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EDITORIAL: ITC AND NATURE’S MAJESTY

Fundamental to International Theosophy Conferences, Inc. is providing a means for all Theosophists to work together. It is very simple. In unity there is strength and with division there is not. We now have three of the major Theosophical organizations contributing to this year's conference and many from the growing ranks of “Independent Theosophists.”

If one looks over the history of the major divisions in the efforts to bring Theosophy to the world, it becomes evident Theosophists cannot work together. There are different leaders, different directions, and probable side trips away from Helena Petrovna Blavatsky’s epic writings. The side trips are attractive to some and distasteful to others.

An irony is that the first object of the Theosophical Society is to form the nucleus of universal brotherhood. Does the idea of brotherhood extend between theosophists of different traditions as well? Can you still have brotherhood with people you know are not doing it the right way?

The Dalai Lama’s recent book Toward a True Kinship of Faiths has a subtitle, “How the World’s Religions Can Come Together.” He sees a need for not only Theosophists but the peoples of all faiths to find a basis of understanding. His unifying principle is compassion. Perhaps compassion as a word has more meaning in today’s world than brotherhood. If so, the first object of Theosophists might be “to form a nucleus of universal compassion.” Of significance, the Dalai Lama states in his book that it was an early encounter with Theosophy that was one of the things inspiring him in write his book on “coming together.”

How can we do this? In her Key to Theosophy, H.P.B. may have given us the clue. She writes:

The clue lies in the double consciousness of our mind, and also, in the dual nature of the mental ‘principle.’ There is a spiritual consciousness, the Manasic mind illumined by the light of Buddhi, that which subjectively perceives abstractions; and the sentient consciousness (the lower Manasic light), inseparable from our physical brain and senses. This latter consciousness is held in subjection by the brain and physical senses, and, being in its turn equally dependent on them, must of course fade out and finally die with the disappearance of the brain and physical senses. It is only the former kind of consciousness, whose root lies in eternity, which survives and lives for ever, and may, therefore, be regarded as immortal. Everything else belongs to passing illusions.

In the lower level of consciousness it is probable we theosophists may never find a way to work together. Too many of us are convinced other traditions are not doing it right. But, that is not where we want to go. At a spiritual consciousness level we may find each other. It seems we need to head in this direction.

But how? Is there a way to at least bring this level of consciousness into awareness? One way we might do this is through the majesty of nature. We all know that sometimes when we come across an incredible expression of nature – a landscape, many plants, trees, animals and so much more, our sense of wonder comes forth. There is often gratitude we are a part of this. It is higher level consciousness. It may be at this level we can be aware of a unity not only with nature but with each other. The theosophical teachings give us this
direction. At this level perhaps theosophists can find that nucleus of universal brotherhood and universal compassion.

This magazine, as a regular feature, plans to have scenes from nature to remind us that we are capable of the higher level consciousness. In fact, when a reader comes across a picture of this dimension, we would like for you to send it to us so it can be reproduced so all can share.

The article, “Beauty Is Not Optional,” reprinted from “Quest Magazine,” we feel touches on this higher level consciousness and can set a tone for our ITC conferences. Additional articles include “A Tribute to Jo,” although she is no longer with us, it is as if she continues to be integral to our conferences. Garrett Riegg’s important article ..on his trip to Wheaton gives us the background for the conference in 2012. We also include a piece from Joe Fulton on www.theosophy.net where so much activity is underway. In our conference, there will be a presentation on Fohat. We reproduced the piece (with permission) by Ron Wallwork, Science Correspondent, from Theosophy Ezine, as a warm-up.

We hope to highlight in this magazine many of the current expressions of theosophy.

Finally, we have the entire program for the 2011 Julian International Theosophy Conference. Although, there may be some last minute changes, it is a close representation of the schedule.

We hope you like it.

– – The Editors.
A JOURNEY TO
HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS
THE SONG OF EVOLUTION

No conscious thing beneath the sky Will ever cease to be;

Unending all as Thou and I,

Tho’ forms change constantly.
The Life imprison’d in dull earth, May bloom a lovely flower;

So all evolve a fairer birth,

When law brings forth the hour.

Rememb’ring ever That Thou Art, The way will shorter grow, True brotherhood within thy heart, Thou’lt reach to those who know.
Beauty Is Not Optional

Kathryn Gann

([This article was published in Quest Magazine and is reprinted here by permission of the author]

We would like to think that if we were dying of thirst and were surrounded by water, we’d have the good sense to drink. Strangely, though, patients suffering from dehydration often do not experience thirst. Thirst is not always a reliable gauge of the body’s need for water (www.mayoclinic.com).

Too often we become starved for beauty in the same way—we simply do not think of it as a necessity. We mistakenly believe that drenching ourselves in beauty is a luxury, something that would be nice to experience someday when we have the time. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. Beauty is as essential to the human soul as water is to the human body. When the tiring dissonance of modern life throws us off balance and seems to drain our very life force, beauty is the antidote with the power to restore us. Indeed, it has been described as the manifestation of love and harmony. To the extent that we are in a state of love and harmony, our life force and vitality flow unimpeded to the same degree, allowing a fuller expression of what it is to be human.

In the 1992 movie FernGully: The Last Rainforest, a nature spirit named Magi advises her protégé, “There are worlds within worlds, Krista. Everything in our world is connected by the delicate strands of the Web of Life, which is balanced between forces of destruction and the magic forces of creation....Everyone can call on the magic powers of the Web of Life. You have to find it in yourself.”

Among the many “magic powers of the Web of Life” to be wielded by human beings, the experience of beauty stands out as one of the most pleasurable. The transformation that occurs deep within us as we enjoy genuine beauty is nothing short of magical. We are free to find beauty in the mundane as well as the extraordinary, in the highs and lows of life, and in doing so we cannot fail to expand and enrich our experience on beauty!

Treasure in the Garbage
The experience of beauty, like inner growth and “aha” moments, comes spontaneously and unpredictably, then vanishes as quickly. We might spend an afternoon at an art museum and leave quite uninspired, yet be mesmerized on the way home by the beauty of falling raindrops reverberating in puddles. We cannot predict when and where we will experience beauty, but we stand a better chance of fully appreciating those spontaneous moments when we maintain a state of mindfulness attuned to beauty in our everyday surroundings.
There is an eccentric elderly woman, writes Italian transpersonal psychologist Piero Ferrucci, who cannot bear to throw away what others might deem garbage. She sees beauty in the fine skin of an onion, the celery stalk, the smooth, round avocado pit, and in vegetable peels in gorgeous shades of red, purple, orange, and yellow. Unable to part with them, she places them in a transparent jar of water on her windowsill. Gradually, her “bouquet” forms itself into interesting spires, floating clouds, pleasant lines, amazing colors and abstract shapes. At sunset, the light shining through the jar produces an incandescent effect (Ferrucci, pp. 16-17).

What a lovely gift this woman shared—the ability to see beauty in the most mundane of forms. Perhaps part of our task as human beings is to see beauty everywhere, even in mundane objects, and elevate it to an art form. Theosophical teacher Joy Mills has said that “unless we find the beauty of the Spirit in the very midst of the most material forms and convey it pure and unsullied as a gift to Divine Love, we shall really not be able to find it anywhere.”

In her diary, Anne Frank described the beauty she saw in the graceful curves formed by her hair in the bathroom sink and lamented that the others in hiding with her did not share her appreciation of this artistry. Her experience illustrates the unpredictable nature of beauty—we never quite know when it’s coming, and we cannot seem to produce it on demand. Had Anne gone to the sink looking for beauty as an assigned task, she might well have missed it; yet because she was open to the experience, she enjoyed this little respite from the fear and tension of her circumstances.

The Japanese concept of wabi-sabi celebrates the beauty of the mundane, the austere, the transient, the imperfect. Japanese tea ceremonies are often performed with simple rustic pottery as an embodiment of the wabi-sabi aesthetic. Looking to the processes of nature, we might find a poignant beauty in the wilting red autumn leaves and accept them as reminders of the transient nature of our world as the yang of summer gradually yields to the yin of winter. This is the wabi-sabi way of seeing.

Nature’s cycles are so much a part of our daily experience that it is easy to overlook the miracle of constant change taking place around us. Every twenty-four hours the yang of daytime gives way to the yin of dark night. As this transition unfolds, we are treated to a spectacular light show—a sunset. Each moment of a sunset is perfectly unique and perfectly fleeting. We gaze at it and realize that never before has there been exactly this combination of light, colors, and clouds; and the brilliant combination changes from moment to moment. In appreciating the uniqueness and fleetingness that makes each moment of a sunset exquisitely precious, we are restored to a state of awe, the hallmark of the experience of beauty. As we watch the shifting colors of a sunset, we embody Kahlil Gibran’s description of beauty as “a heart enflamed and a soul enchanted” (Gibran, 75).

When we attune ourselves to the beauty in our everyday world, we are changed from within. We become “beauty receptors,” and life takes on lovelier colors and a zestier flavor than it
had before. Happily, it’s as simple as seeing and appreciating the artistry of our commonplace surroundings.

**The Riace Warriors**
Having accustomed ourselves to finding beauty in the mundane, we are in an ideal position to be transported entirely beyond ourselves when confronted with extraordinary beauty. In 1972, two bronze statues of warriors from ancient Greece were retrieved from an ancient shipwreck at the bottom of the sea off the coast of Riace, Italy. The statues became known as I Bronzi di Riace, “the Riace Bronzes” or “the Riace Warriors.” By the early 1980s, they were on display in Florence, Italy, at the Archaeological Museum in Piazza Santissima Annunziata, described by Ferrucci as “one of the most beautiful squares in the world,” the “greatest splendor” of the Florentine Renaissance. Yet a friend of Ferruci’s who had seen the Riace Warrior statues inside the museum remarked that they were of such a transcendent beauty that when he emerged from the exhibit, the piazza itself had lost its luster and was no longer beautiful to him.

Not believing that an art exhibit could somehow cause the piazza to “lose” its beauty, Ferrucci attended the exhibit himself. The statues were a study in complementary energies. One warrior embodied a youthful, fierce quality; the other portrayed a calm, mature strength. Ferrucci was “transported into another world, to a plane belonging to all men and women, all times and all cultures.” His previously held ideas about what was beautiful and what was not seemed to fall away; he was “purified and taken to the essence.” He left that exhibit in an altered state and was astounded to find that, just as his friend had described, the Piazza Santissima Annunziata now “seemed old and decadent” (Ferrucci, 58—61). Ferrucci’s experience seems to affirm Michelangelo’s statement that “beauty is the purgation of superfluities.”

**The Song within All Songs**
Recalling Magi’s counsel to find within ourselves “the magic powers of the Web of Life,” we instinctively turn to music to restore ourselves to harmony when we’ve become fragmented by the turmoil and dissonance of daily life. As with all experiences of beauty, musical taste is a deeply individual matter; music that strikes one person as beautiful may leave another cold. But whatever our preferences, we choose music that uplifts when we’re discouraged, energizes when we’re fatigued, or soothes when nerves are raw. Simply put, we appreciate the power of music to restore ourselves to a state of harmony.

Wisdom teachings from many traditions, as well as science, tell us that the entire universe in which we live was created by sound vibration. After pioneering the science of “cymatics” (from the Greek kyma, “wave”), Swiss scientist and artist Hans Jenny wrote that vibrational effects “may be said to exemplify the principle of wholeness. They can be regarded as models of the doctrine of holism: each single element is a whole and exhibits unitariness whatever the mutations and changes to which it is subjected. And always it is the underlying vibrational processes that sustain this unity in diversity. In every part, the whole is present or at least suggested” (quoted in Hodson, Music Forms, 14).
Like a fish that does not perceive that it lives in water, could we be living within a song but not hearing it? Perhaps the vibration that created and sustains the universe is a continuous song, as suggested by Sir James Jeans when he wrote, “To my mind, the laws which nature obeys are less suggestive of those which a machine obeys in its motion than those which a musician obeys in writing a fugue, or a poet in composing a sonnet” (quoted in Hodson, Kingdom, 19). Theosophical teachings agree that “Life itself has speech and is never silent. And its utterance is not . . . a cry; it is a song. Learn from it that you are part of the harmony” (Collins, 26). Songwriter Michael Stillwater similarly wrote, “There is a cosmic music underling everything, vibrating throughout the universe, personally accessible through the specific individual filters of language, culture, and individual attunement. When we listen with awareness from a silent place, we can hear and uniquely express this cosmic music, the Great Song within all songs” (St. Vincent, 142).

Little wonder, then, that beautiful music has the power to restore us to a state of harmony. Music resonates with heart and head, power and passivity, the male and female in us, and weaves all aspects of our being back into harmony. It moves us to feel that all possibility lies within us. Our focus changes from things outside us to that which is deep within, and we move just a little closer to “becoming what we have always been,” as Carl Jung advised. Pianist and composer Kevin Asbjörnson teaches that “music is the medium which creates a bridge between the “doing” and the “being” in life” (St. Vincent, 17). Submerged in our favorite music, we feel that we’ve come home to our true Self. Singer and songwriter Dennis Merritt Jones sums it up: “Music calls us home. It reminds us that beyond all the apparent differences we seem to have, we all come from the same place—our unity in Spirit” (St. Vincent, 97).

**Leaving the Light On**

When a person is away from home at night, the family often leaves a light on near the door, so the loved one will easily find his or her way back home. It’s a loving act that we can perform for ourselves too—we can always “leave the light on” to find our way by focusing on that which is beautiful. Our internal perception of beauty serves as both a stable foundation and a guiding light that’s always shining, ever present to show us the way home.

Going further, an anonymous author known as “The Dreamer” assures us that beauty guides us to our true home, that place in human evolution where saints and sages stand:

Looking for Beauty, which is the manifestation of Love and Harmony, sustained by an ever-growing love and devotion, he is no longer confined even to a Name of the Divine Love and Beauty, and as Plato says of Beauty, he “may no longer be as the slave or bondsman of one beauty or Law but setting sail into the ocean of Beauty . . . . which albeit all other fair things partake thereof and grow and perish itself without change or increase or diminution endless for everlasting. (“The Dreamer,” 104, quoting Plato, Symposium, 192–202)
The character Magi spoke truly: If we wish to maintain harmony between the forces of creation and those of destruction, we must look deep within ourselves to find and draw upon the magic powers of the Web of Life. Beauty is among the most magical of such powers, and for the evolving life within us it is a true necessity.

AUTHOR BIO:
Kathryn Gann has been a student of theosophy since 1994, and currently serves as President of The Denver Theosophical Society, as well as Director, Western District, Theosophical Society in America. She enjoys nature photography and appreciates the Rocky Mountains’ abundant photo opportunities.

SOURCES
Mills, Joy. *The One True Adventure*, p. 49.
Sometimes on TV there is a warning, “Viewer discretion is advised.” The same might be said of this article, “Reader discretion is advised.” If you are unsure if you want to encounter death’s impact, you may not want to read on.

Jo’s story is important. It is connected to the International Theosophy Conferences. It has connection to all of us. It may even add a few notches towards a higher level of consciousness.

It all began a few years ago when we were at the bookstore of San Diego Theosophists – taking care of some odds and ends. The phone rang. At first, it was confusing. They wanted to know if we studied Theosophy. Yes, we said we do. Then another lady came on the phone and said she was calling from Wheaton, Illinois at the Theosophical Society in America. She was taking classes there, but she lived in San Diego, and she wanted to find a place to study Theosophy closer to where she lived. Hesitantly we told her we do have study classes. But, was she aware we are a group associated with United Lodge of Theosophists and we are not associated with the Theosophical Society in America? “Oh,” she said, “What is the difference?” I really did not know what to say. “Over a hundred years ago, there were disagreements between Theosophists and some went their separate ways.” I felt embarrassed. “That’s too bad,” she said. “Is it OK if I still come and study Theosophy there in San Diego?” I said, “Please do.”

In the following week, Jo Raysbrook came to her first meeting in San Diego. She was obviously bright, attractive, and gracious in her manner. It was later learned she had spent a good portion of her career as a flight attendant, then corporate sales, and she became a personal assistant to Pete Wilson while he was Governor and then Senator for California.

On the first day she came to our center, even before words of welcoming could be said, Jo exclaimed, “I was the one who spoke with you on the phone from Wheaton.” “I am here to study Theosophy.” She came regularly to our classes. She attended our art classes, as well, that were held in our book center. She was talented. One of her pictures is on the wall in our waiting room.
During a class she shared her personal story and what led her to Theosophy. It was a Near Death Experience. She wrote about it. I was able to get a copy from her husband. Her words follow:

In November of 1993, I was riding a motorcycle by myself for the first time. It was a dirt bike and I was out in the very dry and barren canyons just east of San Diego. My boyfriend at the time, now my husband, had shown me the basics and asked me to just drive around in the flat picnic area to get a feel for the bike. I was very careful at first, and then becoming bolder and more confident, I went up and down some small hills. I progressed a little further and started to go down a really steep hill.

Somehow, I must have kicked the bike into neutral and try as I did, I could not get it back into gear. I panicked and my mind went blank. I found myself gaining speed and going around corners at a dizzying rate and I started to pray out loud, “Please God, help me, help me.” I do remember coming down that hill but don’t remember landing in a pool of mud. The mud softened the blow of my fall, and I had evidently pitched over the handlebars head first. My boyfriend had caught sight of me careening down the slope and soon found me. I came to, picked myself up, dusted myself off, and with just a little persuasion got back on the bike and rode it over to his van. I was very very sore for a couple of days and had some bruising from the fall but apart from that, did not seem to have suffered any injury. The third day, I was sitting in a restaurant with friends having lunch, when all of a sudden I could not move. The pain in my stomach was unbearable. My friends, seeing I was in a great deal of distress, decided to take me to the emergency room of the nearest hospital. On the way there, in the car, they told me, later, that I was hallucinating as the pain increased up my back and into my shoulders. In the emergency room, all kinds of tests were run and several machines were used. I could not be allowed any medication until all the tests were completed and I was in agony. After some time, a doctor appeared and sat down on the side of the bed. He told me he would have to do surgery immediately because I was bleeding internally. Unbeknownst to me I had burst my gall bladder and bruised my internal organs and over 100 gallstones were floating in my body. I was feeling absolutely terrified as I was wheeled into surgery because there had been no time to give a shot to tranquilize me. I just remember the operating room being so cold, and several doctors and nurses looking down on me wearing their green masks. The next thing—I was out. All of a sudden, I found myself on the side of a fast flowing river. On the other side were figures none of whom I recognized and yet I knew them and they knew me. In fact I sensed that they knew everything about me. A small bridge over the river connected us and I moved towards it to cross over to them. Unanimously, it seemed they rose up and raised their hands to tell me I could not cross that bridge, and yet they did not move at all.
Everything was telepathic and I understood completely that I was not to cross that bridge! I felt very humbled by these figures, which I now realize were spirit forms—and I was in great awe of them. I don’t know how long I stood there (and now I understand that there is no such thing as time in the eternal) but the next thing that happened was that I found myself soaring out into space. I could see our beautiful planet getting farther and farther away and I was just floating amongst the stars. The thought came very clearly to me that THIS WAS THE REALITY and that life on earth was just a small part of existence and was quite meaningless compared with this beautiful truth. I felt I understood everything and it was ALL SO SIMPLE. I asked myself how could I have forgotten this beautiful reality that I was a co-creator with the Universe. I was still just floating when—suddenly—whoosh, I was back in acute care at the hospital. The nurse was pulling a tube out of my throat and I started to cry because I could feel the knowledge leaving. I tried to say, “don’t go,” to will the knowledge to stay with me, but to no avail. I was back to just being me and I longed with all my heart to have that beautiful understanding of the Universe again. There is no question that experience changed me forever and released me from any fear of death.

Jo said too that the experience had changed her life. She began searching for the wisdom she somehow knew existed during the time she was pronounced “dead.” She attended religious and spiritual centers. She read as much as she could. That is, until she found Theosophy. Theosophical ideas seemed to awaken the wisdom found in the NDE. The Secret Doctrine and other theosophical books were now her companions.

Later, when there were chances to understand more about her, it became clear how much death was a part if her existence. She was no longer afraid of dying and thought of death as a wonderful experience. She related she had first been married to a psychologist who suffered with manic depressive illness. He took his own life. His death affected her, but it was more strongly in the consciousness of her two children, now young adults. She, herself, was able to get past part of this. She married again. She described herself as deeply in love with her current husband. She wanted to share what she had found – Theosophy – with him, but this did not seem to be his path.

It was to her two children she devoted so much of her life. Her children tended towards depression, just like their father. Her son had serious chemical dependency problems and her daughter exhibited a major panic disorder.

She and her husband did everything they could to help. Doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists and treatment facilities, became the fabric of the family life. Her essential dilemma was that although she knew there was nothing to, but as a mother, she felt overwhelmed. Perhaps
her children would follow the same path and end as their father. Her fear of death was not for herself. It was for her children. She felt protective and wanted them to have life.

In the year 2006, we had our first International Theosophy Conference in Julian. Now in 2011, we are having the second. Many who attended the first conference will remember Jo Raysbrook. She became a hostess and registered many of the Theosophists who attended. She brought her son with her and he proved to be a bright, handsome young man and so many of us enjoyed his presence. Jo later revealed he seemed to have overcome his addiction to substances.

Several months later, however, a call came from Jo. Her son had gone to Spain, bought and resold some property while there. He had a considerable sum of money from this and he lost his life to several men wanting his money. It was devastating for her and her husband.

Jo, despite the enormity of experiencing her son’s death, devoted as much time as she could to her daughter. Her daughter was admitted to a psychiatric facility after overdosing on her medication. She was in a coma. For days she stayed that way. Jo stayed at her bedside day after day. She read the Key to Theosophy to her each day. She hoped it reached her daughter at a deep level. She wanted her to know Theosophy. Daughter began to respond and did regain her consciousness. She seemed to do well with the treatment the facility offered.

Sometime after this another call came from Jo. She had cancer. Fourth stage cancer of the colon. She said she was undergoing chemo and radiation. She said in her usual cheerful voice she would be alright. Yet, a few months later she did pass away. Ironically, it was only a few months after this the daughter did succumb to another overdose of medication.

Chuck was now completely alone. Jo was and is everything to him. She was his life. He did a great deal to gain support from their many friends and groups with others who had lost loved ones.

Trying to understand became Chuck’s focus to his own life. He thought back that Jo had first discovered Theosophy at classes they took in Ojai, California at the Krotona Theosophical Center. They had stayed there. He decided he wanted to spend some time alone at this center. He called and was first told that the lodging was only for members of the Theosophical Society and he was not a member. Somehow, however, the director of the center, Nelda Samarel, became involved. When she understood his intention, everything changed. He came to Krotona and spent time there experiencing the time he and Jo had been there previously.
Samarel had a background as an RN hospice nurse. Coincidentally she had been working on a booklet that could help Theosophists and others with the time of death. Chuck became a consultant to her. If you look in the back of this booklet, called *Helping the Dying*, you will find his name in the back of the booklet listed there as one of her consultants.

When I called Chuck and talked about doing an article for this magazine, as a tribute to Jo, he told me about the booklet and suggested I get it. The conversation with him was in the evening. When I arose in the morning, my wife had got up earlier and had printed out this very same booklet – “Helping the Dying.” I was mystified. How did she know? A friend, she explained, with whom she had communicated with the evening before, had said she had found this great booklet on death and dying and had sent it as an email attachment. The friend or my wife had no knowledge of my communication with Chuck. I felt that somehow Jo was the one that had pressed the “send” button.

The booklet is truly an excellent work on ways we can all deal with death. It is recommended not only to Theosophists, but to all. We are planning to have it displayed during the Julian ITC conference this August. Probably, another coincidence, when we were reviewing the May edition of “Theosophy Forward” we found numerous photos of the International Theosophical Society conference held in Rome. Among the pictures was Nelda Samarel with a display of this same booklet.

Reflecting on Jo’s incredible life story I could not but help but wonder about its meaning. Perhaps, we might all do this. Mine goes something like this. Jo could have sensed her children’s destiny. She may have come back from death and told all who would listen that death can lead to deeper meaning. In this way she could have tried to remove the fear associated with death - particularly for her children. Maybe her message is for us all. Just being in her presence seemed to bring forth an aura of joy associated with another world. That there is more ahead of us than this one life we have. Maybe she was trying to tell us something like that.

What was the meaning for Chuck? This seems almost too difficult to fathom. She did share with him a time of love that will always be with him. Chuck knows that she is there and feels her presence. They are never apart. He communicates to those who know him a compassion which reminds one so much of Jo. When you are with him or talk to him it is as if both are there. The story can have meaning to Theosophists. Jo would say, for all who will listen. Those who have found love
do not lose it and separation is a temporary illusion on the long journey. Maybe this was what Jo wanted us to know. What are your thoughts?


We also have some additional material from Theosophical literature which may be of help. We can be contacted at theosophy@theosconf.org.

The music of the woods is silent now

And mellow sunlight trickles from the leaves...
OLCOTT CENTER RECONNAISSANCE TRIP

Reviewing ITC’s Conference Site for 2012

By Garrett Riegg

Purpose. Over the past decade, ITC (International Theosophy Conferences, Inc.) has fostered dialogue between students of at least five different Theosophical organizations. Last year we had our conference in The Netherlands, which is associated with the Theosophical Society Point Loma. The year prior to that, we had our conference associated with the Centennial of the United Lodge of Theosophists. For 2012, the plans are for our conference to be associated with the Theosophical Society in America, which is located in Wheaton, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago.

I went to Wheaton to meet with officers and staff at the Olcott Center and to see the facilities and resources that would be available for the 2012 conference. Just as importantly, I wanted to meet the people at Olcott and share with them about the visions and goals of our different organizations.

For those new to Theosophy, the TS in A represents the oldest national section of the international Theosophical Society, whereas ITC represents a new web of connections between Theosophical students in various organizations including not only TS in A (Wheaton) but also the United Lodge of Theosophists, the Theosophical Society Point Loma, the Theosophical Society in America (Pasadena) and other groups.

Airport to HQ. My plane was delayed due to thunderstorms and 90-degree weather in Chicago. I got my rental car and somehow missed the exit for Highway 64. It was almost 8:00 in the evening when I arrived. Two hours late! I parked in front of the Quest Bookstore and Jeff came out and showed me to my room, which is right above the bookstore. The building is known as the Joy Mills Building.

HQ-Rogers Building. Jeff and I walked about a block to the headquarters building where he showed me the basement, kitchen and dining room. I met Melanie and Meredith. Melanie is the official hostess. She has an office right off the front door. It’s quite a beautiful building. I went to join the class in the library but it had just adjourned and they were having snacks. Pablo Sender and Dan Smallo were both there. Soon Betty Bland appeared to greet me.
Philosophy and History. Realizing I might only have an hour the next day, I gave Betty some background on ITC, ULT and the Point Loma group. Mostly we spoke in generalities. We shared the desire to see students from these different organizations work together on collegial, friendly terms. She used a southern term to suggest that those in different Theosophical organizations should be like “kissing cousins.”

She mentioned that she had visited the Pasadena TS, about a year or two ago, and also has been to the Temple of the People in Halcyon, California. They had come to our conference in Cambria Pines about 10 years ago. I can’t recall if they have come to subsequent ones in Southern California. She thought they were all wonderful people. We both acknowledged that in every group there are some who want to keep separate and are shy of other groups. We discussed how strong personalities can make organizations split or become antagonistic. I commented that there’s a lot of old history that is dying out but still has an impact. I explained to her my personal background in ULT and my more recent activities with the Walnut Creek and then Oakland Theosophical Societies. I mentioned my trip to Adyar in 1972.

We discussed Adyar and the worldwide movement. I noticed on the wall that Radha Burnier had been president from 1980 to the present. As I recall, a new president was recently elected but her picture was not up yet. I mentioned the many speakers that we have had from the TSA at previous ITC conferences, including Robert Ellwood and Robert Corrington, Ph.D. from Drew University. I did not mention Michael Gomes and others from L.A.

Kitchen. As I went to breakfast at 8:00 AM, I met Betty Bland and she guided me on how to prepare toast. She shared some strawberries with me and I got a cup of coffee. I was pleased to meet Betty. She is wise and gracious.

Meditation. She showed me the stately meditation room, with artwork or symbols from every major religion. Then we went to her office, which was large but simple, except for the very richly colored oriental carpet. About a dozen people attended the 8:30 AM meditation. Most were staff members. Betty guided the meditation at the beginning and at the end.

Conference with Leaders. At 9:00, I had a quick conference with Betty Bland and Tim Boyd. Betty had just shown me the auditorium. They told me that the audio/visual equipment could only be used by their own staff. There is a downstairs classroom which holds 30 or 40 people. The classroom can serve an overflow audience to watch the speakers by video. For breakout sessions or committee meetings there are several rooms in addition to the classroom. There
is the family room that holds about 10 to 15 comfortably, including several couches; there is the library, which can easily hold 15; and there is the foyer next to the auditorium.

We talked about how Theosophical groups tend to split off whenever someone is unhappy because of leadership or doctrinal differences. The new splinter group can be just as autocratic as the original group, for example, having the same leader for life. Betty mentioned to me that in the TS in A they do have term limits. She thought that was a useful concept. She also mentioned that the annual conference of the Society at Adyar occurs over the Christmas holidays, which is rather inconvenient for many Americans. She suggested they change it but there has been no further word.

Dining Room. About 15 or 20 people came for lunch at noon. It was buffet style. Jeff had prepared a marvelous mushroom sauce for the pasta, lentil soup, green salad, whole grain bread and choice of ice creams. The dining room has new round tables, seating at least 8 people. They think the dining room might hold 80 people. One problem was a large pool table they say cannot be moved. It measures 54 inches by about 8 feet. I suggested they put a plywood top on it, cover it with a tablecloth and use it for the meals. Otherwise we cannot get all the attendees to eat there at once.

S.D. Class. At 12:30, we started the class on *The Secret Doctrine*, led by Pablo. They were reading an abridgement by Christmas Humphries. A fellow student shared with me several books by Stephen Phillips on occult chemistry, mathematics and super strings. We read in Volume II about human evolution.

Holiday Inn. Two Miles from TS in A Headquarters. In the afternoon, I visited the Holiday Inn and got a tour and complete information from Debbie, the saleslady. The cost will be from $85 to $99 plus tax, per night, with the higher amount for a suite that includes one or two beds, plus a hide-a-bed and kitchenette. Each of their two conference rooms holds 150 people, or it can be combined for one room with 300. The more easily accessed room is the Stratford A. They claim there is very little sound penetration through the collapsible wall. The room is very attractive, with a new multi-colored carpet.

Holiday Inn – Directions and Overview. Leaving the side or back entrance of the center, I made a left turn onto Geneva Avenue and went to the second stoplight, which is Gary
Avenue. I turned right on Gary and soon came to the Holiday Inn in the adjacent town of Carol Stream. This is where most guests stay for conferences. It’s about 1.6 miles away. It has 194 rooms, a very large indoor swimming pool, hot water spa, a tavern and a restaurant.

**Quest Bookstore.** Returning to the Quest Bookstore, I saw them bringing in statues of Buddha that were six feet tall and new bookcases from Bali. The bookstore has many long rows of books and several small attached rooms or spaces for homeopathic remedies, crystals and other gifts. It stays open until 8:00 PM most days. It is located in the Mills Building, which includes several rooms for staff and sometimes guests on the second floor.

**ITC Alumnus/Contact.** Next I took photos of the grounds and more of the interior of the main building, which is called the Rogers Building. Michelle gave several of us an explanation of the art in the lobby. I picked up several old magazines and cassette tapes they were giving away. I spent about half an hour with Jon Knebel, who has been to several ITC conferences. He will be encouraging Tim to promote our conference next year.

**Auditorium Details.** Before the lecture, I spoke at length with Tim Boyd, who introduced me to the two audio/visual technicians. They were doing a simultaneous webcast of the lecture on the TSA website. I asked Tim about refreshments during a long conference and he pointed to the table where they had tea and cookies.

**New President.** During the introduction of the lecture, Betty Bland mentioned that after three terms of three years each as National President, she was retiring. As of that day, the new President Elect was Tim Boyd. Everyone gave both of them applause. Tim will be presenting at our conference this year in Julian. After the lecture, I gave Betty a final hug and told her husband, Dave, how much I’d enjoyed meeting everyone and planning the 2012 conference. He expressed enthusiasm about the conference and wished us well.

**Tourist Brochures for Display?** While at the Holiday Inn, I picked up a number of tourist pamphlets promoting the zoo and similar attractions around the Chicago area. We might combine this with pamphlets about the Olcott Library and the history and art of the entire Olcott Center, to promote interest in the 2012 conference, when we meet in Julian this year.

**Wheaton.** Wheaton is a small, stately town which seems to be surrounded by lots of new roads and buildings, as if it were recently suburbanized out of the rural landscape. There is never a parking problem in this town. They don’t even have parking meters. I couldn’t find any downtown, but there are a number of shopping centers and a sprinkling of restaurants along the main roads.
The grounds of the center are quite attractive, with over 40 acres of green grass and tall trees. I was shown where the labyrinth is and some nice gardens and pathways.

In my photos you will see a large pond with an attractive fountain.

So, it will be nice for people who want to take a break and walk around, especially in the cool evenings.

They estimate the temperature in August will be near the top, which could be in the 90s, but usually it’s around 80, they said. It was 80 today and it was fairly comfortable, if I was not in the sun for long. All the bedrooms have air conditioning and most of the public rooms, as well.

The People. Everyone seemed very happy, upbeat and friendly. The students were a cross-section of society, much as in other lodges and groups I have visited. Those who lived on the grounds had a special feeling of community, it seemed to me. It was nice to see several young people in their 20s stop by to tour or attend the evening lecture.

It was great to have John and Martin in the lobby to answer questions for visitors—at depth. These volunteers and the staff members made me feel welcome and supported in every way.

I enjoyed the trip and I am optimistic for the prospects of our 2012 Conference! Now we just need some willing volunteers to make it a reality.
How we do What we Do

Joe Fulton

(This was an invited article, as a way to highlight Theosophical activity – The Editors)

Theosophy.NET has been around only about one and a half years. However, in that time we have managed to attract some of the best and brightest minds within the Theosophical movement. Our approach is unique in that we combine a number of different methods, not only from academic research, but also from the open-source software and project management communities to accomplish our work. We combine this with an out of the box approach that knows no limits and seeks to totally redefine what goes in the Theosophical World.

With that said, here’s how we do it!

1. Excellent Research
   a. Get the facts straight.
   b. Draw conclusions based on the facts, to the best of our comprehension.
      i. Use imagination, tempered by rational examination.
      ii. Fearlessly state the truth, regardless of your personal beliefs.
      iii. Thorough digging. We must become persistent researchers and well-versed in the methods and resources available. We should know all the stones to turn well and network to share information.

2. Accurate History
   For too long, the history of the Theosophical movement has been one of rumors, half-truths and fabrications passing as fact. We must really put that to a stop. Providing an abundance of primary sources from the origins of the movement is the best way to enable researchers to sort fact from fiction. Marc Demarest’s continuing pursuit of Emma Hardinge Britten’s works and associates has unearthed a vast treasury of early Theosophical material that has been hitherto inaccessible. David Reigle’s analysis of the Tibetan and Sanskrit sources of Blavatsky continues to illuminate her later writings. K. Paul Johnson, author of The Masters Revealed reports on current investigations of evidence of “the adepts” as an international network of acquaintances traceable through historical research. In today’s world where the concept of a worldwide digerati is taken for granted, this view of the original TS extends this idea of a global society of thinkers back over a hundred years...a massive innovation way before its time. By framing the movement within these terms, we move from fantasy to rationality.

3. From the heart, not the head... What does this mean? Quite simply, it means that for any one of us, we should be able to explain most concepts in our own words. When we say ‘live the wisdom’ the first place is in our daily lives, specifically how we express
ourselves. Otherwise it comes across as “truthiness” and appears to any reasonable person as lame.

4. We are a True Repository
Part of our mission has evolved into being a repository, not only for Theosophical writings, but also for the larger religious/philosophical/scientific community. This has already shown fruit with the Theosophist and Lucifer, but also with the forthcoming project involving the Sanskrit Texts, a collection of very rare writings which will all be released to the public, again to make sure that they never are lost or restricted to just a few, again. A major part of this effort will be to seek out private collections to scan and archive the documents under a Collective Commons license.

5. According to the Objects
Our goal is to pursue Theosophy strictly by the Objects of the movement. To that end we have reframed them using much fewer words:

- Embrace
- Compare
- Explore

6. Teams Work
In this movement there is the tendency for individuals to work by themselves and the lack of cooperative effort. At Theosophy.Net we have found that by forming small teams with the right people we can accomplish great things.

7. Open Source
We seek to establish a tradition of Open Source principles in our work. This is closely modeled on the practices within the Open Source software community. We publish all items under a Creative Commons license, ensuring that information flows freely to all. No student will ever be denied access to information on account of financial circumstances.

In addition, we use the same methods in our research as used in various Open Source development projects. This includes the encouragement of ‘drive-by’ contribution and efforts with small-teams, as stated above.

Thanks much and hopefully we’ll see you around Theosophy.NET.

Embrace*Compare*Explore
Helena P Blavatsky wrote: "The Sun we see, gives nothing of itself, because it is a reflection; a bundle of electro-magnetic forces, one of the countless milliards of 'Knots of Fohat'. Fohat is called the 'Thread of primeval Light,' the 'Ball of thread' of Ariadne, indeed, in this labyrinth of chaotic matter. This thread runs through the seven planes tying itself into knots. Every plane being septenary, there are thus forty-nine mystical and physical forces, [the] larger knots forming stars, suns and systems, the smaller, planets, and so on...The electro-magnetic knot of our Sun is neither tangible nor dimensional, nor even as molecular as the electricity we know.

The Sun...gives out nothing of itself. It is an absurdity, therefore, to say that the solar fires are being consumed and gradually extinguished. The Sun has but one distinct function; it gives the impulse of life to all that breathes and lives under its light. The sun is the throbbing heart of the system; each throb being an impulse. But this heart is invisible: no astronomer will ever see it."

Today, this wonderful description of the Sun is beginning to be discovered by science, usually termed the Electric Universe. A universe formed not primarily by the incredibly weak random interaction of gravity but by 'Fohat' Cosmic Electricity. Theosophy talks about the cosmos as being a living being, there being no such thing as dead matter. Superclusters, Galaxies, Solar
systems, Suns and Planets form an intricate connected living structure a neuro-network transmitted from Macrocosm to Microcosm as a vast electrical circuit. The distribution of the cosmos and the human brain under an electron microscope have now been proven to have the same structure. Just as electrical impulses energise the nervous system throughout the human body, so does 'Fohat' Cosmic Electricity energise the cosmic systems.

In fact, it is being suggested that enormous electric currents in the relative vacuum of space form naturally a particular twisted ribbon structure known to Electrical Engineers and Plasma Physicist as Birkland Currents. This being the same form as the Caduceus, or DNA. When matter (Plasma) comes into contact with these enormous electric currents, matter is forced into the string of twisted (Z) pinch points forming, suns and planets, condensing matter into tight spheres, giving the explanation for the first time how the Spherical Sun and the staged orbits of planets are formed.

Plasma, the fourth state of matter, makes up 99.99% of matter in the universe. Plasma is very hot matter stripped of electrons giving it electrical charge. The Sun acts as a step down transformer (for those familiar with electronics) it steps down the voltage from high to low. As HPB says it gives nothing of itself. It takes in electrical energy and radiates out to all living forms within its sphere of influence. From a Theosophical perspective the Sun radiates throughout all the 7 or 49 planes mystical and physical.

The Sun is physically very mysterious, Science still has many questions to resolve, the temperature above the surface is in the region of 2 million deg. K, on the surface it is only 6000 deg. K. Whilst Sunspots which are magnetic disturbances and penetrate some 5000 Km below the Suns surface appear black, suggesting a much lower temperature. This seems contrary to logic, maybe the Sun is not a simple fusion reactor.

So in summary, I will leave you with the words of Plasma Scientists Wallace Thornhill and David Talbot:

"From the smallest particle to the largest galactic formation, a web of electrical circuitry connects and unifies all of nature, organising galaxies, energising stars, giving birth to planets and, on our own world, controlling weather and animating biological organisms. There are no isolated islands in an electric universe."

-----Ron Wallwork, Science Correspondent, April 2011 - Theosophy Ezine

www.theosophy.org.uk
THURSDAY, AUGUST 11

5:00-6:25 - DINNER AT MEADOW VIEW INN

6:25-9:00 - OPENING PRESENTATIONS

SETTING THE TONE OF THEOSOPHICAL UNITY

WELCOMING: SALLY COLBERT, President, ITC

PRESENTERS:

MYRRA LEE, for United Lodge of Theosophists

HERMAN VERMEULEN, Leader, Theosophical Society
Point Loma

TIM BOYD, President, Theosophical Society in America

JERRY HEJKA-EKINS, for Alexandria West

JOE FULTON, for Theosophy.Net
FRIDAY MORNING - AUGUST 12

7:30-8:30 - BREAKFAST AT MEADOW VIEW INN

8:30-8:45 - BREAK

9:00-12:00 - JULIAN MEADOW VIEW INN

TOPIC: THEOSOPHICAL PUBLICATIONS

9:00-9:25 - Coordinator: Sally Colbert, *International Theosophy Magazine*

9:25-9:40 - Odin Townley, *Theosophy Watch*

9:40-10:05 - Carolyn Dorrance, Ph.D. *Vidya Magazine*

10:05-10:20 – BREAK

10:20-10:45 - Tim Boyd, *Quest Magazine*

10:45-11:05 - Jan Kind, *Theosophy Forward*

11:05-11:30 - Joe Fulton, *Theosophy.Net*

11:30-12:00 - Shared Ideas on Theosophical Publications

10:05-10:20 – BREAK
FRIDAY AFTERNOON

2:00-3:00 - JULIAN MEADOW VIEW INN

TOPIC: THEOSOPHY AND HEALTH

2:00-2:30 - Coordinator: Helena Kerekhazi, Ph.D.Cand. - The Sacred Feminine and the Sacred Masculine in Theosophy and Brain Medicine. Helena has a clinical practice in Scarsdale, NY and develops therapeutic protocols to enhance neuroplasticity of the brain. She has lectured and taught on this topic.

2:30-3:00 - Richard Hiltner, MD, DHt - Relationship of Theosophy to Homeopathy and Traditional Chinese Medicine. Specializes in Family Medicine, Homeopathy and Chinese Medicine including Acupuncture. President of the Homeopathic Medical Society for the past 15 years.

3:00-3:15 - BREAK

3:15-3:45 - Ruth Richards, M.D., Ph.D. - Perfection of Wisdom: Transformation and Healing in Resonance with The Voice of the Silence and Buddhist teachings. Has authored numerous articles and books on creativity. Dr. Richards is a professor at Saybrook University in San Francisco and lecturer, Dept. of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School. She is a Buddhist practitioner and serves on the Advisory Board of the interfaith organization AHIMSA.

3:45-4:15 - Garrett Riegg - Near Death Experiences: Windows to Eternity. Garrett is a semi-retired attorney. He is associated with ULT and currently President of the Oakland Branch of TS in A. His groups study the Secret Doctrine and leading-edge science including NDEs. His presentation includes excerpts from NDE films and personal stories to broaden our theosophical understanding of the after-death states.

4:15-5:00 - Shared Ideas by Panel on Health
FRIDAY EVENING

6:30-9:00 - THEOSOPHY, EDUCATION AND YOUTH

6:30-7:00 - Coordinator - **Erwin Bomas. The Heart Doctrine: How to Escape from Plato's Cave.** Erwin is a recent graduate of Delft University of Technology, Industrial Design (Netherlands). "Thinking Differently," a course he participated in with Blavatsky House led him to the ability to correlate Scientific concept with Spirituality.

7:00-7:30 - **April Hejka-Ekins, Ph.D. Social Justice and Sustainable Environmentalism: Social Movements as a Pedagogy for Theosophical Education.** Dr. Hejka-Ekins received her Ph.D. in Public Administration from University at California State University, Stanislaus, from 1988 to the present and in 1998 was chosen as Teacher of the Year at this university. Her talk will explore theosophical values that form a basis for educating youth and learning approaches that reflect these values.

7:30-8:00 - **Myrra Lee. Integration of Theosophical Concepts into Various Subjects Taught in Public High School.** Myrra was chosen National Teacher of the Year in 1977 with a Fulbright Scholarship. She received her B.A. from the University of Wisconsin and her M.A. from Columbia University. She will share examples of students growing from passivity to individuals learning how to question authority and become manasic beings able to trust in their intuition.

8:00-8:30 - **Vicente Hao Chin Jr. Video: Theosophical Education and the Golden Link College.** Vic has served as National President of the TS in the Philippines. His books include *The Process of Self-Transformation*. He is President of Golden Link College Foundation, a theosophical school established by the Theosophical Order of Service in the Philippines.

8:30-9:00 - Shared Ideas by Panel on Education.
SATURDAY, AUGUST 13

7:30-8:30 - BREAKFAST - MEADOW VIEW INN

8:45-10:15 - PRESENTATIONS - JULIAN HIGH SCHOOL, 1656 Main St.

TOPIC: THEOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

Coordinator: Joop Smits

8:45-10:15 - Rollin McCraty, Ph.D. Energetic Connectivity; Coherence, Intuition and the Heart Field Environment. Rollin is Executive Vice President and Director of Research at the Institute of HeartMath, and has been with the organization since its inception in 1991. He worked with Founder Doc Childre to formulate the research goals of the organization and create its Scientific Advisory Board. Dr. McCraty is a Fellow of the American Institute of Stress, a Visiting Senior Scholar at Claremont Graduate University, and a Visiting Professor at University of Alabama at Birmingham.

10:15-10:30 - BREAK

10:30-11:30 - Joop Smits. Emanation and Fohat as the Basis for the Electric Universe. Graduate Delft University of Technology, Mechanical Engineering and has given a number of presentations concerning the harmony between science, religion and Theosophy. He is a member of the Theosophical Society of Point Loma.

11:30-12:00 - Shared Ideas on Science
2:00 - 2:30 - Coordinator: Eugene Jennings, M.D. *Exploring the Neurobiological Correlates of Spiritual Heart, Mind and Mystical States in the Light of Theosophical Thought*. Gene is a psychiatrist practicing in Pennsylvania. He has presented papers in numerous medical/spiritual conferences involving meditation and philosophy.

2:30 - 3:00 - Ken Small. *Blavatsky, Neuroscience, Meditation and Transforming Negative Emotions*. Ken is Director of Wisdom Traditions Institute and Board President of The Meditation Initiative. Ken Small facilitates meditation practice and retreats for individuals and groups and teaches and practices herbal medicine. He is also Director of the Enso Meditation Retreat, Pine Valley, CA.

3:00 - 3:15 - Break

3:15 - 3:45 - Tuncay Dantzler. *Culture of Concentration*. Tuncay has been a student of Theosophy for 25 years, and is associated with the Washington, D.C. area.

3:45 - 4:15 - Judy Saltzman, Ph.D. *Plotinus, Abraham Maslow and the Theosophical Path*. Judy completed her Ph.D. at the University of California at Santa Barbara and is a Fulbright Scholar. The presentation will demonstrate the practical and contemporary relevance of Plotinus by comparing his work to the modern psychologist Abraham Maslow, a man deeply interested in the plight of the human condition and in spiritual solutions of a
theosophical nature.

4:15-5:00 - Shared Ideas by Panel on Mysticism

5:15-6:30 - DINNER - MEADOW VIEW INN

7:00-9:00 - At the Colbert's for Paramita Pie - 3275 Dolores Dr., Julian, CA 760.765.1090 760.765.1090

SUNDAY, AUGUST 14

7:00-9:00 - BREAKFAST - MEADOW VIEW INN

9:00-12:00 - THE JULIAN CONFERENCE AND FUTURE OF ITC

Coordinator: Garrett Riegg

9:00-10:30 - Panel presentation including Odin Townley, Garrett Riegg and Tim Boyd. Theme: Science and Spirituality: Summary and Outlook. A review of correlations of scientific findings and theosophical principles will be elaborated from the conference. The panel will respond to questions and comments from the audience as a way to integrate these ideas and wisdom into the fabric of our lives.

10:40-11:00 - Slides of Olcott Center in Wheaton, Illinois. This will be the site of our next conference. Information will be listed about transportation, facilities, grounds, and bedrooms at the Center and at the Holiday Inn 2 miles away. A questionnaire will be distributed to share your ideas about speakers, theme, locations, etc.

11:00-12:00 International Theosophy Conferences, Inc. Membership Meeting (all welcome). Please join this meeting to learn how ITC is run and how to help in next year's conference. We will elect 6 new directors (you may nominate yourself). There will be brief reports from officers and committees.
CONVERGENCE INTO UNITY

“He who is bound in any way—he who is narrow in his thoughts—finds it doubly difficult to pass onward.” – William Q. Judge
“Fore-run by mind are mental states, 
Ruled by mind, made of mind. 
If you speak or act with corrupt mind, 
Sorrow follows you, as the wheel of the foot of the ox.

Fore-run by mind are mental states, 
Ruled by mind, made of mind. 
If you speak or act with clear mind, 
Happiness follows you, like a shadow that does not depart.” (The Dhammapada I:1-2)

This means that we have it in our own hands to bring about our own happiness and to overcome our own suffering. Like the teachings of other great traditions, those of the Buddha are in one way or another directed to the achievement of this goal. According to the Buddha, the path to salvation lies in the individual’s taming his or her mind and perfecting the qualities inherent in the heart.
Keukenhof Gardens, Holland