize.

The list would not be complete unless we mention Albert Einstein. When he was a teenager he had a dream that he was sledding down a hill. The sled kept going faster and faster until he felt he had reached the speed of light. He said he then looked up at the stars and saw that they were refracting a light that he had never seen. He said that his entire scientific career was a meditation on that dream he had as a teenager. These interior experiences of consciousness are the basis of some of the most profound revelations to come into the scientific world, yet we are barred from their consideration.

One of the greatest scientists of the 20th century has gone largely unrecognized. He was a botanist responsible for completely reorienting the agricultural practices of the southern portion of the United States of America, which was involved in the monoculture of cotton. His name was George Washington Carver. He was a very religious man. Every morning he would go out into the woods and commune with Nature. As he did this, he would also commune with God, and he would ask God what it was that he needed to know for that particular day. He would get an

answer, and that would be his work for the day. As a result, in addition to many other breakthroughs, he came up with 300 different products you could make from a peanut. He made rubber, paint, face powder, not just food, and revolutionized the agriculture of the American South.

One of the things that Carver said was: ‘Anything will give up its secrets to you if you just love it enough.’ Anything reveals itself to us if we develop the capacity to be loving. This was the scientific methodology of this great man of science. That is a methodology I can empathize with.

With the changes that we are facing, with the direction that we know we have to go in, it is uncertain, unsure. Security is a fiction. It does not exist anywhere in Nature. But there is one thing we can be sure of, that the greatest safeguard and source of our future illumination is the capacity that we develop for love. It is already resident within us. All of us know how to do it, maybe imperfectly at the moment, but we know.

[The public has a distorted view of science because children are taught in school that science is a collection of firmly established truths. In fact, science is not a collection of truths. It is a continuing exploration of mysteries. Freeman Dyson](#)

This article was reprinted from *The Theosophist*, September 2015.

Atlantis in Northern Europe

Victor Gostin

The legend of a drowned continent in what is now the Atlantic Ocean has intrigued generations of scholars. Advances in earth sciences have resulted in a huge paradigm shift in the modern theory of Plate Tectonics. The continental crust, made of granitic and sedimentary rocks is of lower density than the very heavy oceanic crust consisting mainly of basalt. Thus, in Earth's equilibrium, continents 'float' higher than oceans on the underlying mobile mantle. Furthermore, the 'young' age of the oceanic crust determined both magnetically and by dating the overlying oceanic sediments has shown that it continuously moves away from the mid-ocean ridges. To compensate for this new crust, older oceanic crust is removed [subducted] along the very deep ocean trenches. In the Atlantic Ocean extensive deep-sea drilling has shown that no 'drowned continent' ever occurred under the ocean.

Continental edges are continually affected by sea-levels that periodically expose and drown the continental shelves. During modern humanity's

evolution, especially between 110,000 and 6,000 years ago, it is very significant that sea-levels were generally 45m lower than at present. This exposed many continental shelves including that of the Celtic Sea. The large extension of Europe, now covered by the shallow North Sea was also exposed and is known as Doggerland. As post-glacial sea levels rose this large area became effectively submerged.



William McNulty/Jerome N Cookson - National Geographic



Atlantis by Zlatky.cz - Unsplash

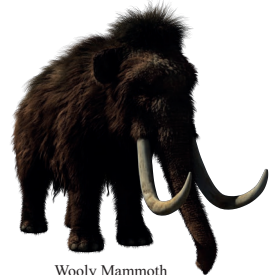
The legend of a drowned Atlantis could well have begun in this area. In a detailed study of Plato's story of Atlantis,¹ Maurice Secrest proposed that the legend is an amalgamation of two different stories; first the beginnings of Atlantis in the Atlantic Ocean when sea-levels were much lower; and second, a description of the end days of Atlantis with the massive eruption of Santorini during the Bronze Age in the islands of the Aegean Sea. This article expands and updates the Atlantic story.

Modern humans expanded out of Africa into Europe and Asia, living alongside abundant megafauna including mammoth. Norfolk is the only place in Northern Europe with evidence that four species of humans lived there in succession — *Homo antecessor*, *H. heidelbergensis*, *H. neanderthalensis* and most recently, *H. sapiens*.² They all hunted here over the past million years, settling in during warmer periods and retreating south when ice covered the land. The seas teemed with fish, and vast herds of deer and now-extinct beasts such as rhinoceros and woolly mammoth, provided plenty of meat. As well as being highly productive, the south and east of England is also thick with chalk deposits, and where you find chalk, you find flint. When honed with fire, flint is sharper than steel, and

would have been a vital component of their hunting tools.

The exposed Doggerland then formed about a quarter of the land mass of Europe. Mesolithic people populated this area. A mixed oak and lime woodland provided the setting for these hunter-gatherers who migrated with the seasons, fishing, hunting, and gathering food such as hazelnuts and berries. According to Vince Gaffney who heads the European Lost Frontiers team out of Bradford University in the UK "The low-lying marshy areas were full of water birds, fish and reeds to create baskets with".^{3,4}

In general, deglaciation was a time of dramatic and frequent environmental changes as flood waters swamped Doggerland. This included abrupt shifts in climate, rapid migrations of populations and major changes in vegetation. Relatively fast and widespread declines in large herbivore



Woolly Mammoth
Tony 241969 - Pixabay

populations, involving some thirty-five genera of mammals occurred during the Younger Dryas period (12,900 – 11,900 BP) and resulted in major extinctions of megafauna (including woolly mammoth) across Europe and North America. A strong geological case has

been proposed that the Younger Dryas was triggered by an asteroid impact over North America, about 12,900 years ago that resulted in extensive wildfires and generating a possible nuclear-winter effect.⁵

A huge submarine landslide off Norway - Storrega ~ 7300 years ago, created a tsunami that devastated the remaining Dogger Bank along with any human settlements.⁶ Memory of this event probably carried by survivors could have resulted in stories about the catastrophic loss of Atlantis.

Furthermore, it is possible that this history later became conflated with the Bronze Age Minoan civilization on the Island of Crete in the Mediterranean. The catastrophic volcanic eruption of Thera or Santorini in the Aegean Sea around 1600 BCE⁷ resulted in a tsunami that devastated the island of Crete along with its very advanced civilisation. H.P. Blavatsky in her history of humanity identified the Atlanteans as a major Root Race in our evolution.⁸

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Profile

Victor Gostin is a retired Associate Professor in Geology and Geophysics at the University of Adelaide. He has been a member of the TS for over 60 years and is active in the Australian Theosophy-Science Group. A graduate of Melbourne University and holding a Ph.D. from the Australian National University, Victor lectured in earth sciences at Adelaide University from 1970 to 2001. As a result of



recognising and proving that a unique rock layer in the ancient rocks of the Flinders Ranges, South Australia, was derived from a giant meteorite impact 350km away, he has been honoured by having an asteroid named after him.

NAMASTE SERIES 4 : 19 SEED WINDS

Seed Winds flow around this tilted rolling-ball of earth
 Entering the atmosphere in both whirls and whispers,
 Ever aware of what is happening across all its compass-points.
 Delight in the laughter which gathers us together ... to connect as
 Whorls spiral around and around, and dance in Nature just as we do.
 Intimate within each form ... does the breath of life gladly touch to
 Nurture in happy embrace ... as it wanders everywhere.
 Down south to pole'n'back ... it heads north, forming protective mother-arms to earth.
 Seen within inner and outer worlds ... does cosmos breathe into kosmos.

© Helen Lambert 3 July 2021

Cosmos: the universe as a complex and orderly system, term first used by Pythagoras.
 The opposite to chaos.

Kosmos: the whole of creation, everything outside of and including our physical universe.
 Galactic winds also regulate star formation.



The Neuroscience of the Creative Brain

Professor Emeritus Richard Silberstein

This presentation was delivered at a national convention of the Theosophical Society in Melbourne in January 2020. The following transcript has been edited by the author:



Archimedes-Eureka - Wikimedia Commons

Today what I'd like to do is to use the notion of creativity to explore a number of linked themes by looking at some of the recent neuroscience perspectives on the creative process. First, how is it that we can be presented with a particular problem, which we are getting nowhere towards solving, when suddenly a solution comes into our mind? What does neuroscience say about that process? I will then move onto some linked notions, one of which I call the Transpersonal Perspective, which goes to the nature of consciousness and the way that, for example, the processes that generate new ideas may be influenced by things outside of the brain itself. Finally, I will touch on the idea of a creative universe and the implications of such a concept.

Neuroscience and creativity

Many creative ideas seem to appear out of the blue. You may have been working on a problem for some time with no solution in sight when suddenly a solution pops into your head. This often occurs when you are not thinking about the problem or may have given up even trying to find a solution.

Most people are familiar with the 'eureka' moment that was experienced by Archimedes when he was taking a bath. He had realized that there was a way to determine whether or not a gold crown was, in fact, adulterated with lead. The important thing to note is that he may not have even been thinking about the problem when the solution came to him. Many creative ideas seem

to arise in our minds out of the blue, when we are not concentrating on them.

What is the Creative Process?

We have now looked closely at the neural networks whose activity seems to give rise to new ideas. Generally, creativity is seen as a reorganisation of pre-existing ideas, which have been put together in different ways to solve a particular problem. There seem to be two processes, both of which are largely unconscious. The first one is coming up with possible ideas and this process of thinking about different alternatives, which some suggest may occur randomly, produces a range of solutions. Most of these ideas will fail or be defective. In fact, there appears to be another network that determines whether or not the idea is good enough to enter the person's consciousness. The Blind Variation and Selective Retention Theory of Creativity postulates that creative insights are comprised of two unconscious processes:

1. Multiple random combinations of existing concepts (creation).
2. Retention only of the combination that best solves the problem (judgement).

Each of these processes is mediated by a specific brain network. One of these networks is most active when

you are daydreaming and not engaged in any particular task. This has been termed the 'Default Mode Network' as it was assumed to be the default state of the brain. The other 'task' networks become active when you engage in a thinking task. When the task networks are active, the Default Mode Network is inactive and vice versa. Recent research has revealed that it is the Default Mode Network that creates the new ideas. So, if the Default Mode Network creates the new ideas, what are the areas of the brain that determine whether or not these ideas are good enough?

An area in the left inferior-frontal cortex is believed to be involved in judgement of new ideas produced by the Creative Network. It is this region of the brain that seems to determine whether or not an idea is satisfactory and it is only after this determination has taken place that the idea will come into consciousness. It is like a yin/yang relationship between the areas of the brain involved in task-orientated activities and creative orientated activities. One is active while the other is inactive. Interestingly, damage to the judgement region of the brain has been shown to increase creativity by lowering the 'standard' for acceptance. In other words, ideas previously rejected are now accepted, or at least given consideration, by a

less demanding Judgement Network. This may result in a greater quantity of new ideas, although the quality may not be as good.

What are some practical steps for enhancing creativity? Being relaxed, taking a break from work and sleeping can all increase the activity of the Creative Network. While maintaining a positive mood, being in a drowsy state and brainstorming in a non-judgmental environment all contribute toward reducing the impact of the Judging Network and allowing other areas in the brain to ‘light up’ thereby increasing your potential for creativity. When you are concentrating or focussing on a task you are, in fact, inhibiting this Creative Network because of the yin/yang relationship it has to the Judging Network. Many times, the Judgement Network has been too stringent and you need to relax and let through more ideas.

Creativity: A Transpersonal Perspective

Parapsychological research over the last 50 years suggests that consciousness cannot simply be considered to be the result of physical/chemical brain activity, that is, the data is not consistent with physicalist monism but is consistent with non-local dualism. This research indicates that some of the creative ideas

produced by the default mode or Creation Network may originate from other levels of consciousness as well as other individuals, embodied or not. In other words, the Creation Network may respond to non-physical (psi) or transpersonal influences to produce novel ideas or insights.

So why can't we tap into these transpersonal domains of the creative process more easily? If we are more than just brain structures and there is evidence of interaction at the level of consciousness, might we not have new ideas as a result of inspiration from others, either near or distant from us? Why, however, does this not occur on a continual or consistent basis? Why are these psi or transpersonal abilities not present all the time?

One view is that these psi effects are very weak and that the brain is an exquisitely sensitive receiver that imperfectly detects them. Another view is almost the converse of that. This perspective posits that the psi effects are very robust and that the brain's function is primarily to filter them out, if for no other reason than for purposes of survival. Just as the Judgement Network will inhibit the expression of the Creation Network, it is suggested that certain inhibitory brain networks act to suppress the expression of creative influences originating in the transpersonal domain

as well as suppressing psi capacity. The notion of the brain acting as a filter to suppress transpersonal or psi influences is not new. It was advocated by the French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859 – 1941) and the ‘Father of American Psychology’ William James (1842 – 1910). If certain brain networks play a major role as ‘filters’, does that mean that damage to these networks will increase psi capacity in the brain-damaged individual? The answer appears to be yes.

A recent study¹ demonstrated this effect. In the study, participants were required to influence the output of a quantum number generator by thought alone, an effect termed ‘micro psi’. Readers are reminded, if any need reminding that micro-psi is considered impossible according to our understanding of the laws of physics. By way of background, successful micro psi studies using quantum physics based random number generators have been extensively replicated over the last 50 years and constitute some of the strongest laboratory-based evidence for non-local mind matter interaction. What the Freedman study found was that the patients suffering brain damage to the left frontal cortex were able to influence the output of the quantum random number generator while the non-patient control group could not. This suggests that the left frontal

region that prevents the appearance of inferior creative ideas in consciousness may also be a key part of the brain ‘filter’ that suppresses transpersonal or psi phenomena.

A Creativity Universe

Evolution can be considered a deeply creative process. However, a materialist view of evolution has difficulty addressing two fundamental questions:

1. How does evolution account for the emergence of consciousness? (Also known as the ‘hard problem’ of consciousness)
2. How did life originate?

How does consciousness emerge?

From the literature there are broadly two types of answers and one non-answer:

Non-answer: None of us is conscious, although we may think we are. From that perspective, we are all like zombies.²

Physicalist Monism answer: We don’t know yet but we will eventually understand how physical/ chemical brain function produces consciousness.

Dualism answer:

Dualism I - Pan-psychism

Consciousness does not emerge from brain function and cannot be reduced to brain function. Consciousness is an

irreducible constituent of the universe as fundamental as matter and energy. The emergence or manifestation of consciousness under Dualism I is dependent on the structure or complexity of the system (i.e., the brain). One attempt to define the type of complexity necessary to manifest consciousness is the Integrated Information Theory of Consciousness (IIT).³ This theory suggests that there is a particular manner in which information is integrated, which can be quantified and measured. For example, measuring whether a person under anaesthesia is conscious or not.

Dualism II

This is a more radical form of dualism suggested by mystical traditions as well as parapsychological research. Here consciousness and matter/energy are different systems or substances and can exist independently of each other. From the time it was first proposed by Descartes, the problem arose of how these different systems or substances can interact if they have nothing in common? Spinoza, Jung and numerous other authors have suggested matter, energy and consciousness are both manifestations of a more fundamental or deeper reality. Thus, consciousness and the domain of matter/energy, while different are able to interact because they both emerge from this deeper reality. This view is consistent with

Theosophical teachings on the subject and with many religions, especially from the Eastern traditions. In philosophy it is sometimes referred to as 'neutral monism'.

Scientific evidence from the fields of parapsychology, 'near death experience' research, and Ian Stevenson's work on children's past life memories is consistent with the view that consciousness is not only an irreducible constituent of the universe but that it can exist independently of physical structures, such as the brain.

How did life originate?

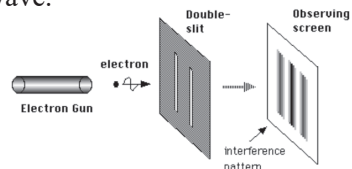
From what we know about physics and chemistry, it is unclear how the transition from 'non-life' to 'life' occurred on earth. The probability that early organic molecules such as amino acids and nucleotides formed increasingly complex and eventually self-replicating life-like systems through a long duration of random organic chemical reactions appears to be very low. There is a Neo-Darwinist approach, not related to the ideas of religious fundamentalism, such as intelligent design, which tries to grapple with this problem. Paul Davies, in his latest book, *The Demon in the Machine*, refers to the improbability of this process of arriving at living systems, on the basis of what we know, as 'climbing mount improbable'.

Climbing Mount Improbable

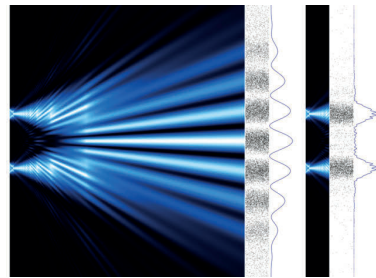
Now, if consciousness is an irreducible constituent of the universe, (Dualism I or II), can it 'shift the odds' of chemical reactions to favour the sequence of chemical reactions leading to the emergence of life? Although this is still considered a controversial view, it is being proposed with increasing frequency. If consciousness were to influence chemical reactions favouring the emergence of organic life, then this would be through quantum processes as all chemical reactions are determined by quantum mechanics. Is there any evidence that consciousness can influence quantum systems? The short answer is yes.

Probably the best examples of consciousness influencing quantum processes comes from the single photon double slit experiments conducted by Dr Dean Radin and his team at the Institute for Noetic Sciences. If photons (particles of light) pass through two closely spaced transparent slits, they form an interference pattern as if the particles of light were behaving like waves. What shocked physicists was this happened even when only one photon was passing through the double slit at a time. In other words, even though the single photon passed through one of the slits, it seemed to know about the other one and behaved as a wave. If we use instruments to see

which slit the photon passes through, it behaves as a particle and does not produce an interference pattern. The act of physically observing a photon made it behave like a particle and not a wave.



Double-slit.svg-NekoJa-Wikimedia Commons



Double-slit experiment with electrons-Gordran-Wikimedia Commons

Dean Radin wondered whether the light particles passing through a double slit would behave like a wave or a particle if they were observed 'mentally? In the experiments, participants were asked to 'project their consciousness to imaginatively observe the photons passing through the double slit'. What Radin found was that the mere act of mentally observing the double slit caused the photons to change their quantum state and behave like particles. Interestingly, meditators showed this effect more strongly than non-meditators.⁴

One conclusion that emerges from these experiments is that consciousness can indeed influence quantum processes. We are thus one step closer to answering the fundamental question ‘could consciousness make possible the most fundamental act of creation, the emergence of life in the universe?’

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Profile

The title and role of Emeritus Professor at Swinburne University, Melbourne, was conferred on Richard Silberstein 2014. His long and distinguished career there spans 40 years of service, which has included roles in teaching, research, management and services to the scientific and broader community. He developed Steady State Topography (SST), a new and unique method for imaging brain function. Richard Silberstein has been a member of the Theosophical Society for over 50 years.



I believe in intuition and inspiration. Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution. It is, strictly speaking, a real factor in scientific research.

Albert Einstein

The Cosmogenesis and Modern Cosmology

Kevin Davey



Spiral Swirl by Spirit 111-Pixabay

We can measure and examine the universe in which we live, but we have no complete knowledge of where it came from or what may happen to it. We have a reasonable understanding about much of our universe, including how old it is, what it started as and the nature of the many of stars and galaxies within it. Our knowledge has increased partly due to the invention of tools such as telescopes, but also with processes of thought and the use of the powerful tools of mathematics. There is still much to learn, but with the power of the human endeavour in examining our universe and the Theosophical desire to reveal the Truth, we will be able to uncover more.

A background to the manifestation and evolution of our physical universe is provided by H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*¹ in Volume I – Cosmogenesis, having the subtitle *The Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy*. The study of everything, including our physical universe, begins, on page 1 of *The Proem* with the words:

Still slumbering Energy, the emanation of the World in later systems is the Point of the Mundane Egg, the germ within the latter which will become the Universe.

Continued on the following page:

It is the ONE LIFE, eternal, invisible, yet Omnipresent, without beginning or end, yet periodical in its regular manifestations, between which periods reigns the dark mystery of non-Being, unconscious yet absolute Consciousness; ... Its one absolute which is ITSELF, eternal, Ceaseless Motion is called in esoteric parlance the "Great Breath" which is the eternal motion of the universe in the sense of limitless, ever present SPACE.

Later, in the first paragraph of page 3, H.P.B. states: "It never had a beginning nor will it have an end".

Here H.P.B. is introducing concepts of the Universe before it is manifest, before our universe has physically formed. Her statement is about the boundless plane from which manifestations come into existence – as whole universes as we understand them, including the one in which we

exist. Read carefully, it can be seen that H.P.B. uses the term “Universe” in two senses: the manifested, physical universe, and a greater Universe from which these physical universes come into existence. Our manifested universe is not infinite, while the Universe of H.P.B is, in a mathematical sense, and is the Absolute.

The Secret Doctrine is not easy to read and H.P.B. is certain that “strenuous thought” is required to understand the concepts within. *The Stanzas of Dyzan*, which are included in *The Secret Doctrine*, describe the processes of the development of the physical universe. They are also described and interpreted in the book *Man, The Measure of All Things*², by Shri Krishna Prem and Sri Madhavna Ashish. Prem and Ashish point out:

This Cosmogony is not intended as a substitute for the best scientific views of cosmic and human origins. Still less is it an attempt to ‘put Science right’ about concrete happenings that are within the latter’s competency to describe. Rather, the Stanzas, like all such, whether ancient or modern, are concerned with one thing and one thing only: the place of man in the Cosmos and the place of the Cosmos in man”

Cosmogony is an older term about the origin of the universe and the Solar System. Cosmology has largely superseded this term and relates to the origin of our universe and its

contents, including both knowledge and speculation of its evolution from its beginning to its end. It is most interesting to compare aspects of the Stanzas with current cosmological ideas. Before doing so, it is important to recognise that the full *The Stanzas of Dyzan* were - and still are - difficult to interpret. Additionally, H.P.B presented a number of ideas and concepts which would have been difficult for people to comprehend. During the 19th century many new scientific concepts were frequently contrary to established religious dogma. Remember, it was presented as a fact that God had made the Heavens and Earth in six days, while the seventh day was for Him to rest.

Stanza 1, part 2 states: Time was not, for it lay asleep in the infinite bosom of duration. (S.D. p. 22).

This Stanza is scientifically correct. It cannot state that “Time was”, as that would refer to a situation before a universe existed. In both the ancient and our modern concepts, time does not exist in nothingness. In modern parlance, time only exists in a manifested, physical universe as time is the result of the measure of entropy, the order (or disorder) in a physical world. Entropy constantly changes, as in the erosion of mountains or our aging and ultimate death. These and simpler changes are essential to a measurement

of time. With no time and being devoid of a physical entity, such as with the description to “lay asleep”, there can only be duration.

Modern physics proposes a scientific example to fit this Stanza, in what is termed “de Sitter Space”, named after Willem de Sitter, who was a contemporary of Albert Einstein. De Sitter was amongst the very first to solve Einstein’s equations and did so using a very simple and clever concept. He solved them when describing a universe containing no matter and without time. This universe is totally empty. His solution is known as de Sitter Space.

Consider three parts of Stanza 3.

Stanza 3, part 1:

The last vibration of the seventh eternity thrills through infinitude. The Mother swells, expanding from within without, like a bud of a lotus. (S.D. p. 28)

Stanza 3, part 2:

The vibration sweeps along, touching with its swift wing the whole universe and the germ that dwelleth in the darkness: the darkness that breathes over the slumbering waters of life. (S.D. p. 28)

Stanza 3, part 3:

Darkness radiates light, and the light drops one solitary Ray into the mother-deep. The ray shoots through the virgin egg: the ray causes the eternal ache to

thrill and drop the non-eternal germ, which condenses into the world-egg. (S.D. p. 28)

These can be readily interpreted as a description of the formulation of our physical universe, a ‘Big Bang’, a description of the universe being manifested within the Absolute. De Sitter space, which, as does the Absolute, exists everywhere, even within and beyond our Big Bang universe. This is a description of totally empty space. It is boundless, to use a Theosophical term. It has always been and always will be. The temperature of this space is close to absolute zero, but it is full of energy, full of potential. Modern cosmology and the Absolute converge nicely with the concept of de Sitter space. Analysis of a de Sitter universe show that in an infinite space all sorts of seemingly strange things can and do happen. Random fluctuations producing energy will occur, most of which will be so tiny as to be almost immeasurable. Other fluctuations will be large and will reinforce themselves to become even larger.

Laboratory experiments show that the intrinsic background energy of our universe can, through Einstein’s energy – mass equivalence ($E=mc^2$), randomly release enough energy for particles of matter to form spontaneously. Most of these particles rapidly “pop” into and out of existence,

but their birth and demise can readily be detected and measured. In a de Sitter universe of infinite size, some of these releases of energy will be vastly huge. They can be large enough to create colossal numbers of particles, enough to form physical universes. This is what infinity enables: with enough space and duration the formation of new universes becomes inevitable. This energy is only “borrowed” from de Sitter Space as it will eventually return to the background of de Sitter Space, so no physical laws, such as the conservation of energy, are violated. Countless “Big Bang” universes could be constantly establishing throughout de Sitter Space, or H.P.B.’s Universe. As H.P.B. states:

The Eternity of the Universe in toto as a boundless plane, periodically ‘the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing’, called ‘the manifesting stars’ and the ‘sparks of Eternity’ (S.D. p. 16).

Our physical universe seems to have started in a ‘Big Bang’ – a sudden and massive release of energy – about 13.798 billion years ago. Measurements indicate that the universe at this instant was very small and highly ordered. Since then, the disorder, the entropy, of the universe has been increasing, providing the basis of time.

The discovery that our universe is expanding at an increasing rate seems to destine it to increase in size without stop. Dark energy, only given that name because we cannot see it directly, we can only measure the results it produces, is realised by the detection of Doppler motion in objects external to our Milky Way Galaxy. More distant galaxies are seen to be moving away from us at an ever-increasing rate. This Doppler motion appears to give light emanating from distant galaxies a blue tinge – it would be a red tinge if they were moving towards us. This is true for the great majority of distant galaxies, and the more distant they are, the bluer the light we receive because they are moving away more rapidly due to dark energy. Over time, galaxies in our universe will not only move further and further apart also, if the effects of dark energy continue to increase as some predict, even the stars within galaxies themselves will be moved away from each other. Potentially, stars and even the atoms that make them up could be ripped apart.

While this extreme level of dark energy could have such supremely dramatic results at the end of our universe, even a modicum of dark energy will result in major changes to our physical universe over time. The universe will continue to expand, and stars will no longer form, as the clouds of gas and dust within

galaxies are used up or spread apart. Eventually all stars will cease to shine due to their internal nuclear reactions as they become unable to fuse heavier elements and will cool. Our Sun is currently fusing hydrogen into helium and later in its life will fuse some helium into carbon. As it is a relatively low mass star, the Sun will be unable to sustain further nuclear reactions and changes in its structure will cause the outer layers to release gas from its gravitational grip. The remaining embers will cool and over many years these remnants will decay, releasing small amounts of energy as photons into space. Similar processes will affect all stars and all matter in our universe. All that will remain will be photons in the ever-expanding emptiness. As eons pass these photons will be stretched as space itself stretches, until they are so stretched that they will lose their wave forms, to become the equivalent of flat lines of zero energy. All matter in the universe will eventually dissolve into nothing through this process. Our universe will have dissolved to be indistinguishable from that boundless plane of de Sitter Space. De Sitter Space enables countless numbers of physical universes to come into being and then disappear.

In the book *Science and Theosophy, Selected Articles* by Dr Hugh Murdoch (Published by The Theosophical

Society in Australia, 2020), Dr Murdoch frequently cautions against taking the *The Secret Doctrine* too literally, or as dogma. He writes, at p. 18, “people like Besant and Blavatsky certainly did not want us to take their words as holy writ”. In a similar tone, “I get very discouraged when I find people wanting to treat all the literal detail in our theosophical literature as Holy Writ” (p. 164). Indeed, page 259 Murdoch states “The language” (of the Stanzas and the S.D.) “is poetic and there is scope for different interpretations in relation to scientific concepts”.

The Great Breath is frequently read as a statement that the universe manifests and dissolves in a cyclic way. While dissolved and undissolved there is always the Absolute Reality. The poem of *The Secret Doctrine*, p. 11 and 12 states:

It expands and contracts [exhalation and inhalation]. When it expands the mother diffuses and scatters; when it contracts, the mother draws back and ingathers.

This is frequently interpreted in terms of the breathing of a living being, one which inhales and exhales air. When considering the evolution of universes, this concept needs to be considered more carefully and perhaps less literally.

Geoffrey A. Barborka³, in his book *The Divine Plan* (p. 5) states:

...a Manvantara, literally a period between two Manus ... [from Manu, a great Divine Being, and antara, between]... is represented as an Outbreathing of the Great Breath ...

The Inbreathing is regarded as a period of rest - technically termed a Pralaya, literally a period of dissolution. [from the Sanskrit *pra*, away and *laya*, from the verb-root *li*, to dissolve].

Relating these statements to the evolution of our universe, this can be taken that the production of our universe is indeed similar to breathing out, an exhalation. However, at its end, the universe is not breathed back in – rather, it “simply” dissolves, becomes undetectable in the Absolute, as explained earlier. The “inbreathing” aspect can be interpreted as a preparation and readying for the next universe to be released, a distinctly physical action. It is interesting to remember that the first breathing action of a newborn is an inhalation, not an exhalation. It is a gasp of air to provide oxygen for all activities of a new life. Similarly, we do not inhale our exhaled air: we pause slightly while the exhaled breath is mixed and dissolves into the atmosphere.

In conclusion, *The Secret Doctrine* (V. I. p. 16) states:

Further, *The Secret Doctrine* Affirms:

(b) The Eternity of the Universe in toto as a boundless plane; periodically “the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing,” called “the manifesting stars,” and the “sparks of Eternity.

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Profile

Kevin Davey has taught science and mathematics at secondary schools in South Australia. He started an information technology company in 1990 and was awarded a Master of Science degree in astronomy in 2016 from Swinburne University of Technology. He has been a member of the Astronomical Association of South Australia since 1995, has provided a number of talks to their general meetings and had articles published in their magazine, *The Bulletin of the ASSA*. Kevin has presented on various aspects of physical sciences, astronomy and cosmology to the Adelaide Lodge and at National Conventions.

The Integration of Theosophy with Modern Science

Hugh Murdoch, M.Sc.

The average man of today looks up to the scientist as somewhat of a demigod. He places great reliance on the beliefs and teachings of the scientists. We have only to read our daily press and magazines to see that this is true. In fact the man in the street will often place much more reliance on the theories of science than does the scientist himself, for the scientist is cautious about holding fixed beliefs. He has seen the one-time dogmas of science shattered by new theories which he is now too wise to elevate to the status of dogmas.

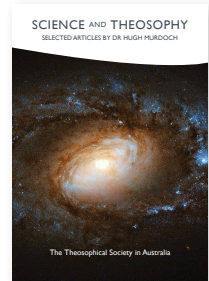
Because of the importance of science today it is essential to examine to what extent its teachings can be integrated with those of theosophy.

There is a limited field where the teachings of science and theosophy overlap, e.g. in Occult Chemistry. Here we can examine each new discovery of science and see whether there is any basis for this idea in theosophy. In especially favourable cases we may even be able to claim confirmation by science of a theosophical teaching. In other cases there is either disagreement

or just no basis for comparison. Here we would like to see more clairvoyant research, but until this is forthcoming we must suspend judgment.

Another example where direct comparison is possible is in the evolution of the earth and of living forms on earth. I deliberately refrain from using the term "life" in this context, for science does not deal with the evolution of life as we understand life but merely with living forms. There is good agreement between scientific and occult estimates of the age of the earth, but science would put the age of the whole solar system not much greater, which is of course at variance with theosophical teaching.

The field of such direct comparison is, however, very limited, for science deals only with that which can be physically observed by the senses with or without the aid of instruments and with direct deductions from those observations. A scientific theory is only valid insofar as it can correctly predict the results of observations. This scientific method of impartial observation is beginning



to be applied to psychic research, but that is not my subject. Because this field of overlap between scientific and theosophical teaching is so narrow, are we then severely limited in discussing the integration of theosophy with modern science? If our subject were the comparison of theosophy with science, the answer would be yes, but significantly it is integration not comparison.

Many theosophical writers and lecturers are over-eager to proclaim that science agrees with Theosophy in realms which science does not even cover. Why? Do you not think it is rather a negative attitude? Why are we so eager to bolster up our ideas with the approbation of science?

We must learn to distinguish what science says (and remember this is limited to physically observable phenomena) from what individual scientists say. They are entitled to their own views, and we should certainly listen to their views which are no doubt based in part on their scientific knowledge, but remember they do not speak with the voice of science.

Let me give you an example. Listen to the words of Sir James Jeans. He has been dealing with the difficulty of reconciling the particle-picture and the wave-picture of light - a subject which

we have not time to discuss now – and he goes on to say this:

It seems at least conceivable that what is true of perceived objects may also be true of perceiving minds; just as there are wave-pictures for light and electricity, so there may be a corresponding picture for consciousness. When we view ourselves in space and time, our consciousness is obviously the separate individuals of a particle-picture, but when we pass beyond space and time, they may perhaps form ingredients of a single continuous stream of life. As it is with light and electricity, so it may be with life; the phenomena may be individuals carrying on separate existences in space and time, while in the deeper reality beyond space and time we may all be members of one body.

Here is a scientist arguing by analogy from the basis of his knowledge of science in favour of the oneness of life. Here is a scientist performing the type of integration of scientific and theosophical ideas which we must do for ourselves.

I can imagine this, however, twisted in the hands of many an over-eager theosophical propagandist into “science confirms the oneness of life,” which is a totally ridiculous statement because science does not even deal with life in that sense. Because it is ridiculous, it is bad propaganda. But what wonderful propaganda to say, as

I said a moment ago, “Look, here is an eminent scientist arguing by analogy from his scientific knowledge the feasibility of the oneness of life, an idea which has always been a fundamental tenet of theosophy.” Do you see the difference? Let me give you more examples of how we can integrate the ideas of theosophy and science.

Science now believes, thanks to Einstein (not to mention atom bombs), that matter is composed of energy. In other words, all matter is in essence one. I have heard more than one Theosophist use this as a basis for saying: “science now believes in the unity of life.” On this I need not comment further. But why not put it this way: “Yes, theosophy recognizes that all matter is a manifestation of the one energy, but theosophy deals with life as well as form, and teaches in a similar way that all life is a manifestation of the one life of the Logos.” But our integration can go further than merely drawing an analogy. We can go on to say: “science does not know what this energy is. But we maintain that matter-energy and life are themselves but different manifestations of Fohat, the one universal Divine Energy, the second aspect of the Logos.”

Let me take another example. Science explains the evolution of living forms, but cannot explain life. Theosophy not

only explains life, but proclaims an evolution of life parallel to the evolution of the forms which the life inhabits. Not only is this so, but an acceptance of the theosophical concept of life can explain some of the difficulties which the scientist encounters in studying the evolution of form. I cannot go into details, but evolution proceeds by means of gene mutation plus natural selection. This much is well established, but the mutations in the genes are a purely chance phenomenon, and it is not understood what produces them. What a wonderful opportunity for a guiding intelligent life to control the evolution of form by manipulating ever so slightly the seemingly chance gene mutations without even upsetting the observed results of science!

You can see the opportunity given us by science’s own limitations of its field of endeavour. We do not need, as did H.P. Blavatsky, to rail against the materialism of science, for science today, though it restricts itself to the material, no longer proclaims as it did in her day that everything can be explained in terms of the material. Instead we can say, theosophy accepts the observations of science in its own field and most of its interpretations, but where science leaves off, theosophy takes over and presents a rational system of thought which is not only compatible with science but can even

explain some of the difficulties of science.

Research on the Atom

A symposium entitled “The Atom – Occult and Scientific Theories Compared” was presented at the Summer School, Newport, on April 16 by four members of The Physical Science Study Group of Blavatsky Lodge. This group was formed about two years ago and has since then been studying the atom. The guiding principle of such a study has been well stated by Dr. E Lester Smith and V. Wallace Slater of the Theosophical Research Centre, London: “The attitude to both orthodox and clairvoyant research should be the same; where there is internal evidence of careful and accurate work, it may be taken that the results obtained in both fields are substantially correct, the interpretations of the results, however, we must learn to esteem much less highly than is our wont.”

The Sydney group has endeavoured to examine critically the interpretation of others and where possible to supply some interpretations of its own. A summary of this study was presented to the Summer School, with four speakers alternating to present various aspects. Special attention was given to some of the recent advances in physics, e.g. the discovery of mesons (particles of weight intermediate between that of

the electron and the proton) which are likely to prove an important missing link between the occult and scientific pictures of the atom.

The difficulty of making comparisons is increased by the great difference in terminology, which is partly due to the fact that most of the occult research preceded the formulation of the present scientific picture. Some tentative suggestions were made towards identifying the occult and scientific theories, but the many unsolved and at present seemingly insoluble problems in attempting to do so were duly stressed. There is room for more clairvoyant investigation, and furthermore each new discovery of science should be carefully examined. Both the scientific and occult research should be regarded as means of discovering the true nature of things. The research in the Physical Science Study Group of Blavatsky Lodge is continuing, and it is hoped that other Lodges will form similar groups for study of this or other fields.



Dr Hugh Murdoch

Reprinted from *Theosophy in Australia*, June 1955.

Review

A Quest for Wisdom: Inspiring Purpose on the Path of Life

By David Lorimer

A Quest for Wisdom amounts to a who's who of people you wish you'd known more about but possibly didn't, including Victor Frankl, Albert Schweitzer, and S. Radhakrishnan (president of India 1962-1967). It is a timely reminder of what was once meant by a liberal education, designed to turn out a well-rounded human being, with broad knowledge, a strong sense of values, and a deep engagement with society. Clearly, David Lorimer received just such an education, augmented by an astonishing amount of close reading. Those who were fortunate enough to attend David's talks during his successful tour of the Australian Section in 2011 would have found him to be an engaging and erudite presenter: light on his feet; not weighed down by considerable knowledge. To the classical liberal education he has added a deep engagement with the spiritual arts and sciences, all of which have imbued his work as Director of the Scientific and Medical Network, and editor of the *Paradigm Explorer* which has shone a steady light on consciousness studies,

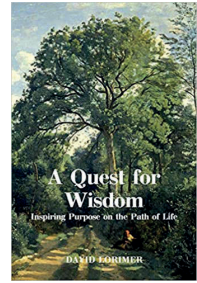
science and philosophy of science, medicine and health, ecology and future studies, politics and more: all of which will be found in some measure in the pages of *A Quest for Wisdom*.

David writes that on one occasion, Dag Hammarskjöld characterised the qualities needed in his job as:

... perseverance and patience, a firm grip on realities, careful but imaginative planning, a clear awareness of the dangers, but also of the fact that fate is what we make it, and that the safest climber is he who never questions his ability to overcome all difficulties.

Hammarskjöld was the second Secretary-General of the United Nations, and still the youngest to have served in that office. It is more than rumoured that he was assassinated in 1961 when his plane was shot down en route to negotiations to end a civil war in mineral-rich Congo. I ordered his only book *Markings* immediately that I put down David's essay on Hammarskjöld: it's that kind of moreish book.

In a dream I walked with God through the deep places of creation; past walls



that receded and gates that opened, through hall after hall of silence, darkness and refreshment the dwelling place of souls acquainted with light and warmth until, around me, was an infinity into which we all flowed together, and lived anew ... (Dag Hammarskjöld)

Reverence for life, the importance of values, and spirituality are central themes of Lorimer's work. In the present volume he quotes that great master of reverence, the theologian and musician Albert Schweitzer, whose notion of reverence for life was absolutely universal. He once said that the truly ethical man would not 'shatter an ice crystal that sparkles in the sun'. Schweitzer left his comfortable teaching post in Europe to study medicine and work in rather desperate conditions in the tropics of Africa. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1952.

Three kinds of progress are significant for culture: progress in knowledge and technology; progress in the socialisation of man; progress in spirituality. The last is the most important. Technical progress, extension of knowledge, does indeed represent progress, but not in fundamentals. The essential thing is that we become more finely and deeply human (A. Schweitzer).

A Quest for Wisdom is a testament to both the active and the contemplative life. Available through Book Depository and elsewhere online.

Lots of material here for a good discussion group. Consider this book for your Lodge/Branch library.

Highly recommended.

Dara Tatrav

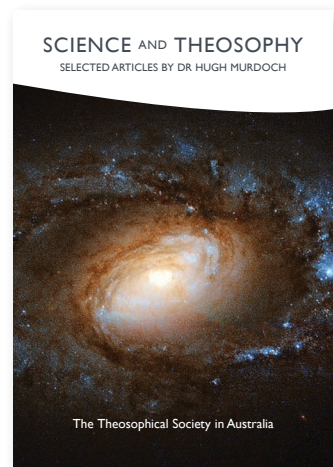
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Position of National Secretary

We are looking for someone to fill the position of National Secretary, which will become vacant when the current National Secretary retires after some ten years in the position. The duties as outlined in the Section's Rules are as follows:

- To take charge of the administrative functions of the national headquarters, in cooperation with the National President;
- To supervise the work of the staff of the national headquarters and payment of wages;
- To supervise the work of the bookkeeper, draft the annual budget, and manage the production of annual financial statements;
- To prepare agendas and take minutes for the various governing bodies/management committees of the National Society and undertake work on their behalf as required;
- Conduct elections in accordance with the Rules of the Society;
- To obtain legal advice on behalf of the National Society and liaise with the Section's lawyers, as and when required;
- Review legislation and governance requirements applicable to The Theosophical Society in Australia, and ensure compliance;
- Attend to routine correspondence, including enquiries from Lodges/Branches and Groups in the Section;
- To be responsible for all statutory obligations including the filing of returns;
- Take charge of properties owned by The Australian Section Theosophical Trust;
- While it is not mentioned in the Rules, the National Secretary also renews the Section's insurance policies in consultation with the National Treasurer, and manages claims on behalf of the insured (the National Society and its Lodge/Branches).

The National Secretary should have been a member of the Theosophical Society in Good standing for the last five years at the time of his or her appointment and must reside within commuting distance of the national headquarters (this rule is under review). In addition, the applicant will need:

- Excellent communication skills, critical thinking ability, and an ability to deliver on time;
- Proficiency in Microsoft office and familiarity with MYOB or similar;

- Prior experience/qualifications in business administration/governance/personnel management is desirable.
- It is preferred that the successful applicant will be able to work at the national headquarters in Surry Hills. A strong application from interstate will however be considered.

If you wish to discuss the pay and conditions before making your application, please email natsec@theosophicalociety.org.au to arrange a suitable time for a phone call.

The office of National Secretary is a great way to serve the Theosophical Society in a position of considerable responsibility and variety, working with a group of dedicated volunteers on the National Council and the Executive Committee, as well as the dedicated staff of the national headquarters.

Election of State Representatives for Qld., SA/NT and Tasmania

The deadline for receipt of nominations for the aforementioned State Representatives was Friday 6 August 2021. There was one only nomination in each electoral state. I am therefore pleased to announce the election results as follows:

Barry Bowden has been elected as State Representative Queensland for a second consecutive term.

Gaynor Fraser has been elected as State Representative South Australia/Northern Territory for a third consecutive term.

Ruth Holt has been elected as State Representative for Tasmania.

The term of office is for a period of two years from the declaration of this election result. The State Representative will represent the Lodges (Branches), Groups and Members in the State in all meetings and affairs of the National Council. They shall also liaise with all Lodges (Branches), Groups and National Members in their Electoral State and shall represent their views to the National Council and to the National Society Officers, as appropriate. As well, they shall receive and deal with representations from individual Members within their Electoral State, and shall refer the representations where requested or deemed necessary.

National Calendar of Events

Notice of Cancellation of National Convention in Perth 2022

As you are aware, there is still great uncertainty related to interstate travel in Australia because of the ongoing Covid crisis. Prior to the spread of the Delta variation of the virus the National Council had agreed to proceed with organising the convention, which was to be held in Perth. Given the change in circumstances, the National Council has decided to cancel the Perth convention in 2022. Anyone who has already paid their registration fee for Perth will have it refunded soon. There will still be an Annual Convention Business Meeting held in January and we are currently looking at the best way to hold that, probably by Zoom conferencing. Further details of this event will be included in the November edition of *Theosophy in Australia*. On a brighter note, we are already planning for the next national convention, which will be held in Adelaide in January in 2023. We expect that travel and state borders will be back to normal by then. It is likely that we will return to Perth in 2024, however that will be decided by the National Council in due course.

News and Notes

Appointment of New National Education Coordinator

I am pleased to announce that the National Council has appointed Simon O'Rourke as the new National Education Coordinator. Many of you may already know Simon, who has been a lecturer for the TS in Australia for some time. Simon brings to this position a long association with the Theosophical Society and a strong commitment to enhancing the educational needs of our Section. This will be a permanent part-time position. At the time of going to print, his commencement date had not been confirmed. On behalf of the Australian Section, I wish to welcome Simon onto our team at the National Headquarters.

Stephen McDonald

Section Directory

It is advisable to check in advance to confirm resumption of meetings.

Australian Section National Headquarters

Level 2, 162 Goulburn Street,
Surry Hills NSW 2010
Ph: 02 9264 7056 / 9264 6404
Fax: 02 9264 5857
Email: tshq@theosophicalsociety.org.au
Web: theosophicalsociety.org.au
Campbell Theosophical Research Library:
Email: catalogue@theosophicalsociety.org.au
www.facebook.com/Austheos/

Australian Capital Territory

Canberra Group, Certified 16/11/2019
Meet: Friends Meeting House, Crn. Bent and
Condamine Streets, Turner
2- 4 pm, 3rd Saturday of the month
Coordinator: Gordon Herbert
Tel: 0466 464 064
Email: canberratheosophicalsociety@gmail.com
Secretary: Barbara Harrod
Tel: 02 6254 1415

New South Wales

Blavatsky Lodge, Chartered 22/5/1922:
Postal Address: PO Box 319, St Leonards NSW 1590
Meet: Suite 8, 599 Pacific Highway, St. Leonards
NSW 2065 (entrance in Albany Street)
1.00pm Wednesdays + many others activities (see
website for full program)
Telephone: Reception: 02 9267 6955
Email: contact@tssydney.org.au
Web: sydney.theosophicalsociety.org.au/
President: Rosanna Sheridan
Secretary: Pamela Peterson

Newcastle Lodge, Chartered 3/12/1941:
Meet: Uniting Church Morrison Room, 29 Highfield
Street, Mayfield NSW 2304
7.30pm 2nd Friday of the month
Please call before attending:
President: Howard Gregg
Secretary: Tony Buzek/Tel: 0452 633 132
Email: anthonybuzek61@bigpond.com
Web: newcastle.theosophicalsociety.org.au/

Blue Mountains Group, Certified 13/5/1997:
Meet: Members' Lounge, Blue Mountains
Cultural Centre, 30 Parke Street (above Coles),
Katoomba NSW 2780
2.00 - 4.00 pm every Monday
Acting Coordinator: Jessica Gemmill
Email: tsbluemountains@gmail.com
Jasmine de Vimes
Tel: 0415 535 525 (please phone before attending)

Gosford Group, Certified 11/11/1997

Meet: The Narara Community Centre,
Pandala Road, Narara NSW 2250
8.00pm 2nd Tuesday of the month
Coordinator: Vivien Wareing
Tel: 0429 088 995
Email: vivienwareing@hotmail.com
Secretary: Roni Ostergaard
Telephone: 02 4358 1413

Northern Beaches Group, Certified 2/4/1996:

Postal address and meeting address:
c/- 31 Riviera Street, Avalon NSW 2107
1.30 pm 1st Saturday of the month
Please email to confirm meetings
Coordinator: Nila Chambers
Email: nilachambers@bigpond.com

Queensland

Brisbane Lodge, Chartered 21/1/1895:
355 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane QLD 4000
Tel: 07 3839 1453
Email: brisbanelodge@theosophyqld.org.au
brisbane.theosophicalsociety.org.au
Meet: 7.30 pm Wednesdays, bookshop
and library open Monday and Friday 10.30 am - 2.30
pm and Wednesdays 6 - 7.15 pm (see website for other
events)

President: Michael Morton
Secretary: Dianne Manning

Logan Group, Certified 9/4/2019:

Meet: Please contact Coordinator for venue
Monthly 1st Friday 9.30-12 md + 1st Thursday
5.30-7.30 pm
Tel: 0418 755 496
Coordinator: Christine Gwin
Email: logantheosophy@gmail.com

Sunshine Coast Lodge, Chartered 14/10/2003:

Meet: Buderim Croquet Club,
 Syd Lingard Drive, Buderim QLD 4556
 Meetings: 7.00 pm Thursdays except last Sunday of
 the month at 2 pm there is a guest speaker (various
 venues)
 Email: theosophy.sunshinecoast@gmail.com
 President Joyce Thompson/0417 873 481
 Secretary: Jean Carroll/0402 805 127

Toowoomba Group, Certified 10/7/2007:

Meet: East Creek Community Centre, 43 Kitchener
 Street, Toowoomba QLD 4350
 Thursday 6.30 pm once a fortnight.
 Annual Springbrook retreat each Spring
 Coordinator: Gayle Thomas
 Tel: 0438 331 885

South Australia*Adelaide Lodge, Chartered 26/5/1891:*

310 South Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000
 Tel: 08 8223 1129
 Email: president@tsadelaide.org.au
 Web: adelaide.theosophicalsociety.org.au/
 Meet: 10.30am 4th Saturday. Science Group 7-9
 pm every 2nd Thursday. (Please contact Lodge for
 additional meeting dates.)
 President: Gaynor Fraser
 Acting Secretary: Valrae Jays

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

13 Goulburn Street, Hobart TAS 7000
 Tel. 03 6294 6195 (please leave message)
 Email: helen_steven@live.com
 Web: hobart.theosophicalsociety.org.au/
 Meet: 7.30pm Mondays
 President: Helen Steven
 Secretary: Patrizia Bini

Launceston Lodge, Chartered 12/1/1901:

Meet: Salvation Army, 111 Elizabeth Street,
 Launceston
 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 1.00pm
 Postal address: 28 Teggs Road, Gravelly Beach,
 TAS 7276
 Email: rmholt@gmail.com
 Web: launceston.theosophicalsociety.org.au/
 President/Secretary: Ruth Holt
 Tel: 0448 397 246

Victoria*Melbourne Lodge, Chartered 9/12/1890:*

Meet: 1st Flr., 234 Flinders' Lane,
 Melbourne VIC 3000
 Tel: 03 8638 9007
 Email: info@melbournetheosophy.org
 Web: melbourne.theosophicalsociety.org.au/
 Meetings: every Saturday from 1.30 pm
 President: Edward Sinclair
 Secretary: Robert Mullaney

Mornington Peninsula Group, Certified 8/2/2000:

Meet: Mount Eliza Neighbourhood House,
 Canadian Bay Road, 1st Sunday
 of the month, (12.00pm meditation + library - 1.30pm
 presenter + questions and comments)
 Coordinator: Georgina Fode
 Tel: 0476 516 778
 Secretary: Elizabeth Ramirez

Wodonga-Albury Group, Certified 9/7/1996:

Meet: Shop 6, Tower Place, High Street,
 Wodonga VIC 3690
 For talks & library, please contact: Coordinator/
 Secretary: Denis Kovacs
 Tel: 02 6024 2905

Western Australia*Perth Branch, Chartered 10/6/1897:*

21 Glendower Street, Perth WA 6000
 Tel/Fax: 08 9328 8104
 Email: tsperth@iinet.net.au
 Web: tsperth.com.au
 Meet: 7.30pm Tuesdays
 Due to Covid please check before attending.
 President: Tina Hentisz
 Secretary: Sue Lee

Mount Helena Retreat Centre:

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

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

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

Freedom of Thought

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

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

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



Freedom of the Society

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

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

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



The Three Objects of the Theosophical Society

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

~

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

~

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