

She received most of her basic education at Theosophical schools and, in 1942, was the first student to graduate in classical dancing (Bharata Natya) from the international art academy of Kalakshetra in Madras, founded by her aunt Rukmini Devi Arundale. She subsequently gave dance recitals in many cities in India and Europe and played a major role, with dancing, in the film *The River* (1951), directed by Jean Renoir. That film has been critically regarded as one of the greatest color films.

Radha also pursued an academic career and obtained an M.A. degree in Sanskrit from Benares Hindu University, earning first place in the examination. In 1984 she was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Letters by Nagarjuna University in recognition of her "distinguished contribution to the advancement of learning and the promotion of human values."

Radha joined the Theosophical Society in 1935 and was President of youth and adult lodges in Adyar and Benares for several years. She worked as Librarian and in other capacities at the Indian Section headquarters from 1945 to 1951. Repeatedly elected General Secretary of the Indian Section of the Theosophical Society, she held that office from 1960 to 1978. She served as President of the Madras Theosophical Federation from 1959 to 1963. She was Director of the Adyar Library and Research Center from 1954 to 1980, being also the general editor of its oriental publications as well as its journal *Brahmavidya*. She herself translated from Sanskrit the Hathayogapradipika, the dance chapter from the Samgita Ratnakara, one of the most important Indian musicological texts.

Burnier was a member of the Society's General Council from 1960 onward and also served for many years on the Society's Executive Committee as well as the Finance Committee and the Theosophical Publishing House Council. She was elected seventh International President of the Theosophical Society in 1980 and re-elected in 1987, 1994 and 2001. In addition to being President of the Society, she held the following offices: Head of the Krotona Institute of Theosophy in Ojai, California, and of the Manor Foundation in Sydney, Australia; President of the International Theosophical Center in Naarden, Holland; Chairman of the Olcott Education Society (OES), whose concern was the education and welfare of children from the poorer classes and which administered the Olcott Memorial School, the HPB Hostel for the