

NEWSLETTER

**Indo-Pacific Federation of The Theosophical Society
July 2005**

Core Workers and the Future of the TS

The membership of the worldwide TS reached its peak in 1928 when the Society had 45,098 members. By 1931 the total membership was 36,115. Many reasons were presented to explain such a loss, including the Great Depression as well as J. Krishnamurti's dissolution of the Order of the Star, in August 1929. Since that period the overall membership of the TS stands at around 30,000.

Throughout its history the Theosophical Society has attracted to its ranks very dedicated and gifted individuals who have given their energy, enthusiasm and insight to make the Society a strong force for good in the world. They have done so because of their understanding of the profound message implicit in the TS work. The Society, as we know, does not compel its members to work for it and such a decision belongs to the individual member.

As one travels through the theosophical world one cannot help noticing that the core group of workers, which is responsible for maintaining the actual work of the Society, seems to be dwindling. In many places, as devoted stalwarts pass away to their deserved rest on the higher planes, there are not many who can replace them. This results in loss of vitality and also in loss of inspiration. Lodges and sometimes whole Sections of the TS can experience such a decline and the theosophical work in their area suffers.

Therefore a question can be asked: how can we assure that our Lodges and Sections, and Presidential Agencies, have dedicated, selfless and energetic workers? Looking back one can see that a possible answer to this question involves making Theosophy more widely known. For it was the depth, the mind-transforming power of Theosophy that touched the minds and the hearts of those who later became true pillars of the Society in their own area, and sometimes also internationally. Theosophy, when studied and assimilated, illumines the consciousness and reveals to it the great truth that none of us live for ourselves, that to live to benefit humanity is the deepest calling of our souls.

As HPB pointed out, the mandate of the TS is to help in assisting to show that such a thing as Theosophy exists, and to help those who are seeking it to study and assimilate its eternal verities. It is very easy to get side-tracked in a world with so many distractions. But if in every Lodge and in Sections there is a continuous study and exploration of the timeless principles of Theosophy, and a sincere effort to apply them in one's daily life, then certainly there will be those who will respond to the teachings from the depth of their own souls. And this response will naturally manifest as a clear, unwavering and devoted dedication to the work of the Theosophical Society, sometimes for as long as they live.

Pedro Oliveira

JAPAN

Nippon Lodge in Tokyo continues its monthly Sunday study meetings for members and those

interested in Theosophy generally. We have been reading *The Key to Theosophy* since January. One of the members spoke about the seven principles of man in June. On the email magazine, Japanese translations of *The Secret Doctrine* and excerpts of *Isis Unveiled* and so forth are carried in series.

A society to study esotericism focused on Theosophy was founded last year in Japan. Its monthly seminars have attracted a significant number of participants. We have the impression that the interest in Theosophy among scholars and professors is increasing through the communication between them and Nippon Lodge.

Naotsugu Takahashi
President of Nippon Lodge, TS, Tokyo

Presently one of the major activities of the Nippon Lodge is to introduce the tenets of Madam Blavatsky's works which are not yet translated into Japanese. We have also established the web site of the Nippon Lodge <<http://www.theosophyjp.org>> In this web site we introduce basic concepts of Theosophy, outline of the lodge meetings as well as information about membership of the Nippon Lodge.

We hold Lodge meetings in Tokyo once a month. In the meetings in 2005 we have studied chapters of Madam Blavatsky's *The Key to Theosophy*. In the process of understanding the recondite tenets of Madam Blavatsky's teachings, we often refer to occult correspondences of her Inner Group Teachings.

Contents of the email magazine of the Nippon Lodge include Japanese translations of theosophical books like Irving Cooper's *Theosophy Simplified*, H.P. Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* and Winifred A. Parley's *Circle of Wisdom: A Blavatsky Quotation Book*.

Taichi Yamaguchi
in charge of the email magazine,
Nippon Lodge, Tokyo

INDONESIA

Ali Ritsema, former General Secretary of the TS in The Netherlands, visited the Section from 12 to 22 May 2005. On the 12 May she spoke at the British Council Library in Jakarta, and theosophical pamphlets were distributed. On the 13 May she lectured on "HPB and The Secret Doctrine" at the Supra College of Computer and Management, also in Jakarta. In Bandung, on 15 May, she gave two lectures at the Parahyangan Catholic University, on "Theosophy and the Theosophical Society" and "Relationship Between Humans and the Environment", attended by 65 people.

As a result of Ali Ritsema's lectures a new study group was formed in Bandung. Its first meeting, attended by 13 people, was held on 5 June, and was chaired by Matius Ali, President of Luxor Lodge (Jakarta), who gave a talk on "Human Principles" based on Geoffrey Hodson's book *Basic Theosophy* and utilising Dr K. V. K. Nehru's PowerPoint slides. The Bandung study group will meet once a month. The hospitality and help of Mrs Maria, a senior TS member in Bandung, was very appreciated. It is hoped that this new initiative will revive TS work in that

area. The Chinese edition of *At the Feet of the Master* has been distributed in Indonesia and has attracted the attention of some Chinese Buddhists from a number of Viharas.

Forty-five members attended the National Convention held in Solo 20-22 May 2005, with Ali Ritsema as the guest speaker. There is a revival of interest in TS work in Malang and in East Java, with meetings held in members' homes. The TS Lodge in Malang, which has been inactive for many years, has a scheduled meeting for next September.

SRI LANKA

As for many years the Sri Lankan Section did not have the necessary number of active Lodges and members to be considered a Section under the Rules of The Theosophical Society, on 9 October 2004 Mr S. M. Jayathilake was appointed Presidential Representative of the TS in that country by the International President, Mrs Radha Burnier. The Federation President, Pedro Oliveira, visited Colombo, Galle and Badulla in October 2004, speaking to the public, to members and to students at several educational institutions. Since his appointment Mr Jayathilake has been busy reorganising the Olcott Lodge in Colombo, located at the Ananda College, which was founded by Col. Olcott; the Olcott Lodge in Galle, located at the Wijayananda Pirivena, where HPB and HSO took the Panchasila and became Buddhists in May 1880. The efforts of Brother Jayathilake are being very much encouraged by the High Priest of the Wijayananda Buddhist Temple, Ven. B. Gnanavisuddhi Maha Thero. The 98th death anniversary of Col. Olcott was held there with the participation of about 200 students. Col. Olcott was also the founder of the TS Lodge in Galle. A booklet in Sinhala about his activities in Sri Lanka was printed and distributed. Steps are being taken to revive the Asoka Lodge in Kandy and a new Lodge, Uva, is being formed in Badulla.

There is a need to establish regular theosophical activities at the Headquarters in Colombo. It is hoped that local members, under the coordination of the Presidential Representative, who lives in Badulla, will eventually organise and maintain a sustained interest in the study and practice of Theosophy in that city. The example of the Founders, who worked tirelessly for the Society and who blessed that country with their visits, is a continuous source of inspiration.

THEOSOPHY IN CHINESE

Hundreds of copies of the Chinese edition of *At the Feet of the Master* were sent to New Zealand, Malaysia, The Philippines, Indonesia, Japan as well as to all TS centres in Australia. Distribution is proceeding in those countries. The next phase of distribution will be to TS Sections in Europe and North America.

VISIT TO AFRICA

The IPF President, Pedro Oliveira, was invited to tour the East and Central African Section of the TS in March 2005. He lectured to the public and spoke to the members in Nairobi, Kisumu, Tabaka and Nakuru, in Kenya; in Kampala, Uganda, and Dar er Salaam, in Tanzania. His subjects included “Meeting Death as a Friend”, “The Message of Karma”, “The Religion of Nature” and “The Perennial Philosophy and Its Practical Application”. He was also one of the guest speakers of the Convention in Nairobi, from 25 to 27 March, which had as its theme “Truth is Timeless” and which commemorated the centenary of arrival of Theosophy in East and Central Africa, the first Lodge established there being the Mombasa Lodge in 1905. The International President, Mrs Radha Burnier, was the guest of honour at the Convention. After that event, Mrs Burnier also visited Uganda and Tanzania.

INDIA

On 18 and 20 January 2005 two dialogues were held at the Headquarters Hall at Adyar, Chennai, between the Venerable Professor Samdhong Rinpoche and the International President, Mrs Burnier. Professor Rinpoche is the first democratically elected Prime Minister of the Tibetan Government in Exile and former Director of the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Sarnath, near Varanasi. He is also a life member of the TS and a Trustee of the Krishnamurti Foundation India (KFI). More than 200 people from the TS, KFI, the Tibetan student community and the public were present. The subject of the first dialogue was the need for morality and right conduct, and for the second one the nature of egoism and its transcendence.

The Indian Section web site <http://www.theosophyindia.com> was launched on 21 October 2004, during the North India Study Camp by the Camp Director, Pedro Oliveira.

The 40th Annual Conference of the Utkal Theosophical Federation was held on 12, 13 February 2005 in Bhubaneswar. Prof. R. C. Tampi, National Lecturer of the Indian Section and President of the Kerala Theosophical Federation, was the chief guest and spoke on “The Science of Religion - The Religion of Science”. H. K. Sharan, also a National Lecturer for the Section and President of Delhi Theosophical Federation, was the chief speaker and spoke on “Secret of Life”. The Theo-Science Lecture was delivered by Ch. Gaurahari Mishra on the subject “A Scientific and Spiritual Analysis of Holistic Environment”.