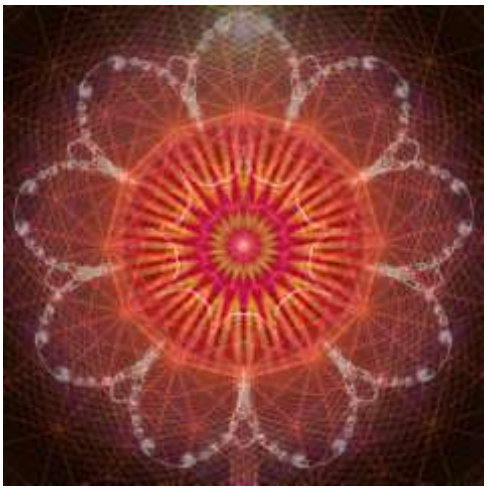
Fall 2015, Volume 11, Number 3



The Esoteric Quarterly

An independent publication dedicated to the trans-disciplinary investigation of the esoteric spiritual tradition.

Esoteric philosophy and its applications to individual and group service and the expansion of human consciousness.

Washington, DC, USA.
www.esotericquarterly.com
e-mail: editor@esotericquarterly.com

The Esoteric Quarterly

The Esoteric Quarterly is an online, peer-reviewed, international journal, published by The Esoteric Quarterly Inc., a non-profit corporation based in Washington, DC. It is registered as an online journal with the National Serials Data Program of the Library of Congress. International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) 1551-3874.

Further information about *The Esoteric Quarterly*, including guidelines for the submission of articles and review procedures, can be found at **http://www.esotericquarterly.com**. All correspondence should be addressed to **editor@esotericquarterly.com**

The Esoteric Quarterly

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BOOK REVIEW

The mission of the *Esoteric Quarterly* is to provide a forum for the exploration of esoteric philosophy and its applications. Full-length articles and student papers are solicited pertaining to both eastern and western esoteric traditions. We also encourage feedback from readers. Comments of general interest will be published as Letters to the Editor. All communications should be sent to: editor@esotericquarterly.com.

Editorial

Eastern Spirituality, Western Religion, and Modern Esotericism: A New Consensus

While each religion contains a distinctive nuance or accentuation, all of the world's religions and esoteric orders form a nexus of Truth and Beauty that is related to a sole or central source of emanation. Throughout the ages, great thinkers and mystics, such as Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1464), understood that "There is…one sole religion and one sole worship for all beings endowed with understanding and this is presupposed through a variety of rites."

Thus there is no one body of religious or esoteric truth, nor is there a single path of return to the central spiritual axis; for the many esoteric or spiritual traditions form a bridge to the very same summit. The solution to divided humanity's many problems is dependent upon this understanding and on forming an alliance with the various spiritual traditions by which humans live.

One of the articles featured in this issue explores the life and teaching of an individual who functioned as a mediator between the Orient and Occident; the others represent an integration of perennial insights from the East and the West, as well as a call for a new consensus relationship between western religion and science.

Our first offering, by Iván Kovács, explores the fascinating life and worldwide circumambulations of Ernst Hoffman (Lama Anagarika Govinda), the German scholar, author, poet and painter who did much to create and advance interest in Tibetan culture and living Buddhism in the West. Part One of this two part series, provides an informative and dramatic account of Govinda's early life, his creative activities, many ordeals, spectacular adventures and encounters with remarkable teachers as he journeyed through Europe, Ceylon, Burma and India. Kovács draws from several sources, such as Govinda's own poetic stories of exploration and discovery, as well as the works of some of his most notable biographers. The result is an inspiring saga of Govinda's global excursions, concluding with his first preparatory expedition to Tibet. His subsequent travels and accomplishments will be discussed in greater detail in Part Two of this series.

Zackary Lansdowne contributes another in a series of articles relating the teachings of Alice A. Bailey with the texts and methods of various other influential spiritual teachers and writers. In this article, Lansdowne compares Bailey's Third Ray Method for Building the Antahkarana with the teachings of Jiddu Krishnamurti, one of the most renowned spiritual philosophers, teachers and thinkers of the twentieth century. A brief biographical sketch of Krishnamurti and an explanation of the antahkarana and the Third Ray Method are provided. Lansdowne's article converts the third-ray method of building the antahkarana into nine prescriptive rules, which are related to correlative quotations from Krishnamurti's teachings in a way which lucidly illustrates that both Bailey and Krishnamurti share one essential goal—their concern with setting people free.

Our next offering, from John Nash, examines traditional views of God or Deity in light of today's scientific knowledge of the physical universe. It explores the ways in which humanity's concept of God has developed and changed, and touches upon the manner in which Theology and Science can move into a new consensus relationship—one that supports both traditional and esoteric views of Deity and Creation. The article also examines humanity's notions of a personal God, and the possible barriers that even esotericism can create to a rewarding spiritual practice by its dismissal of the mystical path, prayer and the

notion of the Beloved. As such, the article challenges readers to question and think about God in a manner that expands their understanding, and their sense of place in the universe.

In addition to the featured articles in this issue, we have included a short paper touching upon the *Modern Religious Spirit*. The paper, by Aaron J. French, contrasts the Western quest for religious individualism with the Eastern anti-individualistic notions of the non Self. Also included is a review for new book titled: *A God that Could be Real: Spirituality, Science, and the Future of Our Planet*, that explores the concept of God as emergent phenomena.

The poem featured in this issue—*Heart for the Dharma*—focuses on true clarity of mind, the phenomena of emptiness and moments of enlightenment. This work is from the poet, writer and teacher Gary Charles Wilkens. Mr. Wilkens is an Assistant Professor of English at Norfolk State University and was the winner of the 2006 Texas Review Breakthrough Poetry Prize for his first book, *The Red Light Was My Mind*. His poems have appeared in more than 60 online and print venues, among them *The Texas Review, The Cortland Review,* the *Adirondack Review, The Prague Revue,* and *The Southern Poetry Anthology, Volume II: Mississippi.* For more information visit: http://www.gcwilkens.com/.

The four unforgettable paintings featured in this issue are from the prize winning Italian painter, Caro Forte. These exquisite "landscapes of the spirit" are intuitively inspired, which means that they free from concrete or intellectual forms, and arise instead, "out of a silent space of meditation, out of the heart and not out of the mind." Forte does not give his painting titles. He believes that an unlimited space must be left open so that the title emerges "as the intuitive feeling or vision that appears during the interaction between the person who is looking at the painting and the painting itself." For further information on the artist and to see more of his stunningly beautiful work we encourage you to visit: www.fortecarlo.com.

This and every issue also includes a series of inspirational quotes all of which relate to the articles and short papers in this issue. These quotes support and lend fresh voices and meaningful perspectives to articles we publish.

Donna M. Brown
Editor-in-Chief

Publication Policies

Articles are selected for publication in the *Esoteric Quarterly* because we believe they represent a sincere search for truth, support the service mission to which we aspire, and/or contribute to the expansion of human consciousness.

Publication of an article does not necessarily imply that the Editorial Board agrees with the views expressed. Nor do we have the means to verify all facts stated in published articles.

We encourage critical thinking and analysis from a wide range of perspectives and traditions. We discourage dogmatism or any view that characterizes any tradition as having greater truth than a competing system.

Neither will we allow our journal to be used as a platform for attacks on individuals, groups, institutions, or nations. This policy applies to articles and features as well as to letters to the editor. In turn, we understand that the author of an article may not necessarily agree with the views, attitudes, or values expressed by a referenced source. Indeed, serious scholarship sometimes requires reference to work that an author finds abhorrent. We will not reject an article for publication simply on the grounds that it contains a reference to an objectionable source.

An issue of concern in all online journals is potential volatility of content. Conceivably, articles could be modified after the publication date because authors changed their minds about what had been written. Accordingly, we wish to make our policy clear: We reserve the right to correct minor typographical errors, but we will not make any substantive alteration to an article after it "goes to press."

Poem of the Quarter by Gary Charles Wilkens

Heart for the Dharma

Upon hearing that the Buddha would be passing
through their country, three good monks
with hearts for the dharma set out to see him.

As they left a storm arose, making the way hard.
The wind stung and the rain bit—one monk fell
behind with illness, while the others went on.

The storm rolled from the sky, but the two monks
pressed ahead. Resting along a road one night
they were robbed, beaten and one monk killed.

The last monk was left alone in the wilderness,
barely alive in his ragged robe,
until a bird flew ahead and whistled him a song.

He followed the bird until he came to the garden
where the Buddha was to be preaching. He searched
among the flowers and trees but was again alone.

He sat upon a rock, wandering why his journey had
been so hard only to miss the Buddha. Suddenly
a group of monks neared, asking where the Buddha was.

"Oh, monks," said he, "I have come to a garden of beauties
with a heart for the dharma, but all I find is emptiness."
Upon hearing this all the monks became enlightened.

Pictures of the Quarter by Carlo Forte

120”x 60”

Carlo Forte 120” x 60”

Carlo Forte 120”x 60”

Carlo Forte 120”x 60”

Quotes of the Quarter

The mere fact that the Buddha . . . led a full life in the world, with wife and child, and still attained enlightenment in that same life should teach us all not to obstruct our path through the enforced repression of normal human functions and capabilities. It is only through the fullness of experience and the living of a full human existence that we can attain to that turning within and transformation that alone can lead to the spontaneous experience of enlightenment.

Lama Anagarika Govinda,
A Living Buddhism for the West
(Boston, MA: Shambhala: 1990), 14.

The question is not whether we are finite or infinite, mortal or immortal, but whether we identify ourselves with the infinite and imperishable or with the finite and ephemeral. This is the leit motif of all Indian thought and the common basis of Indian religiosity. The impermanence of the world of birth and death (samsara) stands in contrast to the imperishable, all-embracing consciousness of enlightenment, in which the state of Nirvana, the liberation from the delusion of egohood is realised. We are not dealing here with a dualistic conception of the universe, but with one and the same reality, seen under two different viewpoints: the ego-conditioned and the ego-free.

Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Creative Meditation and Multidimensional Consciousness*
(Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1976), 197.

Life has no meaning in itself, but only in the meaning we give it. Like the clay in the artist's hands, we may convert it into a divine form or merely into a vessel of temporary utility. If Confucius says that it is not truth that makes men great, but men that make truth great, we may modify this by saying: it is not life that makes men great, but men who make life great. Because life is everywhere; but only if it is centered in an individual focus does it gain the power and the capacity to become conscious of its supra-individual, all-embracing nature.

Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Creative Meditation and Multidimensional Consciousness*
(Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1976), 189-190.

Our minds are conditioned – that is an obvious fact – conditioned by a particular culture or society, influenced by various impressions, by the strains and stresses of relationships, by economic, climatic, educational factors, by religious conformity and so on. Our minds are trained to accept fear and to escape, if we can, from that fear, never being able to resolve, totally and completely, the whole nature and structure of fear. So our first question is: can the mind, so heavily burdened, resolve completely, not only its conditioning, but also its fears? Because it is fear that makes us accept conditioning.

Jiddu Krishnamurti, *Flight of the Eagle*
(Sandpoint, ID: Morning Light Press1971), 3.

As long as the mind is tethered to the idea that action must be divided into past, present and future, there is identification through time and therefore a continuity from which arises the fear of death, the fear of the loss of love. To understand timeless reality, timeless life, action must be complete. But you cannot be aware of this timeless reality by searching for it.

Jiddu Krishnamurti, *The Collected Works Of J. Krishnamurti*. Vol. I: Art of Listening (Delhi, IND: Motilal Banarsidass, 1991), 25.

To allow the free flow of life, without any residue being left, is real awareness. The human mind is like a sieve which holds some things and lets others go. What it holds is the size of its own desires; and desires, however

profound, vast noble, are small, are petty, for desire is a thing of the mind. Not to retain, but to have the freedom of life to flow without restraint, without choice, is complete awareness. We are always choosing or holding, choosing the things that have significance and everlastingly holding on to them. This we call experience, and the multiplication of experiences we call the richness of life. The richness of life is the freedom from the accumulation of experience. The experience that remains, that is held, prevents that state in which the known is not. The known is not the treasure, but the mind clings to it and thereby destroys or defiles the unknown.

Jiddu Krishnamurti, *Krishnamurti, A Biography*, by Pupul Jayakar (Rutherford, NJ: Penguin Group USA, 2000), 263, 273.

The eye through which I see God is the same eye through which God sees me; my eye and God's eye are one eye, one seeing, one knowing, one love.

Meister Eckhart, *The Essential Sermons, Commentaries, Treatises and Defense,* Sermon IV: True Hearing (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1981), 179.

Whether or not you believe in God, you must believe this: when we as a species abandon our trust in a power greater than us, we abandon our sense of accountability. Faiths… all faiths… are admonitions that there is something we cannot understand, something to which we are accountable. With faith we are accountable to each other, to ourselves, and to a higher truth. Religion is flawed, but only because man is flawed. The church consists of a brotherhood of imperfect, simple souls wanting only to be a voice of compassion in a world spinning out of control.

Dan Brown, *Angels &* Demons (New York: NY: Washington Square Press, 2000), 320.

There must exist, beyond mere appearances … a "veiled reality" or "hypercosmic God" that science does not describe but only glimpses uncertainly. In turn, contrary to those who claim that matter is the only reality, the possibility that other means, including spirituality, may also provide a window on ultimate reality cannot be ruled out, even by cogent scientific arguments.

Bernard D'Espagnat, *On Physics and Philosophy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), Chapter 10, "The Veiled Reality Hypothesis," 236-241.

The idea of a universal mind or Logos would be, I think, a fairly plausible inference from the present state of scientific theory.

Arthur Eddington, as quoted by F. Heeren in *Show Me God* (Wheeling, IL: Searchlight, 1995), 233.

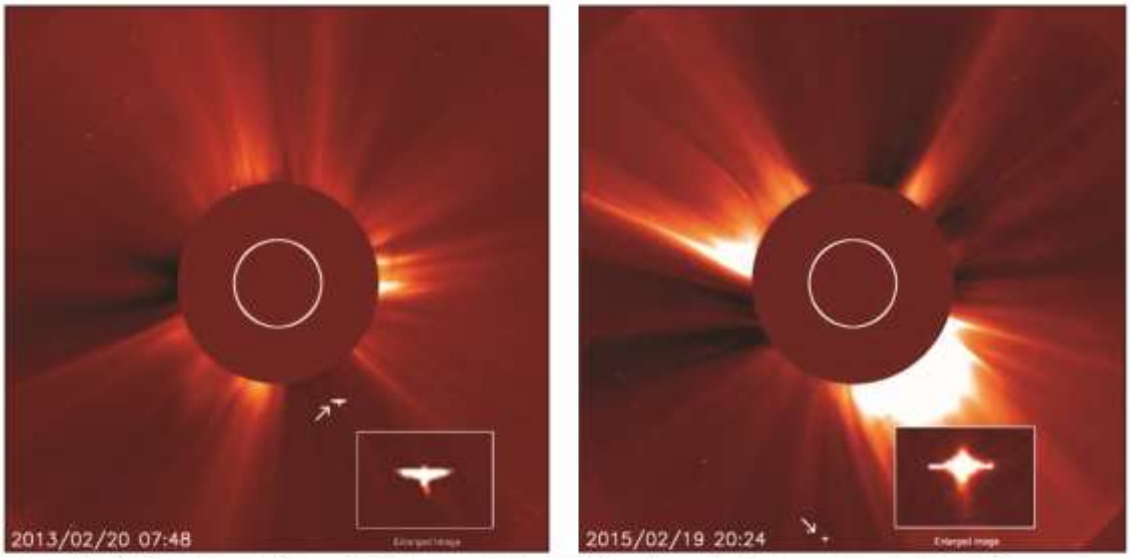
The essence of any religion lies solely in the answer to the question: why do I exist, and what is my relationship to the infinite universe that surrounds me? ... It is impossible for there to be a person with no religion (i.e. without any kind of relationship to the world) as it is for there to be a person without a heart. He may not know that he has a religion, just as a person may not know that he has a heart, but it is no more possible for a person to exist without a religion than without a heart.

Leo Tolstoy, *A Confession and Other Religious Writings* (1882, London, UK: Penguin Group, 1987), 116.

True religion is that relationship, in accordance with reason and knowledge, which man establishes with the infinite world around him, and which binds his life to that infinity and guides his actions … and leads to the practical rules of the law: do to others as you would have them do unto you. ... Reason is the power man possesses to define his relationship to the universe. Since the relationship is the same for everyone, thus religion unites men. Union among men gives them the highest attainable well-being, on both the physical and the spiritual level.

Leo Tolstoy, *A Confession and Other Religious Writings* (1882, London, UK, 1987), 89.

'Angel' filmed by NASA



'Angel' (left) filmed by NASA on 20 February 2013 at 7:48 am from the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory. NASA's LASCO C2 cameras filmed the 'angel' on the right at 20:24 on 19 February 2015.

Since October 2012, several extraordinary photographs have been recorded by NASA of a gigantic angel-like figure hovering near the sun. Two are shown above. The images have been widely seen on YouTube and UFO websites, but NASA scientists have given no explanation for the mysterious phenomenon.

Share International magazine has been reporting on miracles for over 30 years and offers the following explanation. Editor Benjamin Creme says that while many people thought the images were UFOs, "our information is that it is an 'angel', or 'deva' as they are known in the East. The angelic or deva evolution runs parallel to that of the human and they can vary in size from tiny to colossal. These 'angels' were filmed moving near the sun. Our information is that they are gigantic: about half the size of the Earth."

Miracles have been occurring in increasing numbers in the last three decades. ***Share International*** connects these miracles to a bigger story: the emergence of a group of spiritual teachers at this critical time. At their head is Maitreya, the World Teacher. Expected by all religious groups under different names, he comes not as a religious leader, but as an educator in the broadest sense, for people of all faiths and those of none.

(Photo source: soho.nascom.nasa.gov)

For more information go to www.shareinternational.info/eq

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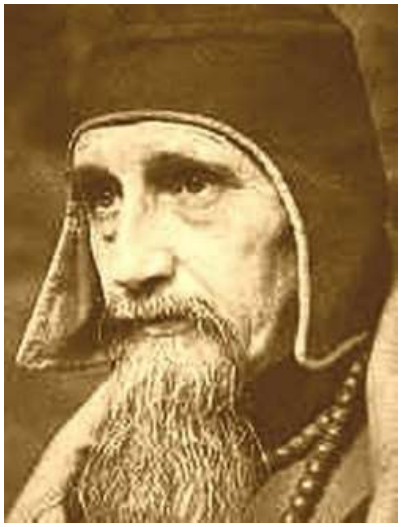
Lama Govinda's Quest for the Truth: A Summary of His Life - Part I

Iván Kovács

 [1]

Life has no meaning in itself, but only in the meaning we give it.
Like the clay in the artist's hands, we may convert it into a divine form,
or merely into a vessel of temporary utility. Lama Govinda, 1969[2]

Abstract

This is the first installment of a two-part article dealing with the spiritual quest of Lama Govinda. It follows his life story from its beginnings in Europe to his late middle age in India and Tibet when he married Li Gotami, a Parsee woman, and with whom he undertook an expedition into Central Tibet. This expedition was preparatory to a second expedition which Govinda and Li were to undertake and which will be dealt with in Part II of this article. Wherever it was found appropriate, the summary was rendered more colorful and pertinent by quotations from Govinda's own writings, particularly his book *The Way of the White Clouds*. The discussion of a selection of his books dealing with Tibetan Buddhism is planned for a forthcoming article. A special mention and appreciation of Ken Winkler's biography of Govinda, *A Thousand Journeys*, needs to be made, as it was most helpful in giving this summary its basic structure.

Introduction

It is not often that one finds a western individual who is capable of retaining the best of his own culture and who can fully assimilate the essence of another. To be able to do this in such a way that two apparently contradictory paths are made to come together and then effortlessly merge is truly unique. Only a free spirit will assert that salvation is not to be found exclusively in one particular religion, and that different spiritual paths are merely

About the Author

Iván Kovács is qualified as a fine artist. As a writer he has published art criticism, short stories and poems, and more recently, articles of an esoteric nature. He is a reader of the classics and modern classics, a lover of world cinema, as well as classical and contemporary music. His lifelong interest in Esotericism was rounded off with several years of intensive study with the Arcane School.

culturally and geographically determined ways which all lead back to a common source. Such a free spirit is to be found in the person of Lama Anagarika Govinda, a rare individual who, despite his German origin and western heritage, was enterprising and bold enough to break with convention. He examined a wider range of options about the kind of spiritual path that he wanted to follow, and even before reaching maturity, he investigated all major faiths, and finally decided to opt for Buddhism.

Govinda's intellectual capacity and inborn creativity display a richness that is only found in multi-talented and ingenious individuals. His talents were equally evident whether he employed them as an artist or a poet, a writer or a philosopher. His knowledge and understanding of the Buddhist path to enlightenment as recorded in his various books remain to this day a testimony of a disciple who practiced what he believed, and as a consequence lived life to the fullest. He is an individual whose words carry great weight, thus in the following biography, whenever possible, and wherever appropriate, he is made to speak for himself.

Lama Govinda: A Citizen of Two Worlds

Family Background, Childhood and Youth

Lama Govinda (May 17 1898 – 14 January 1985), the son of a German father and Bolivian mother, was born Ernst Lothar Hoffmann in Waldheim, Germany. The family was quite well-to-do, and owned silver mines in South America as well as a cigar factory.[3]

Hoffmann was three years old when his mother died, and he and his older brother, Oscar, were brought up by their mother's sister, Matilde. Matilde spoke Spanish to the boys; their grandmother, a Huguenot from Bremen, spoke to them in French; and Matilde's husband, a German-Bolivian, preferred to speak German, with the result that the boys grew up trilingual.[4]

Being barely sixteen, Hoffmann was reading Plato and Schopenhauer, followed by the Christian mystics. Then, culturally further afield, he made a study of the Upanishads, which finally led him to Buddhism. While Europe was in a state of ferment and unrest that would lead to the outbreak of World War I, Hoffmann made a comparative study of Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, in an attempt to determine which of the three appealed to him the most. At first, he had a strong predilection towards Christianity, but eventually he was won over by Buddhism which he believed had a morality that is based on individual freedom.[5]

Hoffmann's studies were abruptly interrupted in October 1916 when he was called up and sent to the Italian front where he was assigned to a heavy machine-gun company. Nothing is known about him whilst he was on active duty and his records only noted that he was admitted to a Milan hospital in 1918 after contracting tuberculosis. He was later transferred to a convalescent home in the Black Forest and discharged late in 1918, after which he resumed his studies in Freiburg Switzerland,[6] where he studied philosophy, psychology and archaeology.[7] Ken Winkler, his biographer, sums up his life thus far in *A Thousand Journeys* as:

> Whatever Ernst Hoffmann learned through his experiences during the war, who his friends were, or how he socialized and spent his time is unknown. Up until this point of his life there are only the barest facts known about his family and his own thoughts and directions. Occasional references, mostly from a few surviving documents and his own recollections, are all that remain from this period.[8]

Capri: The Springboard to the Wider World

Hoffmann left Switzerland for Italy. On the one hand, this move was more advantageous for his health; on the other, it served as an opportunity to further his studies in Buddhism. It was at the University of Naples where he had the opportunity to study a Pali Canon that had been donated to the university by the King of Siam. To be able to follow this line of study Hoffmann first undertook to study Siamese. Then, to further his prospects, he crossed the Bay of Naples to Capri, which had become an

expatriate art colony. He found a job in a photographic studio, which was owned by a widow, Mrs. Habermann, who had not only lost her husband but also a daughter. She was an attractive woman, sympathetic toward the younger Hoffmann, whom she considered as a substitute for her own lost child who had died of tuberculosis. They felt genuine affection for each other, and Hoffmann began introducing her as his "foster mother." Eventually, the two of them shared a small house, where Mrs. Habermann did the housekeeping. Hoffmann, in his turn, got involved in teaching at the local Berlitz school, and at one time served both as its director and only teacher.[9]

Another significant friendship that Hoffmann formed during this time was with Earl Brewster, the well-known American artist, who included the writer D. H. Lawrence among his friends. Buddhism was included among their common interests, and in fact, Brewster was so knowledgeable about this subject that in 1926, he wrote *The Life of Gotama – The Buddha.* Hoffmann was also a serious scholar on the subject of Buddhism. In 1920, he published *The Basic Ideas of Buddhism and Its Relationship to Ideas of God*. The book enjoyed a short-lived popularity in Europe, and was soon translated and published in Japan. A joint venture they undertook shortly after their newly formed friendship was to experiment with Satti-Patthana meditation, a discipline aimed at achieving mindfulness of body, feelings, consciousness, and mental phenomena.[10] As they had no guides and no exercise courses available, they had to improvise constantly.[11]

Hoffmann was also painting at this time. Apart from Brewster, he learned from various other artists in Capri, and with the added discipline of his meditation exercises, he soon developed a unique style of his own. Among his work at this time were experimental works done in pastels, and a variety of landscape scenes.[12]Viewing examples of his later works, his paintings have a strong element of geometric structure, and are variously reminiscent of the works of Paul Cézanne and Nicholas Roerich.

In 1922, Brewster traveled to Ceylon, which turned out to be the first of several trips to the Orient. Hoffmann would have liked to join him, but due to a lack of money, his explorations were restricted to the study of Stone-Age structures of the locale, like the cylindrical stone *nuraghi* (megalithic edifices dating between 1900 – 730 BCE)[13] of Sardinia, the cave towns in Tunisia and Morocco, and the megalithic structures in Malta.[14]

Finally, late in 1928, Hoffmann's dream and ambition to visit the Orient became a reality. He managed to collect enough money to get himself and his foster mother to Ceylon. They sold everything they had, but the consulate informed them that they needed an extra specified amount to be allowed to land in Ceylon, which served as a safety measure to discourage unwanted immigrants. When Hoffmann returned home to discuss this problem with his neighbors and friends, someone — most likely Brewster —offered to give him the money, provided it would be returned upon his arrival.[15]

Encountering the Buddhism of Ceylon and Burma

After his arrival in Ceylon, where he was met by a Singhalese man, Desilva, Hoffmann traveled to his destination in the interior, the monastery of Polgasduwa. The place was in a state of semi-ruin, because its abbot, Nyanatikola Mahathera, had been forced into exile during the war. Like Hoffmann, the abbot was German-born, and willingly became Hoffmann's guide and teacher, allowing him to take up his meditation and to continue his Pali studies. Hoffmann was convinced that here, at last, he had found the place where Buddhism was practiced in its purest form. The abbot gave him the name of Govinda, the name by which he shall be referred to from this point onwards.[16]

In March 1929, Govinda made a pilgrimage to Burma, and shortly after his arrival in Rangoon, he was joined by his abbot. Because the Theravadin communities in Asia kept close contact with each other, it was common practice for young monks of one country to be sent to another for study. Govinda's abbot, Nyanatilok Mahathera, had himself been ordained in Burma twenty-six years before, and

had now come to pay his respects to his recently deceased guru. During their stay in Burma, Govinda and Nyanatilok Mahathera also visited Mandalay where they met U Khanti, a man of great enterprising spirit who had undertaken to restore the temples and pagodas on a sacred hill that had fallen into disrepair. Govinda was told by an attendant Bhikku (monk) that U Khanti was the reincarnation of King Mindon Min, the person who had originally commissioned the building of the temples and pagodas on the sacred hill, and Govinda readily believed him.[17]

It was during his visit to Burma that Govinda received the yellow robes of the *anagarika* (homeless one), as it had been his earnest wish to become a true monk. He and his abbot also visited the northern Shan States to escape the heat. They spent some time in the capital of Maymyo and then parted company, Govinda to attempt a trip up into China, and his teacher to return home. However, Govinda managed to get no further than Bhamo, where the caravan route into Yunnan began, and most probably due to lack of resources, decided to return to Ceylon.[18]

Upon his return to Ceylon, Govinda was on the lookout for more suitable quarters and was eventually given permission by a Singhalese tea planter to build himself a house on his estate. The house building proceeded at a leisurely pace, giving him ample time to continue his studies as well as attend to his responsibilities as General Secretary of the International Buddhist Union. It was in this capacity that he was asked to participate at an international Buddhist conference that was held in Darjeeling in north-east India. He had no idea what awaited him in India, and was convinced that the Buddhism as it was practiced in Ceylon was the purest.[19] He was under the impression that the Buddhism of India and Tibet had "degenerated into a system of demon-worship and weird beliefs."[20] Whilst in Ceylon, Govinda had always felt that there was something missing.[21] Now he was to encounter something which was to radically change the course of his life.

. . . religious truths and spiritual life are more a matter of transcending our habitual consciousness than of changing our opinions or building our convictions on strength of intellectual arguments and syllogisms . . . Spiritual life is based on inner awareness and experience, which no amount of thinking could create, thinking and reasoning merely being a process of digestion or mental assimilation which follows but does not precede the above-mentioned faculties.

When the Disciple is Ready the Master Appears

Govinda's radical change of opinion as regards Tibetan Buddhism came about when he was marooned in a Tibetan Buddhist monastery outside Darjeeling during a three-day storm. More precisely, his place of refuge was the Ghoom Monastery, which is perched atop a mountain spur that juts out over the deep valleys surrounding the Darjeeling area. While the storm was raging he was huddled in his tropical robes and stared at the "weird world of Lamaism". After the storm subsided, he could have returned to the outside world, but he didn't. "Some inexplicable force," he wrote, "seemed to keep me back, and the longer I stayed on in this magic world into which I had dropped by a strange concatenation of circumstances, the more I felt that a hitherto unknown form of reality was revealed to me and that I was on the threshold of a new life."[22]

During his stay at the monastery, Govinda was given permission to live in a corner of the temple.[23] This appeared to be the ideal location by means of which he could absorb and assimilate the spirit of the place, about which he wrote as follows:

> The whole universe seems to be assembled in this temple, whose walls opened, as it were, into the depths of unheard-of dimen-

> sions. And in the midst of this thousand-eyed, form-filled universe, overbrimming (sic) with life and possibilities of conscious experience, I lived in a state of wonder, contemplating and absorbing an infinite variety of impressions without trying to define or reason out their meaning – accepting them, as one accepts the landscapes of a foreign country through which one travels.[24]

As Govinda reflected upon his experience, he realized that:

> . . . religious truths and spiritual life are more a matter of transcending our habitual consciousness than of changing our opinions or building our convictions on strength of intellectual arguments and syllogisms . . . Spiritual life is based on inner awareness and experience, which no amount of thinking could create, thinking and reasoning merely being a process of digestion or mental assimilation which follows but does not precede the above-mentioned faculties.[25]

Although a momentous awakening regarding the reality of the soul and the transcendence of one's ordinary consciousness takes place, more often than not, in solitude, Govinda was not entirely alone. He had befriended an old monk, Kachenla, who was the temple caretaker, and who acted as mentor and spiritual father to him. Kachenla's life seemed one of constant, humble devotion. He was continuously engaged in the service of the temple, which he considered part of his dharma. They would sit together while Kachenla taught Govinda how to unwrap and handle a sacred book, or the old man would show his pupil how to move within the monastery. In the evenings, the old monk would teach Govinda the prayers, and although Govinda couldn't understand them, it didn't bother Kachenla, as he believed that understanding would come later.[26]

As Govinda was exploring the surroundings of Ghoom Monastery, he became aware of a small, square, yellow-colored building with a curved Chinese roof and a glassed-in veranda. Its front rested on stilts, and the only door, which was at the back, was closed. Kachenla told him that a great lama meditated there. Govinda felt drawn towards this man, and wondered if his own spiritual transformation had something to do with him. He told Kachenla that he wished to become the man's pupil and Kachenla answered that he would speak with the abbot about it. The lama in question was Tomo Geshe Rimpoche.[27] In *A Thousand Journeys* Ken Winkler elaborates on the outcome which resulted from the meeting between Govinda and Tomo Geshe Rimpoche:

> No other being would have as much effect on Govinda as this man. Their time together wouldn't be long, a few short weeks, but the Rimpoche offered a peace and harmony Govinda hadn't felt before and the *darshan* (literally a religious interchange) they experienced together was complete. "Merely to be in the man's presence," Govinda wrote, "seemed to be enough to dissolve all problems, to make them non-existent, like darkness in the presence of light."[28]

Tomo Geshe Rimpoche was a well-known figure both inside and outside of Tibet, whose fame extended as far as Mongolia, China, Japan, India, Ceylon, and several Western countries, and he was loved and revered by all those who came into contact with him. In fact, he was considered to be a legendary figure whose previous incarnations purportedly included such famous teachers and holy men as Shariputra, King Trisong Detzen, Milarepa, Khedrup Rimpoche, and Dragpa Gyaltsen.[29]

Tomo Geshe Rimpoche's main objectives were to uphold the Buddha's tradition in its purest form, and serving his fellow human beings in his capacity as a teacher as well as a healer. Among his accomplishments were numerous monasteries that had been built, including the creation of several large Buddha statues that were commissioned to adorn their temples.[30]

Thus, when they finally met, Govinda's admiration and awe of the Rimpoche were fully justified, because in every sense of the word he had found a guru who conformed to the norms of a true Master. Prior to Govinda's initiation they had several discussions during which the Rimpoche stressed the fact that the Bodhicitta (altruistic mind) was potentially present in all living beings. Based on this fundamental truth,

the Rimpoche urged Govinda never to regard himself as superior to others. "As soon, however," the Rimpoche explained, "as we understand that we live in exactly that world which we deserve, we shall recognise the faults of others as our own."[31] Because Govinda's knowledge of Buddhism was already extensive, the Rimpoche found it unnecessary to instruct his disciple in doctrinal matters, and instead, proceeded directly to teach him the practice of meditation, which in Govinda's case was more important than theoretical knowledge.[32]

There are no definite indicators in Govinda's writings regarding the manner of his initiation, except the fact that he considered it as a highly significant and momentous event. In his book, *Prisoners of Shangri-la*, Donald S. Lopez, Jr. writes about it in a rather belittling way, stating that "(i)t is difficult to imagine what transpired between the Tibetan monk and the German traveller . . . who spoke no Tibetan, or what this 'initiation' may have been (it was perhaps the most preliminary of Buddhist rituals, the refuge ceremony) . . ."[33]

Govinda, however, thought his initiation to be the pivotal moment in his life, but considering it a private matter, he was hesitant and vague when referring to it.[34] Yet, one feels that he is attempting to convey to his readers that such profound experiences are, indeed, possible, and to be expected when the time is ripe, thereby confirming the old occult truism that "when the disciple is ready the Master is ready also."[35]

An example of the extraordinary faculties of the Rimpoche, about which Govinda wrote, was demonstrated shortly before the Guru was to take his leave of Govinda and depart for Tibet. The Rimpoche, Govinda, and the interpreter who helped them communicate were sitting together in conversation, when the interpreter put a question of his own to the Rimpoche, and while the Rimpoche was busy answering it, Govinda was preoccupied with his own thoughts. In *The Way of the White Clouds* he wrote about it as follows:

> I allowed myself to let my thoughts wander in other directions. In the course of this it came to my mind that the day might not be far when the Guru would have to leave in order to return to his main monastery beyond the border, and that years might pass before I had another opportunity to sit at his feet. And in a sudden impulse I formulated in my mind the following request: "Please give me a visible sign of the inner bond that unites me with you, my Guru, something that beyond all words reminds me daily of your kindness and of the ultimate aim: be it a small image of the Buddha blessed by your hands or whatever you might think fit . . ." Hardly had I pronounced these words in my mind when the Guru, suddenly interrupting his talk, turned to me and said: "Before I leave I shall give you a small Buddha-image as remembrance."[36]

On the day of their parting the Rimpoche remained true to his words and presented Govinda with "a small but exquisitely finished terracotta statue of Buddha Sakyamuni"[37] which he had kept in his hands during his daily meditations. This parting gift from the Guru later proved to be much more than a simple token of remembrance, but turned out to be a powerful talisman that would pacify those people that Govinda was to meet on his travels. Those who initially suspected him of being a Chinese spy would show a drastic change in attitude on the production of the small Buddha-image. It even worked its magic with armed tribesmen with hostile intentions, miraculously turning them into agents of support and hospitality. To top it all, the image turned out to be the handiwork of the humblest and most devoted of the Rimpoche's disciples, Kachenla, the old temple caretaker, whose remembrance for Govinda was inseparable from that of Tomo Geshe Rimpoche.[38]

A Traveler in the Mountains of Western Tibet

It is not an easy task to summarize Govinda's narrative of his travels in the vast expanses of Tibet. This is due to the fact that unlike many other travel writers, who often record in minute detail the hardships, altitudes, weather conditions, and routines of their journeys, Govinda's observations are mostly written down

from the perspective of an artist, intuitive, and a visionary. His experiences are thus given shape from an elevated state of consciousness in which objectivity is minimized and the world is perceived with an inner eye, and a subjective vision, that is only possible for one who is in touch with the very core of his being.

It also needs to be taken into consideration that the events as narrated by Govinda in *The Way of the White Clouds* start with his sojourn at Ghoom Monastery and his momentous meeting with his guru, Tomo Geshe Rimpoche, followed by his extensive travels in Tibet, but the actual writing down of these events only happened some thirty years later. One can assume that the narration is the product of someone who had matured and grown wiser over the years, and was thus supported by the reflections and insights of an individual who is able to extract the spiritual essence of what he aptly labels a "Pilgrim's Life."[39]

Nowhere is this more evident than when he writes that "(t)he machine made time of modern man has not made him the master but the slave of time; the more he tries to 'save' time, the less he possesses it . . . Only he who accepts it in its fullness, in its eternal and life-giving rhythm, in which its continuity consists, can master it and make it his own . . . Nowhere have I experienced this deeper than under the open skies of Tibet, in the vastness of its solitudes, the clarity of its atmosphere, the luminosity of its colours and the plastic, almost abstract, purity of its mountain forms."[40]

In many ways, Govinda was duplicating the experiences and insights of his guru, Tomo Geshe Rimpoche, who had had a clear understanding "that realisation could only be found in the stillness and solitude of nature."[41] Most people cannot bear to be alone, and shy away from solitude as something undesirable, while many spiritual masters and gurus, as diverse as the Master Djwhal Khul; and Don Juan Matus, a Yaqui Indian shaman from Mexico, attest to the importance of solitude. The Tibetan Master speaks about this "not (as) the solitude of a separative spirit, but the solitude that comes from the ability to be non-separative, and from the faculty of identification with the soul of all beings and of all forms."[42] Don Juan, more bluntly, but unequivocally, tells his pupil, Carlos Castaneda that "(b)eyond a certain point, the only joy of a *warrior-traveller* is his aloneness."[43]

In his own words, Govinda elucidates his general impressions as a traveler in Tibet in the following way:

> The great rhythm of nature pervades everything, and man is woven into it with mind and body. Even his imagination does not belong so much to the realm of the individual as to the soul of the landscape, in which the rhythm of the universe is condensed into a melody of irresistible charm. Imagination here becomes an adequate expression of reality on the plane of human consciousness, and this consciousness seems to communicate itself from individual to individual till it forms a spiritual atmosphere that envelops the whole of Tibet.[44]

And even more specifically, as regards consciousness, Govinda informs the reader that:

> Consciousness seems to be raised to a higher level, where the obstacles and disturbances of our ordinary life do not exist, except as a faint memory of things which have lost all their importance and attraction. At the same time one becomes more sensitive and open to new forms of reality; the intuitive qualities of our mind are awakened and stimulated – in short, there are all the conditions for attaining the higher stages of meditation or *dhyana.*[45]

Finally, Govinda's reflections about the Tibetan environment and its relation to the individual reach their climax, as he explains that one's capacity for concentration and self-observation as well as one's psychic sensitivity tends to be increased "a hundredfold in the vastness, solitude, and silence of nature," which he likens to a concave mirror that not only enlarges and reflects one's innermost feeling and emotions but concentrates them in one focal point: one's own consciousness. This symbiosis is finally explained by him as "the immensity of nature and its timeless rhythm (that) reflect the similar properties of our deepest mind."[46]

Anagarika, the Homeless One

It was during the next few years that Govinda lived up to his name, Anagarika, *the homeless one*, during which time his life followed a course that can best be described as erratic. It started upon his return from Western Tibet, and despite teaching assignments at the University of Patna and Shantiniketan, the school which was founded by Nobel prize winner and poet, Rabindranath Tagore, in western Bengal, Govinda never stayed in one place for long.[47] He participated in debates about Eastern culture and also wrote articles on a regular basis for the *Mahabodhi*, a journal of the Mahabodhi Society in Calcutta.[48] These articles appeared almost on a monthly basis and were, as Ken Winkler, put it "somewhat lofty in content, though his earnestness is just as evident as his determination to present his views on Buddhism. He remained a quiet, scholarly writer, pedantic in his articles and deeply committed to explaining his findings."[49]

Whilst he was teaching at Shantiniketan, Govinda counted two prominent Indian women among his pupils. One of them was Indira Nehru, at the time a motherless girl, whose father, Jawaharlal Nehru, was often in jail under British rule, but who would become India's first Prime Minister once India became independent of Britain. Years later, she would follow in her father's footsteps and become Prime Minister herself, but in these early years of India's struggle to gain independence, Govinda was teaching her French. She and Govinda remained friends until her death.[50]

The other woman with whom Govinda made acquaintance "was a rich, outspoken and very attractive Parsee (Indian follower of the Iranian prophet Zoroaster) from Bombay named Rati Petit. Daughter of an industrialist and raised in a very privileged household, she had been to school in England and was determined to become an artist."[51] She had been a student at the Slade School of Art in London, but her studies there had to be abandoned due to illness. Nevertheless, she then managed to study with several artists in India, and won several awards for her camera work. Her independence can best be described as that which is displayed by a truly free spirit. Publicly, she would come to be known as Li Gotami.[52]

Of these two women, it was Rati Petit who made the strongest impression on Govinda. Their first meeting took place early one morning as Rati Petit was walking by the covered porch of the hostel where Govinda had his living quarters. The light was a rose-gold color that is so particular to rural India, and Rati Petit remembers that as she walked by "a door opened and out strolled this handsome, smiling foreigner dressed in the burgundy robes of a monk." She recalled asking herself who this "bright merry person" might be, and in retrospect (at least on her part) remembered the incident as very romantic.[53] Ken Winkler describes Rati Petit and Govinda's early relationship as follows:

> Considering how direct Rati was, it isn't surprising they met, let alone married ten years later. However, she was a student and, despite what else she might have been, she acted with respect towards teachers. Her forward nature was tempered with a social awareness that bordered on shyness, a characteristic not uncommon with well-brought-up Indian girls.[54]

The friendship between Rati and Govinda developed gradually. Rati, as she admitted to Ken Winkler, became a Buddhist at this time. This was instigated by her study of "easy-to-read-books" about Buddhism, rather than the more complex material—which she could not understand—that Govinda pored over.[55] Nevertheless, Govinda took her interest in Buddhism seriously enough to take her along with him when he went to Sarnath in 1936 to meet with his guru, Tomo Geshe.[56]I n his book, *The Way of the White Clouds*, Govinda wrote that Tomo Geshe had prophesied that the marriage between Rati and Govinda would take place in 1947, but Govinda had kept this to himself, for which, as Rati later admitted, she was grateful.[57] In the interim much was to happen that kept their lives occupied, and Shantiniketan did not prevent Govinda from traveling, but was seen by him as a convenient base from which to explore the surrounding countryside.[58]

Of all the places that Govinda visited, Darjeeling, and neighboring Ghoom remained as his favorite places of retreat. Ghoom was also where his foster mother, Mrs. Habermann, had settled down. While Ghoom provided Govinda with an anchoring spot, his foster mother always remained in the background, and Govinda referred to her only briefly and occasionally in his writings. It was also in Ghoom where some of Govinda's friends from his Capri days came to visit, resulting in lively discussions and exchange of information about their different worlds.

Buddhism is religion; as an intellectual formulation of this experience it is philosophy; as a result of systematic self-observation it is psychology; as a norm of behaviour, resulting from an inner conviction or attitude based on the aforesaid properties, it is ethics; and as a principle of outer conduct, it is morality.

Another teaching post presented to Govinda at this time came from the University of Patna. The courses he presented there were for post-graduate students in Pali-Buddhism, and Govinda's notes were published within a year of his appointment under the title of *The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy*.[59] For testimony of his expertise and confidence regarding his subject matter one only needs to turn to his introduction, in which he gives this clear and concise definition of Buddhism:

> Buddhism is religion; as an intellectual formulation of this experience it is philosophy; as a result of systematic self-observation it is psychology; as a norm of behaviour, resulting from an inner conviction or attitude based on the aforesaid properties, it is ethics; and as a principle of outer conduct, it is morality.[60]

Whenever opportunity allowed, Govinda would go into the mountains. In Sikkim, the Indian state in the Himalayas, he befriended the Maharaja, who not only welcomed him into his home, but also aided Govinda with men and materials, so that he could explore the region. It was off the beaten track where he found numerous hermitages inhabited by cave dwelling hermits who, like the famous Tibetan Saint, Milarepa, sought enlightenment by means of solitude. One of the most well-known of these hermits whom Govinda had the opportunity to meet was the Gomchen of Lachen, who had been the guru of Alexandra David-Neel, the French explorer and Tibetologist, famous for her books *Magic and Mystery in Tibet, My Journey to Lhasa,* etc.[61]

The meeting between Govinda and the Gomchen was brief, but fruitful. They were in agreement that "it is not the robe or the shaven head but the overcoming of selfish desires that makes the saint" and "the knowledge that springs from the experience of ultimate reality in meditation . . . Mere goodness and morality without wisdom is as useless as knowledge without goodness." In his own words, Govinda summarized this visit in *The Way of the White Clouds* as follows:

> I shall never forget the peace of his hermitage amidst the eternal snows and the lesson he taught me: that we cannot face the Great Void before we have the strength and the greatness to fill it with our entire being. Then the Void is not a negation merely of our limited personality, but the Plenum-Void which includes, embraces, and nourishes it, like the womb of space in which the light moves eternally without ever being lost.[62]

The Passing Away of Tomo Geshe and Govinda's Reflections on Life, Death, and Rebirth

It was shortly before this inspiring visit with the Gomchen that Govinda's own guru, Tomo Geshe had passed away. Although the loss of his beloved teacher was deeply felt by Govinda, he refused to be demonstrative about it, and bore his sorrow in silence.[63] However, this

momentous incident gave rise to serious reflection and contemplation about life, death, and rebirth on Govinda's part, and we are fortunate enough to share his insights as they have been recorded in his writings. In *The Way of the White Clouds*, Govinda devotes an entire section of his book to this subject, entitled *Death and Rebirth*, which is subdivided into eight chapters, and in all, totals 41 pages.[64]

At the end of the chapter, which Govinda devoted to the passing away of his guru, Tomo Geshe, he formulates his ideas about the very purpose of the path to liberation, and in this regard contrasts the two approaches, one followed by the mystic, the other by what many esotericists would identify as the approach of the occultist. He expresses his thoughts on these distinctions as follows:

> The purpose of Buddhist meditation, therefore, is not merely to sink back into the 'uncreated' state, into a state of complete tranquilisation with a vacant mind [mysticism]; it is not a regression into the 'unconscious' or the exploration of the past, but a process of *transformation*, of *transcendence*, in which we become fully conscious of the present, of the infinite powers and possibilities of the mind, in order to become masters of our own destiny, by cultivating those qualities which lead to the realisation of our timeless nature: to enlightenment [occultism].[65]

Before his passing away Tomo Geshe had told his disciples not to grieve when he dies, because in a very short time they could look for his return. The question of Tomo Geshe's rebirth was of such an importance to Tibetans that even the State Oracle of Nächung in Lhasa had been invoked. The oracle was so detailed that he not only gave the name of the town (Gangtok), but also the year in which the boy was born (1937), the exact age of his parents, the description of the house in which they lived, and even identified the two fruit-trees which stood in front or their house. All that remained was to send a delegation of monk-officials to verify his findings. The final proof to verify the newly reincarnated identity of Tomo Geshe happened according to the traditional test by which various monastic articles such as rosaries, vajras, bells, teacups, wooden bowls, and other objects were spread before the boy, from which he had to pick out those that had exclusively belonged to the late Tomo Geshe.[66]

As regards the successful conclusion of the identification of Tomo Geshe's new incarnation, Govinda sums it up simply and objectively with the following words:

> The father, who saw all these proofs and remembered the many signs of the boy's extraordinary intelligence and unusual behaviour which had often surprised him, was finally convinced and – though it was with a heavy heart – he finally gave his consent that the boy should go with the delegation to his monastery in Tibet.[67]

In Govinda's musings about rebirth, he points out the part that individuality plays in relation to consciousness, and how such an individual consciousness is related to universal consciousness:

> The highest consciousness is the product of the widest range of experience: the amplitude between the poles of universality and individuality . . . Individuality is not only the necessary and complementary opposite of universality but the focal point through which alone universality can be experienced. The suppression of individuality, the philosophical or religious denial of its value or importance, can only lead to a state of complete indifference and dissolution, which may be a liberation from suffering, but a negative one, as it deprives us of the highest experience towards which the process of individuation seems to aim: the experience of perfect enlightenment or Buddhahood in which the universality of our true being is realised.[68]

Govinda's musing and contemplations about rebirth reach their conclusion when he asks why the universe should bring into being individual forms of life and consciousness if it were not consistent with or inherent in its very spirit or nature. He answers this by asserting that "(t)he very fact of our individual existence

must have a meaningful place in the order of the universe and cannot be brushed aside as a deplorable accident or a mere illusion . . .” He posits further that preceding any explanations either from religious, philosophical, or psychological quarters, one needs to consider the conviction that people had, not only as regards the survival of individual consciousness beyond death, but also of a return, or rebirth, into the human world.[69]

Internment and the War Years

After having come to terms with Tomo Geshe’s death Govinda returned to Ghoom, where he and his stepmother, Mrs. Habermann became hosts for many European visitors and travellers. Among them were refugees, and many professional people such as intellectuals, artists, and university professors who were “an articulate, observant group of survivors. While their presence as anti-Nazis (or at least proselves) didn’t start any immediate divisions in the local German communities, they made people very aware of the dangers they had just left.”[70]

Ken Winkler relates how a peculiar story appeared at the time which would continue long after the war. An English follower of Krishna Prem, the British professor who lived the life of a saduh near Almora, told of a German-Jewish girl who had been a guest at the Govinda home in Ghoom. She related having seen many National Socialist publications there that had been left behind by some visitors, and was worried that someone might misunderstand the reason of their existence in the Govinda home. However, Govinda wasn’t worried, having spoken out in no uncertain terms against the Nazis, and having held very clear views as regards their intentions.[71] As it would turn out later, the British were far from casual regarding such matters, and would use such information to build their case in favor of Govinda’s internment. Other factors that likely contributed to his internment were the fact that his father was German, and that he was friends with the Nehru family.[72]

Before the above-mentioned unfortunate event was to take place, an unsuspecting Govinda was as ever on the move. On a trip to Almora, which is about 1300 kilometers west of Ghoom in the state of Uttarakhand,he met the American Tibetologist, Dr Walter Evans-Wentz, who was also an Oxford scholar, and who is best known for making known *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* in the West.[73] [74] Govinda and Evans-Wentz became friends, and Govinda even went so far as to help Evans-Wentz pick out a site for a property which Evans-Wentz intended as a suitable location for an ashram.[75] The place which they finally decided on was called Kasar Devi, a rising jut of land at the end of what would popularly come to be known as “Crank’s Ridge," when the hippies started to frequent it in the sixties.[76]

The acquisition of the above-mentioned property was to change the lives of both men, and was to have far-reaching consequences. All that needs to be said at this stage is that when Govinda returned to Almora sometime later, Evans-Wentz had left for home on the last passenger ship out of Bombay, afraid that his funds might be cut off in case hostilities should break out with the build-up to the impending war. Kasar Devi now had a stone-block house, but all the bad news coming from Europe made several other expatriates flee the area as well, so that Govinda’s visit was cut short, and he had no choice but to return to Ghoom.[77]

The war began with Germany’s invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939, followed by Britain’s declaration of war against Germany.[78] Ken Winkler writes that “(t)he results were felt immediately, even in India, where civil and military contingency plans were put in effect.”[79] German and Italian men were rounded up within hours all over India and the nationals of the Axis powers of every political background were taken to detention camps. Because Govinda was the holder of a British passport, it appeared that, for the time being, at least, he was exempt from being treated as a potentially subversive foreigner.[80]

What Govinda didn’t know is that he had been under surveillance all along by the Darjeeling police. But sometime after the outbreak of the war, the British finally stopped wavering, and in 1942, he was forcefully taken from his home in Ghoom. His status as a British subject, (de-

spite the fact that he had been naturalized since 1938),[81] was brushed aside, and within a few days, he became a victim of incarceration, which was to last until the end of the war.[82] First an inmate of a detention center in Deolali, Govinda was then moved to Ahmednagar, and finally to a permanent internment camp in Premnagar near Dehra Dun, which is a large upland valley on the Siwalik Hills north of New Dehli. There he became one of about two thousand inmates who were hailing from several Axis countries.[83]

Since no distinction had been made by the British as regards the various factions of inmates, trouble soon broke out. A small minority in the camp, of which Govinda was a part, had little in common with the National Socialist majority, and was almost immediately set upon, giving the British no choice but to separate them. Thus this smaller group, numbering a little over a hundred, were given their own section. They largely consisted of tourists, engineers, teachers, missionaries, as well as a German Theravadin monk from Ceylon called Nyanaponika Mahathera, in whom Govinda found an ideal companion. The two of them soon settled in and partitioned off an area of the barrack, complete with an improvised shrine consisting of a Buddha image, brass water bowls, and oil lamps.[84]

Ken Winkler writes that Govinda and Nyanaponika became close friends, and quotes the latter to have said that "(o)n a very few occasions, we had quite lively arguments on doctrinal differences, these were never unfriendly and we always were aware of our common ground as dedicated Buddhists."[85] Govinda, true to his scholarly nature, did not remain intellectually idle, and undertook several tasks in this regard. One such task was the compilation of a Tibetan, Sanskrit, Pali and English glossary of Buddhist terms; another, aiding Nyanaponika with his study of Sanskrit. It was probably due to their peaceful behavior as inmates that the British later allowed them to receive passes, which gave them the opportunity to leave the camp twice a week, and to explore the town and countryside outside the camp between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.[86]

It is worth mentioning at this point that in another part of the camp two very different companions, the mountaineers, Heinrich Harrer and Peter Aufschnaiter, managed to escape their British captors, and after months of adventures that were characterized by the harshest conditions and dangers, successfully traveled across Tibet, and were eventually granted asylum in Lhasa. A faithful record of their activities would later be written down by Harrer, and made public in his well-known book, *Seven Years in Tibet.*[87] Juxtaposing Harrer and Govinda, Winkler makes the following comment:

> At first glance, it's surprising that two men who helped shape Western views of Tibet would have so little in common, but Harrer and Govinda lived at opposite ends of the camp and represented two philosophies that were worlds apart.[88]

As soon as the war ended in Europe, Govinda was among the first detainees to be released, likely due to the fact that he caused no trouble during his internment, and was, after all, a naturalized British subject. As regards his fellow inmate, Nyanaponika, they remained friends, but after Govinda left the camp, they only met once more—in Germany twenty-five years later.[89]

A Union of Soul Mates

According to Ken Winkler, there is no precise record of all the places that Govinda visited in the two years following his release from internment, but he writes that Shantiniketan was definitely a place of refuge for him, even if for a short time. It is also assumed that he attempted to return to Ghoom, but due to the restrictions that were imposed around the border areas at the time, he may not have gained permission to go home directly. His foster mother, Mrs. Habermann, had spent the war years in a hotel in Darjeeling.[90]

Govinda also spent a considerable time in Calcutta, which had become a place where many refugees from diverse countries got together. However, the city was gripped by intrigue, and had become a hotbed of communal and political agitation. Nevertheless, it is there that Govinda used his contacts in the artistic

world to exhibit his work in Bombay the following year. The war and his internment had interrupted his Tibetan studies and his long-held ambition to investigate the restoration and stabilization of Buddhism in the Tsaparang region of Western Tibet. But his financial situation and poor health made these aims remote.[91]

At this point, a few words need to be said about Govinda's old-time pupil, Li Gotami. While Govinda sat out the war in an internment camp, she had remained at Shantiniketan to further her studies in art by becoming the personal pupil of Abanindranath Tagore, who was considered a great art master. At this stage of her life, Li Gotami was a beautiful woman in her mid-thirties, who had already been married and divorced, and who was now living an active social and cultural life. Under Tagore's tutelage, she learned about all matters of art. However, he eventually advised her to specialize in Tibetan pictures, or to write and illustrate fantasies and children's books, assuring her that she would shine if she followed his advice. Evidently such advice was not without foundation, because Li Gotami's busy schedule also allowed for studying the techniques of Tibetan fresco and tanka painting under Tibetan artists, for which she seemed to show a special aptitude.[92]

When Govinda returned to Shantiniketan to recuperate from the hardships of the war, he and Li Gotami renewed their friendship. It was also revealed that she had kept secret faith in Buddhism, which gave Govinda the opportunity to instruct her in Tibetan iconography and religious thought. As their relationship deepened, marriage now became a possibility, and shortly thereafter, as Govinda's guru, the Rimpoche had predicted, it became a certainty.[93]

As strange as it may sound, Govinda and Li Gotami's marriage was legitimized no less than four times. And as related by Li Gotami to Ken Winkler, one of these marriages was performed by Govinda himself, who in his capacity as a lama was authorized to perform the rite. Two civil ceremonies were also supposed to have taken place, one in Bombay and one in Darjeeling.[94] The fourth ceremony, the most important from a Buddhist point of view, was performed by the Ajo Rimpoche in the Tse-Choling monastery in the Chumbi Valley, concurrent with Govinda and Li Gotami's initiation into the Kagyupa order of Tibetan Buddhism.[95]

The last-mentioned wedding ceremony and the related circumstances under which it took place are worth describing in a little more detail, as it took place when Govinda and Li Gotami were on their way to Gyantse, where Govinda intended to get passes that would allow them to go to Tsaparang. Ken Winkler writes about the launch of these plans as follows:

> In addition to their settling in and getting used to each other, Govinda busily petitioned the authorities to travel to Gyantse, the large trading town in southern Tibet. His plans for Tsaparang were galvanising and he now understood the only way to get the required passes (*lamjig*) and the cooperation from local officials was to camp on the front doorstep of the officials concerned.[96]

As Govinda and Li Gotami advanced on their journey to Gyantse they had to go via the Chumbi and Tomo valleys, and consequently stop over at the Tse-Choling monastery. Govinda had brought with him a letter of introduction to the abbot of Tse-Choling, Ajorepa Rimpoche, who was considered an incarnation of an eighth-century Siddha known as Dombi-Heruka.[97]

Ajo Rimpoche, as Govinda saw him, was as significant a religious teacher as Govinda's first guru, Tomo Geshe. What he had to impart to Govinda and Li Gotami by means of their initiation and wedding ceremony, was looked upon as a continuation of Govinda's spiritual unfoldment, and as much valued as his initiation that he had received from Tomo Geshe.[98]

Govinda does not provide the details of their initiation, and only mentions that much trouble was taken as regards the preceding preparations. He mentions that the most important aspects consisted of the meditation techniques and visualizations which they were taught dai-

ly.[99] Li Gotami was a little less reserved, but nevertheless guarded, when relating her experiences in her correspondence with her sister Coomie. In her letter she explained that the seven factors of enlightenment as represented by the seven lights and seven water bowls that were on the altar during the ceremony stood for wisdom; the active side of the intellect; the intellect as represented by speech; love and compassion; and the remembrance of a historical and transcendental wisdom.[100]

Govinda summed up this important interlude on their journey into Tibet's interior as follows:

> We also found plenty of work to do besides our devotional practices, as there were books to study, notes to be taken, woodcuts to be printed and some outstanding frescoes to be copied or traced in outline . . . Also outside the monastery there was plenty to do in the way of sketching and photographing. We certainly had not one dull moment, and in-between we had ample opportunities of discussing religious questions with Ajo Rimpoche . . .[101]

After their spiritually enriching interlude at Tse-Choling monastery the Govindas continued their journey, and finally arrived in Gyantse on 1 September 1947. Ken Winkler describes Gyantse as a large town and major trading center consisting of about 50,000 inhabitants, which is divided into secular and religious sections. Due to its commercial importance, there were several governmental offices, and it was thus by appealing to these authorities that Govinda hoped to gain permission to travel to parts of Tibet that could only be accessed by means of the necessary passes.[102]

The time it took to wait for the needed documentation for their proposed exploration into the western regions of Tibet, and more specifically, Tsaparang, was about four months, a period that the Govindas utilized by exploring the vicinity and visiting retreats and monasteries. There were also religious ceremonies and festivals in which they partook, not to mention invitations to tea. Li took countless photographs during this period, taking shots of anything of interest, including those that were taken of dancers and performers of mystery plays. Finally, "after a cold, white Christmas, their permits arrived and towards the end of January 1948, they left Gyantse."[103] By the time they returned to India it was spring, during which time they visited Ghoom and Calcutta, and preoccupied themselves with packing and planning for their trip back into Tibet, and more specifically, their intended visit to Tsaparang.[104]

Conclusion

Up to this point, Govinda's life had been highly eventful and instructive in preparation for a life of discipleship in the service of Buddhism. Now with Li by his side, the two of them would prove to become a very effective husband and wife team capable of facing the toughest and most challenging tasks, namely the arduous expedition to Tsaparang. After nearly a year of work in Tholing and Tsaparang, in Western Tibet, they managed to trace and catalogue the first authentic artworks and frescos of the region, dating as far back as the eleventh century, so that future generations could appreciate the splendors of a once great and highly evolved culture. Their experiences and accomplishments will be discussed in greater detail in Part II of this series. Part II will also discuss Govinda's and Li's life after their farewell to Tibet, and their interaction with the wider world as emissaries of Tibetan Buddhism. The article will conclude with Govinda's death in the San Francisco Zen Centre in California, his final place of refuge.

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1 Image of Lama Anagarkia Govinda. Permission granted for non-profit educational uses only.

2 http://www.spaceandmotion.com/Philosophy-Lama-Govinda.htm (accessed August 30, 2014).

3 http://donaldsimons.blogspot.com/2011/04/lama-anagarika-govinda.html (accessed September 1, 2014).

4 Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys* (Shaftesbury: Element Books Limited, 1990), 2-3.

5 Ibid., 3-4.

6 Ibid., 4-5.

[7] http://www.arya-maitreya-mandala.org/ content/lamagovinda.htm (accessed September 5, 2014).
[8] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys*, 5.
[9] Ibid., 6-7.
[10] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satipatthana (accessed August 25, 2015).
[11] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys*, 8.
[12] Ibid., 8.
[13] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuraghe (accessed September 7, 2014).
[14] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys,* 9.
[15] Ibid., 11.
[16] Ibid., 13-14.
[17] Ibid., 15-16.
[18] Ibid., 17.
[19] Ibid., 18-19.
[20] Lama Anagarika Govinda, *The Way of the White Clouds* (1966; reprint; London: Rider, 2006), 13.
[21] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys,* 19.
[22] Lama Anagarika Govinda, *The Way of the White Clouds*, 13.
[23] Ibid., 14.
[24] Ibid., 15-16.
[25] Ibid., 16.
[26] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys*, 22- 23.
[27] Ibid., 23.
[28] Ibid., 23.
[29] http://www.nyackbuddhism.org/rinpoche.html (accessed December 2, 2014).
[30] http://www.nyackbuddhism.org/rinpoche.html (accessed December 2, 2014).
[31] Lama Anagarika Govinda, *The Way of the White Clouds*, 34.
[32] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys*, 25.
[33] Donald S. Lopez, *Prisoners of Shangri-la*, (1998; Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 60.
[34] Lama Anagarika Govinda, *The Way of the White Clouds,* 36-37.
[35] Mabel Collins, *Light on the Path*, (London: The Theosophical Publishing House Ltd, 1971), 14.
[36] Lama Anagarika Govinda, *The Way of the White Clouds,* 38.
[37] Ibid., 39.
[38] Ibid., 39- 40.
[39] Ibid., 57.
[40] Ibid., 60- 61.
[41] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys*, 24.
[42] Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, (1957; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1972), 682- 683.
[43] Carlos Castaneda, *The Active Side of Infinity*, (1998; New York: Harper Perennial, 2000), 261.
[44] Lama Anagarika Govinda, *The Way of the White Clouds, 62.*
[45] Ibid., 62.
[46] Ibid., 70.
[47] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys*, 36.
[48] Ibid., 37-38.
[49] Ibid., 38.
[50] Ibid., 40.
[51] Ibid., 39.
[52] Ibid., 39.
[53] Ibid., 40.
[54] Ibid., 40.
[55] Ibid., 41.
[56] Ibid., 41.
[57] Ibid., 60-61.
[58] Ibid., 41.
[59] Ibid., 42.
[60] Lama Anagarika Govinda, *The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy*, (Rider, 1969) 12.
[61] Iván Kovács, *Alexandra David-Néel: The Life and Work of an Early Romancer of Tibet*, (The Esoteric Quarterly, Winter 2014).
[62] Ibid., 103.
[63] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys*, 46.
[64] Lama Anagarika Govinda, *The Way of the White Clouds*, 109- 151.
[65] Ibid., 114 (terms in brackets added by this author).
[66] Ibid., 120-121.
[67] Ibid., 121.
[68] Ibid., 124.
[69] Ibid., 125.
[70] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys,* 48-49.
[71] Ibid., 49.
[72] Ibid., 54.
[73] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_Evans-Wentz (accessed February 18, 2015).
[74] Iván Kovács, *The Tibetan Tetralogy of W. Y. Evans-Wentz: A Retrospective Assessment*, (The Esoteric Quarterly, Winter 2015, Spring 2015).
[75] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys*, 50.
[76] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crank's_Ridge (accessed February 18, 2015).
[77] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys,* 50.
[78] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invasion_of_Poland (accessed February 22, 2015).
[79] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys*, 51.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid., 55.

[82] Ibid., 51-53.
[83] Ibid., 55.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid., 56.
[87] Ibid., 57.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid., 58.
[91] Ibid., 58-59.
[92] Ibid., 59-60.
[93] Ibid., 60-61.
[94] Ibid., 61.
[95] Ibid., 66.
[96] Ibid., 61.
[97] Ibid., 66.
[98] Lama Anagarika Govinda, *The Way of the White Clouds*, 156.
[99] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys*, 67.
[100] Ibid., 67.
[101] Lama Anagarika Govinda, *The Way of the White Clouds*, 166- 167.
[102] Ken Winkler, *A Thousand Journeys,* 71.
[103] Ibid., 74.
[104] Ibid., 76.

Krishnamurti's Teachings compared to Bailey's Third-Ray Method of Building the Antahkarana

Zachary F. Lansdowne

Summary

The Sanksrit word *antahkarana* denotes an inner, or psychological, bridge that one builds between lower and higher aspects of oneself. Alice Bailey, a writer in the theosophical tradition, states, "*Building the Antahkarana* … leads to the overcoming of the limitations—physical and psychological—which restrict man's free expression of his innate divinity." The *seven rays* denote seven primary differentiations of energy, and doctrines on the seven rays have been expounded by various theosophical writers. Bailey presents methods of building the antahkarana based on the seven rays, but admits that it is "a very abstruse subject," so her presentation is difficult to understand. Jiddu Krishnamurti, a member of the Theosophical Society before leaving it to pursue his own activities, states, "I am concerning myself with only one essential thing: to set man free." According to these statements, building the antahkarana appears to accomplish Krishnamurti's one essential goal, because both are concerned with setting people free. This article clarifies Bailey's third-ray method of building the antahkarana by showing that it is illustrated by correlative passages from Krishnamurti's teachings.

Krishnamurti

Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895 – 1986) was an Indian speaker and writer on philosophical and spiritual subjects. During his early adolescence, he was discovered by Charles Leadbeater, who was said to be clairvoyant, on the headquarters grounds of the Theosophical Society at Adyar in Madras, India. Krishnamurti was subsequently raised under the tutelage of Leadbeater and Annie Besant, leaders of the Society at the time, who believed that he would become a "vehicle" for an expected World Teacher called the "Christ" or "Lord Maitreya." In this context, a "vehicle" signifies being a medium, or spiritual intermediary, rather than the personal incarnation, of the World Teacher.

Krishnamurti, in 1929, disavowed the idea that he was someone who could transform the lives of any followers, dissolved the organization that had been established to support that idea, and made the following statement:

> I maintain that truth is a pathless land, and you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion, by any sect. That is my point of view, and I adhere to that absolutely and unconditionally. Truth, being limitless, unconditioned, unapproachable by any path whatsoever, cannot be organized; nor should any organization be formed to lead or coerce people along a particular path ... This is no magnificent deed, because I do not want followers, and I mean this. The moment you follow someone you cease to follow Truth. I am not concerned whether you pay attention to what I say or not. I want to do a certain thing in the world and I am going to do it with unwavering concentration. I am concerning myself with only one essential thing: to set man free. I desire to free him from all cages, from all fears, and not to found religions, new sects, nor to establish new theories and new philosophies.[1]

About the Author

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Instead, for the rest of his life, Krishnamurti engaged in speaking tours around the world, published many books, and had discussions with a variety of groups and prominent individuals. For example, the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan spiritual leader, met with Krishnamurti and is quoted as saying, "Krishnamurti is one of the greatest philosophers of the age."[2] It is estimated that, as of 2011, "His teachings of more than 20,000,000 words are published in more than 75 books, 700 audiocassettes, and 1200 videocassettes. Thus far, over 4,000,000 copies of books have been sold in twenty-two languages."[3]

A wide variety of assessments have been made regarding Krishnamurti and his teachings. Govert Schüller, writing in *Theosophical History*, shows that many of these assessments can be differentiated according to the way their exponents answer two basic questions: 1) Was the declared project, in which the young Krishnamurti would be a vehicle through whom the World Teacher would manifest, genuine? 2) Was the outcome of the project successful or not?[4]

For example, Alice Bailey (1880 – 1949), who was also a member of the Theosophical Society before leaving it to pursue her own activities, provides this assessment:

> As I have earlier pointed out, the return of Christ will be expressed, in the first place, by an upsurging of the Christ consciousness in the hearts of men everywhere; its first expression will be goodwill.
>
> In the second place, disciples everywhere will find themselves increasingly sensitive to His quality, His voice and His teaching; they will be "overshadowed" by Him in many cases, just as before, He overshadowed His disciple Jesus; through this overshadowing of disciples in all lands, He will duplicate Himself repeatedly. The effectiveness and the potency of the overshadowed disciple will be amazing.
>
> One of the first experiments He made as He prepared for this form of activity was in connection with Krishnamurti. It was only partially successful. The power used by Him was distorted and misapplied by the devotee type of which the Theosophical Society is largely composed, and the experiment was brought to an end.[5]

Let us comment on Krishnamurti's quotations included in this article. All of these quotations are taken from accounts of talks that he gave to various audiences around the world. Even though Krishnamurti was born in India, none of these quotations contains any specialized terms from Indian philosophy, such as the Sanskrit word *antahkarana*, which is used in the title of this article. Even though Krishnamurti had been a member of the Theosophical Society, none of these quotations contains any specialized theosophical terms, such as the seven rays, which are used throughout this article. Even though these quotations are concerned with spiritual or religious themes, none of these quotations appeals to any spiritual or religious authority, such as the writings of Bailey, which are used throughout this article.

The foregoing comments are also applicable to all of Krishnamurti's public talks. As he explains, "I use words which are very simple, not those of any particular jargon or words which have a subtle or hidden meaning, but words as they exist in the dictionary."[6] Consequently, his listeners had the opportunity of comprehending his descriptions without having previously studied Sanskrit, Theosophy, or any spiritual or religious tradition, and then using those descriptions as pointers to things that they could observe in themselves.

This article provides neither a biography of Krishnamurti nor an assessment of his work, because numerous biographies and assessments are readily available elsewhere.[7] Instead this article has a very narrow focus: to demonstrate that Krishnamurti's teachings illustrate Bailey's third-ray method of building the antahkarana.

Third-Ray Method of Building the Antahkarana

Let us begin by clarifying some terminology. The *seven rays* are mentioned in both the ancient Hindu *Rig Veda* and modern Theosophy,[8] and the following definition is often

used: "A ray is but a name for a particular force or type of energy, with the emphasis upon the quality which that force exhibits and not upon the form aspect which it creates."[9] Bailey says that the "synthetic characteristic of each of the rays is denoted by the ray name," and, for example, that the name of the third ray is "Active Intelligence or Adaptability."[10]

Bailey also says, "Every unit of the human race is on some one of the seven rays,"[11] so the seven rays provide a way of characterizing human beings according to the qualities that they exhibit. For example, Dr. Douglas Baker (1922 –2011), a prolific theosophical writer, states, "Krishnamurti was also one of these monads on the Third Ray."[12] Here, the theosophical term *monad* denotes the true or indwelling spiritual self, as shown by Bailey's statement, "the spiritual man is the monad."[13]

Your intended lesson is *Detachment* and, as you free yourself from the clinging chains of attachment to place or person, your intuitive perception will thereby be released, and you will see in terms of reality and not in terms of form—no matter how high or purified.

Helena Blavatsky (1831– 1891), founder of the Theosophical Society, provides this explanation in her glossary:

> *Antahkarana* (Sanskrit), or Antaskarana. The term has various meanings, which differ with every school of philosophy and sect. Thus Sankaracharya renders the word as "understanding"; others, as "the internal instrument, the Soul, formed by the thinking principle and egoism"; whereas Occultists explain it as the *path* or bridge between the Higher and the Lower Manas.[14]

In the above quotation, Manas is a Sanskrit word that literally means "mind." Although the term *antahkarana* has various meanings, this article consistently uses the term in accordance with Bailey's definition: "The technical antahkarana, bridging between the threefold personality and the Spiritual Triad."[15] Here, the *personality* consists of the physical body, emotional body, and lower mind; and the *Spiritual Triad* consists of the higher mind, intuition, and spiritual will.[16] Thus Bailey's definition of the term is compatible with how, in Blavatsky's words, "Occultists explain it."

Bailey says, "*The Science of the Antahkarana* … deals with the mode of bridging the gap which exists in man's consciousness between the world of ordinary human experience, the threefold world of physical-emotional-mental functioning, and the higher levels of so-called spiritual development which is the world of ideas, of intuitive perception, of spiritual insight and understanding."[17] She also says, "*Building the Antahkarana* … leads to the overcoming of the limitations—physical and psychological—which restrict man's free expression of his innate divinity."[18] Thus a method of building the antahkarana appears to accomplish what Krishnamurti proclaimed, in the earlier quotation from his 1929 speech, as his "one essential thing: to set man free."

Bailey writes, "The understanding of the method of building the antahkarana is essential if humanity is to move forward as planned,"[19] but what is that method? In *The Rays and the Initiations*, she presents "The Seven Ray Methods used in the Construction Process" for the antahkarana,[20] but admits,

> I am attempting to make a very abstruse subject clear, and words prove inadequate. I can but outline to you process and method and a consequent hope for the future; on your side, you can only experiment, obey, have confidence in the experience of those who teach, and then wait patiently for results.[21]

This article focuses on only the third-ray method of building the antahkarana, of which Bailey gives the following description:

> At the point of highest tension, the disciple utters the Word of Power for the third ray. It is not easy for the disciple on this ray to

> achieve the necessary focal point of silence; his intense fluidity leads to many words or to great mental activity, frequently carried forward under the impulse of glamour. This lessens the potency of what he seeks to do. But when he has succeeded in achieving "mental silence" and is simply a point of intelligent concentration, then he can use the Word of Power with great effectiveness. The difficulty is that he has to overcome the tendency to use it with the idea of physical plane results in his consciousness. Always he works from the angle of that divine quality which characterises matter; just as the second ray disciple works always from the angle of quality and the first ray disciple from the positivity of spirit. But once he intuitively comprehends and factually grasps the concept that spirit-matter are one reality, and once he has achieved within himself the sublimation of matter, then he can divorce himself from all that the human being understands in relation to form. He can then utter the Word of Power which will make possible his complete identification with spirit, via the antahkarana. This word is "PURPOSE ITSELF AM I."[22]

It appears, however, that the first sentence, in which "the disciple utters the Word of Power," ought to be the last one, because all other sentences seem to provide instructions that enable the disciple to be in a position to utter the Word of Power. Thus our commentary rearranges the order of the sentences so that the first sentence becomes the last one. The order of the other sentences is retained, so that the second sentence is treated as though it were the first one.

Why were these sentences presented in the wrong order? Was the intention simply to confuse a benighted reader by making an abstruse subject even more obscure, or was the intention to convey a symbolic meaning? Given that the first sentence portrays the climactic effort, putting it first symbolizes impatience, because the preliminary steps are missing. Krishnamurti comments, "Most of us are impatient to get on, to find a result, to achieve a success, a goal, a certain state of happiness, or to experience something to which the mind can cling."[23] On the other hand, the third-ray method requires great patience, because it requires one to understand oneself. Accordingly, moving the first, or climactic, sentence to the end symbolizes the patient attitude that one needs throughout the course of the method. Krishnamurti provides this explanation:

> And do you know how difficult it is to understand oneself? It is difficult because we are dilettantes; we are not really interested. But if you are really aware, if you give your whole attention to understanding yourself, then you will find an indestructible treasure … To understand oneself requires, not impetuous urges, conclusions, but great patience. One must go slowly, millimeter by millimeter, never missing a step.[24]

The third-ray method consists of nine sentences. Let us acknowledge that the method, even after being rearranged into its correct order, is quite obscure. Before presenting the third-ray method, Bailey states in the same book, "Students need to read with increasing care as they advance upon the occult way which leads to the Way of the Higher Evolution."[25] The third-ray method appears to be written in a way that can be understood only by reading it with great care. Can the method be presented in a more comprehensible way? Bailey also states,

> It is my intention to be very practical. The building of the antahkarana (which is consciously undertaken upon the Path of Discipleship) is a process which is followed under certain ancient and proven rules. When these rules are correctly followed, the sequence of events and the appearance of the desired results are inevitable and unavoidable.[26]

Even though the above quotation says, "It is my intention to be very practical," the obscurity of the third-ray method makes it impractical. Can the method be presented in a way that reveals its intended practicality? Even though the quotation says, "The building of the antahkarana … is a process which is followed under certain ancient and proven rules," the third-ray method has the appearance of being a series of narrative sentences, which simply describe what is happening, rather than rules, which are

generalized courses of action or behavior. Can the method be transformed into a series of rules? The quotation mentions "ancient and proven rules," which implies that the rules to be followed have been known and proven since ancient times. If the third-ray method were transformed into a series of rules, could those rules be found elsewhere?

In what follows, this article clarifies the third-ray method in the following manner: each narrative sentence is considered separately, transformed into a rule, and then illustrated with a correlative passage from Krishnamurti's teachings.

1. It is not easy for the disciple on this ray to achieve the necessary focal point of silence; his intense fluidity leads to many words or to great mental activity, frequently carried forward under the impulse of glamour.

The first sentence of the rearranged third-ray method is repeated as the foregoing boldface heading. Here, *glamour* is a theosophical term about which Bailey writes, "Human desire has been turned outward to the material plane, thus producing the world of glamour in which we all habitually struggle."[27] Accordingly, glamour could be regarded as outward-turned desire. Thus the first sentence could be rendered in this way: the disciple is hindered by excessive mental activity that is often impelled by glamour, or outward-turned desire.

The disciple, however, may not recognize his or her glamours when they arise, as Bailey explains:

> One of the problems which confronts the aspirant is the problem of duly recognising glamour when it arises, and of being aware of the glamours which beset his path and the illusions which build a wall between him and the light. It is much that you have recognised that glamour and illusion exist. The majority of people are unaware of their presence. Many good people today see this not; they deify their glamours and regard their illusions as their prized and hard won possessions.[28]

If one does not recognize one's glamours when they arise, the first sentence would indicate that one is often ignorant about the immediate cause of one's wrong thinking. The implication is that ignorance may be the root, or underlying cause of wrong thinking. Krishnamurti says, "Ignorance is the lack of self-awareness,"[29] and concludes, "Thus, through constant self-awareness there comes self-knowledge, which brings about right thinking."[30]

Krishnamurti describes a general principle that he applies to many situations:

> One needs to have tremendous energy to find out the truth of this matter. Mostly, this energy is dissipated in the conflict between "what is" and "what should be". One sees that "what should be" is an escape from, or an avoidance of, the fact of "what is". Or thought, incapable of meeting "what is", projects "what should be" and uses that as a lever to try to remove "what is". So is it possible to look at, to observe, "what is", without any motive to change or to transform it, or to make it conform to a particular pattern that you or another has established—whatever may happen at the end of it?[31]

If the first sentence were transformed into a rule, what would that rule be? "What is," in the first sentence, is excessive mental activity, because "what is" denotes the fact or actuality. Thus, according to Krishnamurti's principle, the rule associated with the first sentence is the following: *Observe your excessive mental activity without any motive to change or transform it.*

It seems difficult, however, to observe one's mental activity without any motive to change or transform it, so how can the first rule be carried out? Krishnamurti gives this answer: "To know the whole process of the mind, what you need is only the intention to watch, to be aware, without condemnation or justification."[32] Thus one needs only the *intention* to observe one's excessive mental activity without any motive to change or transform it.

If one were to observe one's excessive mental activity in such a way, what truth would one find out? Krishnamurti gives this answer:

> Now I realize the state of my own mind; I see that it is the instrument of sensation and desire, or rather that it *is* sensation and desire, and that it is mechanically caught up in routine.[33]

Accordingly, one would discover the truth given in the first sentence: namely, that one's mental activity is often impelled by glamour, or desire. This discovery, however, would be one's own first-hand knowledge, rather than second-hand information that is obtained by merely reading the first sentence. Krishnamurti emphasizes the significance of such discovery: "What is important is for you to find out these things for yourself, so that you are free and not second-hand human beings."[34]

An *implied comparison* is "a comparison that the sentence suggests but doesn't state completely."[35] The first sentence states, "It is not easy for the disciple on this ray to achieve the necessary focal point of silence." The sentence contains an implied comparison of people on different rays, because the mentioning of "this ray" suggests that the disciple on the third ray has more difficulty in achieving the necessary focal point of silence than disciples on other rays would have. Thus this grammatical construction suggests that people on any ray could apply the third-ray method, but that the application of the initial rule is especially difficult for people who are actually on the third ray. Why would this circumstance be true? Bailey gives this answer: "Third ray people … are lost in the threads of their own glamorous manipulations and their devious thinking, and hardly know where truth begins and delusion ends."[36]

2. This lessens the potency of what he seeks to do.

The second sentence must refer back to the first sentence, so "this" must point to the statement, "It is not easy for the disciple on this ray to achieve the necessary focal point of silence." In particular, "this" must signify the lack of mental silence. Bailey portrays the third-ray disciple as voicing the following goal: "*The love of truth* must dominate, not love of my own thoughts, or love of my ideas or forms."[37] Krishnamurti voices a similar goal: "So it is very important for each of us to perceive what is true."[38] Consequently, in the second sentence, "what he seeks to do" is taken to be the perception of what is true.

Based upon the foregoing comments, the second sentence seems to say: the lack of mental silence hinders the perception of what is true. Krishnamurti, however, distinguishes between an intellectual comprehension of these words and the understanding of their content:

> The understanding of words which is called intellectual comprehension is utterly empty. You say, "I understand intellectually, but I cannot put it into practice," which means, really, that you do not understand. When you understand, you understand the content … Hearing the words is not the understanding of their content. The word is not the thing. The word is not understanding.[39]

How can the content of the second sentence be understood? Krishnamurti gives the following advice during a public talk, in which he refers to himself as the "speaker":

> Sirs, why do you listen to the speaker? Is it that in listening to the speaker you are listening to yourself? Is that what is taking place? The speaker is only pointing something out, acting as a mirror in which you see yourself, see the actuality of your own consciousness; it is not the description which the speaker is pointing out, which becomes merely an idea if you do no more than follow it. But if through the description, you yourself actually perceive your own state of mind, your own consciousness, then listening to the speaker has a certain importance.[40]

If Bailey's intention for the second sentence were the same as Krishnamurti's intention for a public talk, which is to point to something so that the listeners could see it in themselves, then this sentence would imply the following rule: *Through self-observation, apprehend the principle that the lack of mental silence hinders the perception of what is true.*

Krishnamurti indicates how self-observation does lead to understanding this general principle:

> I want to tell you something; you want to tell me something; I translate what you are saying in terms of my conditioning, of my conclusion, of my tradition; then there is no possibility of communicating, you with me or I with you. But if I am prepared to put away all my conclusions and listen to the words which you are using, then I do not merely stick to the words but go behind and see the whole content beyond; such an insight requires consideration, it needs alertness, watchfulness. So a mind that is merely caught in thought, in words, in memory, can never perceive what is true; it is not still. The mind that is made still through your absurd meditations, compulsions, resistance, is not a still mind; it is a dead mind. But the mind that is really still is astonishingly active, alive, potent—not towards anything in particular. It is only such a mind which is verbally free—free from experience, from knowledge. Such a mind can perceive what is true, such a mind has direct perception which is beyond time.[41]

The above quotation states, "only such a mind which is … free from experience, from knowledge … can perceive what is true." This statement is equivalent to the second rule's principle.[42]

3. But when he has succeeded in achieving 'mental silence' and is simply a point of intelligent concentration, then he can use the Word of Power with great effectiveness.

The third sentence describes two things that are to be accomplished in the near-term—mental silence and being a point of intelligent concentration—and then says that these accomplishments are prerequisites for the subsequent effective use of the Word of Power. If the third sentence were transformed into a rule, it would focus upon only the two things that are to be accomplished in the near-term. The third sentence, however, does not portray the effort needed to accomplish these two things, which suggests that a rule for this sentence would be simply a continuation of the earlier rules.

Krishnamurti describes a general principle about understanding: "When we are free to look, to explore what the problem is, then out of that observation, that exploration, there comes understanding. And that understanding itself is action, not a conclusion leading to action."[43] In other words, the effort "to look, to explore what the problem is" evokes understanding of the problem, which in turn initiates the action that resolves the problem. Bailey also speaks of "that understanding which must be evoked,"[44] and says, "If there is right understanding, there will necessarily be right action."[45]

Krishnamurti describes the concept of pure attention:

> We are always chasing that which is not, something other than the actual. If we could see this and remain with what is, however unpleasant or fearful it may be, or however pleasurable, then observation which is pure attention dissipates that which is.[46]

Bailey describes a related notion:

> Intensity, or working from a point of tension, brings in the floodtide of revelation, and it is then possible for a disciple to learn in one short day what might otherwise take months and even years to learn. *Tension, when focused rightly, is the great releasing power*.[47]

In the third sentence, being "simply a point of intelligent concentration" is taken to be what Krishnamurti calls "observation which is pure attention" and what Bailey calls "working from a point of tension."

Based upon the preceding remarks, the rule associated with the third sentence is the following: *Continue to observe your mental activity, and let the action of your evoked understanding achieve mental silence and pure attention*. Krishnamurti describes the application of this rule:

> Only by penetrating, by going deeply into the process of thought, can thought come to an end. After all, our thinking has not led us very far; our ideas have not brought peace to the world or happiness to ourselves. Thought is a process of reaction, a conditioning of the past, and it is ever creating

> patterns which we instinctively follow. All that has to be understood, which means going into and dissipating the traditions, the prejudices, the particular patterns and peculiarities of the 'me', stripping the mind, laying it bare, so that it becomes really still … As we begin to discover, as we become aware of the process of our own thinking, through that understanding, through that awareness, there comes a tranquility of the mind itself in which there is no longer any effort towards a particular end; and only then is the mind capable of receiving or experiencing something which is not a projection of itself. When there is the experiencing of that, however little it may be, then from that there is a transformation, from that there is a change—not the change of a shallow mind which ends in mischievous action.[48]

The above quotation says that "tranquility of the mind itself" is characterized by the condition "in which there is no longer any effort towards a particular end." This characterization is the key for understanding the fourth sentence of the third-ray method. The above quotation also says, "When there is the experiencing of that, however little it may be, then from that there is a transformation." Here, "that" denotes something that a tranquil mind experiences, so the word "little" suggests that the achievement of mental tranquility may only be momentary.

4. The difficulty is that he has to overcome the tendency to use it with the idea of physical plane results in his consciousness.

The fourth sentence says that one can "use it with the idea of physical plane results," but what does "it" denote? The pronoun "it" cannot refer to mental silence, which is an object of the third sentence's rule, for the following reason: in Krishnamurti's preceding quotation, mental silence is characterized by the lack of effort towards a particular end. The preceding quotation suggests, however, that the achievement of mental silence may only be momentary, so there still could be a tendency to make an effort towards a particular end.

If "it" were taken as self-observation, which the third rule continues to prescribe, then the fourth sentence's premise would be: the disciple has the tendency to use self-observation with the motive of obtaining physical-plane results. Krishnamurti makes a related comment: "To look within with an intention to change the responses of the self is what most people indulge in."[49] The intention to change the responses of the self seems equivalent to the motive of obtaining physical-plane results, so taking "it" as self-observation yields a premise that is supported by Krishnamurti's comment. Accordingly, the fourth sentence can be expressed as follows: The disciple has to overcome the tendency to use self-observation with the motive of obtaining physical-plane results.

This statement of the fourth sentence seems vague, so how can it be clarified? A standard definition of *introspection* is "the examination or observation of one's own mental and emotional processes."[50] Krishnamurti notes, however, that a customary way of using this word is slightly different: "The examination of oneself in order to modify or change is generally called introspection."[51] To clarify this customary usage, Krishnamurti gives the following example:

> Why does one examine oneself? In order to improve, in order to change, in order to modify. You introspect in order to become something, otherwise you would not indulge in introspection. You would not examine yourself if there were not the desire to modify, change, to become something other than what you are. That is the obvious reason for introspection. I am angry and I introspect, examine myself, in order to get rid of anger or to modify or change anger. Where there is introspection, which is the desire to modify or change the responses, the reactions of the self, there is always an end in view.[52]

By employing some of the language from this quotation, let us express the fourth sentence in this way: The disciple has to overcome the tendency to use self-examination with the

desire to modify his or her responses. This version of the sentence is similar to Bailey's injunction:

> The disciple has to cultivate "dispassion" or that attitude which never identifies itself with forms of any kind, but which is ever detached and aloof, freed from limitations imposed by possessions and belongings.[53]

How can the fourth sentence be formulated as a rule? Here, "what is" can be regarded as the tendency to examine oneself with the desire to modify one's responses. According to Krishnamurti's principle given earlier, one needs to observe this tendency without any motive to change it into something else, so the associated rule is: *Observe your tendency to examine yourself with the desire to modify your responses, without any motive to change this tendency*.

When the prefix *meta* is added to the name of a subject, it designates another subject that pertains to the original one but at a more abstract or higher level. For example, metadata are data about data, and a meta-joke is a joke about jokes. Correspondingly, *meta-understanding* can be defined as understanding how something can be understood. Krishnamurti describes the meta-understanding that is evoked through the application of the fourth rule:

> To be critical of oneself, to criticize, condemn, or justify oneself—does that bring understanding of oneself? When I begin to criticize myself, do I not limit the process of understanding, of exploring? Does introspection, a form of self-criticism, unfold the self? What makes the unfoldment of the self possible? To be constantly analytical, fearful, critical—surely, that does not help to unfold. What brings about the unfoldment of the self so that you begin to understand it is the constant awareness of it without any condemnation, without any identification. There must be a certain spontaneity; you cannot be constantly analyzing it, disciplining it, shaping it. This spontaneity is essential to understanding. If I merely limit, control, condemn, then I put a stop to the movement of thought and feeling, do I not? It is in the movement of thought and feeling that I discover—not in mere control.[54]

According to another of Krishnamurti's principles given earlier, this meta-understanding puts aside the desire to modify one's responses while examining oneself. Krishnamurti describes the result:

> So what has happened to the mind when it has denied, put aside, or seen the falseness of something, the falseness of [introspective] analysis?—it is free of that burden, therefore it has become sensitive. The mind is lighter, clearer, it can observe more sharply. By putting aside the tradition of analysis and introspection which man has accepted, the mind has become freed.[55]

Krishnamurti uses the term *awareness* to denote observation when the desire to modify one's responses has been put aside:

> Awareness is observation without condemnation. Awareness brings understanding, because there is no condemnation or identification but silent observation. If I want to understand something, I must observe, I must not criticize, I must not condemn, I must not pursue it as pleasure or avoid it as non-pleasure. There must merely be the silent observation of a fact. There is no end in view but awareness of everything as it arises.[56]

Accordingly, awareness is the eventual outcome from the application of the fourth rule. Bailey encourages a similar outcome when she says to "stand aside and observe with dispassion."[57]

5. Always he works from the angle of that divine quality which characterises matter; just as the second ray disciple works always from the angle of quality and the first ray disciple from the positivity of spirit.

In the fifth sentence, the first clause describes how the third-ray disciple works, whereas the second clause describes how the second-ray and first-ray disciples work. Although the sentence attempts to clarify third-ray activity by contrasting it with second-ray and first-ray ac-

tivities, both clauses of the sentence are obscure. If the fifth sentence were transformed into a rule for the third-ray method, this rule need be concerned with only the practical meaning of the first clause, so that is the only part of the sentence considered here.

The initial phrase, "Always he works," does not mean that the disciple is always working. Bailey says, "Nature grows and progresses through cyclic activity and cyclic rest,"[58] which suggests that the practice of self-observation also has its periods of activity and rest. Thus the fifth sentence is construed as providing instruction for the work that is always performed during each period of active self-observation.

Krishnamurti also portrays self-observation as being a cyclic activity:

> understanding yourself … doesn't mean that you must everlastingly keep awake. You can't. It does mean that you must watch and drop what you watched, let it go and pick it up again, so that the mind does not become a mere accumulation of what it has learned but is capable of watching each thing anew. When the mind is capable of looking at itself and understanding itself, then there is that creativeness of reality, and such a mind can use technique without causing misery.[59]

Krishnamurti, in the above statement, says that one needs to observe without accumulation while going from cycle to cycle, and provides further explanation in another recorded talk:

> So, can you observe without accumulation, without the destructive nature of prejudice, ideals, faith, belief and your own conclusions and experiences? There is group consciousness, national consciousness, linguistic consciousness, professional consciousness, racial consciousness, and there is fear, anxiety, sorrow, loneliness, the pursuit of pleasure, love and finally death. If you keep acting in that circle, you maintain the human consciousness of the world. Just see the truth of this. You are part of that consciousness and you sustain it by saying, 'I am an individual. My prejudices are important. My ideals are essential'—repeating the same thing over and over again. Now the maintenance, the sustenance and the nourishment, of that consciousness takes place when you are repeating that pattern. But when you break away from that consciousness, you are introducing a totally new factor in the whole of that consciousness.[60]

Krishnamurti, in the two preceding quotations, provides two descriptions of the effect from observing without accumulation: bringing about "that creativeness of reality" and "introducing a totally new factor." These descriptions seem to portray the functioning of the *intuition*, which can be defined as the direct perception of truth apart from any reasoning process. Bailey gives related instruction:

> *Illusion* is the mode whereby limited understanding and material knowledge interpret truth, veiling and hiding it behind a cloud of thoughtforms. Those thoughtforms become then more real than the truth they veil, and consequently control man's approach to Reality. Through illusion, he becomes aware of the apparatus of thought, of its activity, expressed in thoughtform building, and of that which he succeeds in constructing and which he views as the creation of his intellect. He has, however, created a barrier between himself and that which *is* and, until he has exhausted the resources of his intellect or has deliberately refused to utilise it, his divine intuition cannot function.[61]

According to the above quotation, having "deliberately refused to utilise it [the intellect]" permits the functioning of the "divine intuition." Such refusal is similar to Krishnamurti's notion of observing without accumulation, for which his preceding quotations seem to portray the functioning of the intuition. Consequently, "that divine quality," in the fifth sentence, is taken to be what Bailey calls the "divine intuition."

The noun *angle* can denote "a particular way of approaching or considering an issue or problem,"[62] so "the angle of that divine quality" is interpreted as a particular way, or method, of

approaching an intuition. The preposition *from* can be "indicating a source of knowledge or the basis for one's judgment,"[63] so "from the angle of that divine quality" can indicate that one's judgment is based on a particular way of approaching an intuition. Accordingly, in the fifth sentence, "he works from the angle of that divine quality" provides this instruction: observe without accumulation so as to gain an intuition.

We *are* the things we possess, we *are* that to which we are attached. Attachment has no nobility. Attachment to knowledge is not different from any other gratifying addiction. Attachment is self-absorption, whether at the lowest or at the highest level. Attachment is self-deception, it is an escape from the hollowness of the self.

The verb *characterises* is ambiguous, because its meaning could be either "to describe the qualities or peculiarities of," or "to be a distinctive trait or mark of."[64] The first meaning is used in this commentary, because of the earlier significance given to "that divine quality." Bailey mentions "the matter of the mental plane, on one or other of its two main divisions,—abstract and concrete,"[65] thereby indicating that the word *matter* could denote both concrete and abstract thought. *Concrete* nouns are things that can be experienced through the five senses—sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch—but *abstract* nouns refer to ideas and concepts. Accordingly, in the fifth sentence, "that divine quality which characterises matter" is an intuition that shows the characteristics of concrete and abstract thought.

Based upon the preceding remarks, the rule associated with the fifth sentence is the following: *During each period of self-observation, observe without accumulation so as to gain an intuition that shows the characteristics of your concrete and abstract thought*.

Let us introduce some terminology that may clarify both the current and subsequent sentences. A *plane* and a *state of consciousness* are regarded as synonymous terms.[66] Theosophy divides the mental plane into seven levels, or subplanes: four concrete, or lower levels; and three abstract, or higher levels.[67] Theosophy also distinguishes between the *mental body*, or lower mind, which is a faculty of concrete thought that resides on the concrete levels of the mental plane; and the *causal body*, which is a faculty of abstract thought that resides on the abstract levels of the mental plane.[68]

For example, a *virtue* is often defined as a moral excellence. We cannot visualize a clear picture of a given virtue, such as honesty, but can visualize clear pictures of moral actions that exemplify that virtue. Thus a virtue is an abstract concept, because it is a generalization of a class of moral actions that share common properties. Bailey mentions "a lop-sided causal body … full of great gulfs and gaps where virtues should be,"[69] which indicates that virtues progressively become part of the causal body and its abstract thought.

Bailey describes a practice that is similar to the fifth rule: "the attainment of that measure of mental control that will permit the wisdom of the [Spiritual] Triad to pour down into the physical brain, via the causal."[70] Here, "that measure of mental control" is the deliberate refusal to utilize the intellect, "the wisdom of the [Spiritual] Triad" is an intuition, and "via the causal" indicates that the causal body is the link between the Spiritual Triad and personality. This intermediary role of the causal body appears to be a prerequisite for the subsequent building of the antahkarana, because Bailey also writes, "the antahkarana … eventually supersedes the causal body as a means of communication between the higher and the lower,"[71] which presupposes the prior use of the causal body as such a means of communication. Here, "the higher" denotes the Spiritual Triad, and "the lower" denotes the personality.[72] Thus, in a series of rules for building the antahkarana, one would expect to find a rule

that evokes the intuition, such as the fifth rule, because it is a necessary step in the process.

Application of the preceding rules, which are associated with the first through fourth sentences, leads to comprehending the limitations of concrete thought, such as hindering the perception of what is true. Application of the fifth rule leads to comprehending the limitations of abstract thought. What are those limitations?

Let us review Krishnamurti's comments about cultivating virtues. First, cultivating these abstract concepts prevents understanding:

> Any effort to be virtuous, to be moral, any endeavor to be something other than what one is naturally creates a resistance to what one is, and this resistance prevents the understanding of what one is; yet such effort, which is really an avoidance, an escape from what one is, is generally regarded as virtue.[73]

Second, cultivating these abstract concepts creates the illusion of being separate from other people:

> You may be able to create an illusion into which you can withdraw, or build a wall between your neighbor and yourself and thereby protect yourself. You may separate yourself through social division, through virtues, beliefs, acquisitions, and so free yourself from your neighbor. But this is not freedom.[74]

Third, cultivating these abstract concepts creates bondage to the past:

> We cultivate virtue; we discipline ourselves to conform to a particular pattern of morality. Why? Not only in order to be socially respectable, but also because we see the necessity of bringing about order, of controlling our minds, our speech, our thought. We see how extraordinarily important that is, but in the process of cultivating virtue, we are building up memory, the memory which is the 'me', the self, the ego. That is the background we have, especially those who think they are religious—the background of constantly practicing a particular discipline, of belonging to certain sects, groups, so-called religious bodies. Their reward may be somewhere else, in the next world, but it is still a reward; and in pursuing virtue, which means polishing, disciplining, controlling the mind, they are developing and maintaining self-conscious memory, so never for a moment are they free from the past.[75]

Bailey states, "All forms are but hindrances and limitations, and ultimately must go, but they have their needed place in the development of the race."[76] Through the application of the first five rules, one learns the truth of Bailey's statement with regard to the forms of concrete thought, such as decisions and conclusions, and the forms of abstract thought, such as virtues and principles.

6. But once he intuitively comprehends and factually grasps the concept that spirit-matter are one reality, and once he has achieved within himself the sublimation of matter, then he can divorce himself from all that the human being understands in relation to form.

The sixth sentence is the longest one in the third-ray method. It also seems to be the most obscure, because of its many abstruse terms, so let us examine carefully each of its phrases.

The first phrase seems to refer to Bailey's notion of *spiritual freedom*: "The problem of good or evil, light or darkness, right or wrong, was enunciated solely for the benefit of humanity, and to enable men to cast off the fetters which imprisoned spirit, and thus achieve spiritual freedom."[77] Bailey alludes to spiritual freedom in her question: "Can I hold my mind 'steady in the light' and see life truly and free from any blinding attachments?"[78] Accordingly, spiritual freedom provides the ability to "see life truly and free from any blinding attachments."

Let us consider the first part of the first phrase: "But once he intuitively comprehends … the concept that spirit-matter are one reality." "The concept that spirit-matter are one reality" is demonstrated by, in Bailey's words, "spiritual freedom, within a world of natural law"[79] In other words, this concept is demonstrated by the ability to "see life truly and free from any

blinding attachments," even while functioning through the personality in the outer world.

Krishnamurti mentions the related notion of *unconditioned freedom*: "Only in unconditioned freedom is there truth; that is, in that freedom alone can you be truly yourself."[80] He also explains what this freedom entails:

> Conditioning is attachment: attachment to work, to tradition, to property, to people, to ideas, and so on. If there were no attachment, would there be conditioning? Of course not.[81]

Thus unconditioned freedom implies freedom from attachments. Nevertheless, one can have unconditioned freedom even while having attachments. As Krishnamurti explains, unconditioned freedom provides the ability to observe one's attachments with a perception that is not distorted by them:

> You can think freely only when your mind is unconditioned—that is, not conditioned as a Catholic or a Communist and so on—so that you are capable of looking at all the influences of life which are constantly conditioning you; so that you are capable of examining, observing, and freeing yourself from these conditions and influences; so that you are an intelligent human being without fear.[82]

Krishnamurti's notion of "unconditioned freedom" seems equivalent to Bailey's notion of "spiritual freedom," because both notions signify freedom from attachments.

Krishnamurti states, "Freedom from conditioning comes into being only when we see the necessity of a mind that is unconditioned."[83] In this context, to *see* means to perceive mentally or to understand. If the disciple's intuitive comprehension included seeing the necessity of unconditioned freedom, then the first part of the first phrase, "But once he intuitively comprehends … the concept that spirit-matter are one reality," might have this meaning: But once he sees the necessity of unconditioned freedom, even while functioning through the personality.

Let us consider the second part of the first phrase: "But once he … factually grasps the concept that spirit-matter are one reality." Bailey provides clearer instruction that also incorporates the word "factually": "Hold in mind, specifically and in detail, the method to be employed in building the bridge, according to the particular ray technique, and with the objective in view of relating (in a new and significant manner, factually and not just theoretically) the Spiritual Triad and the personality."[84] If both accounts provided the same instruction, then the second part of the first phrase would portray a disciple who is "relating (in a new and significant manner, factually and not just theoretically) the Spiritual Triad and the personality."

What does it mean to relate the Spiritual Triad and personality in a new and significant manner? Bailey mentions "the attainment of one point of tension after another,"[85] and gives this account of the sequence: "the mental body becomes the centre of consciousness and then later—through practice—it becomes the point of departure for the transference of the polarisation into a higher body, first the causal and later into the Triad."[86] Transferring the point of tension from the mental body to the causal body is equivalent to, in Bailey's words, "the aligning of the three vehicles, the physical, the emotional, and the lower mind body, within the causal periphery."[87]

Transferring the point of tension from the causal body to the Spiritual Triad is equivalent to building the antahkarana, as shown by Bailey's statement:

> This Way [into new fields of spiritual experience] is revealed only when the antahkarana is built and completed and the man becomes focussed in the Triad as consciously as he is now focussed in the threefold lower nature.[88]

Consequently, when the disciple transfers the point of tension into the Spiritual Triad, he or she is "relating (in a new and significant manner, factually and not just theoretically) the Spiritual Triad and the personality." Thus the

second part of the first phrase, "But once he … factually grasps the concept that spirit-matter are one reality," might have this meaning: But once he … factually grasps how to achieve unconditioned freedom by transferring the point of tension into the Spiritual Triad.

Both parts of the first phrase can be clarified by considering the role of memory. Bailey says, "Memory is the holding on to that which has been known."[89] Memory is the basis of the concrete thought of the mental body, which Bailey describes as "That memory activity which is the result of mental training, the accumulation of acquired facts, the consequence of reading or of teaching, and which is not purely based upon desire, but which has its basis in intellectual interest."[90] Memory is also the basis of the abstract thought of the causal body, which Arthur Powell (1882 – 1969), a popular theosophical writer, describes in this way: "The causal body owes its name to the fact that in it reside the causes which manifest themselves as effects in the lower planes. For it is the experiences of past lives, stored in the causal body, which are the *cause* of the general attitude taken up towards life."[91] Bailey gives a similar description: "The content of the causal body is the accumulation by slow and gradual process of the good in each life."[92] In other words, one's causal body is a repository that expands over time on the abstract levels of the mental plane, because it stores the abstract lessons—such as virtues and principles—that one gleans from one's experiences.

Krishnamurti makes some related observations:

> Our life is based on thought, the whole machinery of thinking, the whole machinery of words, which we use, for example, to communicate through a novel. And without the word is there thought? Or is the mind such a slave to words that it cannot see the movement of thought without the word? That is, can I, can the mind, observe me, the whole content of me, without the word? Observe what I am without association—the association being the word, memory, remembrance—so that there is a learning about myself with no remembrance, without the accumulated knowledge as experience of anger, jealousy, antagonism, or desire for power. So can I look at myself—not "I"—can the mind look at itself without the movement of the word? Because the word is the thinker, the word is the observer.
>
> Now, to look at yourself so clearly the mind must be astonishingly free from any attachment, whether to a conclusion, which is an image, or to any principle or idea that is the product of thought and put together by words, phrases, and concepts, and be free from any movement of fear and pleasure. Such perception is in itself the highest form of discipline—discipline in the sense of learning, not conforming. Are you capable of following all this?[93]

Krishnamurti's first paragraph describes a kind of self-observation that occurs without the association of "the word, memory, remembrance." Such self-observation must come from a point of tension that is higher than either the mental body or causal body, because those two faculties are based on memory. The Spiritual Triad is the next higher point of tension beyond the causal body, so Krishnamurti's first paragraph is taken as describing observation that comes from the Spiritual Triad.

Krishnamurti's second paragraph equates this higher observation to perception that is free from any attachment. Accordingly, becoming focused in the Spiritual Triad, which is equivalent to building the antahkarana, achieves the goal of unconditioned freedom, because the latter provides the ability to perceive without the distorting influence of any attachment. As a result, one can observe one's conditioning, or attachments, with a perception that is unconditioned. In the words of the second paragraph, "Such perception is in itself the highest form of discipline—discipline in the sense of learning, not conforming."

In the middle phrase of the sixth sentence, let *matter* represent concrete and abstract thought, as before, so "the sublimation of matter" refers to the sublimation of concrete and abstract thought, but what does that signify? Bailey writes, "Wisdom is the sublimation of the intellect, but this involves the sublimation of the

higher as well as of the lower aspects of the mind. It is a blend of intuition, spiritual perception, cooperation with the plan and spontaneous intellectual appreciation of that which is contacted."[94] Krishnamurti gives this definition: "To have a complete insight into the whole nature of consciousness implies having no motive, no remembrance, just instant perception of the nature of consciousness."[95] Consequently, "the sublimation of matter" is construed as insights regarding concrete and abstract thought.

In the final phrase of the sixth sentence, *divorce* can mean "to cut off," and *understand* can mean "to know thoroughly by close contact,"[96] so "he can divorce himself from all that the human being understands in relation to form" is construed in this way: he can cut himself off from all attachments that unite a human being with form. Bailey corroborates this explanation by writing, "An adept, therefore, has transcended attachment to forms on three planes (physical, astral and mental) and has killed out all longing for the forms of those planes."[97] Such cutting occurs through insight, as Krishnamurti explains:

> Intellectually, you can break down by analysis why the mind is attached to property, but at the end of it there is still attachment, which comes to an end only if we have an insight into the whole structure of attachment. Because to have an insight into something, to see the truth of something brings its own freedom, brings its own intelligence.[98]

Based on the preceding remarks, the rule associated with the sixth sentence is as follows: *But once you see the necessity of unconditioned freedom, even while functioning through your personality, and factually grasp how to achieve it by transferring your point of tension into the Spiritual Triad, let your insights end your attachment to every form with which you are presently united*.

Suppose that one becomes aware of being attached to something, what ought one to do? In this case, the attachment can be regarded as "what is." According to Krishnamurti's principle given earlier, one needs to observe the attachment without any motive to change or transform it into something else. Put differently, again in Krishnamurti's words, "there must be a sane detachment to understand the actual, the existing problem."[99] Bailey makes a similar comment:

> Your intended lesson is *Detachment* and, as you free yourself from the clinging chains of attachment to place or person, your intuitive perception will thereby be released, and you will see in terms of reality and not in terms of form—no matter how high or purified.[100]

Detachment from emotions—including fear and pleasure—requires working from a higher level, such as the mental body. Detachment from concrete thoughts—including decisions and conclusions—requires working from an even higher level, such as the causal body. Detachment from abstract thoughts—including virtues and principles—requires working from the Spiritual Triad, which is equivalent to building the antahkarana. Consequently, seeing the necessity of unconditioned freedom induces penetration to higher points of tension until the antahkarana is built.

Krishnamurti illustrates this approach by considering the example of being attached to an experience:

> You may be attached to an experience, to an incident, which has given you great excitement, a great sense of elation, a sense of power, a sense of safety and you are clinging to that. That experience, which you have had, what is it? That experience is registered in the mind and you hold it. That something you are holding on to is dead and you also are becoming dead. If you see all this, without any direction, without any motive, just observe it, then you will see that insight shows the whole thing as on a map. When once there is that insight the thing disappears completely, you are not attached.[101]

In the above quotation, seeing "without any direction, without any motive" implies seeing with detachment, which yields an insight into attachment to an experience. If one were to

gain an insight into some other kind of attachment, what might that insight show? Krishnamurti gives this answer:

> We *are* the things we possess, we *are* that to which we are attached. Attachment has no nobility. Attachment to knowledge is not different from any other gratifying addiction. Attachment is self-absorption, whether at the lowest or at the highest level. Attachment is self-deception, it is an escape from the hollowness of the self. The things to which we are attached—property, people, ideas—become all-important, for without the many things which fill its emptiness, the self is not. The fear of not being makes for possession; and fear breeds illusion, the bondage to conclusions. Conclusions, material or ideational, prevent the fruition of intelligence, the freedom in which alone reality can come into being; and without this freedom, cunning is taken for intelligence.[102]

Bailey provides this definition: "*Nirvana*, that condition into which the adept passes when the three lower worlds are no longer 'attached' to him through his inclinations or karma."[103] Here, "the three lower worlds" are the physical, emotional, and mental planes.[104] According to this definition, the third-ray method leads to nirvana, because it brings freedom from attachments to the three lower worlds.

7. He can then utter the Word of Power which will make possible his complete identification with spirit, via the antahkarana.

The seventh sentence does not describe the disciple as actually uttering a Word of Power, whereas the ninth sentence does say, "the disciple utters the Word of Power." Consequently, the purpose of the seventh sentence is to provide instruction on how to select an appropriate Word of Power, rather than to tell the disciple that he or she is ready to utter it.

What are *Words of Power*? According to Bailey, "these are all definite assertions, based on knowledge leading to conviction."[105] Put differently, a Word of Power is an affirmation selected so that uttering it leads to the conviction of it being true. The term *spirit* is sometimes used to denote the Spiritual Triad.[106] Moreover, the seventh sentence mentions the antahkarana, for which the Spiritual Triad is the upper terminal according to Bailey's earlier definition, so "spirit" in this sentence must signify the Spiritual Triad.

In Psychology, *identification* is defined as "the process by which a person takes over the features of another person whom he admires and incorporates them into his own personality."[107] After the notion of a Word of Power is combined with that of identification, the rule associated with the seventh sentence becomes the following: *Select your Word of Power so that uttering it is a process by which you take over the features of the Spiritual Triad and incorporate them into your own nature*.

What is the practical value of the seventh rule? By repeating a Word of Power that satisfies this rule, the disciple may become identified with the Spiritual Triad, which means that the disciple may be able to act *as if* he or she were the Spiritual Triad. Bailey says, "This *as if* behaviour is one of the most occult of practices,"[108] and describes these results:

> The capacity, innate in that imaginative creature, man, to act "as if," holds the solution to the problem. By the use of the creative imagination, the bridge between the lower aspect and higher can be built and constructed.[109]
>
> Govern yourself always "as if" your divine comprehension was perfected and the result in your daily life will be "as if" all concealed glamours and all hiding deceptive veils were non-existent. The disciple acts "as if" he were initiate and then discovers that "as a man thinketh in his heart so is he," because the heart is the custodian of the power of the imagination.[110]

Krishnamurti seems to use the phrase "I do not know" as a Word of Power:

> Now, freedom from all that is freedom from the known; it is the state of a mind that says, "I do not know," and that is not

> looking for an answer. Such a mind is completely not seeking, not expecting, and it is only in this state that you can say, "I understand." It is the only state in which the mind is free, and from that state you can look at the things that are known—but not the other way round. From the known you cannot possibly see the unknown, but when once you have understood the state of a mind that is free—which is the mind that says, "I don't know" and remains unknowing, and is therefore innocent—from that state you can function, you can be a citizen, you can be married, or what you will. Then what you do has relevance, significance in life. But we remain in the field of the known, with all its conflicts, striving, disputes, agonies, and from that field we try to find that which is unknown; therefore we are not really seeking freedom. What we want is the continuation, the extension of the same old thing: the known.[111]

Here, "the things that are known" are the concrete thought of the mental body and abstract thought of the causal body, because those things are products of memory. Moreover, "the state of a mind that is free—which is the mind that says, 'I don't know' and remains unknowing, and is therefore innocent," appears to be the Spiritual Triad, because "from that state you can look at the things that are known." Accordingly, when one is affirming, "I do not know," one is incorporating features of the Spiritual Triad—namely, the features of being free, unknowing, and innocent—into one's own nature, so this phrase satisfies the seventh rule's criterion for being an acceptable Word of Power.

8. This word is "PURPOSE ITSELF AM I."

The eighth sentence provides a Word of Power that could be used by students when they apply the third-ray method, but the meaning of this word-form is obscure. Bailey writes, "There are several such mantric formulas and Words of Power in use by such students but they fail to accomplish very much because the person using them has no real understanding of their import and purpose."[112] Thus, in order for a Word of Power to be effective, students need to understand its meaning and purpose.

What is the meaning of "PURPOSE ITSELF AM I"? Krishnamurti makes a related comment:

> To find out the purpose of life, the mind must be free of measurement; then only can it find out. Otherwise you are merely projecting your own want. This is not mere intellectualization, and if you go into it deeply you will see its significance. After all, it is according to my prejudice, to my want, to my desire, to my predilection, that I decide what the purpose of life is to be. So my desire creates the purpose. Surely that is not the purpose of life. Which is more important, to find out the purpose of life, or to free the mind itself from its own conditioning? And when the mind is free from its own conditioning, that very freedom itself is the purpose. Because, after all, it is only in freedom that one can discover any truth.[113]

The foregoing quotation states, "when the mind is free from its own conditioning, that very freedom itself is the purpose." This purpose seems to be equivalent to what the sixth rule calls "unconditioned freedom." Accordingly, when your mind is free from its own conditioning, you can say, "PURPOSE ITSELF AM I."

Regarding the effort to build the antahkarana, Bailey writes, "Remember that you are not creating now upon the outer plane. The physical sound or sounds are therefore of relatively no importance. What does matter is the ability of the disciple to *feel* the meaning of the Word of Power as he silently utters it."[114] Thus, in this case, the actual words that form a Word of Power have relatively no importance as long as they carry the correct meaning, so the rule associated with the eighth sentence is the following: *Select your Word of Power so that it signifies that you are free from all conditioning*.

What is the practical value of the eighth rule? By repeating a Word of Power that satisfies this rule, the disciple practices, in Bailey's

words, "the constant recollection of the truth that he is the Self and not the not-self."[115] Put differently, the disciple practices the constant recollection of the truth of being the unconditioned spiritual reality and not the conditioned entity being observed. Consequently, the disciple may be able to act *as* the Spiritual Triad and apply what Bailey calls the "Technique of Indifference":

> What is this technique? What is indifference? … It means in reality the achieving of a neutral attitude towards that which is regarded as the Not-self; it involves a repudiation of similarity; it marks the recognition of a basic distinction; it signifies refusal to be identified with anything save the spiritual reality as far as that is sensed and known at any given point in time and space. It is, therefore, a much stronger and vital thing than what is usually meant when the word is used. It is active repudiation without any concentration upon that which is repudiated. That is a statement of moment and warrants your careful consideration.[116]

If a Word of Power satisfies the seventh rule's criterion, it may help the disciple to pass into the phase of acting *as if* he or she were the Spiritual Triad. If a Word of Power satisfies the eighth rule's criterion, it may help the disciple to pass from the *as if* phase into a new phase in which he or she acts *as* the Spiritual Triad. If a Word of Power satisfies both criteria, it may help the disciple to pass into the first phase and then into the second one. Bailey also describes these two phases:

> In the early stages of his invocative work, the instrument used is the creative imagination. This enables him at the very beginning to act *as if* he were capable of thus creating; then, when the *as if* imaginative consciousness is no longer useful, he becomes consciously aware of that which he has—with hope and spiritual expectancy—sought to create; he discovers this as an existent fact.[117]

Krishnamurti comments on the phrase, "I do not know":

> Now, if one can really come to that state of saying, "I do not know," it indicates an extraordinary sense of humility; there is no arrogance of knowledge; there is no self-assertive answer to make an impression. When you can actually say, "I do not know," which very few are capable of saying, then in that state all fear ceases because all sense of recognition, the search into memory, has come to an end; there is no longer inquiry into the field of the known. Then comes the extraordinary thing. If you have so far followed what I am talking about, not just verbally, but if you are actually experiencing it, you will find that when you can say, "I do not know," all conditioning has stopped.[118]

According to the foregoing quotation, "when you can say, 'I do not know,' all conditioning has stopped," so this phrase satisfies the eighth rule's criterion for being an acceptable Word of Power.

9. At the point of highest tension, the disciple utters the Word of Power for the third ray.

The ninth sentence, which was originally the first sentence, portrays the climactic effort. Its first phrase mentions "the point of highest tension," but what is this point? According to the commentary for the sixth sentence, the disciple's point of highest tension is the mental body, causal body, or Spiritual Triad. By uttering a Word of Power that satisfies the eighth rule's criterion, the disciple may be able to act *as* the Spiritual Triad, in which case the Spiritual Triad would be "the point of highest tension."

Given that "the point of highest tension" is the Spiritual Triad, the ninth rule portrays the disciple as uttering a Word of Power while focused at the Spiritual Triad, but the meaning of this portrayal is ambiguous: does the disciple begin by becoming focused at the Spiritual Triad and then utters a Word of Power; or does the disciple begin by uttering a Word of Power and then becomes focused at the Spiritual Triad? The seventh and eighth rules resolve the ambiguity, because they provide criteria for selecting a Word of Power so that uttering it would aid in transferring the point of tension into the Spiritual Triad.

What is the purpose of transferring the point of tension into the Spiritual Triad? According to the sixth rule, it is to let insights end attachments to the three lower worlds. Consequently, the rule associated with the ninth sentence is the following: *Utter your Word of Power so that you stand steady and firm at the Spiritual Triad, detached from the particular attachment that you are observing*.

Bailey clarifies the task of the ninth rule: "the task of the disciple is to become consciously aware—like a detached onlooking Observer—of these energies and their expressing qualities as they function within himself."[119] Here, "Observer" is capitalized, but what does that signify? Bailey mentions "the detachment of the Observer from all desires and longings which concern the separated self,"[120] which characterizes the vantage point of the Spiritual Triad, so being aware "like a detached onlooking Observer" signifies detached observation from the Spiritual Triad.

Bailey also clarifies the role of a Word of Power in the ninth rule:

> When adequate stability has been acquired, the disciple utters a Word of Power which serves to carry the light still further on and up. *When correctly uttered*, this Word produces three effects: a. It keeps the channel for the descending light of the Spiritual Triad clear of all impediments. b. It reaches (by means of its vibratory activity) the centre of power which we call the Spiritual Triad … and evokes a response in the form of a thread of descending triadal light. c. It causes a vibration throughout the antahkarana which in its turn evokes response from the "rainbow bridge" as built by all other disciples.[121]

This quotation lists three effects that are produced through correctly uttering a Word of Power:

> First, "It keeps the channel for the descending light of the Spiritual Triad clear of all impediments." Here, "the channel" is the antahkarana, "the descending light of the Spiritual Triad" denotes the "insights" of the sixth rule, and "all impediments" comprise all movements of memory—which are movements of the known—that could obscure the perception of something new.
>
> Second, "It reaches (by means of its vibratory activity) the centre of power which we call the Spiritual Triad … and evokes a response in the form of a thread of descending triadal light." Here, "its vibratory activity" refers to the processes of identification and recollection, which were described for the seventh and eighth rules, and "a thread of descending triadal light" depicts an insight as revealing relationships among the forms of the lower planes, such as among principles, decisions, feelings, and behavior.
>
> Third, "It causes a vibration throughout the antahkarana which in its turn evokes response from the 'rainbow bridge' as built by all other disciples." Here, "a vibration" refers to what Bailey calls "the higher alignment between the Personality and the Spiritual Triad, via the antahkarana,"[122] and the "rainbow bridge" is a synonym of the antahkarana,[123] so the third effect could be stated in this way: uttering a Word of Power brings about one's higher alignment between the personality and Spiritual Triad, which in turn helps other disciples to attain their higher alignment.

Bailey explains how one's higher alignment does affect other people:

> The higher needed alignment has been much bettered and you need not work so hard now at developing that capacity. You need, however, to employ the line of force which you have succeeded in establishing … with greater frequency and more facility. The result of this would be that … you would radiate light and love and become increasingly an inspiration to others … The peculiar type of radiation which I want you to endeavour to express is that light which reaches others upon the wings of *joy*.[124]

Krishnamurti makes a related comment:

> That state in which the mind says, "I do not know," is not negation. The mind has completely stopped searching; it has ceased

> making any movement, for it sees that any movement out of the known towards the thing it calls the unknown is only a projection of the known. So the mind that is capable of saying, "I do not know," is in the only state in which anything can be discovered. But the man who says, "I know," the man who has studied infinitely the varieties of human experience and whose mind is burdened with information, with encyclopedic knowledge, can he ever experience something which is not to be accumulated? He will find it extremely hard. When the mind totally puts aside all the knowledge that it has acquired, when for it there are no Buddhas, no Christs, no Masters, no teachers, no religions, no quotations; when the mind is completely alone, uncontaminated, which means that the movement of the known has come to an end—it is only then that there is a possibility of a tremendous revolution, a fundamental change.[125]

The above quotation says, "the mind that is capable of saying, 'I do not know,' is in the only state in which anything can be discovered." The quotation portrays this state by saying, "the movement of the known has come to an end," which implies that the movements of the mental and causal bodies have come to an end, so this state appears to be detached observation from the Spiritual Triad. Consequently, the quotation suggests the following: using "I do not know" as the Word of Power can help bring about detached observation from the vantage point of the Spiritual Triad.

Conclusions

This article transforms Bailey's third-ray method of building the antahkarana into the following nine rules: 1) Observe your excessive mental activity without any motive to change or transform it; 2) Through self-observation, apprehend the principle that the lack of mental silence hinders the perception of what is true; 3) Continue to observe your mental activity, and let the action of your evoked understanding achieve mental silence and pure attention; 4) Observe your tendency to examine yourself with the desire to modify your responses, without any motive to change this tendency; 5) During each period of self-observation, observe without accumulation so as to gain an intuition that shows the characteristics of your concrete and abstract thought; 6) But once you see the necessity of unconditioned freedom, even while functioning through your personality, and factually grasp how to achieve it by transferring your point of tension into the Spiritual Triad, let your insights end your attachment to every form with which you are presently united; 7) Select your Word of Power so that uttering it is a process by which you take over the features of the Spiritual Triad and incorporate them into your own nature; 8) Select your Word of Power so that it signifies that you are free from all conditioning; and 9) Utter your Word of Power so that you stand steady and firm at the Spiritual Triad, detached from the particular attachment that you are observing.

Why is this method said to be a "third-ray method"? Bailey provides an answer by portraying a person on the third ray:

> The Third Ray of Higher Mind … is the ray of the abstract thinker, of the philosopher and the metaphysician … The method of approaching the great Quest, for this ray type, is by deep thinking on philosophic or metaphysical lines till he is led to the realisation of the great Beyond and of the paramount importance of treading the Path that leads thither.[126]

In the third-ray method, as interpreted in this article, one observes one's concrete and abstract thought, through the application of the first five rules, until one comprehends the goal of unconditioned freedom and the paramount importance of building the antahkarana that leads to there, which is the initial part of the sixth rule. Thus the third-ray method conforms to the pattern that the above quotation ascribes to the "method of approaching the great Quest, for this ray type."

This article illustrates the third-ray method by relating its associated rules to correlative quotations from Krishnamurti's teachings. Nevertheless, Krishnamurti did not intend for his remarks to support any method or system, as he explains:

> Seeking a method invariably implies the desire to attain some result—and that is what we all want. We follow authority—if not that of a person, then of a system, of an ideology—because we want a result which will be satisfactory, which will give us security. We really do not want to understand ourselves, our impulses and reactions, the whole process of our thinking, the conscious as well as the unconscious; we would rather pursue a system which assures us of a result. But the pursuit of a system is invariably the outcome of our desire for security, for certainty, and the result is obviously not the understanding of oneself.[127]

Unlike many commonly known methods, however, the third-ray method does not enable its practitioners to avoid, or hide from, understanding themselves. Instead, its associated rules are actually steps of self-understanding that take a practitioner from excessive mental activity to unconditioned freedom.

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[42] Deborah J. Bennett, *Logic Made Easy* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004), 115. Let *S* be the proposition that the mind is silent, and *T* be the proposition that there is perception of what is true, so the second rule's principle could be expressed as this conditional statement: if not *S*, then not *T*. Krishnamurti's statement could be expressed as the contrapositive: if *T*, then *S*. The second rule's principle and Krishnamurti's statement have the same meaning, because a conditional statement is logically equivalent to its contrapositive.

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[70] Ibid., 313.
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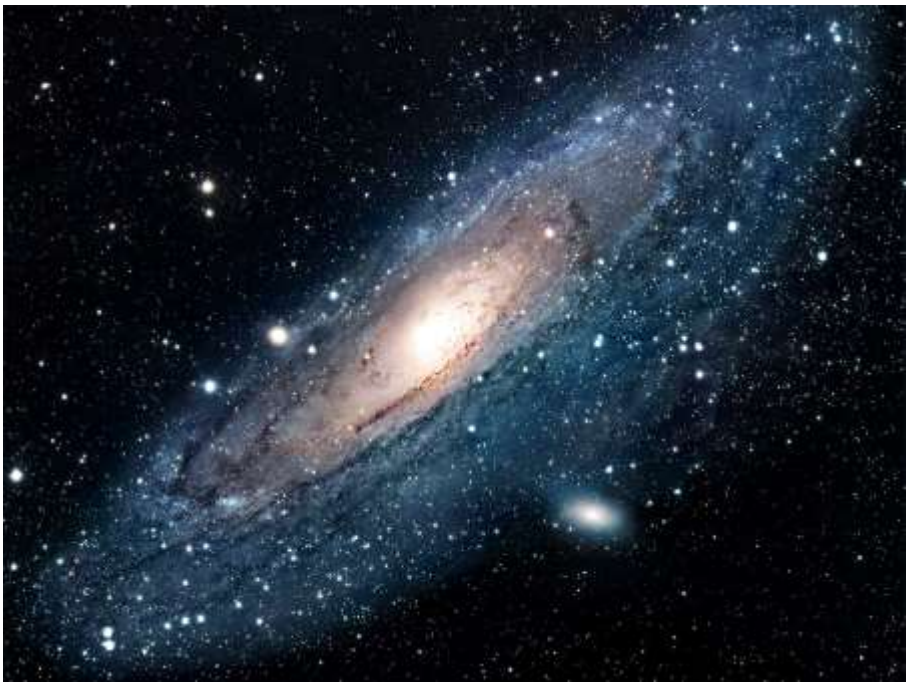
[121] Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 510.
[122] Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. II, 364.
[123] Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 114.
[124] Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I, 181.
[125] Krishnamurti, *On God*, 119-120.
[126] Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 204-205.
[127] Krishnamurti, *The First and Last Freedom*, 47.

God, Humanity, and the Universe

John F. Nash



The Andromeda Galaxy, one of our nearer neighbors in space. Image: NASA.

Summary

This article reveals a serious mismatch between the understanding of Deity, formulated in biblical times but still current in the major world religions, and today's scientific knowledge of the physical universe. Modern esoteric teachings on the hierarchy of Logoi are more compatible with scientific cosmology and better depict the Creator and Life-Giver of a vast, complex universe. Yet religious doctrine has deep roots and self-sustaining support systems. Efforts to encourage acceptance of esoteric theology across a broad spectrum of religious traditions must be approached with sensitivity, patience and humility.

The article also examines religious notions of a personal God—including the Beloved of the mystics—in relation to esoteric teachings on the Logoi and the human Monad. There may be a gap in esoteric teachings, and further insights may be needed to explain an important element of the mystical experience, extending over millennia and spanning multiple religious traditions. To this end, esotericists could benefit from studying the great mystics and even participating in appropriate contemplative disciplines.

About the Author

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Introduction

What do we mean by "God"? Who or what is God? To what extent is God knowable? What are God's attributes? Is God interested in the world, humanity, or us as individuals? What kind of relationship, if any, can we expect to have with God? These are questions people have asked ever since humanity acquired the rudiments of consciousness. Many answers have been offered, but no consensus has developed. Nor could a single article, like this one, be expected to provide universally satisfying answers. Nevertheless, to explore such questions may stimulate group insight and move us closer to an understanding acceptable among multiple constituencies.

In mainstream western religions, God is believed to be the creator of the universe. God is also believed to be loving, compassionate, and accessible by individual people. Christians believe that he sent his only son to redeem humanity. These concepts of God were formulated two millennia ago when our knowledge of physical reality was very different from what it is today. The universe was believed to be small and geocentric. Today we know that the universe is almost unbelievably large and complex. Yet the God who created and rules over it is still perceived as anthropomorphic and focused intimately on our tiny planet and its occupants: God knows our innermost thoughts;[1] and prayers will be heard—and hopefully answered.

The result is a mismatch between religion and science that hampers religious thought, especially among educated people. The mismatch also leads to unnecessary attacks on religion by atheist skeptics and on science by religious fundamentalists. Hinduism and the Judaic Kabbalah conceive of a Godhead less constrained by geocentrism and anthropomorphism; but they still do not adequately accommodate today's scientific knowledge of the universe.

Clearly new insights are needed to guide theological and philosophical thought. They could not come from scientific discovery alone. Insights of a different order are needed, reflecting understanding and perspectives greater than our own.

Institutional religion attaches great importance to divine revelation. But revelation typically is assumed to have occurred in the distant past, and to have stopped with closure of the scriptural canon. Supposedly, the initial deposit of truth would suffice for all time. Authoritative bodies— including, in Christianity's case, the ecumenical councils of the early church— expounded upon scripture and formulated increasingly detailed doctrinal statements. But no provision was made, or permitted, to allow the deposit of fundamental knowledge to expand with discovery, scholarship, and the evolution of ideas.

In principle, the Eastern Orthodox churches acknowledge the validity of mystical theology as a further source of revelation. But in practice, mystics' insights have often been challenged by traditionalists. The Church of Rome invariably denounced individuals, like Meister Eckhart and Giordano Bruno, who shared their own mystical insights. The Anglican and Lutheran churches are less rigid, but they have never accepted any change in key doctrines relating to God, the trinity, or Christ.

Liberal theology has broken free from traditional dogma, primarily at the expense of losing sight of the Divine and the sacred. German Lutheran theologian Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976), a leading biblical scholar of his time, conceded that scripture contained revelation in the "message of God's decisive act in Christ."[2] But he sought to strip away layers of "mythology" in the New Testament, and he claimed that biblical accounts of miracles "mistakenly objectified the transcendent into the immanent."[3] Other liberal theologians have adopted a skeptical attitude toward revelation of any kind. The divinity of Christ is questioned or ignored, and God is turned into an abstract concept like Paul Tillich's "Ground of Being."[4]

Esoteric philosophy speaks of the Ageless Wisdom, gifted to infant humanity by the Planetary Hierarchy and supplemented by new revelation, as and when the human race could benefit from it. Esotericists believe that revela-

tion continues through the intentional seeding of human consciousness via mystical insights or the various methods of communication characteristic of modern esoteric teachings.[5] Importantly, they believe that new revelation has been made available concerning Deity. The concept of a hierarchy of Logoi is more compatible with today's scientific knowledge than is the creator-God of traditional religion, and it can be expanded as new astronomical data become available.

Religion is not just about a creator-God, ruling over the universe. People of all western religions—and many elsewhere—speak of a personal God: one with whom they can form relationships; one they can talk to, perhaps listen to; one to whom they can turn to in times of hardship; one to whom they can express devotion, praise and thanksgiving. In addition to explaining who or what the God of the universe is, we are challenged to explain who or what is this personal God.

Theologians declare that God is both transcendent and immanent. And the immanent God is not just an aspect of the environment, like the air we breathe, but is present to us in a personal way. How divine transcendence and immanence are related and coexist are deemed to be mysteries beyond our comprehension. Part of the problem of explaining God's immanence, at least for western Christianity, lies in its insistence that creation does not share in the divine essence. The universe and humanity are separate from God. We are body and soul, but not spirit.

Esoteric teachings echo traditional beliefs in the religions of South Asia in insisting that, at the most fundamental level of our being, we are fragments of the divine essence. To use western terminology, we have, or *are*, divine Monads, individualized but sharing in one Divinity. The Monad is the guarantor of our divine destiny; we came from Spirit, and we shall eventually return to Spirit.

The experience of a personal God is shared, not only by the masses of devout people, but also by great saints and mystics. The saints and mystics of all religions report experiences of close, even intimate, contact with the Divine. Many mystics speak in anthropomorphic terms of "the Beloved," and their experiences seem to grow ever more intense as they progress on their spiritual paths.

Several theories can be proposed to reconcile the experience of the Beloved with esoteric teachings, including the suggestion that the mystics have attained the third initiation and are glimpsing the Monad. However, none seems satisfactory. Rather, it would appear that new esoteric knowledge is needed to explain the phenomenon.

In order to limit the scope of the article, the primary focus is on "western" religion—that is, on Christianity (including Eastern Orthodox Christianity), Judaism, and Islam. Occasional references to the religions of Asia are made when they shed light on issues pertaining to western religion.

The Manifest Universe

The scriptures of western religions were written in the Middle East, where a consensus understanding of the universe existed for centuries or even millennia. The universe was thought to consist of three tiers. Human beings and all other creatures lived on a flat Earth. Below it was the underworld: "the water under the earth."[6] Above it was the dome of the firmament, a relatively short distance up in the sky. The Sun, Moon and planets moved in the firmament, while the stars were attached to it or shone through apertures, like holes in a black curtain. God, who created the universe and maintained a close interest in humanity, resided above the firmament.

That small universe, perhaps a thousand miles across and no more than a hundred miles from top to bottom, provided the backdrop against which notions of God, still prevalent in mainstream western religion, were formulated. Before we evaluate these traditional concepts of God, and more satisfactory concepts offered by esoteric teachings, it will be useful to review what is known of the universe from modern astronomical observations: a universe which contrasts in almost every conceivable way with the one just described.

Earth is 12,742 km, or roughly 7,900 miles, in diameter. It has a single satellite, the Moon: 3,475 km in diameter, or roughly one-fourth the size of Earth. The Moon moves in an eccentric orbit that brings it as close as 362,600 km and as far as 405,400 km from Earth.[7] Earth is one of eight planets—nine if Pluto is counted, ten if Ceres is included—and innumerable smaller objects and radiation belts that make up the Solar System. They all orbit the Sun, a main-sequence star. The innermost planet Mercury makes a complete revolution around the Sun every eighty-eight days; Neptune takes 165 years, and Pluto 248 years.

The Sun's mean diameter is 1,392,680 km, or about 100 times greater than Earth's. We are some 150,000,000 km from the Sun. The Sun's light takes about eight minutes to reach Earth; or we say that the distance from Earth to the Sun is eight light-minutes—roughly 1/66,000 of a light-year. The edge of the Solar System is ill-defined, but a common estimate places it at about 0.7 light-days, or 1/500 light-years, from the Sun.[8]

Our Sun is one of 100 billion to 400 billion stars that make up the spiral galaxy known as the Milky Way. At the time of writing, approximately 1,000 exoplanets—planets orbiting other stars—have been discovered, and as many as 4,000 have been identified pending confirmation. New exoplanets are continually being discovered, some orbiting stars resembling our Sun and with characteristics resembling Earth's. Those discovered so far all lie in our immediate neighborhood of the galaxy. Extrapolation suggests that the Milky Way may contain more than 10 billion planets comparable with Earth.

The Milky Way is 100,000–120,000 light-years in diameter. The Solar System lies on one of its spiral arms, some 27,000 light-years from the galactic center. That latter distance is roughly 1.8 billion times the distance from Earth to the Sun. The Solar System rotates about the galactic center—thought to contain a massive black hole—making a complete revolution in about 240 million years.[9] It has made roughly one-quarter of a revolution since the extinction of the dinosaurs.

Until the 1920s, the universe was identified with the Milky Way. Then, with improvements in observational technology, celestial objects previously thought to lie within the Milky Way began to be identified as separate galaxies. In due course, many more galaxies were discovered.

As many as eighteen small galaxies may be satellites of the Milky Way. Our nearest major galaxy is Andromeda, roughly 2.5 million light-years away. An image of Andromeda is shown at the beginning of this article. The Milky Way and Andromeda are among the fifty-or-so galaxies that make up the so-called Local Group. In turn, the Local Group is part of the Virgo Cluster whose center lies in the direction of the constellation Virgo. In turn again, the Virgo Cluster is part of the Virgo Supercluster. The Virgo Supercluster is estimated to be some 110 million light-years across and to contain at least 100 galaxy groups and clusters.

Until recently, the Virgo Supercluster was believed to be the largest assemblage of galaxies to which we belong. But in 2014, a group of astronomers, led by R. Brent Tully of the University of Hawaii and Helene Courtois of the University of Lyon, showed that the Virgo Supercluster is just part of a larger supercluster, now known as Laniakea, a Hawaiian word that means "immeasurable heaven." Laniakea encompasses about 100,000 galaxies and extends over 520 million light-years.[10] Even that vast distance is less than two percent of the diameter of the observable universe.[11] Astronomers believe that there may be at least 100 billion *galaxies* in the universe. For comparison, about 5,000 *stars* are visible to the naked eye on a clear night.

The observable universe is nearly twenty orders of magnitude—factors of ten—larger than the Earth. To put that number in perspective: Earth is larger than the hydrogen atom by "only" seventeen orders of magnitude.[12] The entire physical universe may be larger still; the observable part is all that we can ever hope to see, because more distant parts may be receding from us faster than the speed of light.[13] Scientific cosmology has not ruled out the pos-

sibility that other universes may exist alongside our own; indeed, the notion of a *multiverse* seems to be gaining momentum in academic circles.

Clearly, this is a very different universe from the one that underlies religious notions of God. And the impact of that difference on theology can scarcely be ignored. A Deity who informs and ensouls physical reality in its entirety must be almost infinitely remote from us in power and consciousness. The challenge for theology is, or should be, to explain how such a God could possibly bridge the gulf in consciousness to interact in any manner, or share any knowledge of itself, with us. Theology should also be challenged to suggest why such a God would choose to pay us—specks of being on an infinitesimal speck of matter within a vast universe, or many universes—any attention whatsoever.

God in Religion

Most religions in antiquity were polytheistic. Some gods were assumed to animate conspicuous features or forces of nature, while others presided over families, tribes, or territorial areas. Occasionally an Amen (Amon or Amun), a Marduk, an Indra, a Zeus, or an Athena assumed superior importance, but there was no sense that any of them reigned alone, even in the pantheon of the particular culture; rather they expressed particular divine attributes, while fellow gods expressed others.

Monotheism had few precedents in the ancient world. Aten reigned supreme for a mere two decades, in the second millennium BCE, before Egypt returned to its traditional polytheism. Biblical Judaism was unique in its time for making monotheism a central tenet of faith: first in the sense that only one God merited worship,[14] and eventually in the sense that there really was only one God. In due course, belief in a single God passed into the other two Abrahamic religions: Christianity and Islam. Even then, Christianity modified its monotheism by the doctrine of the trinity: "three in one."

Polytheism was the norm in classical Greece, but Aristotle's concept of the Unmoved Mover could be interpreted as affirming monotheism. The concept was developed further by the Christian theologian Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century CE.

God of Revelation

The strong belief of western religion is that God *wants* to be known, to reveal himself to his creation. Yet widespread disagreement exists within and among religions on what form revelation takes, and when and to whom it has been communicated. While scripture is widely believed to be the revealed word of God, there is disagreement over what should be recognized as scripture—and further disagreement on how it should be interpreted and translated into other languages.

A common companion belief, as already noted, is that revelation ceased when the writing and compilation of scripture—Jewish, Christian or Islamic—was completed and received official endorsement by the respective religious authorities. Institutional religion is reluctant to acknowledge the possibility of ongoing revelation.

The Hebrew scriptures focus on the Covenant: a contract between God and the people of Israel. YHVH, "I am that I am," demanded exclusive loyalty from his people.[15] However, his insistence that "Thou shalt have no other gods before me"[16] acknowledged the prevailing polytheism and competition from other tribal gods. His chief competitor was Baal, against whom YHVH's prophets waged a continual—and sometimes losing—battle. Until the sixth-century BCE, YHVH's sovereignty was limited to the Promised Land; the Exile finally persuaded the Jews to acknowledge that he was still their God in Babylon. Gradually, YHVH acquired the characteristics of a universal God, ruling over Jews and Gentiles alike, even though the latter might not recognize him.

The earlier books of the Hebrew Bible sometimes referred to God as the Elohim; indeed, that name appears in the very first verse of *Genesis*. *Elohim* is an irregular, plural noun, suggesting a plurality of deities; but traditionally, it is taken to refer to the single "God."

The Elohim come(s) across as more abstract, or at least more impersonal, than does YHVH. On the other hand, scripture records no doubts that the Elohim and the anthropomorphic, tribal deity Yahweh were one and the same.

As YHVH became more universal, he also became more transcendent and remote. Instead of speaking directly to his people, he began to rely on the prophets to speak for him. Most important of the prophets was Moses, to whom God communicated the Ten Commandments. The Mosaic Law: the Decalogue and its elaboration in *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, *Numbers* and *Deuteronomy*, documented what was demanded of the Chosen People in exchange for divine protection under the Covenant.

Judaism gradually softened its monotheism by acknowledging the existence of divine manifestations. They included Ruach ha-Kadesh, literally "the Holy Spirit" but interpreted more commonly as the Divine Breath; Chokmah, or Wisdom, a divine feminine personage; the Kavod, or transcendent glory of God; and finally the Shekinah, the indwelling presence of God.[17] Those manifestations provided added reassurance that the transcendent YHVH was still present for his people. Along with the prophecies, they represented new forms of revelation.

Christ served as an even more tangible manifestation: one who came to redeem the world and to express love in greater measure than had hitherto been known. Christianity has its scriptures: the "Old Testament"—the Hebrew Bible reinterpreted as a set of prophecies pertaining to Christ—and the New Testament. Yet Christian theologians insist that Christ's incarnation itself was the supreme act of revelation: he was the son of God who took human form. Christ spoke of his father, "the Father," whom his followers assumed to be the Judaic YHVH. The Fourth Gospel identified Christ as the Logos,[18] a term that came to be understood as "the Word," but which in Greek philosophy conveyed the sense of a mediator or intermediary.

In due course the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit—the last the direct equivalent of Ruach ha-Kadesh—were molded into a trinity of divine "persons." The Christian trinity bears some similarity to the Egyptian trinity of Osiris, Isis and Horus, but more closely mirrors the Hindu *trimurti* of Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma.

Islam revered Jesus as a prophet, but rejected the notion that he was divine. Moreover, Mohammed, who received and transcribed the *Qur'an*, never claimed divine status for himself. He was simply God's messenger, "the Prophet." Islam resembles Buddhism in that respect; the Buddha resisted attempts by his followers to deify him. The *Qur'an* is believed to be the final work of scripture, but Islam teaches that the books of Moses and the Christian gospels contain revealed truth. The *Qur'an* speaks of Jews and Christians as "People of the Book,"[19] and as such they were accorded privileges in Muslim countries during the Middle Ages, and in some countries to the present day.

In addition to the *Qur'an*, most Muslims recognize the *Sunnah*, the verbally transmitted record of Muhammad's teachings, deeds and sayings—even his silent approvals and disapprovals. The *Sunnah* has been used primarily as a basis for Islamic ethical teachings and jurisprudence.

Whereas Christianity embraced a modified form of monotheism, Islam rejected any notion of a trinity and returned to the strict monotheism of Moses and the Hebrew prophets. Allah is the only God. In common usage *Allah* means "the God"; but it can also mean "the Exalted One," or "the Being Who comprises all the attributes of perfection." Furthermore, the name Allah has a mantric quality embodying the idea that there is one sole divinity having the potential for infinite possibility.[20]

In the *Qur'an* we read: "There is no god but He, Merciful to all, Compassionate to each."[21] The affirmation, repeated five times a day, continues to be: "There is no God but Allah," or literally "There is no God but the God." The *Qur'an* emphasizes the power of God: "He is God, There is no God but He, Sovereign . . . Almighty . . . The Creator, Originator, Giver of Forms."[22]

While the custodians of dogma typically hold that revelation is confined to scripture and possibly divine manifestations, like Christ, many others believe that revelation can be found in mythology, the arts, and nature. This last has been the subject of commentary for thousands of years. The psalmist wrote: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork."[23] Christian church father John Chrysostom declared: "For not only, indeed, does the magnitude and beauty of the creation, but also the very manner of it, display a God who is the great Founder of the universe. . . . He hath made the mode of this creation to become our best teacher."[24] The *Qur'an* affirms: "God . . . made the sun and moon to do His bidding, each running for an appointed time. He governs the world. He makes clear His revelations. Perhaps you will be convinced of the encounter with your Lord."[25]

Although revelation may be all around us, we must still search for it, as we search for the treasures of this world. A Sufi writer expressed it well:

> The light hidden in matter is the one light experienced within the mystery of creation, the hidden treasure revealed through the dance of multiplicity. The creation of the manifest world is a revelation of the hidden nature of the divine, as expressed in the *hadith* [records of the sayings of Mohammed], "I was a hidden treasure and I longed to be known, so I created the world." But we can only experience the wonder and know the true nature of this revelation through the light hidden within it. Just as He has hidden His secret within us—"Man is My secret and I am his secret"—so has He hidden Himself within His creation. Sometimes, in moments amidst the beauty or glory of nature, in the vastness of the stars or the perfection of the early morning dew on a flower, we glimpse this wonder.[26]

God of the Theologians

Genesis, based on earlier texts but compiled at the time of the Exile, affirmed that "God created the heaven and the earth."[27] Nine centuries later, in late antiquity, Christianity affirmed: "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible."[28] Both statements, referring to the transcendent creator-God, were composed when heaven and earth were understood to consist of the dome of the sky and a flat Earth.

Christianity inherited its priestly tradition and the elements of its liturgy from Judaism, but much of its theology, including Christological and trinitarian doctrine, was Greek in origin. Church father Augustine of Hippo acknowledged Christianity's debt: "Certain partakers with us in the grace of Christ, wonder when they hear and read that Plato had conceptions concerning God, in which they recognize considerable agreement with the truth of our religion."[29] For over a millennium Platonic ideas held sway in the development of Christian doctrine. In its understanding of God, however, Christian doctrine was slow to incorporate what the Greeks already knew about the structure of the universe.

Both Plato and Aristotle had surmised that the Earth was a sphere, around which the Moon, Sun and planets revolved; beyond all of them was the firmament of fixed stars. This geocentric model was elaborated upon by the Hellenistic astronomer Claudius Ptolemaeus (Ptolemy) in the second-century CE. The Ptolemaic model gradually became the standard understanding of the universe in the West. Even then, theologians made few adjustments. God was assumed to reside beyond the fixed stars, much farther away than in the flat-Earth model; but Earth, at the center of the universe, remained his chief focus.

Changes of a different kind came in the Middle Ages with the revival of Aristotelian philosophy. The revival began among Islamic scholars but then made its way into western Europe, where it quickly merged with Scholasticism. Scholasticism was a method of critical thought in which contrasting ideas could be examined, debated and resolved. Its greatest influence was on western Christianity, though several Jewish scholars became involved, notably Moses Maimonides (1135–1204), who formulated

the *Thirteen Articles of Faith*, one of the few confessional statements in the history of Judaism.[30] Scholasticism had virtually no influence on Eastern Orthodox Christianity until the seventeenth century.

Scholasticism affirmed the principle that religious doctrine might transcend the human mind but could not be incompatible with reason. That principle led to the belief that proofs could be constructed for the existence of God. In the eleventh century, Anselm of Canterbury devised an *ontological* or *a priori* proof asserting that the very definition of God as an infinite being mandates God's existence.[31] An ontological proof (from the Greek: *ontos* "being" and *logia* "study") stems solely from rational argument. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), most renowned of the Scholastics, offered five *a posteriori* proofs that incorporated experience or observation of the world. Further proofs of both types were proposed by later theologians and philosophers.[32]

Theologians declare that God is both transcendent and immanent….How divine transcendence and immanence are related and coexist are deemed to be mysteries beyond our comprehension. Part of the problem of explaining God's immanence, at least for western Christianity, lies in its insistence that creation does not share in the divine essence. The universe and humanity are separate from God. We are body and soul, but not spirit.

Aquinas identified several characteristics of God, including simplicity, perfection, goodness, infinity, immutability, and eternality.[33] His and other attempts to describe the divine nature were examples of *kataphatic* (or *cataphatic*) theology, from the Greek *kataphatikos*, which means "positive." Kataphatic theology contrasts with *apophatic* theology (from the Greek *apophatikos*: "negative"), which takes the view that God is so far removed from human understanding that we can only say what it is *not*. For example, the Rabbi Baruch Medzibozer (d. 1811) declared: "God is called the God of Gods in order to demonstrate to us that He is God beyond any conception of Him of which humanity is capable."[34]

Apophatic theology is most appropriate when discussing the transcendent Godhead. The argument is that if the Godhead had attributes it would not be the Godhead. In Hinduism, particularly in Jnana Yoga and Advaita Vedanta, the Brahman, or Godhead, is affirmed to transcend anything that we might say about it; the Sanskrit expression *neti neti* means "not this, not that," or "neither this, nor that." The Kabbalists said much the same about the Ain Soph, which corresponds closely to the Hindu Brahman.

Christian theologians have been singularly silent concerning the transcendent Godhead. One of the few early references is found in the Athanasian Creed, which speaks of "the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[35] No explanation is provided, but the statement could be interpreted as implying that the three persons of the trinity emerge from a transcendent Godhead. More commonly the Godhead is identified with God the Father, watering down the principle of transcendence and sacrificing the principle that the Godhead should be without attributes.

Notions of the simplicity of God—assertions that God has no component parts—may not have originated with Aquinas; indeed they echo throughout the Abrahamic religions, with two exceptions to be discussed shortly. But he became its champion, and his broad influence assured virtually complete support in Christianity and beyond.

Defending the assertion of divine simplicity, Aquinas argued: ""[S]omething has to exist prior to any composite, since composing elements are by their very nature antecedent to a composite. Hence the first of all beings cannot be composite."[36] His mistake was to confuse

God, the supreme *being*, with the formless Godhead. The Godhead may be simple, but God, conceived of as a being, can be "composite"—though that was a singularly weak term to use in relation to the Deity. The assertion of simplicity has caused many difficulties, including an understanding of the trinity. More seriously, it complicates the issue of reconciling the transcendence and immanence of God. From Aquinas' time onward the gulf between the two views of God grew ever wider.

One of the exceptions to the insistence on divine simplicity is almost as old as Christianity itself. Several Gnostic writers offered cosmological models involving multiple planes interposed between the *Pleroma*—roughly corresponding to heaven—and the physical world. Each plane had distinct properties and was inhabited by divine, or at least superhuman, beings, who might be either beneficent or malevolent. In some cases pairs of complementary beings, like the beneficent Logos—that is, Christ—and Sophia, occupied a single plane.[37] The most ambitious cosmological model was proposed by the second-century CE Basilides who envisioned 365 planes, one for each day of the cosmic year.[38]

The other exception is found in the Judaic theoretical Kabbalah, which experienced two extraordinary periods of growth: one in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Moorish Spain, and the other in sixteenth-century Palestine.[39] Whereas Moses Maimonides and most other mainstream Jewish scholars insisted on the simplicity of God, the Kabbalists envisioned ten sephiroth (literally "numbers") interposed between the Godhead, or Ain Soph, and the physical world. The sephiroth can be interpreted variously as challenges to the seeker, archetypical forces, or manifestation of the Divine; several commentators have interpreted them as Logoi, in the sense discussed later in this article. Of the ten sephiroth, six form pairs of opposites, recalling the Logos–Sophia and other polarities of Gnosticism.

Islam never questioned the simplicity of God, but it acknowledges the simultaneous transcendence and immanence of God. It also acknowledges the many divine attributes that are reflected in the Ninety-Nine Names of God, which include "The Victorious," "The Loving One," and "The Light."[40]

Along with their interest in the divine nature itself, theologians have speculated on how God created the universe. Aside from its importance in understanding the workings of God, the outcome is of great importance to humanity. As noted earlier, western Christianity insisted that God created the universe *ex nihilo*, from nothing. Some scholars have argued that Plato supported such a notion in his dialogue *Timaeus*, but Augustine of Hippo became its strongest advocate in western Christianity.

Ex nihilo creation contrasts with two other theories. One is that the universe is an extension of, or was "birthed by," the Divine; this is the Neoplatonic concept of *emanation*. The other is that the universe was created from the primeval chaos. This last theory begs the question because one immediately asks: Where did the primeval chaos come from? Was it created ex nihilo? Was it separate from but coexistent with God—in which case God's place in reality is diminished? Or was it part of the divine essence, in which case we return to a kind of emanation.

Emanation was never shunned as completely in Eastern Orthodox Christianity as it was in the West. And even in the West it was promoted by John Scottus Eriugena and Meister Echkart, both of whom were condemned for their pains. The former wrote in the ninth century:

> It follows that we ought not to understand God and the creature as two things distinct from one another, but as one and the same. For both the creature, by subsisting, is in God; and God, by manifesting himself, in a marvelous and ineffable manner creates himself in the creature.[41]

Hindu teachings strongly support the notion of emanation. For instance, Lord Krishna is quoted as saying, "having pervaded the whole universe with a fragment of Myself, I remain."[42]

God's mode of creation has direct implications for humanity. If we are created from nothing, we are separate from God; we exist simply by

divine fiat, with no ultimate status. If, on the other hand, we are part of the divine essence, we have status and can claim not only divine origin but divine destiny. The Eastern Orthodox tolerance for emanation made possible the doctrine of *theosis*, or deification, which asserts that humankind has the potential to partake of the divine nature.[43] That doctrine looks to *2 Peter* 1:2 as its primary scriptural basis, but it also draws upon the writings of several church fathers. Notably, Athanasius, third-century patriarch of Alexandria, viewed theosis as the complement of Christ's incarnation: "He was made man that we might be made god."[44]

The Reformation brought great changes to ecclesiastical authority and to styles of Christian worship, but it had a minimal impact on western teachings concerning the creator-God. Martin Luther (1483–1546) insisted that doctrine be based solely on scripture, and he was highly critical of Scholasticism. But he left virtually the whole of theistic doctrine in place. John Calvin (1509–1564) placed great emphasis on divine sovereignty: the notion that divine will could never be frustrated by human action: "[T]he will of God is the supreme and primary cause of all things, because nothing happens without his order or permission."[45] That conclusion led Calvin to his doctrine of predestination; if divine sovereignty and mercy were irreconcilable, the latter was the one to be sacrificed. The Calvinist God was to be feared rather than loved, like the Old Testament YHVH. Traces of that attitude persist today in evangelical fundamentalism.

The Copernican Revolution threatened traditional views of God, Earth and humanity. No longer was Earth the center of the universe; it was just one of several planets orbiting the Sun. Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) paid the price of ecclesiastical displeasure, but within a few decades Christianity adjusted to the new view of the universe.

Judaism, too, was largely unfazed. The Rabbi Baal Shem Tov (c.1700–1760), affectionately known as "the Besht," declared: "You can understand that there are many heavens above you, and that you are standing on this tiny dot that is the planet Earth. You can then realize that the entire universe, vast though it may be, is like nothing compared to the infinite Creator."[46] The Besht—born when Isaac Newton was less than sixty years old—never knew how big the universe really was.

As astronomy reached out farther into the depths of space, the problem of reconciling divine transcendence and immanence became ever more serious. Heaven, assumed to lie beyond the boundaries of the physical universe, was pushed ever farther from Earth, and the creator-God became ever more remote from humanity. When astronomical observations placed the Solar System in a galaxy—one of many—theologians stopped even trying to address the implications for the depiction of God.

The Enlightenment, typically dated from the 1620s to the 1780s, sought to exploit institutional religion's discomfort. It offered three possible philosophical positions. One was outright atheism, embraced by an increasing number of academic scientists; another was Deism, popular at the time of the American Revolution, which acknowledged a creator-God but asserted that he no longer paid any attention to his creation. The third was the "God of the gaps," which left God in charge of phenomena which science had not yet explained. Inevitably, as discovery followed discovery, the gaps grew ever narrower, and God was squeezed out. Finally, in 1882, Friedrich Nietzsche's madman cried out in the marketplace: "God is dead."[47]

God in Prayer and Worship

Contrasting with, yet somehow coexisting with, the transcendent creator-God is the immanent, personal God to whom people can pray and express devotion. Not all ancient religions accommodated a personal God, and even where it was found, patterns of devotion developed more slowly than did belief in the Creator.

Few Greeks sought relationships with their gods, or vice versa. Like other tribal deities, YHVH established a relationship with the Jewish race, through his covenants with Noah, Abraham and Moses. For the most part, he was

a stern and sometimes vengeful God. Sacrifices were offered—as they were in other ancient religions—to assuage divine anger and curry divine favor. Yet devotion was not unknown, and *Deuteronomy* offered the famous prayer known as the *Shema*: "[T]hou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."[48] Over the course of centuries, the *Shema* became one of the central prayers of Judaism.

Devotion received greater attention in the teachings of Christ. In addition to reiterating the *Shema*, he encouraged the people to call upon a loving God: "Our Father, who art in heaven . . . ." Islam, likewise, emphasized the importance of individual and collective prayer. One of the pillars of Islam is *Salat*, or ritual prayer five times a day. God remains in close contact with the world and is deeply concerned with humanity's problems.

The God of devotion is an immanent, anthropomorphized, and very personal deity. God knows our weaknesses, our needs, even our most secret thoughts. A passage from *Jeremiah*: "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord."[49] Christ assured his followers of the Father's intimate knowledge and concern for humankind—indeed for all creation: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows."[50] The *Qur'an* reminds us that Allah is "Compassionate to each" but also "All-Knowing."[51]

People turn to God in times of difficulty, petitioning for their own relief or interceding for others'. Not all such prayers are expected to be answered, but belief in the possibility of divine favor is strong enough to provide a basis for hope and comfort. Psalm 46 reminds us that "God is our hope and strength, a very present help in trouble." Italian bishop and saint Alphonsus Maria de' Liguori (1696–1787) wrote

> Acquire the habit of speaking to God as if you were alone with Him, familiarly and with confidence and love, as to the dearest and most loving of friends. Speak to Him often of your business, your plans, your troubles, your fears— of everything that concerns you. Converse with Him confidently and frankly.[52]

Petition and intercession are only two of many types of prayer; others are adoration, praise, thanksgiving, penitence, oblation and contemplation. The eighteenth-century Hasidic Jewish writer Nachman Bratzlaver assured us that God welcomes human praise: "The Lord enjoys the praise and sanctification ascending to Him from men more than the adoration he receives from Angels."[53]

People converse with God to express many impulses. Ecclesiastical authorities encourage private prayer as well as collective, liturgical, prayer. It is no accident that prayer has flourished in a theological environment that emphasizes separation between Creator and creature; prayer helps to ease the pain of perceived separation and to satisfy the longing for union. That said, even people who have a strong sense of an inner God may experience great joy and psychological benefits from prayer.

From time immemorial people have engaged in religious ritual. Animal sacrifice and presentation of the shewbread ceased in Judaism when the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. However, Jewish worship continued and continues today. Morning and evening prayer services include the *Shema*: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord is One." Christian churches celebrate the Mass, or Communion Service, in which bread and wine—according to the beliefs and practices of the particular denomination—commemorate, are associated with, or are transformed into the body and blood of Christ. Other forms of Christian worship focus on prayer, reading from scripture, hymn singing, and/or preaching. In addition to the *Salat*, Islam has many rituals, including Friday congregational prayers; fasting during Ramadan; and the *Haj*, the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Collective worship can evoke a strong experience of the divine presence, as well as communion with fellow worshippers. It strengthens the sense of divine immanence, but when large numbers of people are involved, it can also

enhance the sense of divine transcendence. The great temples, cathedrals and mosques were designed to instill a sense of the majesty of God—and perhaps the power of religious authority.

In ancient times places of worship were considered to be sacred spaces where a god resided. This belief continues to a degree in many religions, most notably in the religions of Asia. People come to temples, individually or in groups, to make ritual offerings, to express adoration, praise or thanksgiving, or to seek divine favors for themselves or others. The belief, overt or otherwise, is that the Divine is more accessible—or more truly present—in the temple than elsewhere. Typical offerings are water, fruit, flowers and incense. Even some prayers are identified with a deity. For example, the *Gayatri* is the name both of a mantra and of the god to whom it is addressed; an English translation from the original Sanskrit is as follows:

> Oh God, the Protector, the basis of all life, Who is self-existent, Who is free from all pains and Whose contact frees the soul from all troubles, Who pervades the Universe and sustains all, the Creator and Energizer of the whole Universe, the Giver of happiness, Who is worthy of acceptance, the most excellent, Who is Pure and the Purifier of all, let us embrace that very God, so that He may direct our mental faculties in the right direction.[54]

Many people, ancient and modern, have shunned sacred buildings to find God in nature. They see the transcendence and majesty of God in the forest, the mountaintop, the ocean, or the vastness of the sky. Hermits seek God in remote places, in the silence and stillness of the wilderness. The desert fathers and mothers of early Christianity were the forerunners of the monastic orders that offered isolation—albeit collective isolation—from the busyness of towns and cities.

Not all religions admit a personal God or encourage a relationship with one. Deism asserts that God is uninterested in its creation, and liberal Christianity attaches little importance to prayer. Yet the saying: "There are no atheists in foxholes," affirms that people who do not ordinarily feel moved to pray may do so at times of extreme danger or fear.

God of the Mystics

Prayer and contemplation are central to the discipline of the mystical path. Christian contemplatives distinguish between *kataphatic* and *apophatic* prayer.[55] These terms correspond closely in meaning with kataphatic and apophatic theology, mentioned earlier.

Kataphatic prayer employs words, concepts and images in the belief that they assist our understanding of the divine nature and orient us toward God. Often referred to as the "way of affirmation," it includes the liturgy and virtually all types of popular devotional prayer. Kataphatic prayer is also employed by many contemplatives; one of its most complete expressions is in the *Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius*. Words can also take on a mantric quality, as in the Rosary or the Jesus Prayer.[56]

More often, contemplative prayer is *apophatic*. Apophatic prayer seeks to transcend discursive thought, in the belief that words and images are unhelpful and distractive. It has its critics, who argue that it bypasses doctrinal formulations about God; one critic referred to it as "praying to the void." Some commonality exists between apophatic prayer and the meditative disciplines of Zen Buddhism.

Contemplative prayer can be a source of great joy. To quote Lebanese-American poet and mystic Kahlil Gibran: "Before my soul became my counsel, I was dull, and weak of hearing, reflecting only upon the tumult and the cry. But, now, I can listen to silence with serenity and can hear in the silence the hymns of ages chanting exaltation to the sky and revealing the secrets of eternity."[57] The contemplative life is not one, continuous experience of joy, however. The sixteenth-century Spanish mystic John of the Cross famously wrote of the "dark night of the soul," when God seemed to have deserted him and his spiritual life became "arid."[58]

At times, contemplative prayer can become so intense as to induce states of ecstasy. In an ecstatic state the mystic may hear voices, see visions, become aware of love on a new level,

or understand reality in an entirely new light. He or she may lose a sense of time, location, and even separate existence. Theresa of Ávila (1515–1582), friend and mentor of John of the Cross, commented: "the soul . . . loses its power of breathing, with the result that . . . it cannot possibly speak. At other times it loses all its powers at once, and the hands and the body grow so cold that the body seems no longer to have a soul."[59] She pointed out that "[c]omplete ecstasy . . . does not last long," but it can produce profound and long-lasting aftereffects. Some mystics have experienced convulsions or have become comatose.

Mystics are fond of quoting the Latin dictum: *Mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, freely translated as "the terrifying mystery that is also irresistible." It recalls the psalmist's words: "For the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth."[60] The mystic yearns to see God, but even a brief glimpse is overwhelming.

The most accomplished mystics regard these glimpses as only stages on the journey; the real goal is union with God. John of the Cross explained that union was possible after "all that is unlike God and unconformed to Him is cast out," whereupon "the soul may receive the likeness of God . . . and it will thus be transformed."[61] "The soul," he continued, "is at once illumined and transformed in God."[62] The unitive experience is often compared to the Beatific Vision, which theologians promise the righteous in heaven. A passage in *Isaiah* may refer to the unitive, mystical experience: "men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him."[63]

In some cases, mystics seek, and apparently find, union with a transcendent God. But many famous mystics, in multiple religions, have encountered a very immanent God, whom they called the Beloved. The Beloved is mentioned thirty-four times in the *Song of Solomon*, thirteen times in chapter 5 alone. A notable verse is: "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so [is] my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit [was] sweet to my taste."[64] The sixteenth-century Bakta yogini Mirabai wrote: "I watered the plant of love I planted with my tears, even as I reaped the fruit of bliss. . . . With love, the Beloved takes me to the other shore."[65]

In their attempts to communicate the intensity of their love for the Beloved, many mystics have turned to erotic metaphor. The twelfth-century Bernard of Clairvaux wrote no fewer than eighty-six sermons on the *Song of Solomon*, many of them containing erotic images. Bernard nevertheless felt compelled to ask: "[W]hat human affections have you ever experienced . . . that are sweeter than is now experienced from the heart of the Most High?"[66] John of the Cross wrote:

> Oh, night that joined Beloved with lover,
> Lover transformed in the Beloved!
> Upon my flowery breast, Kept wholly for himself alone, There he stayed sleeping, and I caressed him, And the fanning of the cedars made a breeze.
>
> The breeze blew from the turret As I parted his locks; With his gentle hand he wounded my neck And caused all my senses to be suspended.
>
> I remained, lost in oblivion; My face I reclined on the Beloved. All ceased and I abandoned myself, Leaving my cares forgotten among the lilies.[67]

The twentieth-century Indian mystic Meher Baba wrote:

> Each and every Lover is the Beloved.
> Every Beloved is the Lover. The Absolute Unity,
> which is the Absolute Beauty and Absolute Love,
> loves its Beloved so intensely it leaves not a trace of it.
> For in reality there is only the Beloved.[68]

Typically, the mystic pours out his or her love for the Beloved, but occasionally it is the Beloved who speaks. For example, to quote the Sufi Abu-Said Abil-Khayr (967–1049): "The Beloved said: 'My face is a basket of roses, my hair is the perfume of musk incense burning.'"[69]

The mystics who confront the Beloved engage and converse with a being that is immanent and personal. The Beloved is tangible, even to the point of lying in their arms like a human lover. The argument could be made that Christian mystics are imagining an encounter with Christ. But the universality of the experience across a broad spectrum of religions suggests that the Beloved is some other manifestation of God. What that manifestation might be is an important issue for the present study.

Hierarchy of Logoi

In parallel with the development of theological doctrine by major religious bodies, complementary depictions of God developed, over the centuries, in the teachings of esoteric movements. For example, we have seen that Gnosticism produced very sophisticated models of Deity, including some in which pairs of divine beings expressed polarities at successive levels of reality. The Judaic Kabbalah provided a very concise description of Deity as a descending cascade of manifestations, which included pairs of opposites. Hermeticism and Rosicrucianism were important western esoteric movements, but they did not make significant contributions to our understanding of Deity.

Most important, from the standpoint of our present study, were the trans-Himalayan teachings, believed to have been communicated by members of the Planetary Hierarchy, notably the Masters Morya and Djwhal Khul, to scribes in human embodiment. The first of the scribes was Helena Blavatsky, who published the landmark *The Secret Doctrine* in 1888. Important teachings were also communicated to members of the Theosophical Society, which Blavatsky co-founded, and to individuals like Helena Roerich (1879–1955) and Alice Bailey (1880–1949). The largest body of teachings, relevant to this study, was communicated to Bailey by the Master Djwhal Khul.

The trans-Himalayan teachings qualify as new revelation, but those who transcribed the teachings insist that students should focus on the informational quality of the material rather than on the sources from which the teachings were received. It should be emphasized that the trans-Himalayan teachings drew upon the religious and philosophical traditions of South Asia but were addressed to a western audience.

The trans-Himalayan teachings envision Deity as a hierarchy of Logoi, or great "Lives." It is unclear from Blavatsky's writings whether she regarded Logoi as beings or forces. But the Indian scholar Tallapragada Subba Row (1856–1890), a respected teacher in the early years of the Theosophical Society, affirmed that a Logos "has an objective existence" and "a consciousness of its own."[70] In the Adyar branch of the Theosophical Society, and in Bailey's teachings, Logoi became firmly identified as great beings, who ensoul celestial objects like planets, stars and constellations. The celestial objects are their "physical bodies."[71] Thus *Logos* has taken on a somewhat different meaning in esoteric teachings than it had in traditional Christology, as exemplified by the prologue to the *Gospel of John.*

Of most direct concern to us is our Planetary Logos, the Logos of our Earth. Other Planetary Logoi ensoul Mercury, Mars, Jupiter, Uranus, and so forth. The several planetary Logoi participate in the life of the Solar Logos, the Logos of our Solar System. In turn our Solar Logos participates in the life of a Logos at a higher level.

The Logoi forming the divine hierarchy should not be viewed as separate beings, like managers in a bureaucracy, each supervising subordinates and reporting to a superior. Separateness does not exist at those levels of consciousness. Rather, they comprise a seamless whole. Yet the essence and energy of the Godhead is successively stepped down, and each Logos "colors" what is received from above and adds its "personality," which gives the celestial body and its lives their unique qualities.

The Planetary Logos

Earth and its myriad lives comprise the physical body of our Planetary Logos; or, from another perspective, the planet and its lives are expressions of that great Life in whom "we live, and move, and have our being."[72]

We are told that our Planetary Logos is one of seven "Heavenly Men," a term first used in

The Secret Doctrine, but which also appears frequently in Alice Bailey's writings. Theosophist Charles Leadbeater (1854–1934), who was closely associated with Subba Row, may have been the first to speak of the relationship between the Planetary Logoi and the Solar Logos: "The seven Planetary Logoi, although they are great individual entities, are at the same time aspects of the Solar Logos, force-centers as it were in His body."[73] Bailey reiterated that the seven Logoi "are the seven centers [chakras] in the body of the [Solar] Logos."[74]

According to Bailey, there are seven sacred planets: Vulcan, Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, Saturn, Neptune and Uranus, and five non-sacred planets: Mars, Earth, Pluto, the Moon ("veiling a hidden planet"), and the Sun ("veiling a hidden planet").[75] Some of the Heavenly Men evidently ensoul one or more nonsacred planets in addition to the sacred planet that is their primary focus of expression. Our Planetary Logos must be one of them. We do not know which sacred planet our Logos ensouls. A likely candidate would be Venus, described as "Earth's alter ego"[76] and the point of origin from which our Planetary Hierarchy came.[77] Another viable candidate would be Saturn. Each sacred and nonsacred planet lies on one of the seven rays. Earth and Saturn are both third-ray planets, while Venus is a fifth-ray planet.[78]

A Planetary Logos guides his or her planet through a very long period of development, referred to as a *scheme*.[79] A planetary scheme includes seven major "incarnations," or *chains*. In turn, each chain encompasses seven *globes*. The globes are believed to come into existence one at a time, and to pass out of existence one at a time. But during most of a chain's duration, all seven globes may exist simultaneously, interpenetrating one another like the "bodies" (dense physical, etheric, astral, and so forth) of the human constitution.[80]

Earth's previous incarnation was the Moon Chain, and the corpse of its densest globe is the Moon we see up in the sky. Our planet is currently in its fourth chain. The rocks under our feet belong to the fourth globe of the fourth chain, which represents the midpoint, and the very deepest descent into materialization, of the entire Earth scheme. We can look forward, over the remainder of this chain and the three forthcoming chains, to a gradual rarification of our planetary home and relief from the woes associated with life in dense physical forms.

The Solar Logos

Whereas Planetary Logoi were referred to as "Heavenly Men," the solar Logos is termed "the Grand Man of the Heavens" in Bailey's works. Later in this article we shall equate the God of traditional religion to a combination of the Planetary and Solar Logoi. But Leadbeater boldly singled out the latter for that role:

> We have in the Logos of our Solar System as near an approach to a personal (or rather, perhaps, individual) God as any reasonable man can desire, for of Him is true everything good that has ever been predicated of a personal deity. . . . [S]o far as His system is concerned He possesses omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence ; the love, the power, the wisdom, the glory, all are there in fullest measure. Yet He is a mighty Individual—a trinity in unity, and God in very truth."[81]

The Solar Logos is usually depicted in the esoteric literature as embracing the seven Planetary Logoi and ensouling the major planets. Yet we must assume that the Logos' physical body also includes the dwarf planets, smaller bodies, and radiation belts that also comprise the Solar System. As Leadbeater pointed out: "The *whole* of our solar system is a manifestation of its Logos."[82]

According to Bailey, the body of the Solar Logos is "spheroidal in shape."[83] She reiterated its inclusiveness is space and time:

> His ring-pass-not comprises the entire circumference of the Solar System, and all that is included within the sphere of
>
> influence of the Sun. The Sun holds a position analogous to the nucleus of life at the centre of the atom. This sphere comprises within its periphery the seven planetary chains with the synthesizing three, making the ten of logoic manifestation. The Sun is

> the physical body of the solar Logos, His body of manifestation, and His life sweeps cycling through the seven schemes in the same sense as the life of a planetary Logos sweeps seven times around His scheme of seven chains.[84]

The Solar Logos is triune, expressing the divine aspects of Will and Power, Love – Wisdom, and Active Intelligence. The triune nature can, in that sense, be compared with the Christian trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In another sense, the triune nature expresses itself through three "incarnations" of the Solar System. The first Solar System expressed the third aspect of Active Intelligence. Our present Solar System expresses the second aspect of Love-Wisdom. And a future Solar System will express the first aspect of Will and Power. "These three aspects of God, the solar Logos, and the Central Energy or Force (for the terms are occultly synonymous) demonstrate through seven centers of force,—three major centers and four minor."[85]

The One About Whom Naught May Be Said

Alice Bailey referred to the One About Whom Naught May Be Said, "the Logos of the cosmic scheme of which our [solar] system is but a part,"[86] and "the Logos of our Solar Logos."[87] The difference in scale can be gleaned from the comment: "[O]n cosmic levels of a high order the solar Logos is an Intelligence as relatively low in the order of cosmic consciousness as man is in relation to solar consciousness. He is but a cell in the body of the ONE ABOUT WHOM NAUGHT MAY BE SAID."[88]

The apophatic title: "One About Whom Naught May Be Said," stems from the fact that "all formulation of ideas about His life and purpose are impossible until one has completed the term of evolution in our solar system."[89] Nevertheless, we understand that this great entity ensouls seven solar systems[90]—ours and six others—and "they are linked up astrologically with the constellations, the Great Bear, the Pleiades, and Sirius."[91] Indeed, three of its major chakras (or "centers") are the star Sirius, a star in the Great Bear (Ursa Major) constellation, and the star cluster Pleiades. Our solar system may be its heart chakra.[92]

Evidently it is meaningful to make comparisons between groups of these chakras and chakras in the human constitution:

> Our solar system, with the Pleiades and one of the stars of the Great Bear, form a cosmic triangle, or an aggregation of three centers in the Body of HIM OF WHOM NAUGHT MAY BE SAID. The seven stars in the constellation of the Great Bear are the correspondences to the seven head centers in the body of that Being, greater than our Logos. Again, two other systems, when allied with the solar system and the Pleiades, make a lower quaternary which are eventually synthesized into the seven head centers in much the same way as in the human being after the fourth initiation.[93]

Energies of various kinds flow from the One About Whom Naught May Be Said to our planet, to humanity, and even to us as individuals:

> First and foremost is the energy or force emanating from the sun Sirius. If it might be so expressed, the energy of thought, or mind force, in its totality, reaches the Solar System from a distant cosmic centre via Sirius. Sirius acts as the transmitter, or the focalizing centre, whence emanate those influences which produce self-consciousness in man. . . .
>
> Another type of energy reaches man from the Pleiades, passing through the Venusian scheme to us, just as the Sirian energy passes through the Saturnian. It has a definite effect upon the causal body, and serves to stimulate the heart center.
>
> A third type of energy is applied to the initiate, and affects his head center. It emanates from that one of the seven stars of the Great Bear whose ensouling life holds the same relationship to our Planetary Logos as the Ego does to a human being. This energy, therefore, is seven-fold, and differs according to a man's ray or type.[94]

We also learn that the seven rays emanate from the Great Bear:

> The seven stars of the Great Bear are the originating sources of the seven rays of our Solar System. The seven Rishis (as They are called) of the Great Bear express Themselves through the medium of the seven planetary Logoi Who are Their Representatives and to Whom They stand in the relation of cosmic Prototype. The seven planetary Gods manifest through the medium of the seven sacred planets. Each of these seven rays is transmitted into our Solar System through the medium of three constellations and their ruling planets.[95]

Sirius, the Great Bear (Ursa Major), and the Pleiades all lie within the Milky Way Galaxy and are relative neighbors of our solar system. Sirius, a binary star and the brightest star in the night sky, is 8.6 light-years from Earth. The nearest star in the constellation Ursa Major is about eight light-years away, while the brightest (Alioth) is about eighty-three light-years away. The brightest star in the Pleiades cluster (Alcyone) is about 400 light-years away. We recall that the solar system is 27,000 light-years from the galactic center. The physical body of the One About Whom Naught May be Said appears to occupy a relatively small region of the Milky Way.

Constellations are groups of stars that appear to be in the same region of the sky, as viewed from Earth. What we see is a two-dimensional projection on the "dome of the firmament." The stars identified with a constellation do not necessarily form a cluster in three-dimensional space. Ursa Major is not a cluster; some of its component stars are much farther than others from Earth.[96] Yet the constellation evidently functions as a unit within the "body" of the One About Whom Naught May be Said.

Beyond the Beyond

The number of levels in the hierarchy of Logoi has not been revealed. Multiple levels may exist within the Milky Way, and the whole galaxy is presumably ensouled by a Logos immensely more powerful than the One About Whom Naught May be Said. As we move from the Milky Way to the Local Group, the Virgo Cluster, and Supercluster Laniakea, each of their respective Logoi must be substantially more powerful than the one before it, and its level of consciousness must increase accordingly. The hierarchy of Logoi contains many levels; in organizational terms, we say that it is a *tall* hierarchy.[97]

Logoi had already attained exalted status by the time their planetary schemes, star systems, or galactic systems came into being. Their eons-long evolution may have taken them through phases resembling human existence. Indeed, we are told that one of the options available to initiates who have completed their terms on Earth will take them on that path.[98]

Meanwhile, Logoi continue to evolve in consciousness, and we have to assume that the physical vehicles through which their lives are expressed will eventually become inadequate to support further growth. Planetary systems go through a long process of evolution—their schemes—and then pass out of existence, allowing their Logoi to move elsewhere. Stars, too, go through a process of evolution, leading, according to current astrological opinion, either to collapse into a dwarf star or to explosion as a supernova. Such physical events no doubt have esoteric significance. For example, the explosion of a supernova may signal a major initiation of its ensouling Logos.[99]

At the scale of the observable Universe, or beyond it, we come to the Godhead, equivalent to the Brahman, or Para-Brahman,[100] of Hinduism, and the Ain Soph of the Kabbalah. The Godhead is our extrapolation from the first few levels in the hierarchy of Logoi. We can point in the direction of the Godhead, but it is utterly transcendent, remote, unknown and unknowable.

The Human Monad

An old Hindu legend relates that the gods came together to decide where to hide man's divinity, where it could be found only by the most dedicated seeker. They considered burying it deep in the earth, in the deepest ocean, or at the top of the highest mountain. But none of those places was judged to be safe

enough. Brahma finally decided to hide that divinity in the center of man's own being, for we would never think to look for it there.

Hinduism teaches that the eternal and "real" part of the human constitution is the Atman, identical in essence with the universal Atman. We read in the Bhagavad Gita: "Know this Atman / Unborn, undying, Never ceasing, / Never beginning, / Unchanging for ever. / How can It die / The death of the body?"[101] Man is a divine being. That divinity may be latent in the majority of people, but it remains an indestructible affirmation of our divine destiny.

Esotericists must avoid a smug certainty that we are right and others are wrong. God—transcendent and immanent—is larger than any body of teachings, even modern esoteric teachings. Synthesis will emerge over time, but it will never be complete. The highest entities of whom we are aware would insist that their understanding of Deity is limited. At the human level, we must accept the limitations on our own knowledge and respect some diversity of understanding.

The Greeks considered the *nous* ("rational mind") and the *pneuma* ("spirit") to be higher, more enduring, aspects of the human constitution than the transient physical body—and higher than the *psyche*, or "soul," that animates the physical body. The Stoics of the third century BCE placed the pneuma on a more exalted level than the nous, believing it to be a fragment of the spirit of Zeus, the cosmic Pneuma. It was the divine spark that affirmed man's divine origins and destiny.[102] The influential Gnostic teacher Valentinus (c.100–c.160 CE) also regarded the pneuma as the divine spark in man.[103] The Neoplatonists regarded the pneuma as the human counterpart of the divine *Monas*, the highest aspect of their trinity.

Early Christianity embraced the Greek notion of the pneuma, regarding it as higher than the soul and body. The Apostle Paul prayed that "your whole spirit [pneuma] and soul [psyche] and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."[104] In the *Magnificat*, Mary, likewise, referred to the pneuma: "My soul [psyche] doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit [pneuma] hath rejoiced in God my Savior."[105] Western Christianity later allowed the pneuma to be absorbed into the psyche. The Fourth Council of Constantinople (869) decreed that man "has one rational and intellectual soul" whose primary role was to "animate the flesh."[106] By denying humankind a divine spark, western Christianity was denying us our divine origin and destiny.

Belief in a divine spark remained relatively strong in the Eastern Orthodox Churches. And despite ecclesiastical disapproval, similar belief continued among certain western mystics, mystical theologians, and poets. Meister Eckhart (1260–1328) spoke of the *Seelenfünklein*, literally "spark of the soul" but often rendered in English translations as "citadel of the soul" or "light of the soul."[107] In his words: "There is something in the soul which is only God . . . . For herein the soul takes its whole life and being and from this source it draws its life and being."[108] His views on the divine spark were condemned by Rome, but others agreed with him. Sixteenth-century mystic Theresa of Ávila discussed "the spirit in the soul,"[109] and eighteenth-century Anglican clergyman William Law wrote of the hidden "pearl of eternity" in the center of the soul.[110] Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809–1892) wrote: "Follow you the Star that lights a desert pathway, yours or mine. / Forward, till you see the highest Human Nature is divine."[111]

Several western philosophers considered the Monad in the sense of the Neoplatonic *Monas*, or all-encompassing reality. Gottfried von

Leibniz (1646–1716) was not only a brilliant mathematician—he invented the calculus independently of Isaac Newton—he also proposed the theory of individual Monads. Monads, he determined, were the ultimate elements of the universe: "Monads are the real atoms of nature," the elements of created things.[112] Those created things include ourselves.

God creates and holds Monads in existence: "God alone is the primary unity or original simple substance, of which all created or derivative Monads are products and have their birth."[113] Importantly, the functionality of the Monad in its own domain, and its relationship with the universal Monad, are governed by divine order:

> [E]very Monad is, in its own way, a mirror of the universe, and as the universe is ruled according to a perfect order, there must also be order in that which represents it, i.e. in the perceptions of the soul, and consequently there must be order in the body, through which the universe is represented in the soul.[114]

Leibniz' theory of Monads anticipated, in remarkable detail, the trans-Himalayan teachings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Tallapragada Subba Row identified the Monad as an emanation of the Logos, which remains in existence "for perhaps millions of years, till Pralaya comes—this time can be almost called infinity."[115] At the end of its life, the Monad is "transferred into the Logos . . . and becomes part of the life of the Logos."[116]

Theosophist Geoffrey Hodson defined the Monad as "a fragment of Divinity, a concentration of Universal Spirit, with which in origin, nature, substance, and potentiality it is identical."[117] The Monad is the fragment of the Logoic essence: the source of life, sustaining our very existence throughout the very long journey of our descent into form and our slow ascent back to Spirit.

The trans-Himalayan teachings assert that the human constitution is threefold, consisting of personality, soul and Monad. The teachings distinguish soul from spirit in much the same way as did the Stoics, Neoplatonists, and early Christians. The Monad is the Will aspect of the human constitution, whereas the soul is the Consciousness aspect; the personality is the Activity aspect. The three aspects of the human constitution correspond, at the level of the microcosm, to the three aspects of Deity that Christians refer to as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

For long eons the lower self has no conscious contact with the Monad. Alice Bailey explained, however, that upon attainment of the third initiation "conscious recognition of the Monad becomes possible."[118] The experience of gaining the first glimpse of our Divine Spark, often compared with the transfiguration of Christ, may be overwhelming: "the entire personality is flooded with light from above."[119] Moreover, after the third initiation "the Monad is definitely guiding the Ego [the soul]."[120] We progress into a new relationship with Deity, one in which the inner God may speak as loudly as the external God.

Toward Synthesis

What is Divine?

An important challenge in working toward a synthesis of religious and esoteric concepts of God is the meaning of "divine." This section deals specifically with Christianity, but some of the same issues arise in Judaism and Islam.

Western Christianity typically divides reality into two distinct categories. "God"—including the persons of the trinity—is deemed to be divine. The physical universe, the kingdoms of nature, the saints and angels, even Mary the "Mother of God," are not divine. Christianity's rejection of emanation in favor of *ex nihilo* creation made that separation inevitable. Whatever is created by God is, by definition, *not* God.

Christianity's separation between the divine and the non-divine is unbridgeable, with two exceptions. One exception is the incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity as Jesus Christ. The other is the Eastern Orthodox doctrine of theosis that allows for certain individu-

als to "partake of the divine nature."[121] Theosis is the inverse or complement of Christ's incarnation: the Word became flesh, allowing flesh to become the Word.

Esoteric teachings embrace the Neoplatonic notion of emanation, in which reality at all levels flows from, or is birthed by, the Logos in a continuous cascade of divine essence. The sharp dichotomy between the divine and the non-divine is replaced by a continuous spectrum, extending from the dense physical world to the Godhead. Beings from the various kingdoms find their place on that spectrum. Human beings are more divine than rocks, Christ is more divine than we are, and the Logoi are still more divine.

Traditional Christians would object that the esoteric definition of divine diminishes the difference between us and Christ; Christ is God incarnate, but so are we, and so are the rocks we stand on. For the theologians, the esoteric Christ is *not divine enough*. Exacerbating the matter, the trans-Himalayan teachings declare that Christ is a member of the human family who attained his present status via the initiatory path.[122]

To facilitate discussions with traditional Christians, esotericists might agree to a division between non-divine and divine, based on levels of consciousness. If another being's level of consciousness were so much higher than our own as to suggest a completely different order of reality, that being could be described as "divine." While there might be debate over where the cut-off lies, one suggestion is that it lies at or beyond the stage of "relative perfection" represented by the fifth initiation.

Christ is in process of attaining the seventh initiation, which involves merging his will with that of the Planetary Logos.[123] Furthermore, Christ is establishing links with Logoi greater than our Planetary Logos—even greater than our Solar Logos. For example, we read that "the seventh initiation makes the Adept a Master Mason of the Brotherhood on Sirius."[124] Elsewhere we read:

> At the seventh Initiation his [the initiate's] vision penetrates beyond the solar ring-pass-not, and he sees that which he has long realized as a basic theoretical fact, that our solar Logos is involved in the plans and purposes of a still greater Existence, and that the Solar System is but one of many centers of force through which a cosmic Entity vastly greater than our own solar Logos is expressing Himself.[125]

Christ's links with Logoi higher than the Solar and higher Logoi give him a status potentially greater than traditional Christian doctrine does.

Traditional Christians would also charge esotericists with the heresy of Arianism: that their Christ was not always divine; that he is a creature, not one with the Creator, "begotten of the Father before all worlds."[126] Yet the charge of Arianism is a "straw man," a product of western religion's embrace of ex-nihilo creation over the doctrine of emanation. Esotericists argue that all Monads—ours, Christ's, and those of every life in the Solar System—are fragments of the Logoic essence. The esoteric Christ was indeed with God from the Beginning, "God from God, Light from Light."[127]

Traditional Christians would still complain that the esoteric Christ is not "the only-begotten Son of God."[128] Esoteric teachings confirm that other individuals have attained the seventh initiation—though not ones who individualized on Earth's present chain. In order to address this issue we must examine where the religious "God" fits into the hierarchy of Logoi.

Who or What is "God"?

What Jews, Christians and Muslims call "God" can most readily be equated to a combination of the Planetary and Solar Logoi. We, our Monads, are fragments of the Planetary Logoic essence, but the "transcendent" God of western religion may be represented more closely by the Solar Logos. The Sun God of early civilizations provides an important pointer in this regard.

The higher Logoi provide the link between the God who maintains a close interest in us and our world and the immeasurably more powerful Deity who created and rules over the universe. No information has been revealed about

the higher Logoi, but what we have been told about the Planetary and Solar Logoi, and the "One About Whom Naught May Be Said" can be extrapolated to as many levels as might be needed to encompass the observable universe—and any other universes that may exist. The Godhead may reign above the whole hierarchy.

Western religion has tried to make "God"—particularly the "simple" Thomist God—play too many roles: roles that are inherently incompatible, like transcendent and immanent; abstract and personal; creator of the universe, judge of humanity, and compassionate friend. When challenged, theologians might remind us that an omnipotent God can play an infinity of roles. But the charge of incompatibility does not question divine omnipotence; rather, it questions the ability of a "simple" being to communicate across vast differences in consciousness. Something "internal" to God is necessary to step down the power and level of consciousness to make it accessible to each level of reality. We would need some comparable mechanism to enable us to communicate with an amoeba.

Alternatively, theologians might retreat to the position that what we view as incompatibilities are divine mysteries, which we cannot and should not penetrate. Yet we are thinking beings; "man" and "humanity" come from the Sanskrit *manas*, which means "mind." Esoteric teachings demonstrate that these mysteries can be penetrated to a significant extent. We do not have all the answers, but—like the Scholastics—we are making an effort to understand higher reality. Those coming after us will have new insights, will receive new revelation, and will carry the process forward.

Western religion has never been unanimous in its assertion of Thomist divine simplicity. Yet the great body of the faithful, and even many theologians, are unaware of Gnostic and Kabbalistic depictions of Deity as a hierarchy of divine beings. Most are equally unaware of—and in the first instance would likely be hostile to—esoteric teachings on the hierarchy of Logoi. Nevertheless, insistence on the simplicity of God has not only caused problems in understanding the trinity and God's simultaneous transcendence and immanence, it is a major stumbling block to reconciling theology with modern scientific discovery.

The existence of multiple Logoi does not imply some kind of polytheism. As already noted, the Logoi are distinct, but they are not "separate" from one another. When we turn our eyes to the Deity, we are not looking at multiple lights; rather, we are looking at a distant and overpoweringly bright Light, the Godhead, through a long series of lenses. Each Logoic lens filters the Light, so that it does not blind us. It also creates the "personality" of the planet, planetary system, galaxy, or cluster that the particular Logos ensouls. We look at the Light through one set of lenses. An intelligent being on an exoplanet in, say, the galaxy Andromeda, would see the same Light through a different set of lenses, at least at the lower levels. The higher lenses would be common to whole galactic clusters. Perhaps at some level there is a single lens.

Particularly unpalatable to the religious mind is the suggestion that "Almighty God" might lie at the bottom of a tall hierarchy. But the scriptural God, even the "all-powerful" God of the Middle Ages was, in fact, quite limited in power and responsibility—concerned just with our planet and humanity, though still powerful enough to inspire fear, awe and devotion in the faithful. Careful reflection shows that the esoteric depiction of Deity is an expansion, not a diminution, of God. Understanding the Deity as a hierarchy of Logoi allows for divine responsibilities to be handled at every level of reality. The Planetary and Solar Logoi handle the responsibilities on the "local" level. The higher Logoi have correspondingly greater responsibilities, and are immeasurably more powerful than the God of western religion.

Esotericists can rightly take issue with the traditional Christian depiction of Christ as the *only* son of God. This depiction suggests that other "humanities" are left unredeemed, or that they have to share in our redemption, though their circumstances might be radically different. More reasonably, and with all due reverence to an individuality of enormous signifi-

cance, Christ can be considered the "only son" of our planetary Logos. Other Planetary—and Exoplanetary—Logoi are accorded the right to redeem their humanities through their own sons or daughters.

The notion of a God associated with our planet—or with the Solar System—is not new. In Greek mythology, the Earth was personified by the goddess Gaia, who bore the gods of the classical pantheon through her union with Uranus (the Sky), and the sea gods through her union with Pontus. The God of scripture certainly was a planetary God. The Sun, Moon, and stars visible to the naked eye were all viewed as supplementary to, supportive of, and most importantly *close to* Earth.

Discussion of a planetary God has resurfaced very recently. Nancy Ellen Abrams, who described herself as an atheist in search of a higher power, conceived of a planetary God that is an emergent property of human aspiration—based on the view that the latter is a "system" with sufficient complexity to produce self-organizing phenomena. Abrams asserted: "The emerging God is not universal. It's *planetary*—a phenomenon of Earth. It is humanity's God."[129] She added: "*God transcends us, but the universe transcends God*."[130] Abrams suggested that intelligences elsewhere in the universe might have comparable emergent gods. Moreover, "[s]omewhere in the very, very distant future, some new emergent phenomenon might even arise from all those gods interacting."[131] The result presumably would be a meta-God reigning over the several planetary gods.

That speculation takes Abrams toward an understanding of the hierarchy of Logoi described by esoteric teachings—except in one crucial respect. She is proposing a bottom-up model of Deity, stemming from the belief that form creates consciousness; by contrast, esoteric teachings insist that consciousness creates form. The higher Logoi will not emerge from human, or human-like, aspiration "in the very, very distant future." They were there from the very beginning, the creators of worlds and the lives that inhabit them.

Practical Steps

The mismatch between western theology and modern science can easily create mental compartmentalism—a state in which one area of belief coexists uneasily and uncomfortably with one or more others. Stresses arise along their interfaces, like the shear stresses between tectonic plates. Those mental stresses may be repressed into the unconscious mind, eventually causing neuroses. Or they may remain conscious, become unbearable, and are resolved either by the "loss of faith" or by retreat into anti-science fundamentalism. For religion as a whole, the stark options may be fundamentalism or a decline into irrelevance.

Western religion needs to consider a new concept of Deity. Students of the trans-Himalayan teachings might wish for the wholesale acceptance of the concept of a hierarchy of Logoi. However, a useful first step would be for theologians to embrace a simplified model in which a planetary/solar God is distinguished from, say, a God of the universe or the transcendent Godhead. Technical terminology and more information on the higher Logoi—to the extent that it has been revealed—can be filled in later.

Even an intermediate step of this nature, concerning such a fundamental principle of doctrine, would be difficult for theologians and those who look to them for guidance. Religious dogma has built-in systems to ensure survival in the face of new knowledge. Those systems include the ongoing *magisterium ordinarium* of authoritative teachings as well as the pervasive conservatism of all religious belief.[132] Any suggestion that fundamental beliefs might need revision raises intense anxiety in the religious mind. Defensiveness on the part of the masses, as well as on the part of religious authorities, poses a formidable challenge to the acceptance of new teachings.

Esotericists may have good reason to believe in the superiority of their concept of Deity, but caution, patience—and humility—are needed in efforts to persuade their brothers and sisters in traditional religions to modify their under-

standing of God. A clumsy intellectual assault on traditional theology would not only be pointless, it would be divisive and make future conversations more difficult. Esotericists need to engage members of traditional religions sensitively, make them aware of pertinent esoteric teachings, and allow the power of the teachings to speak for itself. In return, esoteric teachings can be enriched, and esotericists may find new avenues for discipleship work.

Some esotericists have gone on record, claiming that religion is in its death throes, whereupon conversations on theological and other issues are pointless. But the trans-Himalayan teachings point to the emergence of a New World Religion, in which outworn forms will be discarded, but what is good will be preserved and built upon.[133] Even if western religion has an outmoded understanding of God, it has motivated great works of service and has nourished the spiritual growth of millions of people.

The Beloved

An essentially different problem arises in connection with religious experience of a personal God. And in this case, esoteric teachings may not offer an adequate solution. We have examined two examples of such experience: by the masses of devout people and by individuals of obvious spiritual stature. Even if the experiences of the former were to be dismissed as unworthy of scholarly study, that of the mystics demands consideration. The key question is: Who or what is the mystics' Beloved? We have already noted that the experience extends far beyond Christianity, ruling out the possibility that the Beloved is a vision of Christ.

The case could be made that the mystics are simply encountering a phantasm of their own imagination: astral matter ensouled by a thoughtform of their own pious creation. Yet many mystics who reported encounters with the Beloved seem to have risen above the level of astral consciousness.

Mysticism is often belittled by esotericists, and certain passages in the trans-Himalayan literature have been interpreted as equating it to simple devotion: appropriate to the path of aspiration but of no value to discipleship work. Yet Alice Bailey associates a predisposition to mysticism or occultism to ray type. She urges the mystic to "work at the forms upon the Rays of Aspect, and so develop knowledge of the concrete side of Nature—that side which works under law"; she also urges the occultist to pursue "forms on the abstract or attributive rays" to develop the mystical nature. Eventually, "the time comes when the paths merge and all forms are alike to the Initiate."[134] Clearly, mysticism and occultism are of comparable value, and elements of both are needed for balanced growth in consciousness.

Alternatively, the case could be made that the Beloved is a vision of the Monad. Certain mystics have probably attained the third initiation which would give them their first glimpse of the Divine Spark within them. Perhaps the influx of light could explain the *mysterium tremendum*. But the Monad is unlikely to manifest itself as a personage; nowhere in esoteric teachings do we find it depicted in such a manner. A great deal of filtering would be needed to transform the light of the Monad into a personage who visits the mystics, converses with them, even lies in their arms.

A third possibility is that mystics are encountering their Solar Angels. The intimate relationship that develops could be associated with the mystic marriage said to take place between the soul-infused personality and the Solar Angel, prior to the latter's departure at the fourth initiation.[135] A problem with this explanation is that male mystics invariably describe a male Beloved, whereupon their poetic imagery is often mistaken for evidence of homosexuality. By contrast, the Solar Angel is commonly believed to reveal itself with a gender opposite to that of the personality, creating an attractive polarity leading to the mystical marriage. That sexual polarity complements the polarity between spirit (masculine) and matter (feminine) that exists, regardless of the gender of the personality.[136]

None of these explanations seems adequate to explain the phenomenon of the Beloved, leaving us in need of new insights to bridge the gap between religious experience and esoteric

teachings. Here, esotericists could benefit from studying the mystical experience with respect and understanding, and from a willingness to learn from the writings of the great mystics of the past and lectures by contemporary mystics. Participation in contemplative practices would be even more valuable, possibly leading to the insights needed to extend esoteric teachings.

Concluding Remarks

Throughout history, humankind's understanding of God has been guided by experiences of the inner and outer worlds. People's experiences included personal insights as well as observations and interpretations of the world around them. As people gained more knowledge of the universe, their concept of God expanded. The concept of God also expanded as people became more introspective; explored the inner life of prayer, devotion and mysticism; and in due course expressed their experiences through group relationships and service.

Our understanding of God has also been guided by revelation in various forms, historical and ongoing. Esoteric teachings on the Ageless Wisdom affirm that new knowledge has been revealed whenever humankind reached a stage of evolution when that knowledge was needed and could be assimilated. One of the products of revelation has been the emergence of institutional religions. Religious bodies tend to place great emphasis on the revelation that brought them into being, but soon they enshrine it in dogma and ignore or reject new revelation. Similarly, religious bodies may incorporate an understanding of the physical world current in their infancy but then ignore or resist the theological implications of new scientific discovery.

Few religious leaders today would question the reality that Earth is a planet which orbits the Sun, the Sun is part of a galaxy, and other galaxies exist besides our own. But the biblical mindset is so ingrained in the religious consciousness that one could easily gain the impression from sermons, collective prayer, and the religious literature that we still live on a flat Earth, and God lives just above the clouds.

In a stereotypical example of the crystallization of forms, religious doctrine clings to a depiction of God justifiable two millennia ago, but which is difficult or impossible to reconcile with what we now know of the universe. Western religion missed the opportunity to benefit either from science or from ongoing revelation. In the process, it has harmed its own credibility, threatened the faith of its members—including some of its greatest intellectuals and mystics—and diminished the respect of the scientific community.

Esoteric teachings on the hierarchy of Logoi offer a description of Deity that can be reconciled with scientific cosmology, and help explain how Deity can simultaneously focus on, and communicate across, multiple levels of reality and consciousness. A Logoic hierarchy can ensoul the whole range of celestial bodies, from the universe down to the planet we live on—and exoplanets on which other sentient, thinking beings may live. Planetary Logoi can maintain a close interest in their worlds and their inhabitants. Yet they share in the life of the whole hierarchy and the Godhead that may transcend it.

Western religion is emerging from the closed-mindedness and defensiveness of the past. Correspondingly, esotericists—and many scientists—are shedding the anti-religious attitudes common a century ago. Unique opportunities now exist for mutual engagement and discussion of theological issues, which could result in the enrichment of religious theology, esoteric teachings, and the philosophy of science.

Few works of service would be more far-reaching in their effects than the formulation of a common understanding of Deity, accessible to, and acceptable by, the masses, theologians and religious authorities, the scientific community, and the worldwide esoteric community.

The notion of emanation explains how Deity penetrates to the very depths of our being. Esoteric teachings on the Planetary Logos and on the individualized human Monad go a long way to explaining what theologians call the immanence of God. The one weakness in esoteric teachings seems to be an adequate de-

scription of the personage whom mystics call "the Beloved." Unless we dismiss the mystics' experience as "astralism"—a rash characterization in view of their spiritual status—we must look to new insights to provide a satisfactory explanation.

In this instance, esotericists have much to learn from the great mystics. Opportunities exist, particularly for disciples on certain rays to participate in contemplative practices to glimpse some of the experiences that mystics discuss. As Alice Bailey pointed out, the occult and mystical faculties need to be brought into balance.

Esotericists must avoid a smug certainty that we are right and others are wrong. God—transcendent and immanent—is larger than any body of teachings, even modern esoteric teachings. Synthesis will emerge over time, but it will never be complete. The highest entities of whom we are aware would insist that their understanding of Deity is limited. At the human level, we must accept the limitations on our own knowledge and respect some diversity of understanding. Contrasting visions of God can exist side-by-side like panes in a beautiful stained-glass window. "We are more cultured, richer and wiser when we let alternative visions coexist ecologically and harmoniously."[137]

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1 *Psalm* 139:2. See also *Ezekiel* 28:3.

2 Rudolf Bultmann *New Testament and Mythology* (trans.: S. M. Ogden; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1941), 12.

3 Ibid., 99.

4 Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology,* 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951–1963).

5 In this article "modern esoteric teachings" refer to esoteric teachings disseminated over the last 150 years.

6 *Exodus* 20:4.

7 Several Near Earth Objects, including the quasi-satellite Cruithne, orbit the Sun in resonance with Earth. From time to time one of these is claimed to be our second "moon."

8 This estimate corresponds to the heliopause, the outer boundary of the bubble of plasma flowing from the Sun. Up to 100 times farther from the Sun lies the Oort Cloud, from which comets are believed to originate.

9 The orbital velocities of stars within the Milky Way do not decrease with distance from the galactic center at a rate comparable with that of planets in the Solar System. Rather, our galaxy rotates more like a solid body, an observation that many astronomers attribute to the presence of dark matter.

10 Laniakea may not be the largest "structure" in the universe. Recent observations have identified a *void*—a region of fewer than average galaxies—estimated to be more than one billion light-years across.

11 The estimated diameter of the observable universe is 93 billion light-years. One may ask how its radius: 93/2 = 46.5 billion light-years, can be greater than the distance light could travel in the age of the universe, estimated to be 13.8 billion years. The answer lies in cosmic expansion: space itself expanded, especially in the early life of the universe.

12 A million is six orders of magnitude, a trillion is twelve orders of magnitude.

13 Although no massive object can travel faster than light, cosmic expansion may be carrying distant regions of the universe away from us at a higher apparent speed.

14 The belief that there may be multiple deities, but one's family, tribe or nation owes exclusive loyalty to a particular God, is sometimes referred to as henotheism.

15 Since classical Hebrew contained no vowels, the pronunciation of YHVH is not known, and the name was never uttered outside the temple. "Jehovah" and "Yahweh" are merely Gentile speculations, attempts to form a pronounceable name to satisfy western tastes.

16 *Exodus* 20:3.

17 See for example Karen Armstrong, *A History of God* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1994), 74.

18 *John* 1:1.

19 *Qur'an,* 3:110, 113, 199. All quotations from the Qur'an are taken from Tarif Khalidi, *The Qur'an: A New Translation* (New York: Viking Press, 2008).

20 Donna M. Brown, "Duality and Non-Duality: Awakening to Unified Perspective," *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Spring 2010), 61-74.

21 Ibid., 1:163.

22 Ibid., 59:23-24.

23 *Psalm* 19:1.

[24] *Homilies of S. John Chrysostom* (Oxford: Parker, 1842), homily IX, 165.

[25] *Qur'an* 13:2.

[26] Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee, "Anima Mundi: Awakening the Soul of the World," Sufi Journal, Issue 67, Autumn 2005. Online: http://www.goldensufi.org/a_animamundi.html. Last accessed July 22, 2015.

[27] *Genesis* 1: 1, The creation stories in the first two books of *Genesis* are believed to have been based on earlier legends.

[28] *Nicene Creed*.

[29] Augustine of Hippo, *City of God* (trans: J. F. Shaw; 413-426 CE, book 8), ch. 11.

[30] For a brief discussion of the broad reach of Scholasticism see Richard Harvey, "The Influence of Scholasticism on the Thought Structures of Judaism, Christianity and Islam from the Middle Ages until the Present." Online: http://www.sttonline.org/files/STT08_2_Harvey_EN.pdf. Last accessed Sept. 5, 2015.

[31] Formally, Anselm defined God as "that than which no greater can be conceived." In Cartesian terms, existence is more perfect than non-existence; therefore the most perfect conceivable being must exist.

[32] Philosopher René Descartes (1596–1650) refined Anselm's proof, and mathematicians Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716) and Kurt Gödel (1906–1978) offered their own ontological proofs. Eighteenth-century naturalist William Paley offered an a posteriori proof.

[33] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, first part, questions 1-11. Online: http://www.ccel.org/ccel/aquinas/summa/FP.html#TOC02. Last accessed Dec. 6, 2014.

[34] Baruch Medzibozer. Quoted in Louis I. Newman, *Hasidic Anthology* (New York: Schoken, 1963), 148. Medzibozer was the grandson of the famous Rabbi Baal Shem Tov.

[35] "Morning Prayer," *Book of Common Prayer*, 1662. The Athanasian Creed is named for Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria, but scholars believe that it probably dates from the late fifth or early sixth century–at least 100 years after Athanasius.

[36] Thomas Aquinas, *Shorter Summa* (trans; Cyril Vollert; Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute, 1993), 14.

[37] Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis* (trans; R. Wilson; San Francisco: Harper, 1977/1984), 311.

[38] For a discussion of Gnostic teachings see John F. Nash, *Christianity: the One, the Many*, vol. 1 (Bloomington, IL: Xlibris, 2007), 260ff.

[39] The theoretical Kabbalah, a system of theology and ethics, contrasts with the ecstatic Kabbalah of mystics like Abulafia. See for example John F. Nash, "Abraham Abulafia and the Ecstatic Kabbalah," *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Fall 2008), 51-64; "From the *Zohar* to Safed: Development of the Theoretical Kabbalah," *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Summer 2009), 21-46.

[40] Asma al-Husna, "The Most Beautiful Names of Allah." Online: http: // sufism.org/foundations /ninety- nine-names/the-most-beautiful-names-of-allah-2. Last accessed Sept. 5, 2015.

[41] John Scottus Eriugena, *Periphyseon*, vol. 3, 678c. Quoted in: "John Scottus Eriugena," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Online: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/scottus-eriugena/. Last accessed June 25, 2015.

[42] *Baghavad Gita* (trans.: Annie Besant & Bhagavan Das; Benares, India: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1905), §42, 191.

[43] John F. Nash, "Theosis: a Christian Perspective on Human Destiny," *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Spring 2011), 15-33.

[44] See the discussion in Vladimir Kharlamiv, "Rhetorical Application of *Theosis* in Greek Patristic Literature," *Partakers of the Divine Nature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 121.

[45] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, book I, ch. 16, §8.

[46] Baal Shem Tov, *Tzava'ath HaRivash*. Quoted in Aryeh Kaplan, *The Light Beyond* (New York, NY: Maznaim), 32.

[47] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, section 125, 1882. The famous quote also appears in Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* of 1891.

[48] *Deuteronomy* 6:5.

[49] *Jeremiah* 23:24.

[50] *Luke* 12:6-7.

[51] *Qur'an* 3:31, 34.

[52] Source: http://catholicfire.blogspot.com/2011/08/ten-powerful-quotes-from-st-alphonsus.html. Last accessed Dec. 2, 2014.

[53] Nachman Bratzlaver, *Likkutei Etzoth ha-Shamem*, 1913. Quoted in Newman, *Hasidic Anthology*, 138

[54] Online: http://www.eaglespace.com/spirit/gayatribywords.php. Last accessed Feb. 24, 2015.

[55] John F. Nash, "Prayer and Meditation in Christian Mysticism," *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Fall 2011), 17-41.

[56] The Rosary, the ritual prayer to Mary the mother of Christ, is especially popular in Roman Catholicism. Recited with the aid of prayer beads, it includes five "Our Fathers" and fifty "Hail Marys." The Jesus Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me," is popular among mystics and others in the Eastern Orthodox Churches. Often it is repeated endlessly, until the words sink into the unconscious mind.

[57] Kahlil Gibran, *Mirrors of the Soul* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1965), foreword.

[58] John of the Cross, *Dark Night of the Soul* (trans: E. A. Peers; Mineola, NY: Dover, 2003).

[59] Theresa of Ávila, *Interior Castle* (trans. E. A. Peers; Mineola, NY: Dover, 1946/2007), 108.

[60] *Psalm* 47:2.

[61] John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* (trans.: E. A. Peers; 3/e, Mineola, NY: Dover, 2008), 80.

[62] Ibid., 82.

[63] *Isaiah* 64:4. See also *1 Corinthians* 2:9.

[64] *Song of Solomon* 2:3.

[65] Richard J. Hooper (ed.), *Hymns to the Beloved*, Sedona (AZ: Sanctuary Publications, 2010), 72.

[66] Bernard of Clairvaux, Sermon 52, *Bernard of Clairvaux on the Song of Songs*, vol. 3 (Collegeville, MN: Cistercian Publications, 1979), 50.

[67] John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, 10.

[68] Hooper (ed.), *Hymns to the Beloved*, 73.

[69] Ibid., 72.

[70] T. Subba Row, *Esoteric Teachings*, Adyar, India: Theosophical Publishing House, 1887/1951, 130.

[71] The branch of Theosophy under William Q. Judge that broke away from the Adyar Society insists that the Logoi are to be understood more as forces: "So, simply put, the Logos is the all-ensouling Light and Life of the Universe. It is the *Living Universe* itself. It is the primal radiation from the Absolute at the dawn of the Maha-Manvantara or universal life cycle. It is Light, radiating forth from the Unknown Darkness of the Absolute. . . . It is the Anima Mundi or Universal Soul. It is Divine Ideation itself." Source: "Understanding the Logos." Online: http://blavatsky theosophy.com/understanding-the-logos/. Last accessed Sept. 8, 2015.

[72] *Acts* 17:28.

[73] Charles W. Leadbeater, *The Inner Life* (Chicago: Theosophical Press, 1911/1922), 140. The book is a compilation of lectures given at Adyar, India, prior to 1911.

[74] Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (New York: Lucis, 1925), 181.

[75] Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology* I (New York: Lucis, 1936), 335.

[76] Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 298. The same statement is repeated several times in Bailey's writings.

[77] Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle* (New York: Lucis, 1950), 132.

[78] Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 298.

[79] The choice of pronoun, in references to Logoi, is problematic. Terms like "Heavenly Men," in the esoteric literature of 100 years ago, can be attributed to prevailing cultural bias, but today such matters are taken more seriously. While gender as we know it is not relevant at the Logoic level, gender-like polarities may exist. One suggestion is that Logoi on the odd-number Rays be considered masculine, and those on even-numbered Rays feminine.

[80] For a discussion of schemes, chains and globes see John F. Nash, *The Soul and Its Destiny* (Bloomington, IL: Authorhouse, 2004), 49-55.

[81] Leadbeater, *The Inner Life*, 93. Although Leadbeater mentioned the Planetary Logoi as "force centers" in the body of the Solar Logos, his discussion of Logoi in this work and elsewhere focused almost exclusively on the Solar Logos.

[82] Charles W. Leadbeater, *The Masters and the Path* (Adyar, India: Theosophical Publishing House, 1925). 265. Emphasis added.

[83] Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 255.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid., 5.

[86] Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (New York: Lucis, 1922), 150.

[87] Ibid., 162.

[88] Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 295. The name of the Cosmic Logos is normally capitalized in Bailey's writings.

[89] Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (New York: Lucis, 1934), 274.

[90] Ibid., 409.
[91] Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (New York: Lucis, 1951), 29.
[92] Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 156.
[93] Ibid., 182.
[94] Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 98.
[95] Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 422-423.
[96] Whether the disparity in distances has any impact on astrological interpretations is a topic that esoteric astrologers might wish to explore.
[97] In organizational theory, hierarchies are categorized as "tall" or "flat," according to the number of levels of responsibility. A tall hierarchy has many levels of responsibility. A flat hierarchy has relatively few levels, but many subordinate entities may report to each level.
[98] Reportedly the Path of the Higher Evolution offers seven options, one being "The Path the Logos Himself is On." Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 185-191. See also Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy* (New York: Lucis, 1957), 531.
[99] Adam A. DeFranco shared that insight in a discussion on social media.
[100] The term "Para-Brahman" is confusing. Sometimes it is used in eastern religion to emphasize the transcendence of the already transcendent Brahman. The term is often confused with "Para-Brahma," referring to a deity lying beyond Brahma, the first "person" of the Hindu *trimurti*, or trinity.
[101] *Bhagavad Gita*, 2,20 (trans: Swami Prabhavanada and Christopher Isherwood; New York: New American Library, 1972), 37.
[102] For an in-depth study of the pneuma, nous and psyche among the Stoics and others, see Adam Drozdek, *Greek Philosophers as Theologians: The Divine Arche (*Aldershot, Hampshire, UK: Ashgate, 2007).
[103] Nash, *Christianity: the One, the Many*, vol. 1, 188.
[104] *1 Thessalonians* 5:23.
[105] *Luke* 1:46-47.
[106] Fourth Council of Constantinople, canon 11 and preamble. Online: http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0869-0869,_Concilium_Constantinopolitanum_IV,_Documenta_Omnia,_EN.pdf. The council is not regarded as a major ecumenical council, and some historians claim that the outcome was distorted by voting irregularities. Nevertheless, the claim that we are nothing but body and soul was accepted as doctrine by western Christianity.
[107] Ursula King, *Christian Mystics: Their Lives and Legacies throughout the Ages* (Mahwah, NJ: HiddenSpring, 2001), 109.
[108] Meister Eckhart, Sermon 6, "The Greatness of the Human Person," reproduced in Matthew Fox, *Passion for Creation* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 1990), 103.
[109] Theresa of Ávila, *Interior Castle* (trans. E. A. Peers; Mineola, NY: Dover, 1946/2007), 152.
[110] William Law, *The Spirit of Prayer*, part I (London: Ogles, *et al*., 1816), 51.
[111] Alfred Lord Tennyson, *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After,* 1886.
[112] Gottfried W. von Leibniz, *The Monadology* (trans.: Robert Latta), 1714, §3. Online: http://home.datacomm.ch/kerguelen/monadology/monadology.html Last accessed Sept. 10, 2015.
[113] Ibid., §47.
[114] Ibid., §63.
[115] Subba Row, *Esoteric Teachings*, 129.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Sandra Hodson (ed.), *Light of the Sanctuary*: *the Occult Diary of Geoffrey Hodson* (Manila, Philippines: Theosophical Publishers, 1988), xiv.
[118] Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 158.
[119] Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 86.
[120] Ibid.
[121] John F. Nash, "Theosis: A Christian Perspective on Human Destiny," *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Spring 2011), 15-33.
[122] Rudolf Steiner and Max Heindel insisted that Christ was a Sun spirit who had never incarnated in human form prior to his Palestinian mission.
[123] Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York: Lucis, 1960), 722.
[124] Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 18.
[125] Ibid, 123-124.
[126] *Nicene Creed*, as amended by the First Council of Constantinople, 381.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Nancy E. Abrams, *A God that Could be Real* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2015), 53. Emphasis in original. Abrams' book is reviewed elsewhere in this issue of *The Esoteric Quarterly*.
[130] Ibid., 56. Emphasis in original.
[131] Ibid., 61.
[132] The terms *magisterium ordinarium* and *magisterium extraordinarium* were coined by the

Church of Rome to describe its system of doctrinal authority, but they can also be used more generally. The former term refers to the ongoing, collective teachings of the bishops. The latter refers to the occasional pronouncements on key issues of doctrine by councils of bishops or *ex-cathedra* papal pronouncements.

133 John F. Nash, "The New World Religion: Opportunities and Challenges," *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Fall 2012), 17-38.

134 Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation*, (New York: Lucis, 1922), 157-158.

135 Nash, *The Soul and Its Destiny*, 248-254.

136 For comments on the mystic marriage and the emergence of the divine hermaphrodite, see Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 672.

137 The author is indebted to a reviewer for this insight.

Modern Religious Spirit: Eastern Illumination and the West

Aaron J. French

Introduction

Throughout the recorded history of the West, religion has occupied the minds of the greatest thinkers and the souls of the most devoted hearts. Indeed, even those who appear to have opposed religion have, in a sense, played a part in shaping and furthering its cause, by analyzing and studying the religious topic as concept, helping to evolve it and acting as a necessary weight against the tide of fervency. Religion continues to permeate the lives of most Western people; it is built into their holidays, their cultural outlook, their idiomatic language, and even the structure of the seven-day week. Nevertheless, the increase in both scientism and atheism begs the question: Are Westerns truly religious or spiritual, or have they lost their original devotion to the cause?

The Psychology of Religious Individualism

Renowned Jewish scholar Jonathan Sacks suggests in his 2012 article —*The Moral Animal*[1]—that conventional religion has fallen out of favor in the West, with many people claiming they hold no religious affiliation—a percentage that is increasing. Although Sacks is a proponent for the religious life, he uses neuroscience to support his position: "We have mirror neurons that lead us to feel pain when we see others suffering. We are hard-wired for empathy. We are moral animals." While this is a valiant claim toward pro-religious thinking, it is nonetheless materialistic, aligning with the deification of scientific knowledge. As we shall see, when the above statement is brought into the light of the individualism sought after in the West, and compared with the old spiritual knowledge of the East, which became westernized in the book *Siddhartha* by Herman Hesse,[2] the statement "We are moral animals" is rendered irrelevant. A true understanding of what is happening in the evolution of human consciousness reveals that the Western quest to attain individualistic freedom is indeed a religious act—in accord with the change and development of modern souls.

In his foundational book on the psychology of religion, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*,[3] William James examines the phenomena of religion through a pragmatic and scientific lens. Over the course of his study, he delineates the neglect of science in the academic study of religion, explaining that there needs to be a shift from the dogmas of outer religious expression to an inner, experience-based form, including the states of consciousness associated with such experiences. In this regard, James would be in agreement with Sacks when Sacks calls humans "moral animals" and endeavors to support his statement with neurological (materialistic) data.

For Sacks, as for James, the human is at the mercy of fluctuating mental states, which are triggered and constructed from the sensory data of the physical world, as a computer program is at the mercy of the fingers tapping the

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keys. There is no focus on the organic substance of human consciousness as it relates to the Soul, whose substance is invisible to mundane modes of perception. Rather, consciousness is seen as a static paradigm through which experiences and concepts are processed, resulting in the psychological makeup of the human being and leaving little room for the maturation of the Soul.

However, James goes further than Sacks, and where Sacks departs, James asserts that experience is the real driving force of religion, stating at the start of his book: "[I will] … confine myself as far as I can to personal religion"[4] He describes personal religion as the most important function of mankind, and says that it is based upon experience. So, in the end both James and Sacks are in favor of a kind of religion, as both agree on the neurological apparatus, yet they wind up at opposite sides of the same coin, with James asserting religious individualism based upon experience, and Sacks concluding: "Religion is the best antidote to the individualism of the consumer age."[5]

There is absolutely nothing wrong with either of these positions. Both men, in their own related yet varied ways, do well in coming to conclusions based upon their own materialistic data, which has been gained via sense perception. Furthermore, there is absolutely nothing wrong *with scientific, materialistic data*, nor with the scientific method itself, the tool that has garnered so much progress for contemporary life. The problem lies in the deification of materialistic data—the idea that it remains the authority on what is *true*, a God-above-God judging matters of reality with an iron assurance, when clearly it has been incorrect on numerous occasions throughout history, (e.g., the corrective publication of *On the Revolutions of the Celestial Spheres*[6] and other similar works). What is missing from the equation is individual human experience that, as James rightly points out, is the sole religious force in driving the evolution of consciousness in the modern-day West.

The striving after full attainment of individualism has replaced the old forms of religion. This development is in harmony with the Christian mythology of self-deification by finding oneself in Christ and linking up Christ-Selves with Christ Himself. Moreover, the only possible way to become an individual is to make decisions, have experiences, and reflect honestly upon them. *That* is the modern religious spirit.

While not as nebulous as it sounds, this progression of consciousness will be better and more clearly explained pictorially—and the organic process is beautifully depicted, both in its narrative form and the situation surrounding its composition—in *Siddhartha*, the aforementioned book by the German poet, novelist, and painter Hermann Hesse. For, as Robert C. Conard wrote in his 1975 article entitled *Hermann Hesse's Siddhartha, eine indische Dichtung, as a Western Archetype*[7]: "Although Hesse's *Siddhartha* is subtitled eine indische Dichtung (an Indian Poetry), and a prominent Indian scholar has discovered in it 'the core of Indian thought' and 'the greatest tribute of one of the greatest minds of our time to the sons of India,' Western critics still claim the work as a product of Occidental culture. While the Orient sees the book as a great Eastern work by a Western writer, many Western scholars perceive the book as typically Western with merely an Oriental facade."[8] Conard concludes with his study that *Siddhartha* "reveals the bodily structure of the work as Western despite the Indic garment it wears."[9]

This is all stated with accuracy, but again, as with Sacks and James, Conard is missing a key component—which is exactly the point of this seeming mask of the Occident in Indic guise: that the Western quest for individualism has become the new religious mood in the evolution of human consciousness—inspired by the advent of Christianity, its spread, globaliza-

tion, and even the Internet. At this point in the game, it is nearly impossible to return to previous conditions, as an irreversible change has been set in motion. Humans on this planet now feel as if their own individuality, inspired by the kinds of personal experiences they select and carry out, has become irreconcilably bound up with the religious feeling life.

The plot of *Siddhartha* takes us through this process, revealing young Siddhartha's brazen defiance of the imposed way of life, being a Brahmin and having no sense of Self, indeed with the goal being to *abandon* that Self. This is followed by his own carefully selected set of experiences, which he undergoes, and throughout the course of the novel he eventually gets to teach himself, as it were, what it means to be religious. Siddhartha's is a personal religion, whereas his childhood friend Govinda is left at the end of the novel in the old consciousness paradigm, a follower having no sense of Self, gazing on the transformed divinity of Siddhartha, yet not comprehending it. In a very vivid manner, this final scene shows the movement out of the Eastern or Old World style of intellect, into the more Occidental one, which is steeped in individualism and experience. Indeed, the Occident's religious quest for individualism has permeated the entire world-culture, and it will only continue to do so. Hence, there is no possible way to "un-expose" the world to this development.

And yet, what is not implied here is that the West has now eradicated the East, replaced it—killed it off, in other words. Rather, the current religious mood is the blossoming of the rose bud (the West) upon the firm stalk of the East, the whole of it arising naturally, as the rose sprouts over time from the garden bed, when properly cared for and nourished. Indeed, the concept and process can only be described pictorially and poetically, as above, because it is a spiritual, organic manifestation; *not a materialistic or mechanistic one*.

Conclusion

While it may appear to those who are armed with materialistic data and feel themselves an authority in some capacity that the old religious models are dying out and must be saved by importing the Orient to the Occident, as depicted so correctly in Hesse's novel *Siddhartha,* the truth is that "personal religion," and even non-religion, is wholly bound up with the evolution of human consciousness. The striving after full attainment of individualism has replaced the old forms of religion. This development is in harmony with the Christian mythology of self-deification by finding oneself in Christ and linking up Christ-Selves with Christ Himself. Moreover, the only possible way to become an individual is to make decisions, have experiences, and reflect honestly upon them. *That* is the modern religious spirit.

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1 Jonathan Sacks, "The Moral Animal," *New York Times*, 23 December, 2012.

2 Hermann Hesse and Joachim Neugroschel. *Siddhartha: An Indian Tale* (New York, NY: Penguin, 2003).

3 William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York, NY: Touchstone, 1997).

4 Ibid., 23.

5 Jonathan Sacks, "The Moral Animal."

6 *On the Revolutions of the Celestial Spheres* is the seminal work on the heliocentric theory of the Renaissance astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus.

7 Robert C. Conard, "Hermann Hesse's Siddhartha, eine indische Dichtung, as a Western Archetype," *The German Quarterly*, Vol. 48: No. 3, May, 1975. Published by Wiley, on behalf of the American Association of Teachers of German Stable.

8 Ibid., 358-369.

9 Ibid.

Book Review

***A God that Could be Real: Spirituality, Science, and the Future of Our Planet*, by Nancy Ellen Abrams**, Boston: Beacon Press, 2015. Hard cover, 163 pages, publisher's list price US$22.95. Available from all leading online and conventional retailers.

Nancy Ellen Abrams clashed with her rabbi, while in her teens, and soon rejected the Judaism of her upbringing. Through her husband, astrophysicist Joel Primack, Abrams came into contact with leading scientists from around the world and lived in an environment of skeptical atheism. She and Primack coauthored two books on the philosophy of science, neither of which acknowledged any role for religion in human, global or cosmic affairs.

Given her background, Abrams would not seem to be the ideal candidate to write a book on theology. But participation in a twelve-step program persuaded her that turning one's life over to a higher power—"of one's own understanding"—has healing potential. So Abrams set out on a quest to find such a higher power, posing the question: "*Could anything actually exist in the universe, as science understands it, that is worthy of being called God?*" [p. xxviii, emphasis in original].

Reflecting her background, the higher power of Abrams' understanding had to satisfy a number of stringent preconditions:

1. God could not have existed before the universe.
2. God could not have created the universe.
3. God can't know everything.
4. God doesn't plan what happens.
5. God can't violate the laws of nature. [pp. 24-34]

Those preconditions would seem to pose almost impossible obstacles to Abrams' quest for a higher power, but she found a way around them. Her ingenious solution was to turn to complexity theory and the concept of emergent phenomena. The basic idea of emergence can be traced back as far as Aristotle, and the term itself was coined by the nineteenth-century English philosopher George Henry Lewes. But only in recent decades has the new discipline of complexity theory given it broad visibility in scientific and philosophical circles.

A basic tenet is that when a system acquires a certain level of complexity, it begins to exhibit emergent properties, patterns or entities, qualitatively different from those of the system's component parts, and unpredictable from even the most detailed knowledge of the latter. For example, the crystalline patterns of snowflakes could not be predicted from the study of water molecules. And no amount of knowledge of elementary particles could predict the nature of consciousness, which, according to the mindset within which Abrams is working, emerges from physical matter. Abrams makes the important assertion—though it is unclear whether a majority of complexity theorists would agree—that emergent traits are *goal-oriented*. "They are *about* something, *for* something." [p. 43, emphasis in original]

Abrams' God is an emergent phenomenon from the collective aspirations of the human race:

> Our ancestors over tens of thousands of years *collectively* gave rise to almost everything that is now most important to us and most influential in our lives. . . . They're abstractions that emerged from different aspects of human behavior, and they're real, even though no one can completely define what any one of them actually is.
>
> God has emerged from some aspect of us, something we were already doing in prehistory, something so ancient and fundamental that it was in our ancestors before the first ideas of gods arose. It has to be so basic to

> us that, without it, we might not be human. [pp. 48-50, emphasis in original]

She explains further:

> We humans are the aspiring species. Because we feel driven to be better, to do better, to create better, to understand better, to have more, to be safer, we have become far more than the sum of our instincts. The interacting aspirations of humanity make up an extremely complex system. . . . *God is endlessly emerging from the staggering complexity of all human aspirations across time*. [pp. 49-50, emphasis in the original]

The result is a God who can inspire us, whom we can love, to whom we can pray. It is a God within whom we can look forward to an afterlife. Abrams rejects the cynical notion that man created God out of a need for solace or salvation, or the desire for an almighty to smite one's enemies. Her God emerged without humanity's conscious desire, even—until now—its awareness.

Abrams' God did not pre-exist the universe; it did not create the universe: "*God transcends us, but the universe transcends God*." [p. 56, emphasis in original] But it gives meaning to the universe, at least for us human beings. God is a planetary God, because it emerges from humanity that lives on Earth: "God is in all the places that we humans have changed, improved, interpreted, and loved. And nowhere else." [p. 55]

Our God may not be the only one. If our God emerges from human aspiration, other gods conceivably could emerge from the aspirations of thinking beings in other parts of the universe. Moreover, and this is a most important deduction: "Somewhere in the very, very distant future, some new emergent phenomenon might even arise from all those gods interacting." [p. 61] A meta-God could emerge, at a higher level of complexity, from the Gods already formed.

The author's primary thesis that "a God could be real" is presented in a little more than the sixty pages that comprise Part One of the book. Parts Two and Three attempt to attach meaning, still within her rationalistic mindset, to a number of concepts more commonly associated with religion, spirituality, or even esotericism.

Abrams offers an interesting definition of "spirituality." She examines the sixty orders of magnitude (powers of ten) that separate the Planck scale, the shortest length that has any meaning in quantum physics, from the longest length that has any meaning to scientific cosmology: the diameter of the observable universe.

Our lives focus on a limited portion of that spectrum, from the size of "the tiniest creature visible to the naked eye up to maybe the sun." [p. 71] This is the range that Abrams defines as "physical." On the scale of the atom and smaller, and on the scale of galaxies and clusters of galaxies, reality is totally foreign to our understanding. Moreover, matter is so rarified, relative to the size of the entities that comprise it, that it can no longer be termed "physical;" rather, it should be called "spiritual." In fact, "Most of the scientific universe is spiritual! . . . [I]f we open our minds willingly and exuberantly to a real God in the real universe, we will find that there is indeed a spiritual world." [p.75] Strong affirmations for an avowed rationalist.

We can develop a relationship with the emergent God. Abrams poses four questions: "Can it love us? Can we love it? Can it respond? and Can it answer our prayers? And she answers an emphatic "yes" to all of them. Prayer, for example, "is a conversation among different faces of ourselves as we exist on different size scales. We send our ordinary consciousness out to connect to our roles on emergent size scales. Those roles speak back to us if we're open to their existence." [p. 84] The God that emerges from human aspiration loves its creators: "God loves us, even though God doesn't feel it." Moreover, it provides a favorable environment for mutual love: "God is what makes it possible for us to love one another." [p. 93.] As we shall see shortly, the love-oriented God that emerges from human aspiration also provides a basis for morality.

Abrams acknowledges a sense of the sacred. Things are not inherently sacred, however, or

sanctified by divine decree. Rather we anoint them as sacred: "*Sacred* is more of a verb than an adjective." "The sense of sacredness," she explains, "reflects our ability not only to see but to *appreciate* something to the depths of our being." [p. 125, emphasis in original] Among the things that are sacred is humanity's story, told not so much in cultural artifacts, like scripture and mythology, but in the scientific history of the universe, the planet and ourselves. "There is one magnificent cosmic origin story, and it is equally true for everyone on Earth. To know who we are, we must tell it in every language, every medium, and every generation." [p. 142]

The question of an afterlife obviously poses difficulties for Abrams. Heaven and hell, not surprisingly, are dismissed out of hand, except as "potential futures for our species." [p. 161] Reincarnation is worth considering, but it is rejected on probability grounds. Abrams views reincarnation as the reconstruction of our consciousness in a new body. But she is committed to the notion that consciousness emerges from physical matter as an emergent phenomenon, which exhibits a high degree of randomness. The probability that our consciousness could have been produced by the particular aggregate of atoms that we encompass is already exponentially small; in other words, we are who we are—rather than someone else, a different kind of creature, or an inanimate object—by the slimmest of chances. So reincarnation—the production of the same consciousness from a future aggregation of atoms—is a virtual impossibility.

The best prospect for immortality is that our consciousness lives on in the thoughts of others, in the memories of our ancestors, and in the impact we have on the world. Here, Abrams moves into a topic critically important to her cause: "We may not be our brother's keeper, but we are our great-great-great-grandchildren's keeper." If we make the right choices, "We might become ancestors [our] descendants will honor." [p. 109] In other words, we have moral obligations.

But what precisely is morality, and where does it come from? The essence of morality "is human beings struggling to *express something they already feel*." "[A]ctive morality—really thinking about right and wrong—is an *expression of our highest aspirations*. That's the connection between morality and a God that continually emerges from our aspirations." [pp. 130, 131, emphasis in original] From another perspective, morality arises from our inherent need for harmony: "The more we are in harmony with the universe and God, the more sustainable—even regenerating—our lives will be. We'll experience taking the long view not as sacrifice but as oneness and fulfillment and harmony with God—because that's what it is." [p. 144]

Nancy Abrams' theological model is an attractive one. One key element is not acknowledged, however, and that weakness seriously undermines her thesis. The aspirations from which God is alleged to have emerged: "to be better, to do better, to create better, to understand better, to have more, to be safer, we have become far more than the sum of our instincts," are all of a positive nature. In consequence Abrams' emergent God has beneficent qualities. Why, we may ask, did not some meta-being emerge from humanity's fears, spitefulness, greed and sloth? We could equally have created a Devil. Perhaps we have created both, and the present book simply focuses on one of them. Not until the very end of the book does Abrams concede: "Collectively we are influencing God. The worse we behave, measured against our deepest aspirations, the weaker God becomes, not only for us but for future generations." [p. 150]

The author has imposed an unacknowledged, positive ethical bias on her emergent phenomenon. Her God has emerged from a system of cardinal virtues, whereas its polar opposite could have emerged from a system of deadly sins. While the author claims to be proposing a God that is "real," by the standards of scientific rationalism, we can only suppose that she has an underlying framework of belief that is not disclosed—or perhaps of which she is not yet aware.

Abrams expresses great optimism for the future: "Awakening to the emerging God prom-

ises us love on previously unknown scales—for Earth and the cosmos, for the immensity of what it took to create us, and for all the children to come." [p. 161] But a similar optimism, a belief in humanity's basic goodness, seems to have preceded and guided Abrams' formulation of her thesis. Esotericists share that optimism, recognizing it as an element of humanity's evolution toward higher consciousness, urged on by our own souls and by the Second Ray emanation from the Solar Logos.

Her suggestion that emergent Gods from different planets could form an even-greater emergent God is a valuable one. It points the way toward broader acceptance of a hierarchical deity, which could alleviate important conceptual challenges modern people face as they try to reconcile theology and science. Abrams' multi-level God has much in common with the hierarchy of Logoi described by trans-Himalayan teachings. But there is a crucial difference. Abrams' is a bottom-up model of Deity, founded on the belief that form creates consciousness. Esotericists, by contrast, insist that consciousness creates form. The Logoi precede and create, from their own being, their worlds and the lives that inhabit them. Abrams' meta-God may emerge "in the very, very distant future." But the Logoi have been here all along.

One of two forewords to *A God that Could be Real* was written by Desmond Tutu, former Anglican Archbishop of South Africa and a leading figure in the reconciliation process following the end of apartheid. Archbishop Tutu comments that he disagrees with much Nancy Abrams says but believes that people "will come away better for having read it." [p. ix] He adds: "I recommend it highly to all, religious or secular, believer or atheist, who are ready to explore honestly their understanding of the divine in our beautiful, expanding universe." [p. x] This reviewer joins him both in his evaluation and his recommendation. The book is well-written, in a lively, journalistic style, and it should be of considerable interest to readers of *The Esoteric Quarterly*.

Whether she would acknowledge it or not, Abrams is on a spiritual journey—using "spiritual," not in the sense of remoteness from our everyday frame of reference, but in the more familiar sense of expanding consciousness. At present, however, she is a prisoner of her rationalist mindset and its associated premises and terminology. Many of the concepts she examines could be reworded—and in some cases reoriented—to fit in well with modern esoteric teachings. Our hope is that she will continue on her journey, following her insights, giving voice to those unspoken beliefs she reveals from time to time, and allowing herself to open up to new language that could provide a better basis for expressing her insights. Nancy Abrams would make an excellent esoteric student.

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